



STEWARDSHIP OUTCOME

STEWARDSHIP GIT/ STEWARDSHIP WORKGROUP

CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED AGREEMENT OUTCOME LANGUAGE

PROPOSED DRAFT OUTCOME LANGUAGE:

Equip partners and the regional network of practitioners with the social science data, technical assistance and support needed to develop and carry out programs that train and mobilize individuals and communities to improve the health of our land, water, living resources and people.

EXISTING 2014 OUTCOME LANGUAGE:

Increase the number and diversity of trained and mobilized volunteers who have the knowledge and skills needed to enhance the health of their local watersheds.

PROPOSED TARGET	New Target / Update of Existing Target	Date estimate for target being developed
<i>For both: metrics to be determined, baseline assessments needed</i>		
<p><u>Target 1 purpose:</u> Measure how well we are supporting partners.</p> <p><u>Draft target language:</u> <i>Continually increase partners' ability to develop and carry out programs that enable people and communities to participate in stewardship.</i></p> <p>Data collected through a periodic stewardship survey (e.g., an updated Stewardship Index) and analysis would be used to inform partners of effective stewardship methods and strategies. A self-assessment for organizational partners may be considered.</p>	New target	December 2025
<p><u>Target 2 purpose:</u> Measure on the ground stewardship work.</p> <p><u>Draft target language:</u> <i>Through 2040, support achievement of the targets identified [SMART targets to be set**] that ultimately increase both individual and community level stewardship actions that advance certain Watershed Agreement outcomes, e.g., Healthy Forests and Trees, Workforce, Water Quality, etc.</i></p> <p>**Example target to be set: Work with the Forestry Workgroup (WG) to determine a SMART metric such as "By 2040, XXXX number of acres of urban or suburban forest will be stewarded by individuals or communities." Assist the WG by connecting stewardship partners to help with implementation, and assist in the process to track the metric.</p>	New target	Set SMART targets with other outcome teams by December 2025

*Detailed activities will be included in an updated work plan

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Rationale and context for proposed draft outcome language:

- The evergreen, **ultimate** intent of the Stewardship Outcome is to increase public participation in regular actions that contribute positively to the health of the Bay and its watershed. We will aim to create more of a cultural norm that people readily, easily practice various types of stewardship as part of their daily lives. This will be achieved by working to intentionally and effectively **utilize social science** best

practices and weave stewardship throughout Agreement outcomes, contributing to their success. We will increase emphasis on systems that expand effective stewardship. To date, the Stewardship Workgroup has built a tool to measure and understand individuals' stewardship knowledge and actions, and to map our network of practitioners. As a next step, we must better support our partners in creating broader, community-scale stewardship efforts and help our partners replicate best practices across jurisdictional boundaries. This will amplify the many individual acts of stewardship to achieve impactful, collective results that have a much greater effect on environmental conditions, including those that affect human health.

- The new outcome language places emphasis on best serving and supporting our partners to build their capacity to engage their networks, communities, and local stewards to increase the efficacy and reach of on the ground actions. The language also guides our work to make tools and support available to those working in other disciplines who can enhance results through stewardship and who may not see themselves as working directly on "stewardship" per se. For example: (a) support land conservation or forestry professionals to more effectively engage with landowners or neighborhoods to protect or care for a parcel of land; (b) support a watershed conservation organization helping a local government to launch a program that incentivizes and makes it easy for residents to plant more trees and take care of them; (c) connect oyster restoration practitioners with waterfront communities who can use recycled oyster shell for shoreline stabilization; (d) connect schools with technical assistance to support student stewardship projects.
- Targets and metrics will be carefully considered. Metrics could include measures of: (1) the direct work to "equip" (i.e., build the capacity of) partners to use social science to do the work called for; (2) public engagement; and (3) the achievement of outcome-specific actions (trees planted, etc.).

Challenges:

- It has become clear that we need to broaden what we mean by stewardship, beyond (and including) individual daily actions at home, as well as broadening our focus for collective action beyond just volunteerism(*). Many residents engage in daily actions which benefit the health of the Bay and its watershed without specific recognition of or intent to protect the environment for environment's sake, e.g., picking up litter to beautify the neighborhood, or carpooling to work to save money. We should promote a wider range of types of stewardship efforts, while being careful to avoid overwhelming or confusing public audiences.
- Is it feasible to measure how or if stewardship actions are having a positive effect on environmental conditions? The recommendation for updating the Outcome included defining stewardship actions and metrics to align with and directly support Water Quality, Tree Canopy, Forest Buffers, Wetlands, Land Conservation and other outcomes, and it ties in with the new Workforce Outcome. This alignment will take coordination with these groups to understand where stewardship can make a difference, the kind of efforts to promote, and associated achievable metrics. Plus, we are uncertain whether these metrics should be situated in the Agreement under those specific outcomes or here with the Stewardship outcome.
- The methodology for how to measure the increase in stewardship engagement and what to measure will take a while to determine. Is it numbers of people participating in individual or community activities; numbers of programs; and/or number of trees planted, acres conserved, pounds of trash collected, etc.? Numbers would likely need to be collected from willing stewardship practitioners and partners (who we are aiming to support) and reported out as a collective, telling the stories of success of the whole body of stewardship work happening across the watershed, to celebrate and help build more support and participation.
- It takes a long time to engage the public broadly in stewardship to make an appreciable difference and create societal change. Under the scope of the Watershed Agreement, it will be necessary to take smaller bites of the apple, to focus on shorter-term, realistic milestones to achieve durable results in the very long term.

** For many people, volunteering their time is a barrier to participation. Volunteering is not the same as taking actions voluntarily (willingly). There are workforce related opportunities that can aid stewardship goals while providing monetary benefits to those involved. An array of options is needed.*