

Charting a Course Beyond 2025

In October 2022, the Chesapeake Executive Council [charged](#) the [Principals' Staff Committee](#) with recommending a critical path forward for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* leading up to and beyond the year 2025, addressing new advances in science and restoration.

Charting a Course to 2025

[Charting a Course to 2025](#) was presented to the Chesapeake Executive Council in October 2023 with close to 200 recommendations to help the Chesapeake Bay Program accelerate progress up to and through 2025. The report included an assessment of the 31 *Watershed Agreement* outcomes, determining 18 outcomes were on course, 11 were off course and two were uncertain pending upcoming data updates. Additionally, the report included detailed sections on the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL), Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs), emerging science and monitoring, climate change, diversity, equity, inclusion and justice (DEIJ), forest buffers and wetlands.

A Critical Path Forward Beyond 2025

Since summer 2023, a steering committee consisting of representatives from each of the six states in the watershed, District of Columbia, tri-state legislative Chesapeake Bay Commission, federal agencies that participate in the Chesapeake Bay Program, three advisory committees and nonprofit organizations have met to develop recommendations for the Chesapeake Executive Council that continue to address new advances in science and restoration, along with a focus on our partnership for going beyond 2025.

[A Critical Path Forward for the Chesapeake Bay Program Beyond 2025](#) includes two high-level recommendations for the Chesapeake Executive Council to consider regarding the *Watershed Agreement* and partnership structure, as well as programmatic considerations for furthering the Chesapeake Bay Program's three mission areas—science, restoration and conservation, and partnership—gathered by subject matter experts in clean water, climate change, healthy watersheds, people and shallow water habitats.

Beyond 2025 Charge

Guided by the recommendations from *A Critical Path Forward for the Chesapeake Bay Program Beyond 2025*, the Chesapeake Executive Council now directs the Principals' Staff Committee to take the following actions:

- Revise the 2014 *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, pursuant to the [Governance and Management Framework](#) for the Chesapeake Bay Program.
 - While not all outcomes will need revision, some reviews will likely result in consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, replacing, or adding new outcomes.
 - Proposed revisions should be considered as they are being reviewed, with every effort to complete most reviews and revisions by the end of calendar year 2025.

- Develop 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.
 - This simplified and streamlined partnership structure and processes should be provided to the Chesapeake Executive Council in as much detail as possible by December 1, 2025, however subsequent changes that 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.

The Principals' Staff Committee is charged by the Chesapeake Executive Council to conduct the above actions through a transparent and inclusive process, that is consistent with the partnership's existing Governance and Management Framework, that engages the Chesapeake Bay Program's Advisory Committees, academic and non-profit partners, and the public.