

Vital Habitats Goal Wetlands Outcome

From the 2014 Agreement:

"Continually increase the capacity of wetlands to provide water quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed. Create or reestablish 85,000 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands and enhance function of an additional 150,000 acres of degraded wetlands by 2025."



Wetlands Workgroup

Change is good!

- Wetlands Workgroup was **restructured**.
- **Chair** remains focused on the overall outcome for wetlands.
- **Vice-Chair, Tidal Wetlands** focuses on tidal wetlands creation, restoration and enhancement. **Vice-Chair, Non-Tidal Wetlands** focuses on non-tidal wetlands.
- **Black Duck Action Team** was folded into the Wetlands Workgroup.



Previous Management Strategy

- Identified Issues:
 - Tracking
 - Capacity
 - Funding
 - Data- current wetland maps
 - Communications
 - Landowners
 - Partners
 - Decision-makers
- The Goal context around the issues has not improved since last strategy

MANAGEMENT APPROACHES from 2019 Strategy

- **Reporting**
- **Prioritization**
 - Wetland Workgroup members will work to identify outcomes and criteria to prioritize areas for wetland restoration
 - Focus restoration efforts on projects that benefit species requiring high-quality wetland habitats
 - Maximize limited resources by focusing efforts on projects that help meet multiple goals.
 - Work with experts in black duck ecology to help provide the habitat needed to meet the black duck outcome.
 - Identify areas where wetlands can be restored without taking agricultural land out of production
 - Water quality and habitat priorities rarely overlap. For water-quality projects, practitioners should work to maximize habitat improvements.
 - Identify opportunities for large acreage gains.
- **Identify and Develop Solutions to Barriers to Accelerating Wetland Restoration**
 - Identify barriers that the workgroup can mitigate and develop actions plans to address.
 - Increase understanding of the need for restoration among decision-makers.
- **Increase Technical Understanding of Factors that Influence Restoration Project Success**
 - Identify tools, models and other science needs for improving wetland
 - Engage other Chesapeake Bay Program teams, such as the Land Conservation Workgroup, Healthy Watershed GIT, on mutual issues such as wetland protection.
- **Local Engagement**
 - Local government involvement is crucial to meeting the wetland outcomes. The WWG will strive to include representation from local governments, county conservation districts, watershed associations, and other nonprofit organizations.

LOTS GOING ON SINCE LAST STRATEGY

Tidal Wetlands Strategic Plan Complete

This plan was developed to accelerate the protection, restoration and creation of tidal wetlands throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Tidal Wetlands Landowner Engagement Complete

This project was completed as part of the development of a Tidal Wetlands Strategic Plan, and involved developing and implementing an outreach and engagement program that will accelerate tidal wetland restoration among private landowners.

Financing and Funding Tidal Wetlands Strategic Plan Implementation

Complete

This project was completed as part of the development of a Tidal Wetlands Strategic Plan, and involved identifying new and innovative financing and funding sources for strategic plan implementation.

Non-tidal Wetlands Communication Strategy Complete

This project explored current perceptions of non-tidal wetlands and barriers to participation in wetland restoration, and developed a targeted strategy to better engage local stakeholders.

2024 Wetlands Workgroup Statement: Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency Complete

The Wetlands Workgroup's statement on the U.S Supreme Court ruling in Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency.

Understanding and Addressing the Impacts of Wetland Mowing

Chesapeake Bay Program - Wetlands Schematic



schematic created by
Chris Guy and Sophia Seufert
USFWS, 2024

PLANNING

Wetlands Action
Plan (finalized
January 2023)

Wetlands Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay Program
(proposed to the Management Board October 10, 2024)

division into tidal &
non-tidal subgroups

Wetlands Work Group (Restructured 2023)

WORK GROUP STRUCTURE

Tidal Wetlands Team

Chesapeake Bay Trust
facilitating creation of
Strategic Plan
(to be completed
December 2025)

Black Duck Action Team
(from original bay program structure)

Implementation Tools

Black Duck Tool
developed by Black Duck
Joint Venture adopted to
the Bay watershed

Non-Tidal Wetlands Team

Utilize Northeast Partners
for Fish and Wildlife Plan,
State Action Plans, etc.
Step down to Chesapeake
Bay watershed

TOOLS

Implementation Tools

50+ tools currently identified
e.g., Marshes for Tomorrow

Implementation Tools

Commonly used tools to be
inventoried and compiled

OUTPUTS

Habitat Tracker Data Base (2023)

2-year milestones shared on Chesapeake Progress (last update January 2024)

2025 Agreement

Restoring or create at least 3,000 acres of tidal wetlands and 3,000 acres of nontidal wetlands, as well as enhancing 15,000 acres of tidal wetlands and 15,000 acres of nontidal wetlands, by 2040.