



CBP Communications Office

Recommendations for the Chesapeake Bay Program Strategic Communications Plan

Management Board Meeting
November 2nd, 2023



PHOTO: WILL PARSON/CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM



Presentation Overview

1. Methods and research
2. Target audiences
3. Findings document
4. Recommended goals and tactics



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Methods and Research

Interview Sessions

April 27 to June 13

- Four in-depth interviews with CBP partners.
- Five conversations with media.

Focus Groups

April 27 and May 18

- NGO Communications
- State Government Partners
- Local Government/Engagement Communications
- CBP Leadership
- Federal Agency Partners



Findings



1. Audience Engagement
2. Strengths
3. Weaknesses
4. Opportunities
5. Threats



Audiences

1. Federal agencies
2. State agencies
3. Watershed nonprofit organizations and regional environmental organizations, particularly those representing diverse communities.
4. Academic institutions
5. Local planners
6. Educators and students
7. Media
8. Interested public



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Findings

Challenge with audiences engagement

- Lack of capacity to reach all audiences, particularly community groups.
- Local governments, particularly outside Maryland and Virginia, are not familiar with the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- Those who recreate near the Bay such as hunters or fishers should be better engaged because they use the resource.
- Urban audiences should be better engaged.
- Disagreement over engagement of the general public.
- Lack of diversity amongst the CBP Communications Office.



Findings

Opportunities with audiences engagement

Go Deep, Not Wide

“They are doing a good job with people who already engage with the Chesapeake Bay Program. They are making efforts to engage with diverse people and groups.”

“[CBP] should not be doing community outreach effort if they don’t have the capacity to do so properly. There can be a way to reach those audiences in other capacities and by leveraging partnerships.”



SWOT Analysis

Communications Team Strengths

- Highly trusted, well-respected communications team.
- Excel at communicating scientific, technical information.
- Produce high-quality materials.

Communications Team Weakness

- High focus on water quality significantly outweighs other Agreement goals.
- Lack of internal communication and too many silos.
- Unclear communications goals.
- Mixed reviews of DEIJ communications.



SWOT Analysis

Communications Team Opportunities

- Continue positive relationships.
- Shape the narrative for attainment of the 2025 *Watershed Agreement* goals.
- Maintain trust with media sources and the interested public by presenting measurements of Bay health accurately.
- Prioritize internal communication, coordination, and collaboration to advance Bay goals.
- Communicate about co-benefits of Bay work.
- Bring diversity into communications.
- Reach younger audiences.
- “Give credit” for work across the Bay.

Communications Team Threats

- **Capacity:** Staff and time constraints to reach all audiences and advancing all goals of the *Watershed Agreement*.
- **Identity:** Differentiating ourselves from other Bay organization.



Recommendations

Goals and tactics



Strengthen *internal communications* within the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership to enhance staff awareness and communication product development.



Recommendations Document

Goals and tactics



**Streamline communications processes
to enhance capacity.**



Recommendations Document

Goals and tactics



Fortify relationships with targeted audiences (and **limit current partner outreach) to expand impact.**



Recommendations Document

Goals and tactics



Grow the Chesapeake Bay Program profile as a **thought leader in Chesapeake Bay restoration work through **communications** and **engagement**.**



Next-Steps

We Want Your Feedback!

Release date: 11/6

Closing date: 11/24

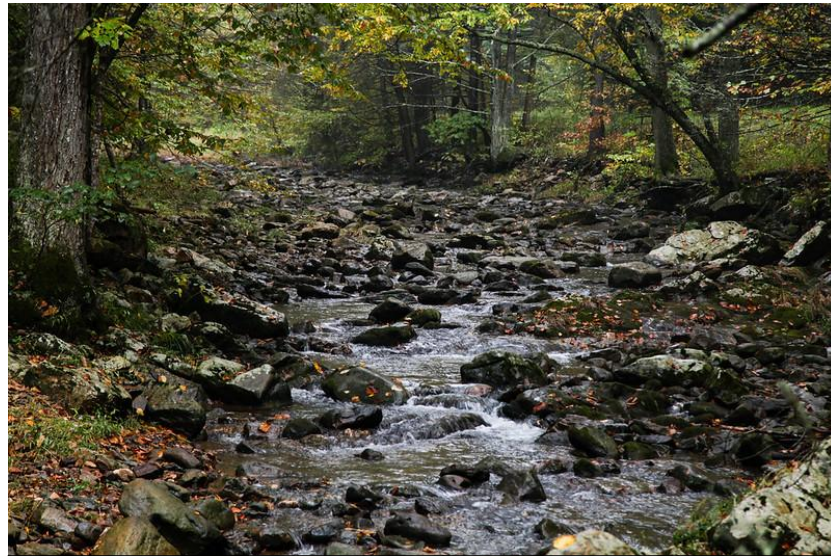


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Strategic Communications Recommendations



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CONTRIBUTIONS

Rachel Felver

Will Parson

Jake Solyst

Marisa Baldine

The Hatcher Group