



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Beyond 2025 Updates and TCW Planning

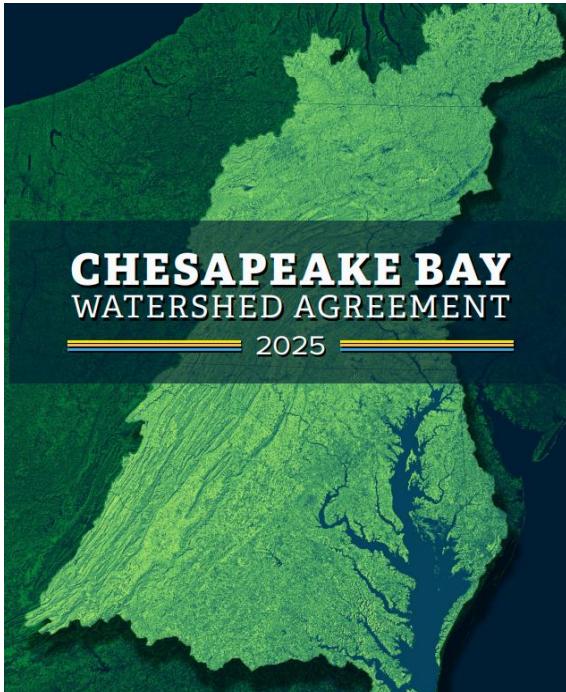
Toxic Contaminants Workgroup Monthly Meeting
January 14th, 2026



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Beyond 2025

Revised Watershed Agreement



[Revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#)



Photo by Will Parson, Chesapeake Bay Program <https://flic.kr/p/2rJDU9g>

CBP Structure and Governance



Chesapeake Bay Program Governance & Accountability Recommendations

In response to the 2024 Chesapeake Executive Council *Charting a Course Beyond 2024 Change* to strengthen and streamline the partnership, the ad hoc Governance and Accountability Team prepared—and the Principals' Staff Committee now recommends—the following actions to address its priority challenges, "Priority Setting and Decision-Making" and "Roles and Responsibilities."

The Governance and Accountability Team has also developed initial considerations for four additional challenges—"Complexity and Structure"; "Transparency"; "Accountability and Adaptive Management"; and "Communication and Coordination"—but these recommendations remain under deliberation and are therefore not included in this document.

Priority-Setting and Decision-Making Recommendations

- 1) A Policy Steering Committee should provide strategic direction for the partnership by establishing and implementing a collaborative priority-setting framework.
- 2) Clarifying decision-making authority is recommended to enhance operations across all levels of the governing structure, particularly when considering how best to streamline outcome implementation decisions and delegate decision-making.
- 3) Increased transparency and accountability should be strengthened at each level of the governing structure, including transparency in decision making.
- 4) Consensus-based decision-making should be re-evaluated to determine whether alternative methods could be more effective at different levels of the partnership, while acknowledging the necessary balance between efficiency and egalitarianism.

Role & Responsibility Recommendations

- 1) Major updates to the roles and responsibilities of the Chesapeake Executive Council are recommended to emphasize their strategic direction, policy-setting, and public-facing functions.
- 2) Major updates to the roles, responsibilities and operations of the existing Principals' Staff Committee are recommended to strengthen its role as a source of policy advice or operational expertise. This recommendation results in a significant shift in the focus of the Principals' Staff Committee to include strategic direction and priority setting, while focusing less on approving operational decisions.
- 3) Major updates to the roles and responsibilities of the program's operational and implementation-focused elements are recommended to strengthen workflow and coordination.
- 4) Updates to the roles and operations of the Advisory Committees are recommended to increase their engagement across the partnership and to encourage greater collaboration amongst themselves.

These governance recommendations were approved by the Principals' Staff Committee on November 6, 2025.

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Chesapeake Bay Program Structure Recommendations

To fulfill the 2024 Chesapeake Executive Council *Charting a Course Beyond 2024 Change* to strengthen and streamline the partnership, the Principals' Staff Committee has identified two primary structural focus areas: **Program Leadership** and **Program Implementation**. Restructuring these areas will enhance the efficiency, coordination and effectiveness needed to implement the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

By July 1, 2026, the Principals' Staff Committee will finalize the membership, leadership, responsibilities and decision-making protocols associated with these two structural components. However, to align with the revised *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* and ensure timely delivery of Management Strategies, the partnership will begin preparing for—and transitioning to—the new Goal Team structure following the December 2, 2025 Executive Council meeting.

These structural components will reflect the partnership's governance recommendations to ensure both efforts are aligned to create a more effective and streamlined governance and structure.



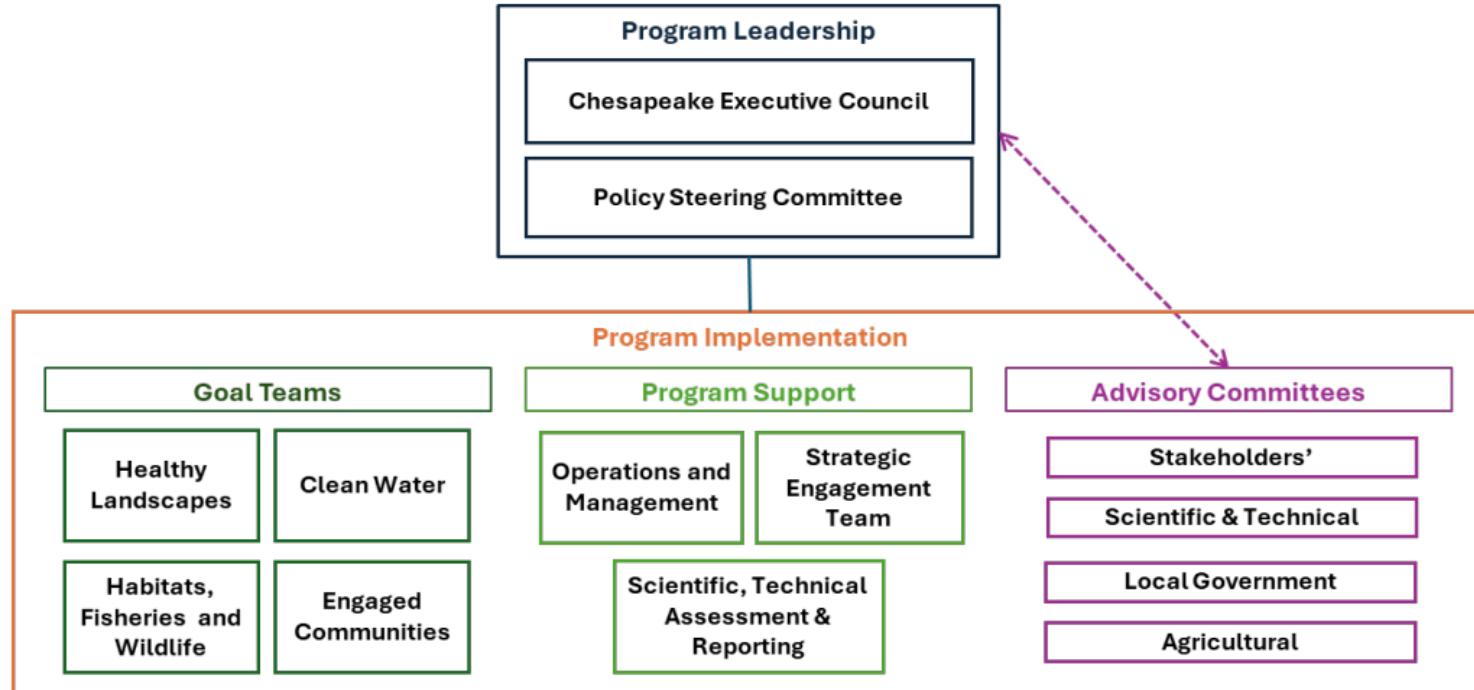
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graph TD; PL[Program Leadership] --> PEC[Chesapeake Executive Council]; PL --> PSC[Policy Steering Committee]; PI[Program Implementation] --- GT[Goal Teams]; PI --- PS[Program Support]; PI --- AC[Advisory Committees]; subgraph Goal Teams [Goal Teams]; direction LR; HL[Healthy Landscapes] --- CW[Clean Water]; HL --- FW[Habitats, Fisheries and Wildlife]; HL --- EC[Engaged Communities]; end; subgraph Program Support [Program Support]; direction LR; OM[Operations and Management] --- EAT[Executive Assessment Team]; end; subgraph Advisory Committees [Advisory Committees]; direction LR; SFT[Stakeholders' Scientific & Technical] --- LG[Local Government]; SFT --- AG[Agricultural]; end;
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A team led by the Management Board Chair will implement the structure and governance revision and report progress to the PSC for final approval. Each signatory may, at their discretion, appoint a Management Board representative (or designee) to the implementation team. This team will determine roles and responsibilities, leadership and membership, duration of membership, and operations for the structural components below, consulting with the existing PSC, Goal Implementation Teams, Advisory Committees and Program Support teams as appropriate.

Leadership and certain decision areas are proposed and documented as a draft version for the administration of the Principals' Staff Committee.

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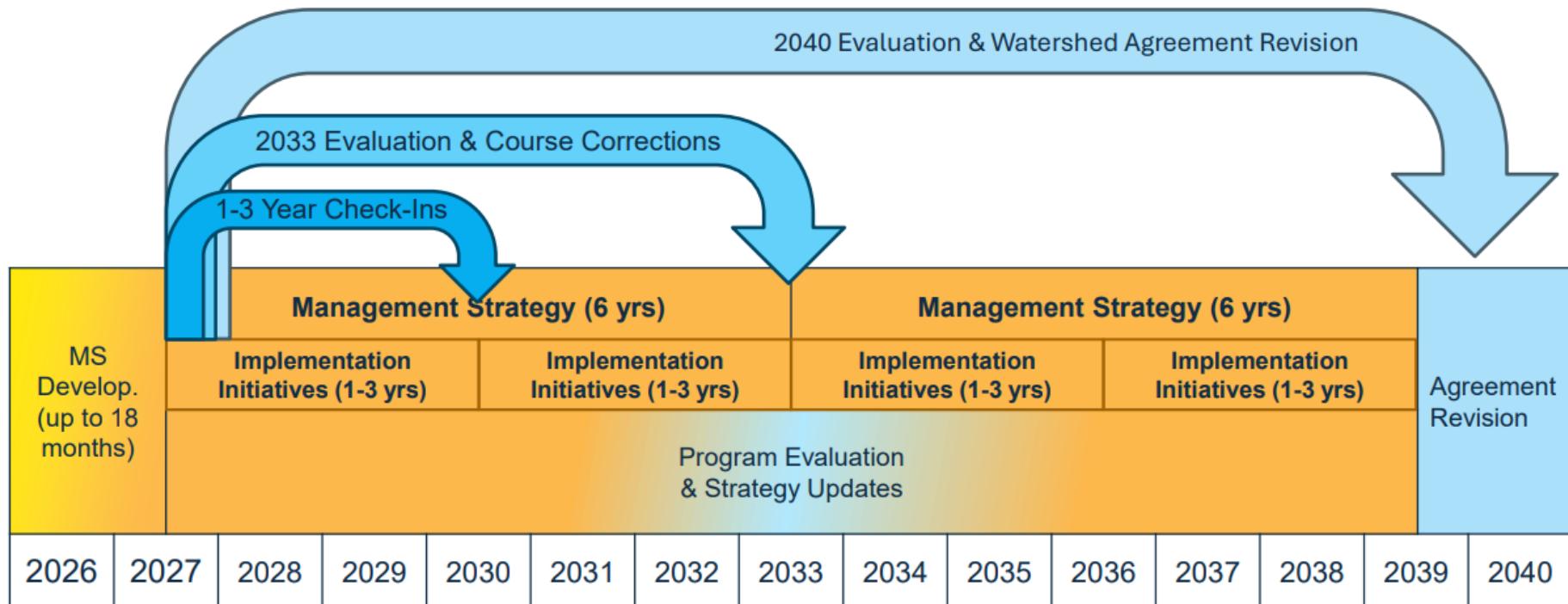
Accountability: CBWA Time Horizon

The MB agreed via consensus to adopt a six-year cycle for Management Strategy implementation.

MS Develop. (up to 18 months)	Management Strategy (6 yrs)						Management Strategy (6 yrs)						Agreement Revision	
	Program Evaluation & Strategy Updates													
2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040

The Program will report progress to the public and update work plans on a shorter-term basis for each Outcome in accordance with adaptive management.

Time Horizon & Adaptive Management



Toxic and Emerging Contaminants Outcome



Toxic and Emerging Contaminants Outcome

Reduce the amount and effect of toxic contaminants, such as PCBs, plastics, mercury and PFAS, on the waters, lands, fisheries, wildlife and communities of the Chesapeake Bay watershed through an increased understanding of their impacts and mitigation options.

Consolidates prior Policy & Prevention and Research Outcomes



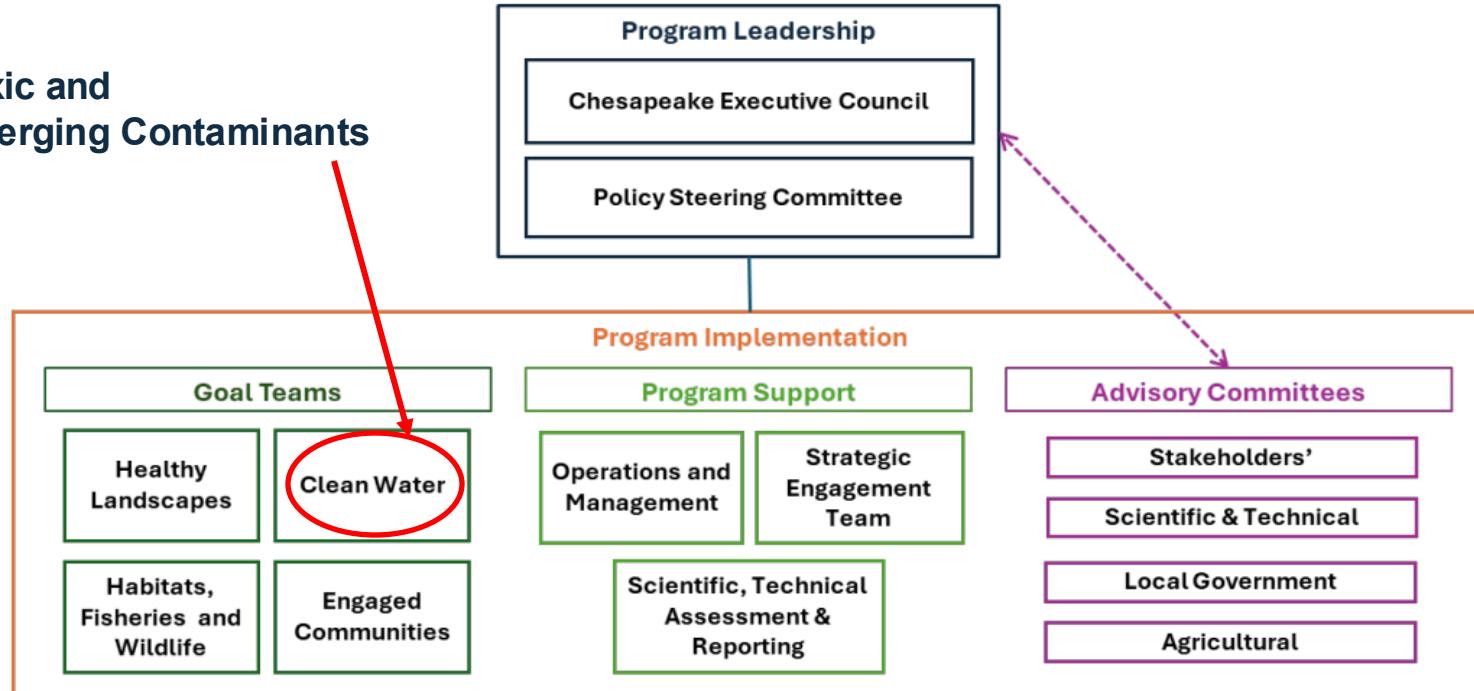
Toxic and Emerging Contaminants

Target

Promote information sharing between researchers, program managers and policymakers on the lessons learned, best practices and most up-to-date science, policy and communications around the toxic contaminants impacting the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

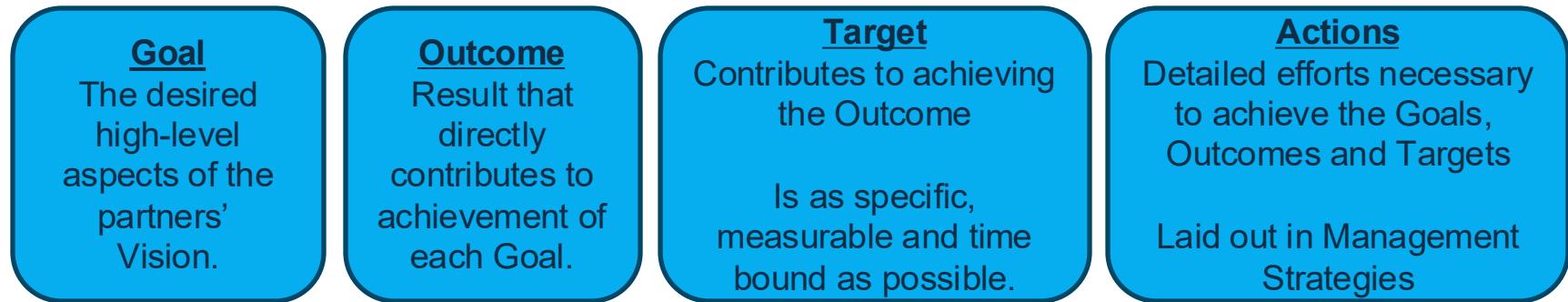
CBP Structure and Governance

Toxic and Emerging Contaminants



Toxic Contaminants Workgroup

Revised Structure of Watershed Agreement





TCW's (*likely*) Role

- Carry out Actions as directed by Clean Water Goal Team toward achieving toxics Target.
- Target should provide value to Partners by enhancing toxics mitigation capacity.

What does such a Target look like?



Specifying the Target

Promote information sharing between researchers, program managers and policymakers on the lessons learned, best practices and most up-to-date science, policy and communications around the toxic contaminants impacting the Chesapeake Bay watershed."



Information Sharing

- Topics
 - Lessons learned
 - Best practices
 - Latest science, policy advances
 - Toxics status (5 Ws)
- Products?
 - Communicate information
 - Document Target achievement



How to Provide Value to Partners?

- Advancing jurisdictional toxics-mitigation efforts
- Specificity of Targets will aid identifying Actions
- All details/Actions TBD in Management Strategy...soon...

All ideas welcome!

