



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

September 11, 2025

Outcomes with Placeholders

Discussion and Decision

MB Discussions & Decisions

- Consider public feedback throughout the presentation.
- **Decision:** will placeholders (X) be included in the final version of the revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (CBWA)?
 - If not, **Discussion:** what does the MB want to do with targets that will still have placeholders in the CBWA?
 - Decision on Sept. 30th.
- **Discussion:** proposed target values for developed placeholders.

Outcome	Target	Placeholder	Development Deadline
Protected Lands	Protected Lands	protect an additional <u>1.5-2 million acres</u> of land	End of August 2025*
Protected Lands	Forests	protect a total of <u>XX</u> acres of forest, of which <u>XX</u> % are in riparian areas.	By September 2025*
Protected Lands	Wetlands	protect a total of <u>XX</u> acres of wetlands, focusing on the protection of buffer zones	By December 2025*
Protected Lands	Watershed Health	protect a total of <u>XX</u> acres of natural lands in watersheds that support good stream health	By December 2027*
Protected Lands	Tribal Lands	securing protection status and/or co-management agreements for a total of <u>XX</u> acres of tribal homelands	By December 2027*
Protected Lands	Agricultural Lands	protect a total of <u>XX</u> acres of agricultural lands	By December 2027*
Protected Lands	Community Greenspace	protect a total of <u>XX</u> acres of community greenspace	By December 2027*

Target development ongoing beyond September 2025 (critical date for inclusion in Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement)

*Pending availability of USGS, GSAT or PLWG data

**Dependent on receipt of STAC workshop funding

Outcome	Target	Placeholder	Development Deadline
Healthy Forests and Trees	Forest Conservation	plant and maintain _XX_ acres of new forests	September 2025
Brook Trout	Identified Threats	reduce identified threats by _XX_ %	End of December 2025*
Public Access	Urban Lands	expand access to _XX_% of urban lands and community green spaces	March 2026*

Outcome	Target	Plans for Targets	Development Deadline
Fish Habitat	Acid Mine Drainage	develop an acid mine drainage target w/ Brook Trout	Drafted in September 2025
Wetlands	Waterbirds	priorities for specific species	December 2026**
Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Sediment***	Updated Water Quality Targets	revised targets that include a timeline	By December 2030

Target development ongoing beyond September 2025 (critical date for inclusion in Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement)

*Pending availability of USGS, GSAT or PLWG data

**Dependent on receipt of STAC workshop funding

***Flightpath and timeline are described in the targets themselves and were presented to the PSC in June and to the MB in June & July.

Public Feedback: Placeholder Targets

- Most public feedback on this topic is against having placeholders in the CBWA.
 - “I understand this is being actively worked by the commission. But, as a matter of record so to speak, anywhere “X” remains—whether it’s for timeline, reevaluation frequency, or implementation period—**those spots should be finalized to ensure the public and signatories understand expectations.**”

Public Feedback: Placeholder Targets

- Feedback highlights the important role specific values play in setting shared expectations for CBWA success, tracking progress, and promoting accountability and transparency.
 - “We believe **quantitative targets, metrics, and numeric goals can help drive efforts towards a shared vision and make tracking possible.** Without numeric targets, it is hard to know when and where we are successful. Over the last 15 years, outcomes without numeric targets struggled to show measurable progress.”



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DECISION

Will placeholders (X) be included in
the final version of the revised
Chesapeake Bay Watershed
Agreement?

Yes – No changes needed

No – See four proposed options

A. Rephrase targets using “continually increase/decrease” or similar.

- Ex: ~~By 2035, Continually reduce identified threats by XX% to increase brook trout resilience in watersheds supporting healthy populations.~~

B. Rephrase targets using “continually increase/decrease” and specify that targets will be **replaced** with specific values (include deadlines to complete development).

- Ex: ~~By 2035, Continually reduce identified threats by XX%~~ to increase brook trout resilience in watersheds supporting healthy populations. By 2026, replace the phrase “continually increase” in this target with specific value for reducing identified threats.

C. Replace targets with language describing plans to develop the targets (include deadlines to complete development).

- Ex: ~~By 2035, reduce identified threats by XX% to increase brook trout resilience in watersheds supporting healthy populations.~~ By 2026, update this outcome with a target to reduce identified threats to brook trout resilience.

D. Remove targets with placeholders. Follow Governance process to add them later, if appropriate.

- Ex: ~~By 2035, reduce identified threats by XX% to increase brook trout resilience in watersheds supporting healthy populations.~~
- When sufficient details are developed, follow the Governance process detailed on the following slides to consider inclusion in the CBWA.

Summary: Options for Placeholders

- A. Rephrase** targets using “continually increase/decrease.”
- B. Rephrase** targets using “continually increase/decrease” and specify that targets will be **replaced** with specific values (include deadlines to target complete language development).
- C. Replace** targets with language describing plans to develop the targets (include deadlines to complete target language development).
- D. Remove** targets from the CBWA until sufficient details have been developed, then follow the Governance procedures to add Outcome/Target language, if appropriate.

Next Steps

- Public Feedback Review Team and Outcome leads consider public feedback and MB input as they collaborate on revising outcome/target language.
- Public Feedback Review Team circulates a revised, redline draft of the CBWA by September 23rd.
- September 30th **Decision:** MB accepts or revises outcome/target language at the retreat, including finalization of target values (former placeholders).



Thank you!

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