



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

# FishGIT Office Hours

Wednesday, July 9th  
3:00pm - 4:00pm

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# Beyond 2025 Updates

- Revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement is now live
  - <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/Revised-CBW-Agreement-For-Public-Feedback-2025.06.30.pdf>
  - Public feedback period: July 1st - September 1st
- New outcome structure

# Blue Crab Outcome Updates

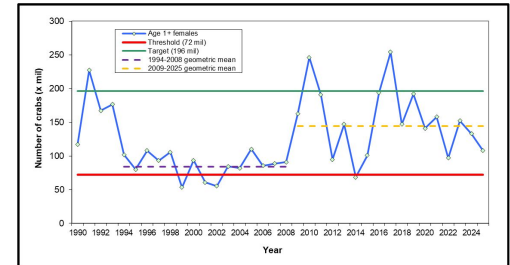
**Blue Crab Management  
Outcome = Complete**



**Continuing  
cross-jurisdictional  
management**



**New benchmark  
stock assessment**



# Blue Crab Sustainability



## Outcome

**Achieve a sustainable bay wide blue crab fishery through cross jurisdictional coordination that supports healthy blue crab populations and thriving fishing communities.**

- Continually maintain abundance and harvest rate targets as determined by the 2026 benchmark stock assessment.
- Achieve cross jurisdictional coordination by jointly evaluating and communicating stock status annually through the blue crab advisory report and refining targets, as needed, through the next stock assessment.

# Blue Crab Sustainability



**Achieve a sustainable bay wide blue crab fishery through cross jurisdictional coordination that supports healthy blue crab populations and thriving fishing communities.**

## Target

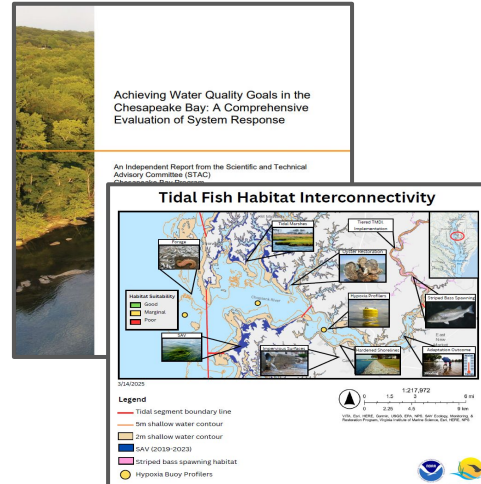
- Continually maintain abundance and harvest rate targets as determined by the 2026 benchmark stock assessment.
- Achieve cross jurisdictional coordination by jointly evaluating and communicating stock status annually through the blue crab advisory report and refining targets, as needed, through the next stock assessment.

# Fish Habitat Outcome Updates

## Tidal & Non Tidal Fish Habitat



## Living Resource Assessment



## Reclassification of Forage Outcome under Fish Habitat



# Fish Habitat



**Achieve and maintain suitable shallow water fish habitat in tidal and non-tidal areas for key species through focused water quality, conservation and restoration improvements informed by a synthesis of fisheries science and habitat assessments.**

- Continually improve the quantity and quality of shallow water fish habitat in tidal area above baseline conditions as determined by a Bay-wide assessment of fish habitat conditions completed in 2026.
- Increase the consideration of forage species in fishery management decision making for key predators by annually developing reports of prey status as good, uncertain, or poor.
- Establish a baseline and assess the overall condition and suitability of fish habitat in the watershed to support healthy communities and inform effective restoration, conservation and management actions.
- Develop an acid-mine drainage target, in collaboration with the Brook Trout outcome, that strives to better understand the impacts and mitigation opportunities for Acid Mine Drainage throughout the watershed.
- Develop freshwater mussel conservation plans for 5 tributaries and begin implementation by 2035.

# Oyster Outcome Updates

**Maintenance of  
reefs from the 2014  
Watershed  
Agreement**



**Continue oyster  
reef restoration  
efforts**



**Incorporation of the  
oyster fishery**





# Oysters



**Increase ecosystem benefits from oysters through reef habitat restoration, sustainable harvest, and aquaculture.**

- Restore or conserve at least 1800 additional acres of oyster reef habitat concentrated primarily in restoration focus areas to provide ecosystem service benefits.
- Maintain sustainable oyster abundance through oyster fishery and aquaculture practices.
- Maintain reefs established under the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement to achieve restoration success metrics.

# New Goal Structure

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation  
Brook Trout  
Fish Habitat  
Wetlands  
Fish Passage  
Stream Health  
Blue Crab Sustainability  
Oysters

## Thriving Habitats, & Wildlife

## Clean Water

Water Quality Standards  
Attainment and Monitoring  
  
Reducing Excess Nitrogen,  
Phosphorus and Sediment  
  
Toxic Contaminants Mitigation

Public Access  
School District Planning  
Student Experiences  
Stewardship  
Workforce  
Local Leadership

## Engaged Communities

## Conserved Lands

Land Use Decision Support  
  
Protected Lands  
  
Healthy Forests and Trees  
  
Adaptation to Changing  
Environmental Conditions

# Timeline & Next Steps

<b>July 1 - September 1</b>	Public feedback period
<b>September 11</b>	Conclusion of public feedback period; Begin to review, organize, & address public feedback
<b>October 9</b>	Propose changes to watershed agreement based on public feedback
<b>November 6</b>	Approve final structure & governance recommendations
<b>November 18</b>	Approve final Watershed Agreement revisions and structure & governance recommendations
<b>December TBD</b>	Executive Council meeting to approve watershed agreement revisions, consider structure & governance recommendations & task PSC with actions moving forward
<b>January - June 2026</b>	Incorporation of structure and governance changes in Governance and Management framework

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# Public Feedback Period

- **July 1st - September 1st**
  - Revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement can be found [here](#)
  - Send comments to [comments@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:comments@chesapeakebay.net)

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# Discussion

- Questions about the public feedback process?
- Questions about the proposed outcomes and targets?
- Do you plan on submitting comments?
- Anything we can help you with in submitting those comments?

# Notes:

- It seems like the end date is undefined for these outcomes?
  - This is something we have noted internally and recognize that there needs to be concrete endpoints for these outcomes
    - Great thing for the public to comment on
    - For the oysters outcome we were thinking 2040 timeframe - but this is not set in stone
- Regarding the forage target - speaking primarily about menhaden. Changes in VA, menhaden management given back to VMRC. Something we need to comment on as well?
  - The 2014 agreement identified that menhaden is one of many forage species in the Chesapeake Bay- this target includes a lot more than just menhaden - more about species important to key predators
    - The plan (under the Forage Target) is to make it applicable to management by making a stoplight chart to report prey status as good, uncertain, or poor.
- Regarding oyster outcome- I do not see any talk about mussels - was there thought about adding a mussel targets to the overall goal in addition to oysters?
  - No, the goal of the oyster outcome is to enhance oysters and the habitat they provide
  - We have received requests to look at mussels, including freshwater mussels - which there is a target for that
  - We recognize the ecological benefits of mussels and this has been well-documented. In terms of infrastructure/expertise/resources to restore mussels, we do not have them at this time. But if there are other groups that have those resources to restore that species you can include that recommendation in your comment for the feedback period.
    - Folks in DE bay are doing a lot of work on mussels



# Thank you!

Any questions?

You can contact Christina Garvey at

[christina.garvey@noaa.gov](mailto:christina.garvey@noaa.gov)



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