

2015-2016

# BAY BAROMETER

Health and Restoration in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



**194 million**

adult female blue crabs were in the Bay in 2016, meeting 90 percent of the target of 215 million female crabs.



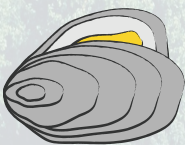
**92,315 acres**

of underwater grasses were in the Bay in 2015, meeting 50 percent of the 185,000-acre goal.



**7,623 acres**

of wetlands were created or reestablished on farmland between 2010 and 2015, meeting 9 percent of the 83,000-acre goal.



**Six**

Bay tributaries have oyster restoration projects underway, with a goal to bring this number to 10.



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

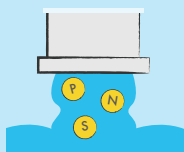
# Did you know?

## The Chesapeake Bay

The Chesapeake Bay is the nation's largest estuary, part of an interconnected ecosystem that supports countless plants, animals and habitats. More than 64,000 square miles of land make up the Bay's "watershed," the area of land that eventually drains into the Bay.

## Water Pollution

Too much nitrogen and phosphorus can fuel the growth of algae blooms that lead to low- or no-oxygen conditions harmful to underwater life. Excess sediment can suffocate shellfish and block sunlight from reaching aquatic plants.



Between October 2014 and September 2015, about 217 million pounds of nitrogen, 9.9 million pounds of phosphorus and 2.9 billion pounds of sediment entered the Bay; a 25 percent, 44 percent and 59 percent drop from the previous year, respectively.

## Conserved Lands

Protecting land from development protects water quality, supports fish and wildlife, maintains working farms and forests, preserves our history and provides opportunities for outdoor recreation.



Since 2010, more than one million acres of land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been permanently protected from development, meeting 50 percent of the two million-acre goal.

## Public Access

Public access to open space and waterways can improve public health and quality of life. Access to the water can also build personal connections with places that have shaped life in the region, boosting tourism and creating citizen stewards.



Between 2010 and 2015, 108 boat ramps, fishing piers and other public access sites were opened to the public, meeting 36 percent of the goal to add 300 new sites.

Want to learn more?  
Visit [www.chesapeakebay.net](http://www.chesapeakebay.net)

