



# Chesapeake Bay Program Update: Beyond 2025

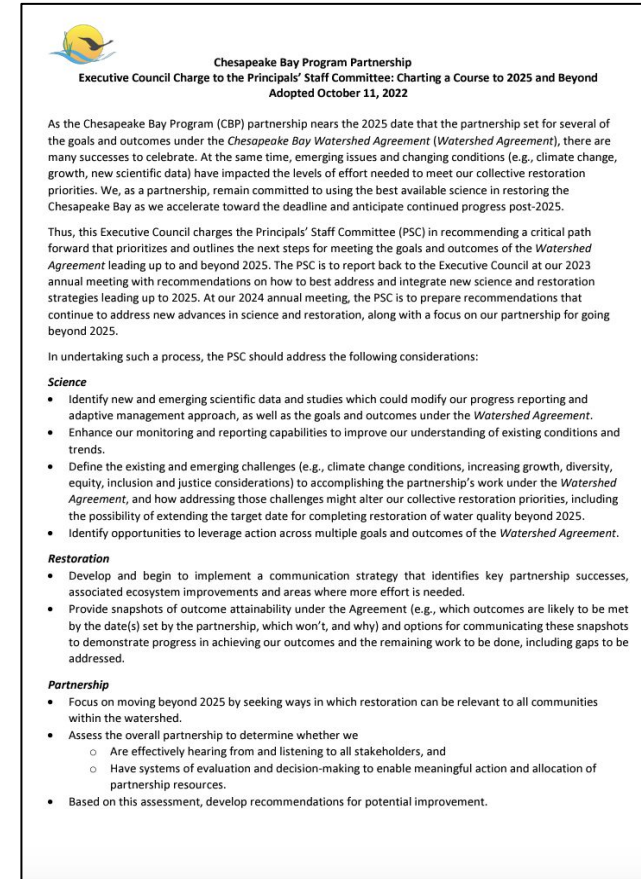
May 21, 2025



**Chesapeake Bay Program**

# Chesapeake Executive Council Charges

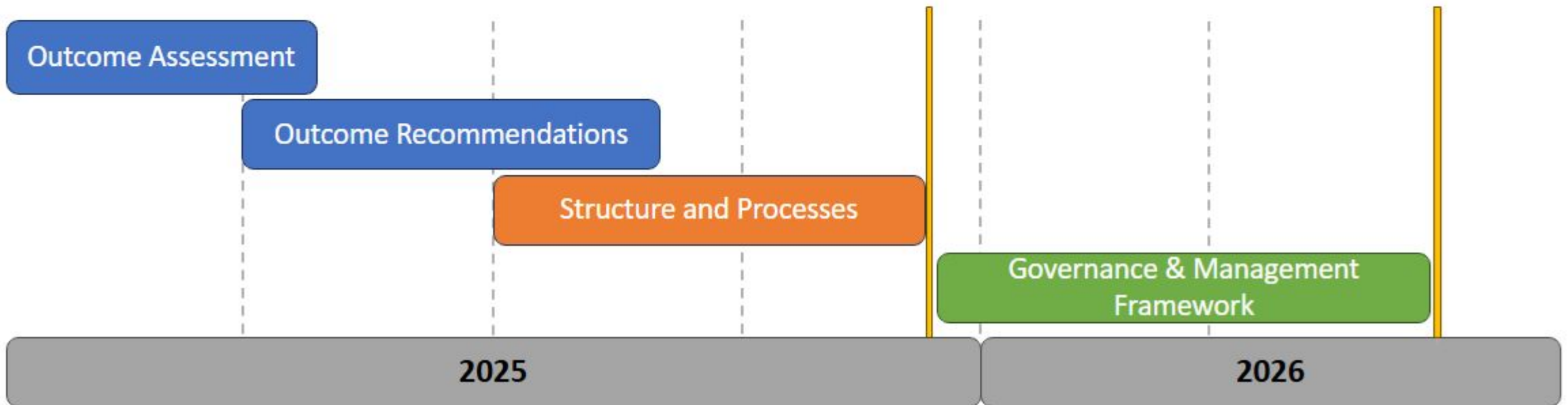
- 2022 EC charge directed the Principals' Staff Committee to recommend a critical path forward that prioritizes and outlines the next steps for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement* up to and **beyond 2025**.
- 2024 EC charge charted a path forward for revising the *Watershed Agreement* by the end of 2025.



# Specifically, the 2024 Executive Council Charge:

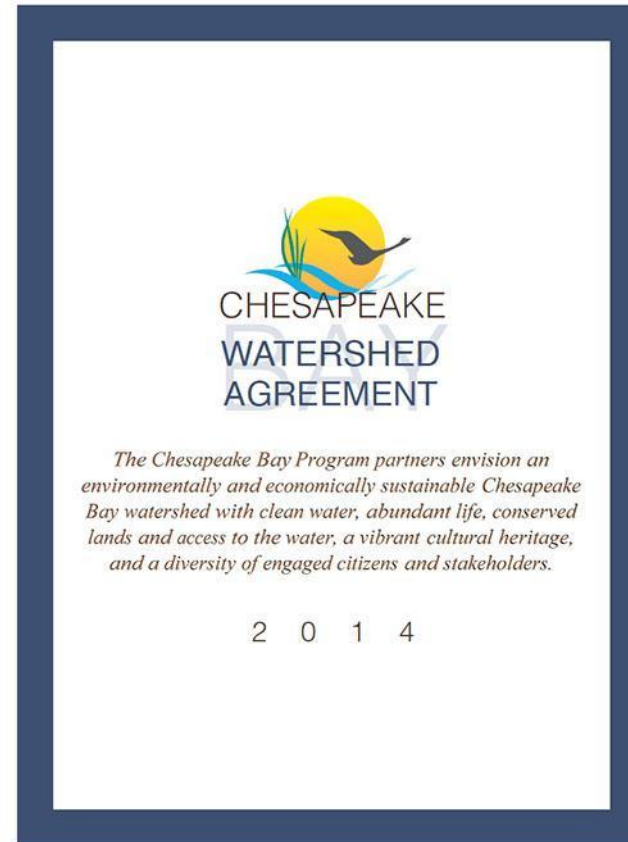
“...direct the Principals’ Staff Committee to complete the following by December 1, 2025:

1. Revisions to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement with modifications to the existing vision, principles, preamble, goals, and **outcomes...**”
2. ...Recommending this simplified and streamlined **partnership structure and processes** to the Executive Council in as much detail as possible...”
3. Subsequent changes which incorporate this revised structure and processes into the **Governance and Management Framework** for the Chesapeake Bay Program do not need to occur until June 2026.

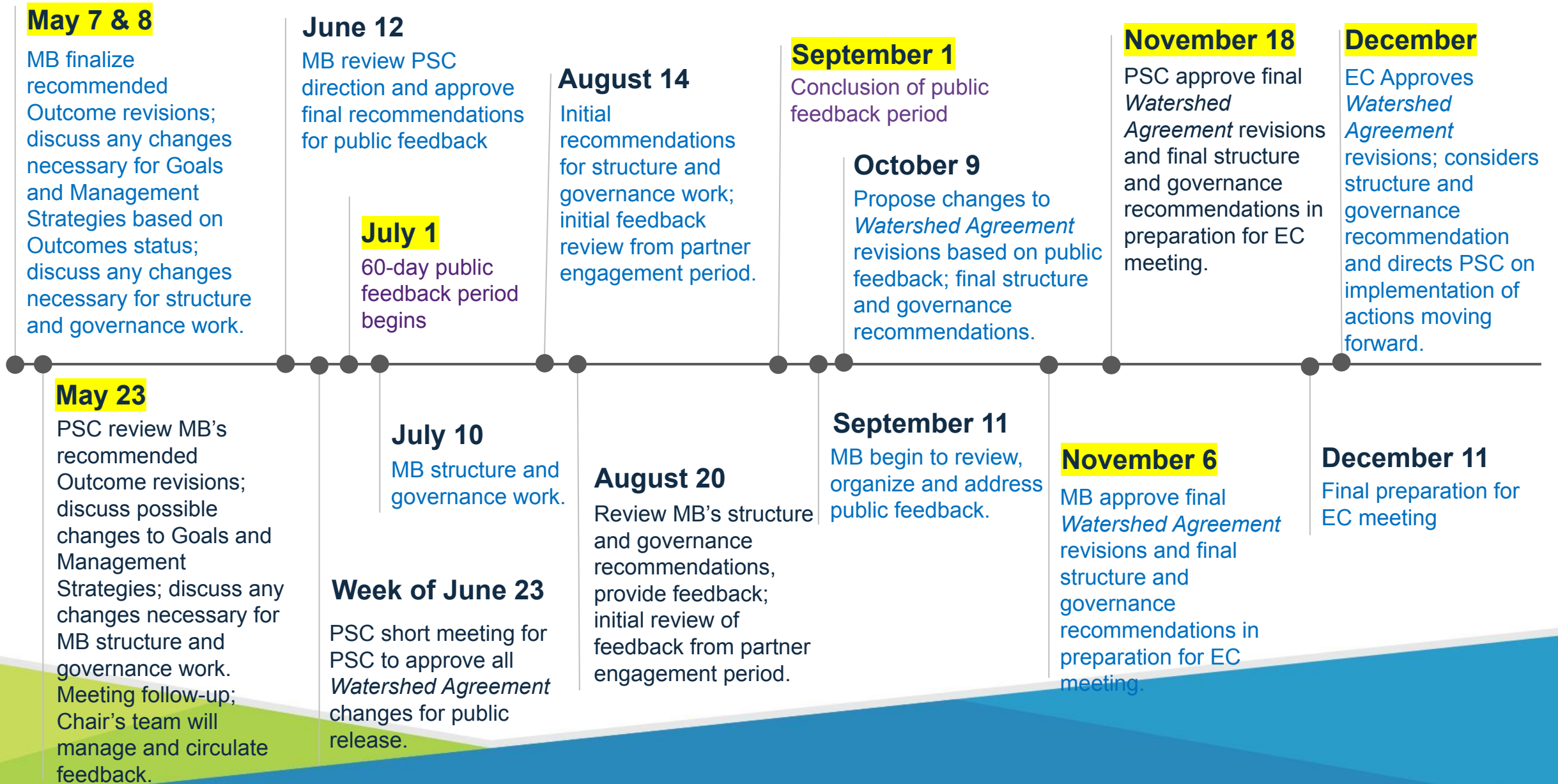


# Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

- Vision
- Preamble
- Principles
- **Goals & Outcomes**
- Management Strategies
- Affirmation by the Signatories



# Timeline for the rest of 2025





# 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

## 1 VISION, 10 GOALS, 31 OUTCOMES



Sustainable  
Fisheries



Toxic  
Contaminants



Land  
Conservation



Vital  
Habitats



Healthy  
Watersheds



Public  
Access



Environmental  
Literacy



Water  
Quality



Stewardship



Climate  
Resiliency

Each goal includes between one and five outcomes.

Goals focus on the big picture.

Outcomes are intended to be specific, measurable objectives toward achieving each goal.

# Proposed Modifications to Goals



- Example: Clean Water
- Introduction: Clean water is the foundation of healthy fisheries, habitats and communities across the watershed. However, excess nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and toxic contaminants can degrade our waterways, harm wildlife and pose risks to human health. The Chesapeake Bay Program partners use a variety of tools to reduce excess nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, address toxic contaminants and monitor progress toward achieving water quality standards.
- Goal Statement: Reduce pollutants entering the Bay and its rivers to achieve the water quality necessary to support our aquatic wildlife and protect human health.
- Outcomes: Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring; Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment; Toxic Contaminants Mitigation

# Proposed Modifications to Outcomes: Disposition Process

- An **updated** outcome will maintain its original intent, but language may be added to make it more specific, measurable, actionable, relevant or timely.
- Outcomes may be **consolidated** to form a single outcome, or activities underneath an existing outcome may be integrated into other outcomes.
- Outcomes may be **removed** from the *Watershed Agreement*.
- An outcome may be **replaced** by a new outcome that relates to the original's intent or subject matter.
- An outcome may also be **reclassified**, in which it could adopt a new structure or be changed to an output or activity.




# Partnership Consensus Achieved!

- Sustainable Schools - **Reclassify**
- Environmental Literacy Planning - **Update**
- Student - Update
- Stewardship - **Update**
- Diversity - **Replace**
- Public Access – **Update**
- Protected Lands – **Update**
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation – **Update**
- Oysters – **Update**

# Partnership Consensus Achieved!

- Tree Canopy- **Consolidate**
- Forest Buffers - **Consolidate**
- Monitoring and Assessment – **Replace**
- Land Use Options and Evaluations - **Replace**
- Healthy Watersheds - **Reclassify**
- Brook Trout – **Update**
- Stream Health – **Update**
- Forage Fish - **Reclassify**

# Updated Outcome Language

- Outcome leads have drafted updated Outcome language for Management Board review.
    - Outcome: long-term, high-level change we desire, or the difference made by our actions
    - Target(s): more direct products of the actions we plan for and take as partners (SMART, where possible)
  - No “stops” or “holds” received from the Management Board on the revised Outcome language.
  - PSC will review updated Outcome language at its May 23 meeting – approval will be requested on this language.
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# How about streamlining the partnership structure and process?

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Enhancing Partnership, Leadership and Management Goal Implementation Team (GIT 6) is leading an informal process to aid the Management Board and Principals' Staff Committee in developing recommendations for streamlining the structure and governance process of the partnership.



# Principals' Staff Committee / Management Board Meeting

January 16, 2024

## Actions and Decisions

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### Discussion of Structure, Governance, and Operational Management Framework

**Decision:** GIT 6 will coordinate an informal process and develop a draft scope of work to accomplish the **Executive Council Charge** to simplify and streamline the structure and governance process for the partnership. GIT 6 will also pursue options to standardize partnership meeting processes as well as action and decision documentation.


*“A simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments in an effective, efficient, and inclusive manner. It is the expectation of the Chesapeake Executive Council that the revised partnership structure and processes will be more inclusive of all communities and more manageable for partnership staff.”*

#### **Updated Guidance from the Management Board (03/06)**


- “develop a single one-pager that highlights the top 3-5 priorities that would inform the scope of work for the partnership to address the structure, process, and governance component of the 2024 Executive Council Charge.”
- “present the contents of the one-pager [at the 3/27 MB Meeting], highlighting the top level 3-5 priorities. The Management Board will then determine if this work under GIT 6 should continue or if an alternative approach should be pursued. “




# Proposed Priorities for Streamlining/Simplifying

- Clarifying membership roles, responsibilities, and definitions of Chesapeake Bay Program groups to strengthen accountability and adaptability
  - Revising the Strategy Review System to ensure regular assessment, adaptability in tactics and goals, and clear alignment of actions and responsibilities
  - Refining decision-making processes to ensure broad representation, agile science-based decision making, and integrative participatory practices
  - Strengthening communication, engagement and integration across the Program to build trust, align goals, and enhance coordination among program units
  - Establishing a logical framework and governance structure to produce results that align with the goals and outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement
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# PSC Direction to GIT 6 from March 28 Meeting

- Collect best practices for meeting operations
  - Review other regional partnership programs
  - Identify skillsets and resources needed to draft and execute the Scope(s) of Work for the top priorities
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# Meeting Best Practices – Examples

- Standardize agendas and meeting documentation
  - Update group membership on website every 6 months
  - Choose common meeting and file sharing platforms (e.g., MS Teams, Google Drive)
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# Geographic Program Reviews

- *Objective*: Review other geographic programs to gain insights for developing Scope(s) of Work.
  - *Suggested Approach*: Rapid assessment with 5-6 related regional partnerships. Delve further as needed.
    - How was the Program formally established? (e.g., statutes)
    - Organizational structure? What guides the Program?
    - Funding mechanisms; deployment and prioritization of resources?
    - How are you measuring success?
    - Lessons learned?
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# Geographic Program Reviews

1. Informational discussions and comparative exercise in June.
  - Individuals set up meetings with identified partnerships.
  - Review Program materials (e.g., strategic plan, org chart).
  - Discuss issues of interest; inform of CBP approach and seek feedback.

**Suggested Programs:** [Puget Sound Partnership](#), [San Francisco Estuary Partnership](#), [Long Island Sound Study](#), [International Joint Commission](#) (Great Lakes), [Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council](#)

2. [As desired] Informational small group discussion(s) with Partnerships' **external stakeholders.**



# Expertise and Resources Needed for Top Priorities?


1. Clarifying membership roles, responsibilities, and definitions of Chesapeake Bay Program groups
2. Revising the Strategy Review System (SRS)
3. Refining decision-making processes
4. Strengthening communication, engagement, and trust
5. Establishing a logical framework and governance structure that supports the vision and goals of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement



# Next Steps for the Watershed Agreement

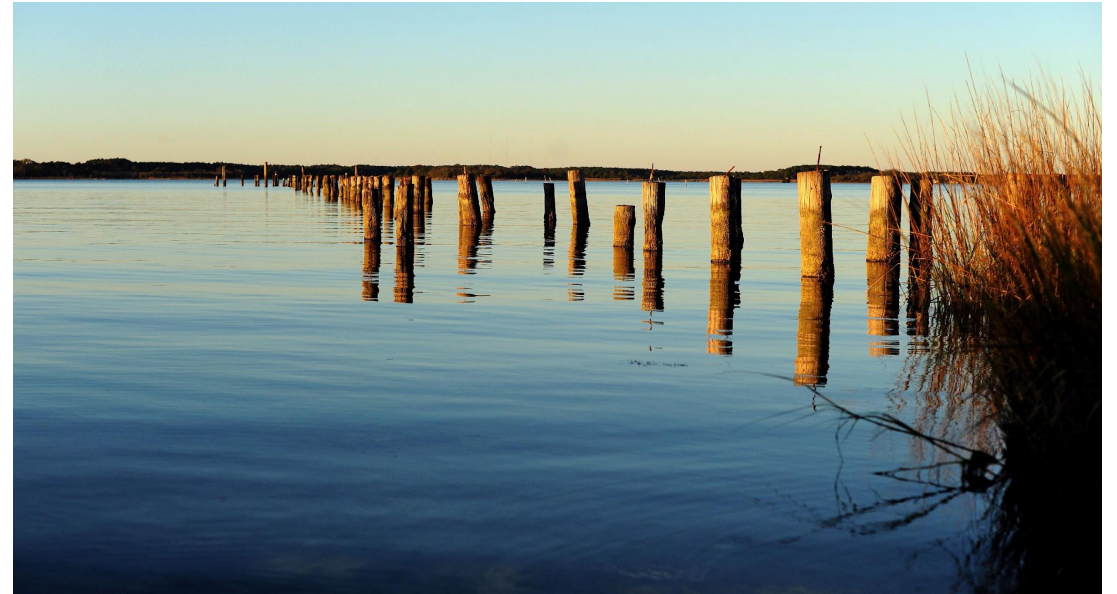
Date of Action	Deliverable / Decision
May 23, 2025	PSC reviews and approves MB's recommended updates to the Watershed Agreement
July – August 2025	60-day public review and engagement period for updated Watershed Agreement
Sept – Oct 2025	PSC reviews public feedback and revises Watershed Agreement as needed
November 2025	PSC approves final updated Watershed Agreement for Executive Council consideration
December 2025	Chesapeake Executive Council holds annual meeting; reviews and approves updated Watershed Agreement

# May 23 PSC Decisions Requested

- Approve the PSC response to the January 2025 resolution from the Indigenous Conservation Council (ICC).
  - Approve the proposed revisions to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement's Vision, Preamble, and Principles.
  - Approve recommended language for the Agreement's outcomes, which were language proposed at the May 7-8 Management Board Retreat.
  - Review and approve the revised goal structure under the Agreement, as well as any proposed changes to the Management Strategies section of the Agreement.
  - Approve GIT 6's continued work on structure and governance as part of fulfilling the 2024 Executive Council charge.
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# Public Feedback Process

- Public feedback open July 1– August 30.
- Anyone can submit comments by email to [comments@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:comments@chesapeakebay.net).
- Comments will be collected, reviewed and integrated as appropriate into the updated Agreement.
- All comments received, as well as a redlined version of the updated Agreement will be posted online at [chesapeakebay.net/beyond2025](http://chesapeakebay.net/beyond2025).
- The final updated Agreement will be reviewed by the Management Board and will inform the Principals' Staff Committee recommendations to the Chesapeake Executive Council.



# Where can I find information on the Beyond 2025 process?

The most up-to-date information on the Beyond 2025 process can be found on the Chesapeake Bay Program's [Beyond 2025 webpage](#). The webpage includes the timeline, important documents, outcome review summaries and public feedback.







**Thank you!**

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