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** Subsections described under Goal 1 should be repeated under Goal 2, 3, and 4.*

Workplan

A separate workplan will be produced. The workplan initially produced will describe collaborative activities that will be undertaken by the partnership over the course of the three-year period between July 2027 and June 2030.

Management Strategy Outline – With Descriptions

1. Executive Summary

High-level synopsis of the Management Strategy (MS) that includes concise highlights from each chapter. This can serve as a standalone document for audiences that don't require additional details.

2. Introduction

Brief description of the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP), the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (CBWA), and how CBP leverages a partnership approach to address challenges to protecting, conserving and restoring the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

a. Realizing Our Vision: briefly describe the MS as the partnership's plan for making progress towards achieving the CBWA's Vision, Goals and Outcomes

- I. The purpose of the Chesapeake Bay Program's Strategic Plan, and the management strategies it includes, is to "outline the means for accomplishing each [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement] Outcome and its Targets as well as monitoring, assessing, and reporting progress and coordinating actions among partners and stakeholders as necessary" (CBWA, 2025).

b. Strategic Plan Development and Implementation: briefly describe how Management Strategies adhere to guidance in the CBWA, calling out where explicitly identified considerations are addressed in the document and how the Management Strategies were developed.

- I. *Participation in Strategic Plan Development and Implementation:* The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement notes that, "participation in developing Management Strategies or in the achievement of Outcomes varies by signatory based on differing priorities across the watershed. This participation may include commitments such as sharing knowledge, data or information, educating the public, working on future legislation and developing or implementing programs or verified practices" (2025).
 - i. "Describe how signatories, other state and federal agencies, local governments, Indigenous representatives, nonprofit and private partners are engaged;"
 - ii. Signatories, other state and federal agencies, local governments, Indigenous representatives, nonprofit and private partners are welcome and encouraged, as they are able, to contribute to the development and implementation of the Management Strategies through workgroup discussions and time allotted for non-members during Goal Team meetings.
 - iii. Entities that choose to engage in this way are listed as "Participating Partners" in the relevant Outcome-specific subsection(s).

- iv. Participating Partners are further defined in the Workplan, where Lead(s), Signatory Partners, and Other Partners are included for each Activity.
- II. *Empowering Local Governments and Others:* Describe... where actions, tools, financial support and technical assistance are needed to empower local governments and others to do their part; and what steps are necessary to facilitate greater participation in achieving the Outcome.
 - i. Management Approaches at the Goal and/or Outcome-level are included “to describe how local governments and others are engaged; where actions, tools, financial support and technical assistance are needed to empower local governments and others to do their part; and what steps are necessary to facilitate greater participation in achieving the Outcome.”
 - ii. Workplans include Management Approaches and related action(s) that describe and seek to address where actions, tools, financial support and technical assistance are needed to empower local governments and others to do their part and what steps are necessary to facilitate greater participation in achieving the Outcome.
 - I. In instances where specific approaches or actions are not planned, a narrative description is provided at the end of the Workplan to describe how partnership meetings related to their Outcome and Target(s) will incorporate consideration of these topics.
- III. Public Feedback Period: Management Strategies will include a period for public input and review prior to final adoption.
 - i. The Public Feedback Period will run from Tuesday, January 5, 2027 through Sunday, January 31, 2027.
 - ii. These dates were selected to respond directly to stakeholder requests to avoid scheduling the public feedback period when it would conflict with major winter holidays. It also seeks to create additional frontend drafting time.
 - iii. The Strategic Plan / Management Strategies will be released for public feedback. Per the Management Board’s March decision, Workplans will not be released for public feedback. Public feedback will be used to develop Workplans. The public should be invited to participate in workplan development, at the discretion of the Goal Teams and associated Outcome leads.
- IV. *Addressing and Accounting for Changing Environmental Conditions:* Considerations are incorporated into the Situation Analysis
- V. *Plan Approval:* The Strategic Plan will be approved by the PSC. The Workplan will be approved by the Goal Team.

- c. **Understanding the Strategic Plan:** briefly state that the Strategic Plan is written primarily for internal audiences across CBP, state that it includes Management Strategies for each Goal, and provide a hyperlink to the associated documents, as needed (ex: workplans if they are produced separately).
 - I. Workplans: The workplan will succinctly summarize the commitments, actions and resources that each jurisdiction, federal agency and partner will undertake collaboratively to help achieve each of the outcomes over a three-year period.
 - i. Provide a hyperlink to the CBP webpage where all workplans are posted.
 - ii. Consistent with CBP's use of Adaptive Management, workplans will be updated as needed to respond to program learning and opportunities for continuous improvement. To promote transparency about document updates, all workplans will include the date of development or most recent revision.

3. Accountability

Description of program-wide structures to monitor, assess and report progress, both with respect to completion of stated actions and ecosystem impacts. This section also outlines how CBP adaptively manages, with lessons learned being identified and incorporated into partnership work across multiple timeframes. **NOTES:** Content in this section is contingent on the Governance and Management Framework (GMF) document and will be updated to ensure alignment. Pending finalization of the GMF, this section of the outline may be revised and abbreviated.

a. Programmatic Accountability

- I. *Accountability and Program Governance*
 - i. EC is accountable to the public, stakeholders and the press for implementation and progress towards the CBWA.
 - ii. PSC is accountable to the EC
 - I. Management Strategies are subject to review and oversight of the PSC.
 - iii. *Goal Teams* are responsible for the development and implementation of Management Strategies within this Strategic Plan.
 - I. Goal Teams oversee Workgroup progress on Workplans, reporting challenges and needs to the PSC.
- II. *Addressing Our Principles:* highlight how CBP operates in accordance with partnership values.
- III. *Accountability under the Clean Water Act Section 117*
 - i. *Report to Congress* – Every five years, EPA produces and submits a Report to Congress on behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership.

- ii. *CBARA* – short paragraph describing what it is and the transparency it provides. Include a hyperlink to Chesapeake Progress

b. Monitoring, Assessing and Reporting Progress

- I. *Assessing Our Actions*: briefly describe how CBP will assess and report on the status of activities described in the Workplan (no progress, in progress or completed). State how and when associated challenges, successes and opportunities for improvement will be shared within CBP.
- II. *Ecosystem Impact*: briefly describe standard processes and platforms that are used across the program
 - i. Briefly define what indicators are, how CBP uses them, and state that associated Analysis and Methods documentation provide additional details.
 - ii. Highlight Chesapeake Progress and Bay Barometer as platforms that are used to report progress.
 - I. Describe the intention for data and trends to be accompanied by better integration of storytelling (case studies on successes) in future reporting efforts.

c. Accountability and Adaptive Management

- I. *1-3 year Workplan and Progress check-ins*: aligns with Assessing Our Actions and Indicator reporting, as cycles allow. Check-in on completion of Workplan activities, along with associated challenges, successes, and opportunities for improvement
- II. *2033 Evaluation and Course Corrections*: greater focus on ecosystem responses to management actions with consideration given to if progress towards Outcome attainment is on track, off track or uncertain, based on Indicator monitoring, assessing and reporting. Also determine whether Workplan activities have had the intended impact and/or if there are indications that CBP actions have supported progress towards Outcome Attainment. Update the Strategic Plan and associated Management Strategies with course corrections, as needed.
- III. *2040 Evaluation and Watershed Agreement Revision*: fundamental assessment of CBP progress towards achieving CBWA Outcomes and deliberation on how effectively program structure has facilitated implementation. As appropriate, revise Vision and Principles. Holistic reconsideration of what Goals and Outcomes CBP should prioritize and pursue.
- IV. *Future Opportunities for Stakeholder Input*: “Stakeholder input will be incorporated into the development and reevaluation of each of the [management] strategies. The Chesapeake Bay Program will continue to make these strategies and reports on progress available to the

public in a transparent manner on its websites and through publicly accessible partnership meetings” (CBWA, 2025).

4. Goal 1: Thriving Habitat, Fisheries & Wildlife

- a. **Goal Language:** copy and paste the goal language from the CBWA.
- b. **Goal Situation Analysis:** document current challenges (including changing environmental conditions) to achieving Outcomes that fall within this Goal and describe where a partnership approach adds value to addressing these challenges. This situation analysis should ultimately inform the identification of Management Approaches and development of Workplans for each Outcome and prompt collaboration across Outcomes.

- I. *Shared challenges for partnership to address:* develop a table that summarizes the most important challenges that the partnership will seek to address for Outcomes within this Goal. The Goal Team and its Workgroups, as appropriate, identify those challenges (using bold font) that are critical for workgroups to begin addressing within the next six years via the development and implementation of a Management Approaches. Use an asterisk (*) to identify considerations associated with changing environmental conditions that, if pursued collaboratively by CBP partners, would enable progress towards attainment and resilience of Outcomes within this Goal Team. Where feasible, Goal Teams will seek to establish shared terminology with which to describe challenges across Outcomes. When appropriate, describe where a cross-Outcome partnership approach is suited to make progress in the face of these challenges.

NOTES: Partnership groups are encouraged to first brainstorm situation analysis responses at the Outcome-level, then have Goal-level discussions about commonalities, differences, relative importance, and trade-offs to addressing identified challenges. While workgroup discussions may consider factors influencing Outcome attainment that are both within and outside of CBP’s ability to control, Goal Team documentation in the situation analysis should focus on those challenges that CBP can impact. Challenges and changing environmental condition considerations may not apply to all Outcomes within the Goal; some may be unique. Conversations and the following documentation should drive towards identifying and elevating challenges that have the potential to make the greatest impact, either because they are associated with multiple Outcomes or because they are critical to making progress towards a single Outcome. Goal Team are encouraged to consider the following criteria when prioritizing challenges to be addressed by the partnership:

- i. PSC priorities
 - ii. Workgroup expertise and background materials provided
 - iii. Whether or not the challenge is within CBP’s ability to influence

- iv. Where a partnership approach to addressing the challenge adds value
- v. The relative importance and expected impact of addressing each challenge with respect to Outcome attainment
- vi. The partnership's capacity to pursue initiatives related to challenges within the next six years

c. *Optional - Goal Management Approaches:* Management Approaches outline the general approach needed to fill existing gaps and identify the partnership's role in that approach. These are the actions that the program will undertake to address the challenges to goal and outcome attainment that are described in the Situation Analysis. The Management Approach section should include how local governments and other stakeholders will be kept informed and involved.

- I. Each Management Approach should seek to address one or more stated challenge(s).
- II. Management Approaches should be specific enough to guide Workgroup efforts over the coming six years and to enable the partnership to determine if work related to the Management Approach has progressed at an appropriate pace. (Example: a Management Approach would not be "communications and outreach," but rather "Assess Blue Crab Stock Status and Communicate the Results to Managers and the Public.") Management Approaches should be specific enough to be meaningful and provide transparency about the work that partners will collaboratively undertake.
- III. Management Approaches at the Goal and/or Outcome-level should describe and seek to address "signatories, other state and federal agencies, local governments, Indigenous representatives, nonprofit and private partners are engaged; where actions, tools, financial support and technical assistance are needed to empower local governments and others to do their part; and what steps are necessary to facilitate greater participation in achieving the Outcome."
- IV. Goal-level Management Approaches should speak to the strategies and actions that Chesapeake Bay Program Partners should undertake over the next six years to address challenges that impact multiple Outcomes within the Goal.
- V. For each Goal-level Management Approach, a statement should be included to describe which Outcome workplans will include related actions.]

d. Sub-Chapter for each Outcome

A sub-section for each Outcome should state the Outcome, including target language, and a description of the baseline and current condition from which progress will be measured. Each sub-section should also include a list of

signatory statutory authorities, as well as existing signatory programs with a snapshot of associated funding.

- I. *Outcome Language*: copy and paste the exact Outcome and Target language from the CBWA.
- II. *Baseline and Current Condition*: state the starting point from which progress towards the Outcome will be measured or explained using a specific value or graph wherever possible. If historic monitoring data is available, it should be summarized here alongside a summary of recent trends. Define critical terms or standards needed to measure future progress. **NOTE: If the Outcome does not have a baseline or current condition, explain why (ex: Workforce is a new Outcome) and what progress will be measured from (ex: progress towards directly engaging at least 400 local government leaders will be measured starting from zero each year).**
- III. *Monitoring Progress and Indicators*: List the Indicator(s) for this Outcome, if they exist, and provide a hyperlink to where additional information is provided on Chesapeake Progress. Briefly summarize how progress toward the Outcome will be tracked and assessed. State the frequency or schedule for planned updates. Where possible, Outcomes are encouraged to align Indicator assessment schedules with the schedule for progress check-ins in 2030 and 2036 and for robust evaluations in 2033 and 2039/40. **NOTES: If the Outcome does not have an Indicator, but one will be identified in the future, describe the plan and timeline to attain and report the necessary information. If an Outcome does not have an Indicator and there are no plans for the development of a new indicator, describe how progress toward the Outcome or Target will be demonstrated, how often progress will be assessed and how CBP will communicate progress to support partner decision-making.**
- IV. *Outcome Situation Analysis*: document current challenges to achieving the Outcome and its Target(s), with consideration given to which factors are within and outside of CBP's ability to influence. Consider any scientific, environmental, fiscal or policy-related developments that have already or may influence work during the upcoming six-year Management Strategy cycle. Use an asterisk (*) to identify considerations associated with changing environmental conditions that, if pursued collaboratively by CBP partners, would enable progress towards attainment and resilience of the Outcome and its Target(s). This situation analysis and Goal Team prioritization of challenges should ultimately inform the identification of activities developed for the three-year Workplan.
- V. *Snapshot of Signatory Programs*: spotlight the existing programs and priorities of individual signatory partners alongside the financial resources they contributed to making progress towards Outcome

attainment during a specific, to be defined period of time (ex: a fiscal or calendar year). This section is intended to demonstrate the investments and commitments of individual signatory partners and the role they play towards Outcome attainment. **NOTE: this section focuses on what we do as individual partners; the Workplan Summary and separate Workplan are intended to document those things that we will work on together as a partnership.**

- i. Introductory language for this section will:
 - I. acknowledge that managing a large and difficult restoration and conservation program with “no assurance about the level of funds that may be available beyond the short term” (GAO 2028) is a challenging undertaking that requires individual and collaborative action from signatory partners, as well as the many communities and individuals who live, work, play and learn in our region.
 - II. better recognize the significant contribution that individual signatory partners make towards outcome attainment
 - III. underscore that this section reports funding from a single point in time and is not representative of future investments.
 - IV. emphasize that the listed programs and funding are not intended to represent the full range of resources available or required to support partner progress; only the “biggest ticket” programs are spotlighted for each outcome and signatory
 - V. recognize that identifying the most critical programs and resources that exist at a particular moment in time can help the partnership focus its collaborative efforts on approaches and activities that have the greatest impact, and which don’t duplicate the work of existing programs.
- VI. *Management Approaches*: Management Approaches outline the general approach needed to fill existing gaps and identify the partnership’s role in that approach. These are the actions that the program will undertake to address the challenges to goal and outcome attainment that are described in the Situation Analysis. The Management Approach section should include how local governments and other stakeholders will be kept informed and involved.
 - i. Each Management Approach should seek to address one or more stated challenge(s).

- ii. Management Approaches should be specific enough to guide Workgroup efforts over the coming six years and to enable the partnership to determine if work related to the Management Approach has progressed at an appropriate pace. (Example: a Management Approach would not be “communications and outreach,” but rather “Assess Blue Crab Stock Status and Communicate the Results to Managers and the Public.”) Management Approaches should be specific enough to be meaningful and provide transparency about the work that partners will collaboratively undertake.
 - iii. Management Approaches at the Goal and/or Outcome-level should “describe how local governments and others are engaged; where actions, tools, financial support and technical assistance are needed to empower local governments and others to do their part; and what steps are necessary to facilitate greater participation in achieving the Outcome.”
 - iv. Outcome-level Management Approaches should speak to the strategies and actions that Chesapeake Bay Program Partners should undertake over the next six years to address challenges that impact the specific Outcomes.
- VII. *Participating Partners*: list the signatory partners, or their designated agencies, and other organizations that participated in the creation of this Management Strategy
 - i. The following partners participated in the creation of this Management Strategy and expressed their intention to collaborate on Management Strategy implementation over the next six years. Signatory partners may join implementation efforts at any time. Partners also recognize that Signatory participation is voluntary and may vary accordingly.

5. Goal 2: Clean Water*

6. Goal 3: Healthy Landscapes*

7. Goal 4: Engaged Communities*

8. Appendix 1. Signatory Statutory Authorities Driving Outcome Attainment

- a. As appropriate, identify critical jurisdiction and federal laws or policies that direct the entity to take action(s) related to the Outcome. Signatory Statutory Authorities will be presented by Outcome in a table with columns to state the Signatory jurisdiction and the main statutory authority/authorities. Introductory text will emphasize that the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement is voluntary and that information provided on statutory authorities is not meant to be exhaustive. *Note: Statutory Authorities will be collected in Excel format, allowing for data to be sorted by Signatory partner or by Outcome.*

** Subsections described under Goal 1 should be repeated under Goal 2, 3, and*

Workplan (to be completed as a separate document)

Workplans should describe the major activities that will be collaboratively undertaken by Chesapeake Bay Program partners to make progress towards Outcome or Target attainment. Workplans should not provide an onerous detailing of the specific steps required; rather, they should succinctly describe the major activities that will be implemented over the next three years. The Workplan initially produced will describe collaborative activities that will be undertaken by the partnership over the course of the three-year period between July 2027 and June 2030. Workplans will include the following:

- 1) A narrative summary, including a statement about the activities' impact on Outcome and Target attainment
- 2) Descriptions of major actions to be undertaken
- 3) The name of activity lead and a list of partners who will participate in the activity
- 4) Human and financial resources needed and committed, as well as potential sources to fill gaps
- 5) A timeline for completion
- 6) Performance targets and deliverables

Outcome Authors should include Management Approaches and related Workplan action(s) that describe and seek to address where actions, tools, financial support and technical assistance are needed to empower local governments and others to do their part and what steps are necessary to facilitate greater participation in achieving the Outcome. In instances where specific approaches or actions are not planned, Outcome Authors should include a narrative description at the end of their Workplan to describe how partnership meetings related to their Outcome and Target(s) will incorporate consideration of these topics.

Workplan development will be completed within the 18-month period established in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement for Management Strategy development (deadline: June 2027).

References

CBP Internal and Archival Resources:

- [Management Strategy Key Elements \(final 10/23/14\)](#)
- [Management Strategy Template \(draft 05/15/24\)](#)
- [Strategy Review System Documents – Archived Management Strategies and Action Plans](#) (scroll past “2025 SRS Cycle”)

External Resources:

- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan IV: Fiscal Years 2025-2029](#)
- [Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan 2025](#)
(CCMP is a 10-year plan)
- [Puget Sound Partnership: 2022-2025 Action Agenda for Puget Sound](#)
 - [Puget Sound Partnership: 2026-2030 Action Agenda Update](#) (plan for updating the Action Agenda)