



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

September 25, 2026

Local Government Leadership Workgroup Report

Maura Christian, VA DEQ, Chair
Caitlin Bolton, MWCOG, Vice Chair

Local Government Leadership

Outcome:

Increase knowledge and support the capacity of local government leaders in decision-making, such as land-use planning, to implement local actions that advance the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

Targets:

Engage directly (e.g., roundtable discussions) with at least 400 local government leaders annually.

Engage indirectly (e.g., newsletters) with at least 4,000 local government leaders annually.

Wandering Maryland's Waterways P2P



Thank you Councilmember John Carroll and Mayor Kelly Porter!

Future Wandering Waterways Tour

PML Municipal Leadership Summit - Wandering Pennsylvania's Waterways Bus Tour

October 7th | Susquehanna and Londonderry
Townships

Thank you Commissioner Fred Faylona!

August QM Recap - Meeting Webpage

*Land Use Changes
Across the Watershed*

Sarah McDonald - USGS

*Tree Canopy Resources for Local
Governments*

Katie Brownson - USFS

*DRAFT Local Government
Leadership Management Strategy*

will cover in more depth on Dec 5th

Tree Cover Status & Change

FOR FREDERICK COUNTY, MD 2013-2021

43%

Total percent of
land with Tree Cover

\$125.5 million

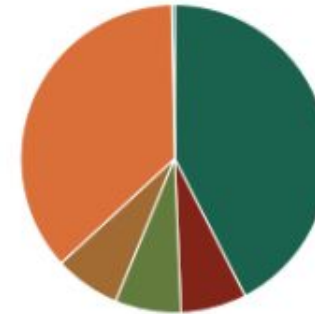
Annual benefits provided by Tree Cover
(in reduced air pollution, stormwater, & carbon dioxide)

-1,575 Acres

Net loss of Tree Cover on
developed lands, 2013 to 2021

What is the land use/land cover breakdown in your community?

423,180 ACRES OF LAND AREA
IN FREDERICK COUNTY



43% Tree Cover¹

180,072 acres

7% Turf Grass

27,921 acres

37% Agriculture

155,163 acres

7% Impervious

28,614 acres

7% Other²

29,993 acres

0.33% Non-Forested
Wetlands

1,417 acres

1. Tree cover includes all trees occurring on all land uses, such as individual trees found over turf, impervious, agricultural, wetlands, or other lands. It also includes areas of "forest," defined in this dataset as patches of tree cover 1 acre or greater, with a minimum patch width of 36 meters.
2. Other includes a mixture of non-treed land uses not captured in the main pie chart categories. See the Data Guide for detailed definitions of "other" and all the land use categories as well as accuracy statistics.

Land use/land cover statistics were generated based on 2021 imagery using the 2024 edition of the *Chesapeake Bay Land Use and Land Cover Database*.

Where does tree cover occur in your community?



What are some benefits of tree cover in your community?

-  **Total Air Pollution Removal Value**
10.0 million lbs removed annually
\$5.5 million saved annually
Total air pollution removal includes CO₂, NO₂, O₃, SO₂, and Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀)
-  **Gallons of Reduced Stormwater Runoff Value**
208.3 million gallons reduced annually
\$1.9 million saved annually
-  **Carbon Sequestered Value**
248,000 tons removed annually
\$118.2 million saved annually

Calculated based on 2021 tree cover data using:
landscape.itreetool.org



EMPOWER LOCAL ACTION: Helping Local Governments Meet Clean Water Goals Through Technical Assistance

September 25, 2026



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
INNOVATION
CENTER

Project Overview



Project Background

Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) Recommendation from December 2023:

“LGAC is a long-term advocate of the Circuit Rider concept of facilitating implementation through the engagement of local governments and stakeholders. Chesapeake watershed jurisdictions created their versions of circuit riders and LGAC requests that the Chesapeake Executive Council expand support for a number of current programs that meet the goals of Circuit Rider efforts. Local governments and LGAC encourage expanding the proven efforts listed below.”

Management Board Response Letter from March 2024: *“The Management Board commits to collaborating with the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's Local Leadership Workgroup, LGAC, Federal Agencies, and the seven Bay watershed jurisdictions to identify and potentially expand upon local government assistance”*

GIT-Funded Project: Local Government Technical Assistance Inventory and Gap Analysis

Chesapeake Bay Program hired a contractor, Environmental Policy Innovation Center, to conduct the inventory and gap analysis.

Key Tasks



1. Identify and **inventory** existing free local government technical assistance programs that align with the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement outcomes.



2. Compile **standardized information** about each technical assistance program.



3. Define and **analyze gaps** in existing technical assistance programs.



4. **Recommend approaches** to fill gaps in technical assistance to local governments to drive increased implementation towards meeting watershed agreement outcomes.

Inclusion Criteria For Inventory

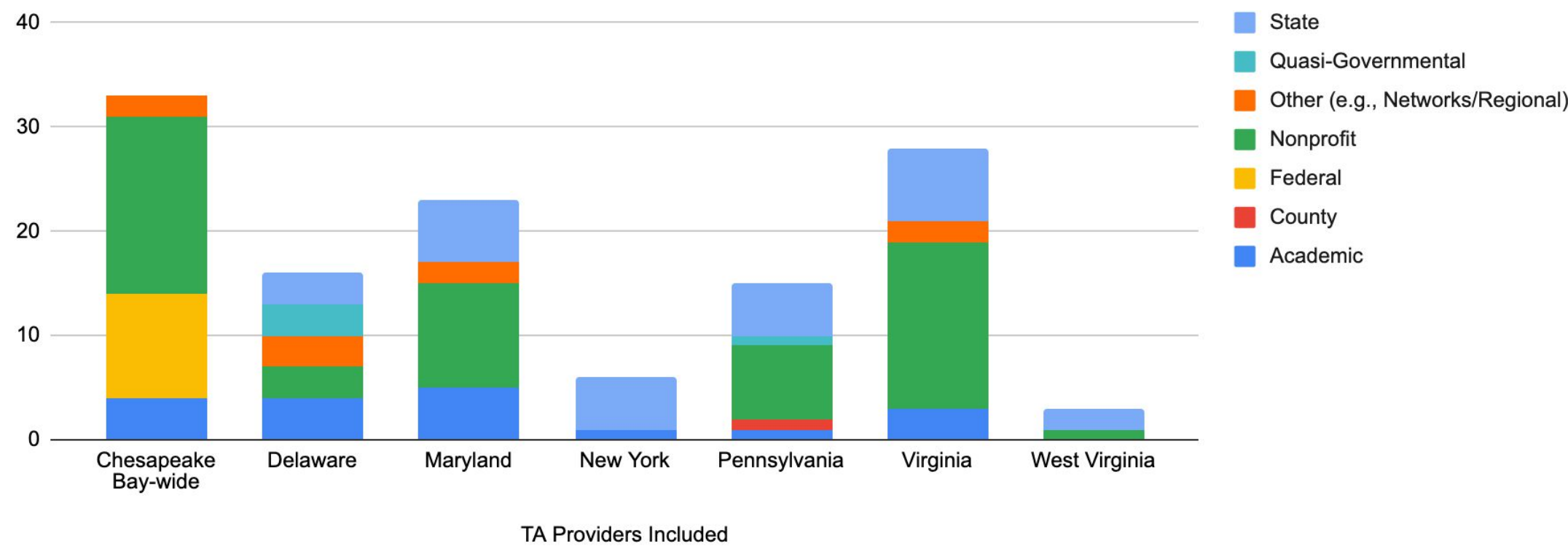
- **TA Definition:** “[T]echnical assistance is defined as a service provided to local government by an outside organization or agency, which may otherwise be performed by staff or secured through normal procurement processes, e.g. municipal engineering services.”
- Included entities: Provision of **free TA** to **local governments** relevant to the **Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement** goals

*The TA Inventory is a **supply-side inventory**; it does not show demand from local governments for these TA services*

Results & Findings



123 organizations in TA inventory



TA providers use a broad range of methods to deliver TA, with most providers using more than one method



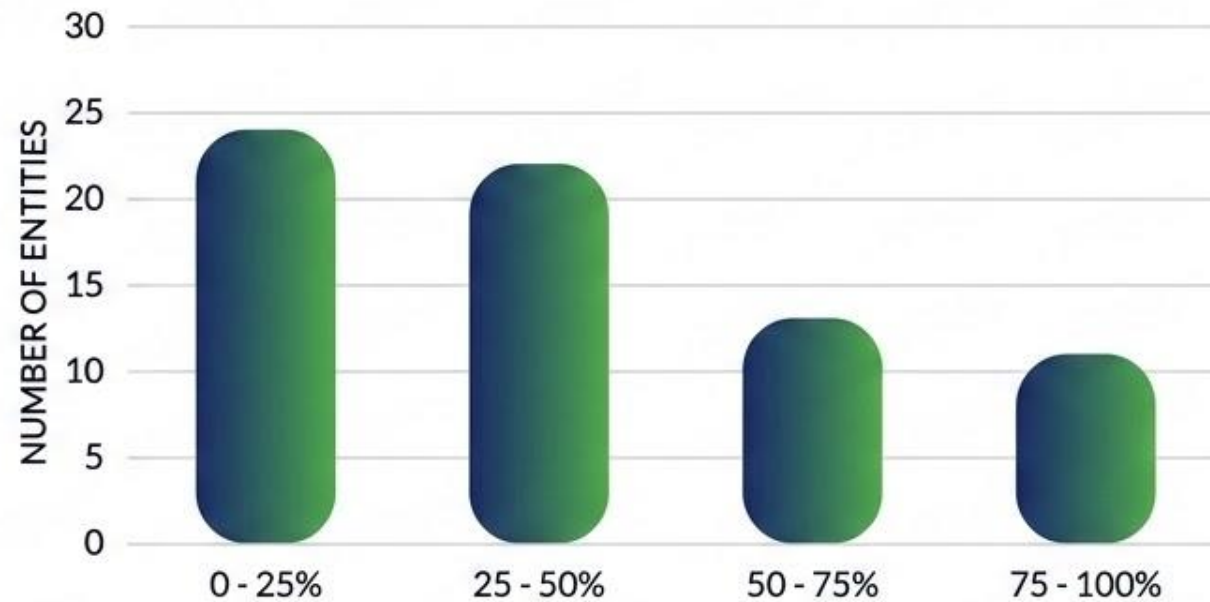
TA is more heavily concentrated within education and planning activities, with gaps for TA in late project cycle activities.



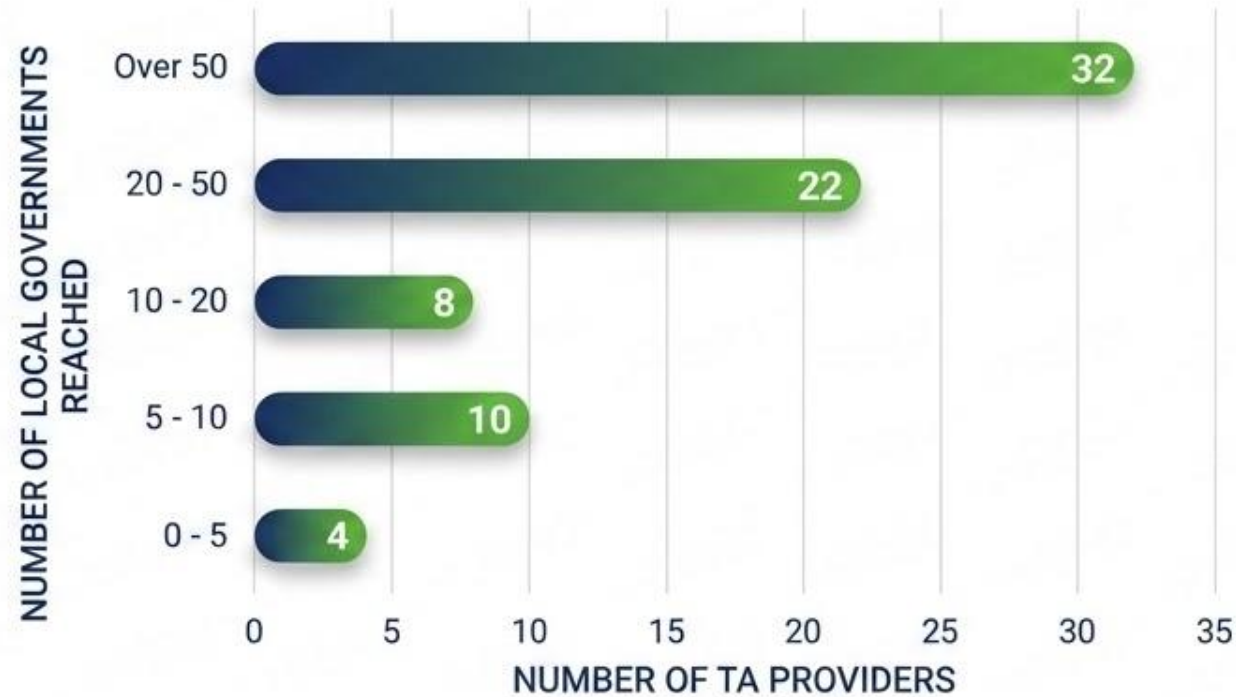
Most TA providers allocate staff time and resources to other activities in addition to TA.
This suggests TA providers have diverse operational mandates.



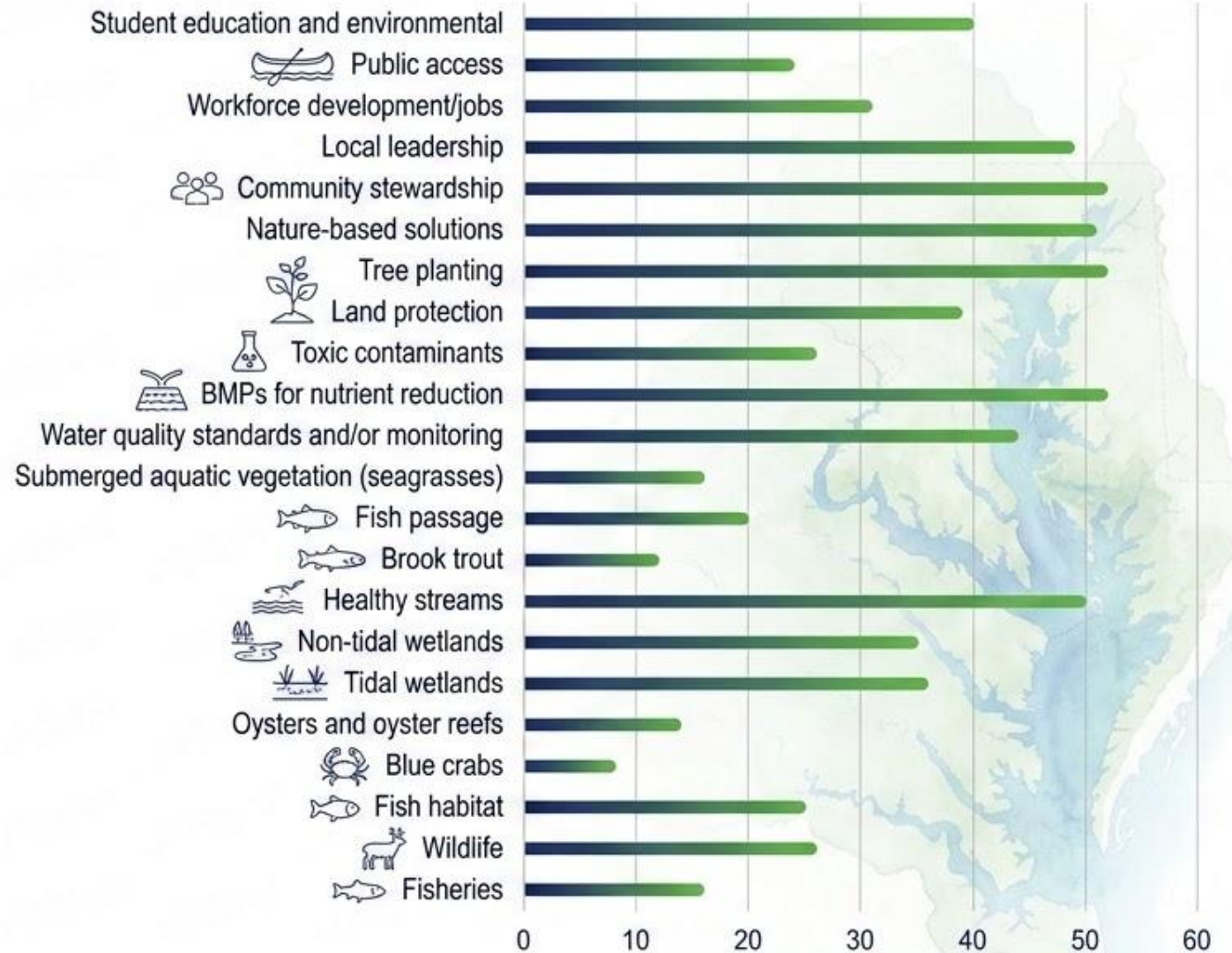
PERCENT OF TIME ALLOCATED TO TA
(N=70 TA providers)



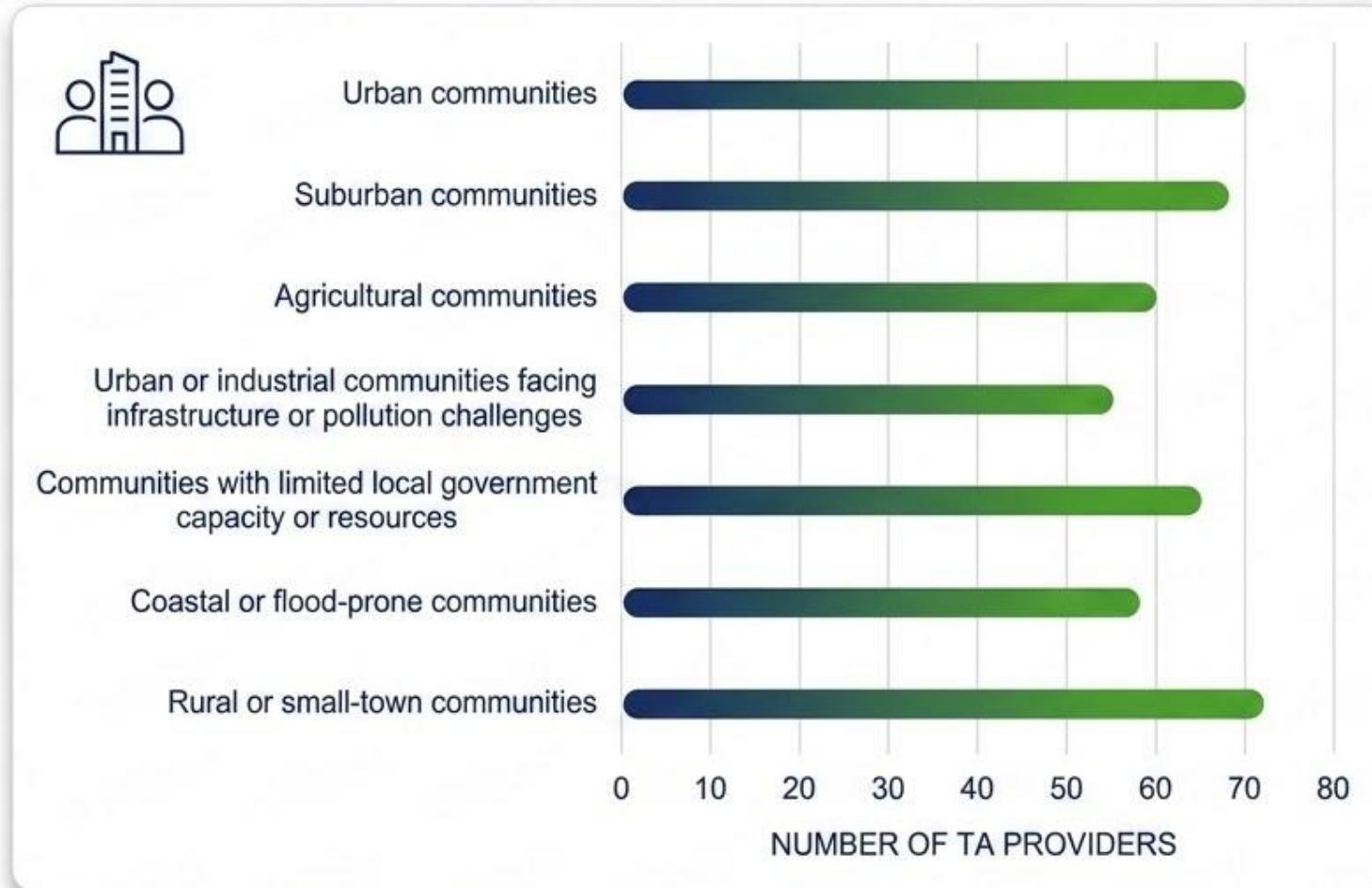
More information is required to understand the degree to which TA providers are meeting demand for TA from local governments.



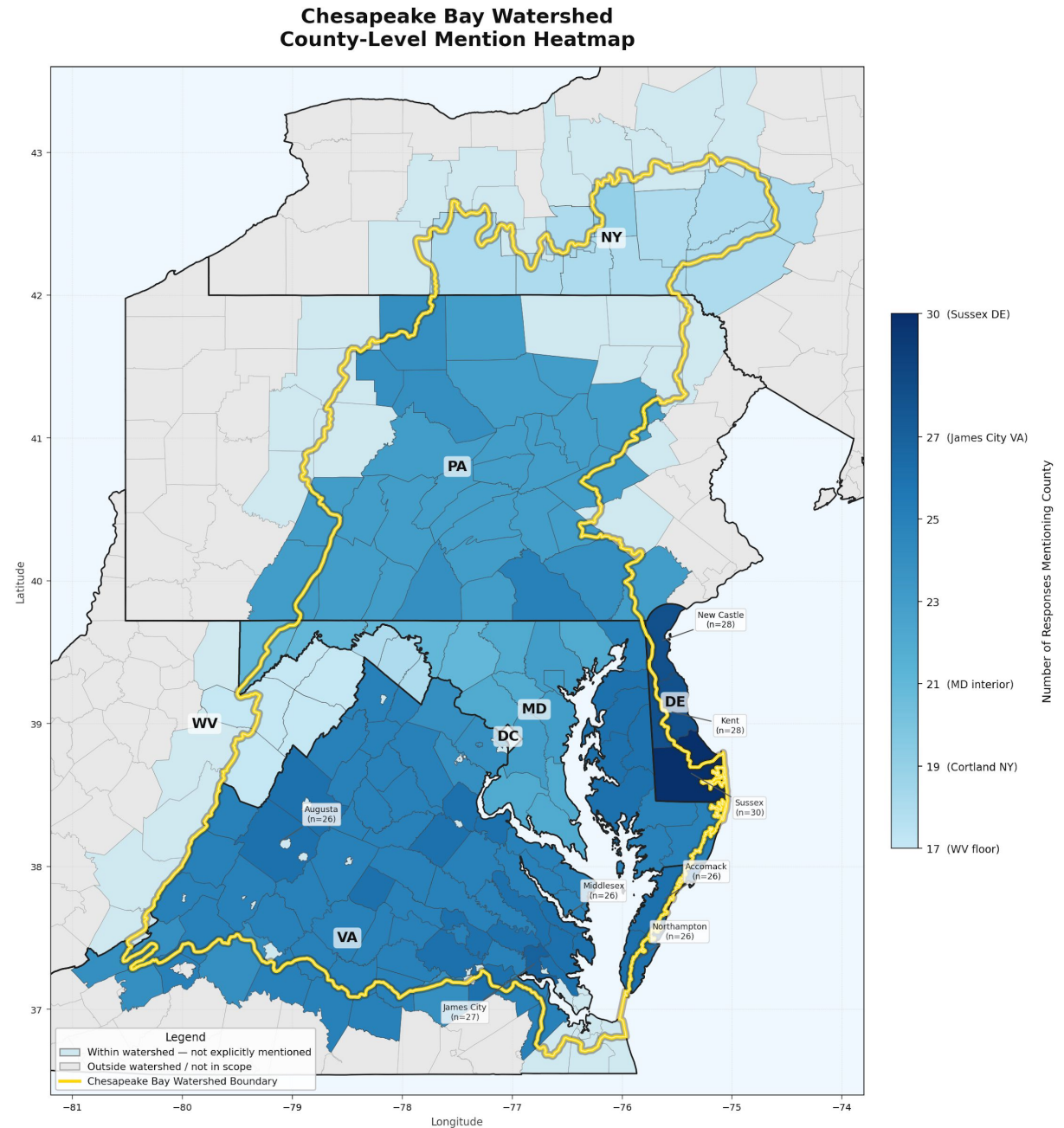
Results suggest that toxic contaminants, fish passage, and public access are Bay Agreement goals that need additional TA resource allocation.



TA providers are assisting a broad range of government and community types across the Bay watershed.



Geographic coverage of TA providers shows differing intensities of potential TA across the Bay watershed, with more coverage closer to the Bay itself.



Sources: US Census Bureau TIGER/Line 2022 county shapefiles; Chesapeake Bay Program open data watershed boundary.
Mention counts reflect number of responses referencing each county directly or via named geographic units (watersheds, states, regions, river basins). n = 76 responses.

Recommendations



Recommendations

Short-term

1. Share results of the TA Inventory with local governments across the Bay Watershed through existing + new channels.
2. Provide convening opportunities for TA providers across the Bay Watershed to share information, best practices, and lessons learned.
3. Target currently available TA to the local governments that need it most.
4. Target currently available TA to priority geographic regions.
5. Explore ways to facilitate more resources for TA that supports local governments in improving toxic contaminant reduction, public access, and fish passage projects.

Recommendations

Medium - term

1. Support research on the effectiveness of existing TA models.
2. Explore methods to solicit demand-side information from local governments on TA priorities and needs.
3. Support identification of private sources of TA for local governments.
4. Support states in the alignment of additional resources for TA to resource allocation for project implementation.