

Wetlands Definitions White Paper

July 15, 2025

Why Develop a Bay Program Definition of Wetlands

- Tracking the Bay Program's progress towards the wetlands outcome is complicated by a lack of a common definition for wetlands and wetland restoration, creation, or enhancement *techniques*
- Many federal agencies and other partners of the Agreement have different wetlands definitions
- Lead to easier reporting of wetland

Developing a Bay Program

Definition of Wetlands

- Linh Nguyen - the Franklin and Marshall College 2024 Public Service Summer Institute Internship Program
- Identified federal, jurisdictional, academic, and NGO partners of Chesapeake Bay Program
- Literature search for each organization's wetland definitions
- Synthesized a common wetland definition that best incorporated all the functions identified by the individual Bay Program partners



Chesapeake Bay Program Wetlands Definitions: A White Paper to Create Common Terminology Around Wetlands Practices in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



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Defining Creation, Restoration, and Enhancement Techniques

- Regulatory and technical guidance definition search for each technique
- If there were no regulatory or jurisdiction definitions found for a technique, a search was done through the peer reviewed published literature
- Created tidal and non-tidal subcategories under restoration, creation, and enhancement

Techniques Defined in White Paper

	Creation	Restoration	Enhancement
Thin Layer Placement		x	x
Ditch-plugging		x	x
Native Planting		x	x
Runnel		x	
Tidal Restriction		x	
Living Shorelines		x	
Hydrology Modification	x	x	x
Treatment Wetlands	x	x	
Re-creation	x	x	
Legacy Sediment Removal	x	x	x
Fencing			x
Rehabilitation		x	x
Vegetation Removal		x	x

Next Steps

- We will use this time to fill in the gaps
- This paper is a living document and will be updated to reflect new knowledge of wetlands practices and evolving techniques
 - Send feedback/edits/comments to Dede Lawal at lawal.dede@epa.gov



Questions?