



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Overview of Revised *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*

Aug 2025

A New Chapter for the Watershed Agreement

- The *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* is a voluntary agreement between the six watershed states, the District of Columbia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of the federal government
- As many milestones in the 2014 *Agreement* approach their target dates in 2025, the Chesapeake Bay Program has drafted a revised *Watershed Agreement* to chart a course for the future





2024 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHARGE



Members directed the Bay Program's Principals' Staff Committee to take the following actions by the end of 2025:



Revise the existing *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.



Elevate conservation as a key pillar of the partnership.



Address both water quality and living resources (e.g., habitat, wildlife).



Place a greater emphasis in engaging communities of the watershed.



Ensure goals and outcomes are measurable, time-bound and sufficient to complete the outcome as quickly as possible.



Ground revisions in the most current scientific understandings and issues.

Agreement Components

- Vision
- Preamble
- Principles
- Goals & Outcomes
- Management Strategies





Revised Vision

“The Chesapeake Bay Program partners envision an environmentally and economically sustainable and resilient Chesapeake Bay watershed with clean water, abundant life, conserved and healthy working lands, a vibrant cultural heritage and a wide range of engaged individuals whose communities enjoy access to the waters and natural landscapes of the region.”

Revised Goals

Thriving Habitat and Wildlife

Protect, restore and sustain fisheries and wildlife, as well as the network of land and water habitats they depend on, to promote a balanced and resilient ecosystem and support local economies and recreational opportunities.

Clean Water

Reduce pollutants entering the Bay and its rivers to achieve the water quality necessary to support aquatic wildlife and protect human health.

Healthy Landscapes

Conserve, restore and enhance landscapes of ecological, economic and cultural value to maintain water quality, provide habitat for wildlife and increase resilience.

Engaged Communities

Engage and grow a community of local stewards and leaders through education, recreation and professional opportunities.

Regrouped and Revised Outcomes

Healthy Landscapes

- Healthy Forests and Trees
- Protected Lands
- Land Use Decision Support
- Adapting to Changing Environmental Conditions

Clean Water

- Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment
- Toxic Contaminants Mitigation
- Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring

Thriving Habitat and Wildlife

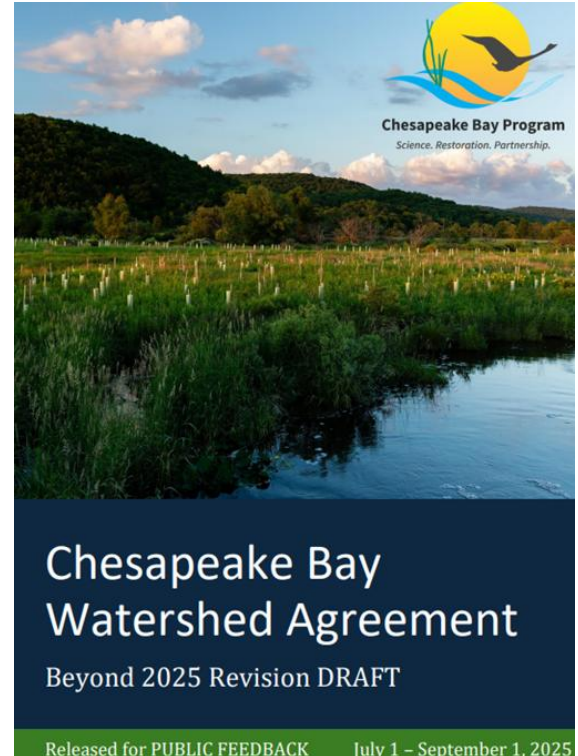
- Blue Crab Sustainability
- Brook Trout
- Fish Habitat
- Fish Passage
- Oysters
- Stream Health
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)
- Wetlands

Engaged Communities

- Local Leadership
- Public Access
- School District Planning
- Stewardship
- Student Experiences
- Workforce

What Local Leaders Need to Know

- Revised agreement is a refresh, not a major rewrite
- Conservation was elevated as a key pillar within the Agreement
- Key outcomes for Local Governments:
 - Land Use Decision Support
 - Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment
 - Changing Environmental Conditions
 - Toxic Contaminants Mitigation
 - Local Leadership



We Want Feedback!

- Public feedback period runs until Monday, September 1
- Everything you need to know can be found at <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/what-guides-us/planning-for-2025-and-beyond>
- Feedback can be emailed to comments@chesapeakebay.net
- Chesapeake Bay Program staff are available to talk with any of your members or groups.