

Elected Officials Watershed Education Program Outline

Goal: Develop a newly elected officials handbook introducing the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, Bay Program Partners working on enacting the Agreement Goals and Outcomes and Trusted Sources for resources and assistance. Keep to 10 pages with visual and graphic representation of information.

1. Introduction

- a. As an elected official within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, you're part of a larger community. Here's what you need to know:
 - i. What is a watershed
 - ii. What is the Ches Bay Watershed community comprised of (*express as infographic*):
 - 1. 6 watershed states and DC
 - 2. EPA, Chesapeake Bay Commission
 - 3. Numerous federal agencies
 - 4. Universities
 - 5. Non-profits
 - 6. Local Communities and Governments
 - iii. What are the biggest challenges (condition of the local watershed/Chesapeake Bay/development, scarce resources, agriculture, climate change, etc. etc. -- things that make it necessary to each do our part in our community)
 - 1. Regulations - federal, state, local (*keep this brief, possible to express as graphic*)
 - iv. What are the greatest Opportunities (innovation, resources/expertise, etc.)
 - 1. Include list of some general BMPs (***is this helpful for elected officials?***)
 - 2. Ultimately it's up to you to meet local needs, why it's important to identify your local priorities and fit water resource projects into the context of meeting greater community goals

2. Local priorities and opportunities (*should this come before the introductory information?*)

- a. How your community can address **local priorities** while also addressing regional water resource issues
 - i. Identify your priorities (*What matters to you? Create a worksheet of possible priorities that elected officials can go through and identify*)
 - 1. Environmental: (***what's missing?***)
 - a. Flooding
 - b. Regulatory
 - c. Stream restoration (not applicable for all)
 - d. Wildlife habitat (land and water)
 - e. Climate resilience
 - f. Local water quality impairments
 - 2. Non-environmental: (***what's missing?***)
 - a. Economic Development
 - b. Recreation
 - c. Public health

- d. Public safety
 - e. Property values
 - f. Transportation
- ii. Photo examples of co-benefit projects (GI on a street, park projects, etc. etc.)
(possibly tailor to each state or keep general?)

3. What are the ways in which you, as an elected official, can address these priorities?

- a. Serve as the champion/supporting local efforts
- b. Work closely with your staff to: (depending on level of interest/expertise)
 - i. Create local plans
 - ii. Align local priorities with ordinances, codes, policies
 - iii. Implement projects on the ground (from planning and design phases to maintenance) - ensure the right people are involved
- c. Provide opportunities for staff training
- d. Talk to your community about their interests and priorities
- e. Consider collaborating with neighboring communities
- f. Educate yourself (MOST Center, other resources we can point them to?)
- g. Peer to peer networking
- h. Budgeting/planning

4. Baywide resources

- a. Regional map (*include here or in the beginning of the guidebook*)
- b. Opportunities that exist by being part of the Bay
 - i. Grants and loan programs
 - ii. Technical resources/expertise
 - iii. Workshops/educational opportunities (maybe only in state section?)
 - iv. Networking
- c. Bay Program's success (*use Bay Barometer? Other existing resources?*)
 - i. Highlight success as shown by recent water quality monitoring data, and increases in SAV and fisheries
 - ii. Must report what you do in order to get credit, tee up next section about who to report to

5. State-specific section

- a. What makes your state unique (*PA as the example*)
 - i. Government structure
 - ii. Mix of urban and agriculture
 - iii. Susquehanna River the biggest contributor to the Bay
- b. State resources and opportunities
 - i. Trusted sources
 - ii. Agencies/grants
 - iii. workshop/networks etc
 - iv. Examples of Projects on the ground