



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

July 9, 2026

Engaged Communities Goal Team Introductions

Get To Know Your Goal Team Members!

Julie Lawson



**Engaged Communities Goal Team |
Workforce Workgroup Co-Chair**
DC Department of Energy & Environment

Areas of expertise/interest: environmental education & workforce planning; community-based social marketing; network building; plastic pollution

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: paddling the Anacostia River

Katie Ayers



Engaged Communities Goal Team Coordinator | Stewardship Workgroup Coordinator

EPA, Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Areas of expertise/interest: community-level stewardship programs; partnership building; cost-share programs; forest and wetland restoration; invasive species management

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Hiking in western Maryland!

Daniel Koval



Environmental Management Staffer: Public Access, Protected Lands, and Workforce Workgroups

*Chesapeake Research Consortium,
Chesapeake Bay Program Office*

Areas of expertise/interest: public access; urban planning; outdoor recreation; land conservation; community stewardship; public health

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens

Meredith Lemke



Environmental Management Staffer:
Education, Stewardship, Workforce Workgroups
Chesapeake Research Consortium,
Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Areas of expertise/interest: environmental education, stewardship, international relations, network development/management, coordination

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: hiking, birding, kayaking, Huntley Meadows (Alexandria), Patuxent River Park

Erin Sonnenburg



Environmental Management Staffer: Local Government Leadership Workgroup

*Chesapeake Research Consortium,
Chesapeake Bay Program Office*

Areas of expertise/interest: Regenerative Ag – Soil health, mycology, plant pathology; Sustainable Design – Permaculture, urban planning

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Enjoying waterfall hikes at Shenandoah National Park, going to the beach (great place to unwind and recenter), and favorite place to visit is Austin, TX

Holly Walker



Engaged Communities Goal Team Member
*Delaware DNREC, Chesapeake Bay Program
Coordinator*

Areas of expertise/interest: coordinating and organizing programs across agencies and stakeholder initiatives

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: kayaking

Samantha Cotten

Alternate Signatory Member - DE



Delaware Community Conservation Assistance Program; Community Conservation Specialist
Delaware Dept. Natural Resources & Environmental Control

Areas of expertise/interest: Native plants; Best Management Practices; insects; gardening; making jewelry

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Hiking in Maryland's state parks & spending time with friends from home on the Nanticoke River

Cassie Davis



Chesapeake Bay Watershed Coordinator/Research Scientist

NYS DEC, Division of Water

Areas of expertise/interest: nonpoint source
BMP implementation; data analysis; data
management; GIS

**Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or
outdoor activity:** Unadilla River, Kayaking

Jennifer Fetter



Engaged Communities Goal Team Member

Penn State Extension, Water Resources

Areas of expertise/interest: agricultural water resources issues; youth water education & curriculum development; conservation volunteer management; stormwater management; safe drinking water; innovative watershed restoration approaches

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: being in the sun in my own gardens

Kate Beats



Environmental Group Manager

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Areas of expertise/interest: stakeholder/partner engagement and development; partner coordination; communication; facilitation

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Walking my dog along Little Conestoga Creek at Dorwart Park.

Lori Schoenwiesner



Engaged Communities Goal Team Signatory Member | Environmental Education Workgroup Member

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Areas of expertise/interest: strategic planning; environmental education; professional development

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Hiking to Camp Hoover and the Rapidan River in Shenandoah National Park

Wendy O'Sullivan



**National Park Service Superintendent | Member of
Chesapeake's Federal Office Directors (FOD)**

National Park Service, Chesapeake Gateways

Areas of expertise/interest: building partnerships; community engagement; heritage tourism; visitor experience; outdoor recreation economy; youth employment; grants management; collaborative conservation; philanthropic partnerships; and cause-related marketing.

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Exploring Chesapeake's small towns and main streets with my husband and our dog, Rudder.

Shannon Sprague



Education Workgroup Chair

NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office

Areas of expertise/interest: K-12 environmental education, network development/Collective Impact, partnership building, strategic planning

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Fires on our neighborhood beach

Kacey Wetzel



VP of Programs, Outreach and Education
Chesapeake Bay Trust

Areas of expertise/interest: social science for systems change; environmental philanthropy; public-private partnerships

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Hiking

Darran White Tilghman



Director of Community Engagement

ShoreRivers

Areas of expertise/interest: partnerships; environmental justice; capacity building; rising stewards of family farms; green workforce; the lawn revolution; rights of nature; intersections with art

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Mucking and beachcombing on the banks of the Chester

Wuill Urvina



Partnerships and Outreach Specialist

Choose Clean Water Coalition, National Wildlife Federation

Areas of expertise/interest: coalition building; environmental justice & equity; workforce development; strategic communications; climate change resilience; ecology

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Point Lookout, Maryland

Laura Casdorph



**Science Coordinator | Education Workgroup
Vice Chair**

Virginia Department of Education

Areas of expertise/interest: Environmental education

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: James River Park System in Richmond, VA

Maura Christian



Local Government Leadership Workgroup Chair
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Areas of expertise/interest: facilitating regional engagement on Chesapeake Bay efforts; connecting local partners with Bay Program resources; Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act local assistance

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: James River Park System in Richmond, VA

Rick Mittler



**Local Government Leadership Workgroup
Coordinator (*Former*)**

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Areas of expertise/interest: Local government technical assistance; GIS; environmental education; green stormwater infrastructure

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Exploring the James River

Marissa O'Neill



Stewardship Workgroup Chair

DC Department of Energy and Environment

Areas of expertise/interest: Stewardship, community engagement, events, and environmental education

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: Kingman and Heritage Islands, DC's first and only state conservation area

Elise Trelegan



Education Workgroup Coordinator

NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office

Areas of expertise/interest: environmental education; youth engagement/leadership development

Favorite Chesapeake Bay watershed place or outdoor activity: walking + bird watching!