Protected Lands

OUTCOME

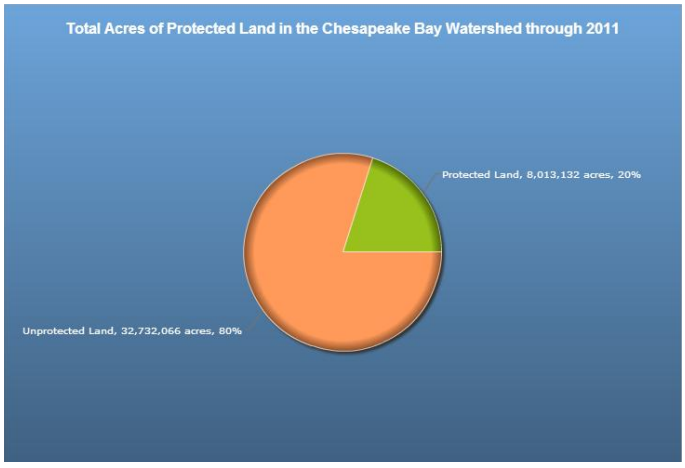
Protect an additional two million acres of lands throughout the watershed currently identified as high conservation priorities at the federal, state or local level by 2025, including 225,000 acres of wetlands and 695,000 acres of forest land of highest value for maintaining water quality.

Why is this outcome important?

The human population in the Chesapeake Bay watershed continues to grow. By 2030, experts predict nearly 20 million people will live in the region. The development and land conversion this growth implies rank among the top stressors the Bay's ecosystem will face and are major threats to its restoration and protection. One strategy to combat the loss of high value lands is to permanently protect them from development.

Current Conditions:

As of the end of 2011, data indicates that just over 8 million acres of land have been permanently protected in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.



See how protected lands are doing at chesapeakebay.net

How was the outcome derived? Who came up with it?

In 2009 and 2010, state, federal and non-governmental land conservation and public access partners met at a series of collaborative sessions to develop recommendations for supporting further progress in these areas. These sessions provided the basis for actions included in the 2010 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and for this agreement's new goal statement and outcomes.

What was the basis or baseline?

At the time the outcome was originally defined in 2010, the most detailed information on the status of protected lands came from the Chesapeake Bay Program's tracking of land protection in the three states that signed the Chesapeake 2000 agreement (Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia).

For the headwater states of New York, Delaware and West Virginia, the extent of protected lands was indicated by GIS data that was provided to the Chesapeake Bay Program.

For More:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/development
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/population_growth
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/indicators/indicator/chesapeake_bay_watershed_population
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/indicators/indicator/preserving_lands

DRAFT ONLY Photos and links to be added

Land Use Methods and Metrics

OUTCOME

Continually improve the knowledge of land conversion and the associated impacts throughout the watershed. By 2016, develop a Chesapeake Bay watershed-wide methodology and local-level metrics for characterizing the rate of farmland, forest, and wetland conversion, measuring the extent and rate of change in impervious surface coverage and quantifying the potential impacts of land conversion to water quality, healthy watersheds, and communities. Launch a public awareness campaign to share this information with local governments, elected officials, and stakeholders.

Why is this outcome important?

Land use change is a local issue with regional consequences. Land use can affect restoration and protection efforts if not understood, mitigated, or otherwise planned for. This outcome was included in the Agreement to ensure that there are appropriate methods for understanding and tracking land use changes.

Current Conditions:

During the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) process, differences have come to light between the land use data set used by that CBP that covers the entire watershed over a multi-decadal period and local-scale information. These differences have created challenges for implementation planning and reporting in support of the WIPs. It is vital that the land use data used in the watershed model is perceived as relevant at the local government scale.

How was the outcome derived? Who came up with it?

This outcome responds to public comments received that an earlier version of the Agreement did not sufficiently address the extent and impacts of land use change in the watershed. The Land Use Workgroup of the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team was instrumental in developing this outcome, along with representatives of the Maryland Department of Planning and the Chesapeake Bay Commission.

What was the basis or baseline?

The Land Use Workgroup will directly involve stakeholders in the generation of land use data for modeling. The challenge will be to assemble a more accurate baseline dataset using local information to the extent possible while estimating historic land use acreages in a clear, transparent, and logical fashion.

For More: [links]

DRAFT ONLY – photos and links to be added

Land Use Options Evaluation

OUTCOME

By the end of 2017, with the direct involvement of local governments or their representatives, evaluate policy options, incentives, and planning tools that could assist local governments in their efforts to continually improve their capacity to the reduce the rate of conversion of agricultural lands, forests and wetlands as well as the rate of changing landscapes from more natural lands that soak up pollutants to those that are paved over, hardscaped or otherwise impervious. Strategies should be developed for supporting local governments' and other efforts in reducing these rates by 2025 and beyond.

Why is this outcome important?

Land use change is a local issue with regional consequences. Land use can affect restoration and protection efforts if not understood, mitigated, or otherwise planned for. This outcome was included in the Agreement to provide tools and support to local governments to ensure the capacity to plan for and mitigate land use change impacts.

Current Conditions:

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For More: [links]