

2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Revisions

Vision, Preamble, and Principles

Initial Suggestions offered by MD to the PSC

VISION:

The Chesapeake Bay Program partners envision an environmentally and economically sustainable Chesapeake Bay watershed with clean water, abundant life, conserved **and productive** lands, ~~and~~ access to the water, a vibrant cultural heritage and a diversity of engaged stakeholders **whose communities will benefit from a more resilient watershed.**

PREAMBLE:

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is one of the most extraordinary places in America, spanning six states and the District of Columbia. As the nation's largest and most productive estuary, the Chesapeake Bay and its vast network of more than 180,000 miles of streams, creeks and rivers, holds tremendous ecological, cultural, economic, historic and recreational value for the **nearly more than** 18 million people who live, work and play in the region.

To restore and protect this national treasure, the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership (the "Partnership") was formed in 1983 when the Governors of Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency signed the first Chesapeake Bay agreement. That initial agreement recognized the "historical decline of living resources" in the Chesapeake Bay and committed to a cooperative approach to "fully address the extent, complexity and sources of pollutants entering the Bay." For more than ~~30~~ **40** years, this regional Partnership has become recognized as one of the nation's premier estuarine restoration, **protection and conservation** efforts, implementing policies, engaging in scientific investigation and coordinating actions among the states, the District of Columbia and the federal government.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partners have made much progress in that time, ~~but~~ **and** there is **still** more to do— especially in the face of continued challenges such as changes in population, loss of farm and forest lands and changing environmental conditions. Through the **2014 2025** Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (the "Agreement"), the Partnership **recommits remains committed** to the Bay watershed restoration effort based in and guided by science and the lessons learned from our experiences.

One of the most important lessons the partners have learned from the past ~~three~~ **four** decades is that although watershed-wide partnerships can help to coordinate and catalyze progress, implementation happens locally. Local governments are key partners in our work, as ~~is~~ **are** the public, businesses, watershed groups and other non-governmental organizations. Working

together to engage, empower and facilitate these partners will leverage resources and ensure better outcomes **for all watershed communities.**

The Partnership's experience with watershed restoration, ~~and~~ protection **and conservation** efforts has shown that measurable **results progress**, coupled with firm accountability, yield the most significant results. The Partnership ~~stands ready~~ **continues** to embrace new ideas, technologies and policies that will help meet its goals. The Partnership is committed to improving verification, ~~and~~ transparency of its actions **and outreach** to strengthen and increase public confidence in its efforts.

The 1983 Agreement laid the foundation for a cooperative program that included four jurisdictions along with the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the federal government. ~~This new Agreement includes the~~ **Since 2014, the Agreement has included all** seven jurisdictions in the watershed, bringing New York, West Virginia and Delaware on board with the original signatories and making them full partners in the Chesapeake Bay Program and the Chesapeake Executive Council. Due in part to a 2009 Presidential Executive Order, numerous federal agencies ~~have~~ **also reaffirmed and augmented** ~~continue~~ their longstanding and shared commitment to restoring, ~~and~~ protecting, **and conserving** the Chesapeake Bay.

This Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement acknowledges that the Partnership cannot address every issue at once and that progress must be made in a strategic manner, focusing on efforts will achieve the most **meaningful and** cost-effective results. Watershed restoration, ~~and~~ protection, **and conservation** ~~have the potential to become~~ **are** integral drivers of the region's economy. To that end, the Partnership is committed to achieving restoration success while maximizing the economic benefits to local communities across the region. The signatories to this voluntary Agreement commit to achieving the restoration, ~~and~~ protection, **and conservation** of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, ~~and~~ its **water, habitats** and living resources **for the benefit of all people living in and visiting this national treasure.**

PRINCIPLES:

The following principles are an overarching framework by which the Chesapeake Bay Program commits to operate. They encompass the partners' collective, core values and are intended to help guide us in our work as the Partnership develops policy and takes actions to achieve this Agreement's Goals and Outcomes.

The Partnership will:

- **Collaborate** to achieve the Goals and Outcomes of this Agreement.
- **Achieve Goals and Outcomes** in a **measurable and** timely way and at the least possible cost to the public.

- **Represent the interests of people all communities** throughout the watershed fairly and effectively, including a broad diversity of cultures, demographics, and ages.
- **Operate with transparency** in program decisions, policies, actions and reporting on progress to strengthen public trust and confidence in our efforts.
- **Use science-based decision-making and seek out innovative technologies and approaches** to support sound management decisions in a changing system.
- **Maintain a coordinated watershed-wide monitoring and research program** to support decision-making and track progress and the effectiveness of management actions.
- **Acknowledge, support and embrace local governments** and other local entities in watershed restoration, ~~and~~ protection and conservation activities.
- **Anticipate changing conditions**, including long-term trends in sea level, temperature, precipitation, land use and other variables.
- **Adaptively manage** at all levels of the Partnership to foster continuous improvement and reduce uncertainties in achieving progress.
- **Seek consensus** when making decisions.
- **Use place-based approaches**, where appropriate, that produce recognizable benefits to local communities while contributing to larger ecosystem goals.
- **Engage the public** to foster collaboration, increase the number and diversity of people who support and carry out the ~~conservation and restoration~~, protection and conservation activities necessary to achieve the Goals and Outcomes of the Agreement.
- **Explore Integrate using social science into a systems approach** to better understand and measure how human behavior can drive natural resource use, management and decision-making.
- **Promote environmental justice** through the meaningful involvement and fair treatment of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income, in the implementation of this Agreement.