

Public Feedback, Public Access Outcome

Enhance new and existing public access sites to the Bay and its tributaries through a combination of actions aimed at improving recreational opportunities and accessibility while addressing barriers to access by increasing the number, quality and geographic distribution of sites.

- **New Access Sites:** By 2040, add 100 new public access sites with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for recreation where feasible.
 - **Improving ADA/ABA Accessibility:** By 2040, improve 3% of existing public water access sites by adding ADA/ABA accessible features, where feasible, to meet the needs of communities.
 - **Access Upgrades, Maintenance and Expansion:** By 2040, improve at least 100 existing public water access sites by upgrading or maintaining site grounds and structures—including signage, parking, seating and public facilities—and expanding the range of active and passive recreation opportunities, such as kayaking, boating, trails, courts, piers, wildlife viewing and picnic areas.
 - **Expanding Access to Urban Lands:** By 2040, expand access to _XX_% of urban lands and community green spaces identified in the Protected Lands data set. An initial baseline study is to be conducted by 2025-2026 to determine appropriate numeric targets for this metric.
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Feedback on New Access Sites:

“New Access Sites - what if these 100 new public access sites are all located fairly close to each other or, all in the same state. **Could you include more in this outcome that includes the goal of reaching areas with no or few public access sites?**”

- When discussing access metrics, consider geographic distribution of sites.
 - Could add this as an action in Management Strategies as well

“New Access Sites: By 2040, add 100 new public access sites with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for recreation where feasible (P 15). **Should have intermediate steps to 2040.**”

- Recommended by Review Team:
 - More targets and plans will be available in the Management Strategies.

Feedback on Improving ADA/ABA Accessibility:

“3% is low. If 100 sites are added, this would include only 3 sites. **Would it be possible to evaluate existing infrastructure to identify the places where it would be easy and low-to-no cost to add/modify infrastructure to increase this number to a higher proportion of sites?** Additionally, there is already a goal in “Access Upgrades, Maintenance and Expansion” to update 100 sites. Why not make these goals one?

- Potential Action:
 - Detail plan to target easiest updates first for adding ADA/ABA accessibility features.
 - Could combine the two targets
 - Recommended by Review Team:
 - Consider rewording to say, "at least 3%." Refer to the Public Access Workgroup for their thoughts. Recommend more specific language around what the 3% refers to
 - (suggestion--just move targets around switching the order of the second and third).
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Feedback on Access Upgrades, Maintenance, and Expansion:

“To me, this is the biggest standout within the agreement. **There is NO language anywhere about improving public transit to rec sites. I would like to see this added to the “Access Upgrades, Maintenance and Expansion”/ADA Accessibility sections to improve access for folks without cars** (which includes working-class people, as well as people living in urban areas who may not otherwise have access to parks and more remote rec spaces. This also goes hand in hand with increasing stewardship and environmental consciousness among the public. If more people can access sites, we increase the number of stewards in our world.”

- Potential Action:
 - When defining how to track access to sites, consider public transit (quantity and quality)
 - **Should this be added in the language of the target, or included as action items in the Management Strategy?**
- Recommended by Review team:
 - Recommend the Public Access Workgroup and Chesapeake Conservation Partnership weigh in on this feedback re: transit access. Recommend adding this detail into Management Strategy, perhaps prioritizing upgrades or new sites that have transit access. Making public access sites ADA-accessible is mentioned in the draft outcome language. Consider adding the language, "to the best extent

possible, incorporate ADA-accessible guidelines and structures into new and existing public access sites.”

“Under the access upgrades I would suggest considering **"paddlers" vs kayaks** as paddling would include not just kayaks but also canoe and SUP. More inclusive...”

- (Comment from the Engaged Communities Webinar)
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Feedback on Access to Urban Lands:

“**How are you defining access to urban lands?** Are active and passive recreation opportunities outlined?”

- (Comment from the Engaged Communities Webinar)

“Pennsylvania has explored a walkability analysis to try to get more population to be within walking distance to a park. Have you looked into **including an analysis on walkability** for the Bay Program building off of PA's work?”

- (Comment from the Engaged Communities Webinar)
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Supportive Comments

“Finally, environmental literacy in schools, local stewardship, and public access are the only personal connection many residents and voters have to the Bay Program. The Communities goals create an engaged, environmentally aware, and vocal constituency that fights for the Bay. As such, engaged communities are critical to the long-term success of the Bay Agreement.”

- Voices general support; No action required

While the public access goal is on target to be met, over the course of the following year, it is critical that the CBP and the Management Board include updates to this goal and ensure that all people across the watershed have access to our waterways and greenspaces. Having a connection to the watershed fosters care and stewardship of its resources, ultimately leading to improvements in water quality.

- Voices support; no action required