



Community Input Beyond 2025

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Who Do We Represent?





Question: Why are we restoring the Chesapeake Bay watershed?

Reflection of the people who live in the Bay watershed is lacking in the mission, design, and the infrastructure of the Partnership

Why aren't people an indicator species? Each of the Goals & Outcomes should include impacts to people

Look beyond the TMDL and Bay restoration. Make the Goals & Outcomes relevant to people. This supports STAC's recent CESR report

Meet people where they are. The Bay Program lacks collaboration in practice

Our Why





The Challenge: Beyond 2025

The CBP often loses sight of its primary audience... its role is to coordinate the work of the partners toward the restoration goals

STAFF

1. Leadership & Staff

THE PARTNERSHIP

1. Workgroup Chairs, Management Board, Jurisdiction/Agency Staff
2. Practitioners NGO's, CAC, LGAC, STAC, Private Funders, Grantees

GENERAL PUBLIC

1. Volunteers, grantees, and people who care about clean water



Audience #1: Staff (INTERNAL)

The internal work must be done before you move to the external work

Barriers:

- Timing of the creation of the Partnership relative to network science
- Disconnect between CBP leadership and staff working in Bay Program Office
- Hierarchy and distribution of power between EPA & Non-EPA CBP staff
- Challenges tracking diversity goals

Opportunities:

- Opportunity to leverage science to increase collaborative impact
- Empower staff. Include them in the Post-2025 discussions and decision making
 - Junior and younger staff are significantly more likely to see opportunities for change
- Create feedback loops. Ask staff for their input. Institutionalize partnership and collaboration. Show the staff how their feedback is being incorporated into decision making with clear commitments for change
- Promote and invest in lower level staff



Audience #2: Partners (EXTERNAL)

The CBP is a regional partnership between federal and state agencies, local governments, NGOs, academic institutions, with public advisory committees

Barriers:

- The Partnership lacks structure for authentic stakeholder input
- The Partnership does not always have the right people participating
- Underutilized as a resource
- Lack of trust? Collaborative work moves at the speed of trust

Opportunities:

- Revisit the Partnership Principles in the Bay Agreement to identify opportunities to collaborate moving forward
- Use the Partnership as a resource of expertise. They are the practitioners leading on the ground work
- Include public partners in the Post-2025 Steering Committee. Not just the public comment period



Audience #3: Public (EXTERNAL)

The public includes active volunteers, grantees, and general public

Barriers:

- There's little visibility in decision making. Promote what is happening now Post-2025
- Lack of space and acceptance for public input. The general public rarely participates

Opportunities:

- Tie each Bay Agreement Goal & Outcome to people and healthy communities. Make them relevant to this audience
- Utilize the Partnership to inspire and reinvigorate people. Promote the Post-2025 work to the general public
 - Use the press and social awareness campaigns
 - The Partnership has greater access to the general public
- Use the Partnership to create and push out resources for the general public to weigh in on Post-2025 work
 - Host listening sessions with grantees and the public
 - Ask the grantees for their feedback



What's Needed? A Cultural Shift

Refocus on the Partnership. It's time to create something new!

Public input is valuable, not a burden

Shift toward a more collaborative, inclusive, equitable structure for community engagement

These changes don't require money — they require behavior change and/or policy change

Ask yourself.... How can I be more inclusive? How can I be pushing for change? How can I break down power structures?

“This whole idea that the Bay of the future is not going to look like the Bay of the past is a big pill to swallow,”.. That doesn't mean giving up on Bay improvements, she added. “We're not going to stop, but there are signals that we could be doing things better, and how we can do that.”

Denice Wardrop, director of the Chesapeake Research Consortium



Questions

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