

2024-2025 Stewardship Action Plan

Stewardship Outcome: Increase the number and diversity of trained and mobilized volunteers with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance the health of their local watersheds.

Stewardship Workgroup (SWG) Core Staff = coordinator, staffer(s), chair or co-chairs. SWG Small Team refers

Action #	Description of Step	Notes for development or implementation	Responsible Party or Parties	Geographic Location	Expected Timeline
MANAGEMENT APPROACH 1: Network Development -- Build a professional community through the growth and advancement of stewardship networks. Develop stewardship networks to increase novel and long-term partnerships and promote collective, emergent thinking and action.					
Action #	Description of Step	Notes for development or implementation	Responsible Party or Parties	Geographic Location	Expected Timeline
1.1	<p>Build out the Chesapeake Steward Map as our primary tool for identifying and connecting the members of the larger stewardship network in the watershed.</p> <p>A. Complete map development by September 2024;</p> <p>B. Increase the number of people on the map;</p> <p>C. Conduct webinars/presentations on how to use the map;</p> <p>D. Collaborate with other CBP workgroups who may find the map useful.</p>		<p>Stewardship Workgroup</p> <p>Contractors (Local Concepts LLC, sumApp), SWG Core Staff</p> <p>Steward Map Steering Committee, Map Ambassadors (SWG members helping to promote use of the Steward Map)</p> <p>Stewardship Workgroup, Map Ambassadors</p> <p>Stewardship Workgroup, Map Ambassadors</p>	<p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide/ internally to the CBP</p>	<p>2024-2025</p> <p>by September 2024</p> <p>2024-2025</p> <p>2024-2025</p> <p>2024-2025</p>
1.2	<p>Track and report on a more complete picture of stewardship, i.e., collect information about community-scale or group stewardship actions in addition to the information about individual actions that the stewardship indicator already collects. Communicate this clearer picture of the breadth of accomplishments of the various stewardship partners across the watershed.</p> <p>A. Use the Chesapeake Steward Map to identify stewardship practitioners across a broad variety of jurisdictions, program types, and subject areas. Conduct outreach to these individuals to ask them to report their accomplishments so that we can share success stories from across the watershed.</p> <p>B. Work with the CBP communications team to help tell success stories, to raise awareness of good progress, to further encourage more stewardship efforts, and contribute to creating more social norms around stewardship actions.</p> <p>C. Include this information and success stories in the stewardship resource hub.</p>	<p>Digitally and at relevant conferences, meetings, etc.</p> <p>See more information about the resource hub under Management Approach 2.</p>	<p>Stewardship Workgroup</p> <p>Steward Map Steering Committee, Map Ambassadors</p> <p>SWG Small Team, CBP Communications Team</p> <p>SWG Small Team, CBP Communications Team, Web Development Team</p>	<p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p>	<p>2025</p> <p>2024-2025</p> <p>2025</p> <p>2025</p>
1.3	<p>Work with the CBP Strategic Engagement Team to identify workgroups (WGs) and Outcomes that would benefit from implementing stewardship efforts toward their targets. Help those identified WGs to use the Chesapeake Steward Map to find partners as needed.</p>	<p>For example, assess whether the Forestry Workgroup could benefit from increased volunteer tree planting to advance the Tree Canopy Outcome, then potentially use the Map to assist them with finding partner organizations who can provide stewardship support.</p>	<p>SWG Small Team, CBP Strategic Engagement Team, Map Ambassadors, Other WGs and GITs</p>	<p>Watershed-wide</p>	<p>2024</p>
1.4	<p>Continue to use the Stewardship Workgroup quarterly meetings to convene Network partners and encourage collaboration, including more representation from accountable signatories and practitioners.</p>		<p>SWG Core Staff, Stewardship Workgroup</p>	<p>Watershed-wide</p>	<p>2024-2025</p>
1.5	<p>Connect and work with other established large networks, such as:</p> <p>A. National Park Service (NPS) Chesapeake Gateways;</p>		<p>Stewardship Workgroup</p> <p>NPS, SWG Small Team</p>	<p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide, Chesapeake Gateways sites and communities</p>	<p>2024-2025</p> <p>2024-2025</p>

	<p>B. Other NPS Networks such as: NPS parks in the watershed (58 sites) and their associated staff and Community Volunteer Ambassadors (CVA) program and network; NPS Gateways Network; NPS Connected Conservation / Conservation at Home; NPS Sustainability/ Climate Friendly Parks & Green Parks Plan;</p> <p>C. National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) networks;</p> <p>D. State park systems in each jurisdiction.</p>	<p>NPS, SWG Small Team</p> <p>SWG Small Team; potential NERRS partners at MD DNR and VA Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)</p> <p>SWG Small Team</p>	<p>Watershed-wide, NPS parks</p> <p>Chesapeake Bay NERRS programs / sites in MD and VA</p> <p>State parks in each jurisdiction</p>	<p>2025</p> <p>2025</p> <p>2024-2025</p>
--	---	--	--	--

For MA 1:	How do we expect the action to fill the priority factor or gap? What do you expect to happen when the action is completed?	What are the goals or metrics you will use to determine the impact of your action?	How will we collect and assess the data that we want to monitor and how will we use the data?	How will we communicate the results?
	<p>There is a need for improved coordination between stewardship programs at the local and regional level to work towards collective, larger-scale impacts. There is also a need to better track and share stewardship programs and accomplishments across the watershed. These actions are intended to address both of these needs, as well as to more accurately depict and celebrate the extensive body of stewardship work happening across the watershed. These actions focus on strengthening stewardship networks across the watershed to facilitate greater coordination, learning, and sharing across networks. Collecting and sharing program success stories can serve as inspiration for program replication or identify opportunities for scaling up. These actions will be ongoing, as network building never stops, however the expectation is that once these actions have been "completed" there will be a strong, robust, collaborative network of stewardship practitioners working together to achieve a collective impact on stewardship greater than the sum of their parts.</p>	<p>Multiple goals and metrics can be used to determine the impact of our actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of stewards who join the Chesapeake Steward Map will be documented and used to measure increased use over time. An initial baseline quantity of stewards on the map at the end of 2024 will additionally allow us to set a target number or rate of increasing users on the map which can be tracked through the tool's analytics. • Document whether the target is met to identify and work with at least one CBP workgroup that would benefit from increased collaboration with the Stewardship WG, and from using the Chesapeake Steward Map, by the end of 2024. • Track the number of success stories gathered, written, and shared on the future stewardship hub. • Qualitatively analyze whether the Stewardship Workgroup is more effectively collaborating by requesting feedback from members. • For action 1.5, track progress by assessing the number of new partners and connections with each network by the end of 2024 and 2025 respectively. 	<p>The Workgroup will continue populating the Chesapeake Steward Map with stewardship practitioners and Bay Program partners across the watershed. The map's analytics measuring tools will be used to measure the number of stewards who have joined the map and filled out the questionnaire to get connected to other stewards. Qualitatively, analyzing whether the Stewardship Workgroup is more effectively building and connecting a stewardship network across the watershed can be done by requesting feedback from members. Additionally, the web analytics for the platform that hosts the planned stewardship information hub will be used to assess whether map trainings, webinar recordings, and best practice resources are being accessed.</p>	<p>The Workgroup and the Chesapeake Steward Map Steering Committee will continue to conduct outreach to encourage Workgroup members to share the Map widely and engage participants to populate the map. Staff and Workgroup members will attend conferences, give presentations, and continue to conduct virtual outreach about the map; and work with the CBP Communications Team to share stewardship program success stories. Approach 2 details the intent to create an improved virtual hub of information and resources related to stewardship and the Stewardship Workgroup. The hub will first be developed with the Web Design Team, and then the hub's stewardship related tools, resources, guidance, and articles about successful programs will be publicized in a centralized location.</p>

MANAGEMENT APPROACH 2: Increase Individual and Community-Scale Stewardship by [tracking existing actions](#), [building a resource hub](#) for practitioners to easily access stewardship tools and guidance, and [promoting the use of resources](#) through trainings and sharing practitioner success stories.

Action #	Description of Step	Notes for development or implementation	Responsible Party or Parties	Geographic Location	Expected Timeline
2.1	<p>Continue and improve the tracking of individual and community-scale stewardship actions.</p> <p>A. Identify current efforts to track individual stewardship that already exist across the watershed; reduce unnecessary redundancy of data collection efforts and identify knowledge gaps.</p> <p>B. Continue to build up and improve the Chesapeake Behavior Change web-based tool.</p> <p>C. Revise the Stewardship Indicator/Survey.</p> <p>D. Develop a plan/methodology to identify what community-scale stewardship actions already exist across the watershed, to establish a baseline for future measurement of community-scale stewardship beyond 2025.</p>	<p>[this full action is under MA 4].</p>	<p>Stewardship Workgroup</p> <p>SWG Small Team</p> <p>Chesapeake Behavior Change Team</p> <p>Stewardship Indicator/Survey Team</p> <p>SWG Core Staff, SWG Small Team</p>	<p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p> <p>Watershed-wide</p>	<p>2024-2025</p> <p>2024-2025</p> <p>Begin planning steps in 2024, revise the survey 2025 2024</p>

2.2	Build/ expand a stewardship resource hub. Create a useful hub of information and tools for stewardship practitioners to use and reference to help them strategically improve and increase their individual and community-scale stewardship efforts.	The website on which this information will be centrally hosted is yet to be decided; we will decide on a digital location in collaboration with the CBP Communications Team and CBP Web Team. This information could be hosted on, for example, the Stewardship WG page of ChesapeakeBay.net or on ChesapeakeBehaviorChange.org . Some ideas for information and tools to gather and make available include: (A) Stewardship Index data and results presented on Chesapeake Behavior Change; (B) The Chesapeake Steward Map tool and guidance on how to effectively use it; (C) Outreach and engagement recommendations for working with local-level entities (informed by social science best practices); (D) Case studies of successful individual and community-scale stewardship actions, programs, and campaigns.	Stewardship Core Staff, SWG Small Team, CBP Web Development Team, CBP Communications Team	Watershed-wide	2024-2025
2.3	Promote the use of resources gathered on the resource hub.	This <i>could</i> include sub-actions such as: (1) creating a GIT-funded project to train people on how to use the ChesapeakeBehaviorChange tool; (2) continue to promote, populate, and teach people how to use the Chesapeake Steward Map; (3) Collect, write, share, and celebrate successful individual and community-scale actions, programs and campaigns. This could involve: • working with the CBP Communications Team to gather, write about, and share success stories; and/or • creating an award to present to a particularly successful stewardship practitioner/program at a regular event such as the Chesapeake Watershed Forum; and/or • getting practitioners to present about their successful programs at Workgroup meetings.	Stewardship Workgroup, CBP Communications Team	Watershed-wide	2024-2025

For MA 2:	How do we expect the action to fill the priority factor or gap? What do you expect to happen when the action is completed? There is a need to more accurately and adequately measure and track impacts and efforts of stewardship programs across the watershed. Actions 2.1 A-D will help to develop more adequate and accurate tracking methods. There is also a need to help stewardship programs achieve their maximum impact and increase their capacity. Actions 2.2 and 2.3 will focus on gathering, creating (where necessary), and promoting stewardship resources and best practices to address this need. Tracking stewardship actions, gathering/creating best practice resources, and promoting the use of resources will be ongoing. However, when these actions are "completed" we expect to have gathered and communicated a more accurate picture of the stewardship actions and programs across the watershed to the Chesapeake Bay Program, our partners and the public. Plus, an online resource hub will be available for stewardship practitioners and other interested parties to centrally access useful resources and tools.	What are the goals or metrics you will use to determine the impact of your action? Multiple goals and actions will be used to measure the impacts of our actions. Intentions are to continuously improve the Chesapeake Behavior Change web-based tool; to successfully revise the Stewardship Indicator/Survey; and to develop a plan/methodology to more accurately measure both individual and community-scale stewardship actions across the watershed. One goal is to build an easily accessible stewardship resource hub. Once this goal is achieved, its quantitative success can be assessed through website use analytics, and its qualitative success by requesting feedback from workgroup members and stewardship practitioners.	How will we collect and assess the data that we want to monitor and how will we use the data? Quantitative data can be collected about the Stewardship resource hub by utilizing web-based analytics; and qualitative data about the hub can be gained by gathering feedback from our intended audience, e.g., workgroup members, CBP partners, and stewardship practitioners.	How will we communicate the results? We will work with the CBP Communications Team to conduct outreach about the resource hub to relevant internal groups and external partners via email, presentations, etc.
------------------	---	--	--	--

MANAGEMENT APPROACH 3: Explore opportunities to innovate the Workgroup's structure and methods to facilitate strategic collaboration and support larger scale stewardship efforts across the watershed.

Action #	Description of Step	Notes for development or implementation	Responsible Party or Parties	Geographic Location	Expected Timeline
----------	---------------------	---	------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------

3.1	Determine a new way for the Stewardship Workgroup to function that amplifies the work of Workgroup members and partners.	Conversations with members of the Workgroup and other CBP Workgroup leadership have generated some ideas to restructure the SWG to increase efficacy. These ideas must be more solidly defined before actions towards implementation are decided upon or taken. Options for restructuring include, but are not limited to: (1) The Workgroup serves as a steering committee to a network; (2) The Workgroup acts as a peer resource/ team of experts/ think-tank; (3) The Workgroup increases state/signatory representation and integration.	Stewardship Workgroup, SWG Core Staff		2024-2025
3.2	Identify potential game changers: Seek out and A. Convene interested Workgroup members and other partners to begin exploring ideas, considering needs and possibilities on a larger scale. B. Learn more about theories of change and provide opportunities for workgroup members to do the same.	What would it take to bring about more substantive change across the watershed? How do theories of change work, what are some good resources about them, are they applicable for the Stewardship Workgroup's goals?	Stewardship Workgroup SWG Core Staff, Stewardship Workgroup Stewardship Workgroup, UMCES	Watershed-wide Watershed-wide	2024-2025 2024-2025 2024

For MA 3:	How do we expect the action to fill the priority factor or gap? What do you expect to happen when the action is completed?	What are the goals or metrics you will use to determine the impact of your action?	How will we collect and assess the data that we want to monitor and how will we use the data?	How will we communicate the results?
	The Stewardship Workgroup has received repeated feedback that the workgroup structure needs to be revamped in a way that increases efficacy. Since multiple restructuring ideas have been proposed, they must be thoroughly defined, researched, and evaluated before any significant changes are made to the workgroup. Additionally, multiple workgroup members have indicated an interest in identifying opportunities for catalytic innovation to much more significantly impact stewardship throughout the watershed. These actions are intended to intentionally begin the process for exploring ways to innovate both the workgroup structure and watershed.	Goals include identifying ways to innovate the workgroup structure to provide for improved function and effectiveness toward collaboration, working at larger scales efficiently, and amplifying stewardship work across the watershed; this will also inform guidance for expanding watershed-wide stewardship methods/programs. Success will be evident if there is a marked increase in the number and diversity of stewards engaged in efforts across the watershed as reported annually by partners or in future Stewardship Index surveys; and if we are able to identify and document replication of successful stewardship programs in the region at larger scales.	The Workgroup will informally collect information through the network of stewardship practitioners engaged with the Workgroup and through those who have joined the Chesapeake Steward Map. Formal collection of data will occur again in 2025 through the Stewardship Index, pending approval to administer the survey and funding to support the data collection and assessment.	The results of this approach will be shared with workgroup members and the larger CBP through various means, including discussion in workgroup, GIT and other meetings; through the regular adaptive management processes and reporting to CBP leadership (Strategy Review System); as well as in coordination with the CBP Communications Team using press releases, Chesapeake Progress, etc.

MANAGEMENT APPROACH 4: Prioritize Equity – Create a more inclusive, welcoming approach to building stewardship by tending to terminology/language, practices, and systems that can help to remove barriers to participation and result in more effective means to engage a more significant portion of the watershed's population in appropriate, meaningful ways.

Action #	Description of Step	Notes for development or implementation	Responsible Party or Parties	Geographic Location	Expected Timeline
4.1	Use the Stewardship Index survey data and analysis to better understand our audiences and what motivates them to take action. Revise the indicator to encompass an expanded definition of stewardship to be more inclusive of more audiences, and revise the survey accordingly.		Stewardship Index Survey Team, SWG Core Staff	Watershed-wide	Begin steps in 2024, revised indicator established 2025
4.2	Provide guidance on recommended approaches to embrace equity in our practice and support more effective, inclusive stewardship campaigns for more audiences.	For example, reconsider the use of terms such as "behavior change" to be more inclusive of audiences who view the phrase negatively; potentially rebrand Chesapeake Behavior Change or find new ways to frame/talk about CBC that resonate with audiences.	Stewardship Workgroup	Watershed-wide	2024 and ongoing

For MA 4:	How do we expect the action to fill the priority factor or gap? What do you expect to happen when the action is completed?	What are the goals or metrics you will use to determine the impact of your action?	How will we collect and assess the data that we want to monitor and how will we use the data?	How will we communicate the results?
------------------	---	---	--	---

<p>If we are to increase the number and diversity of local stewards that support and carry out conservation and restoration activities that benefit the Bay, we must be inclusive and equitable in our approaches and practices. This approach and these actions address this need. Equity work is ongoing, but when this action is "completed" within the timeframe of this plan, we hope to: (1) have a means of measuring stewardship that is more inclusive towards recognizing the different types of stewardship actions taken by the diverse residents of the watershed (e.g., people who do not own homes cannot install rainbarrels but could, for example, take steps to reduce air pollution such as by carpooling or using public transportation); and (2) improve equity in our practice by first doing the work to understand our audiences, what motivates them and what kind of support will help them to be able to practice stewardship.</p>	<p>One goal is to revise the indicator in a way that is useful to us and informative for data collection, utilizing a more inclusive definition of stewardship and associated activities that "count." Another goal of the revision is to create a more informative scoring method for results, <i>i.e.</i>, showing different factors' scores separately versus rolling all data up into one numeric score. This will lead to a more nuanced picture of stewardship across the watershed. This will also create a deeper understanding of watershed residents' stewardship actions and willingness to take action. This knowledge will help us more effectively focus outreach and engagement to increase the number and diversity of stewards across the watershed.</p>	<p>We will collect data through the Stewardship Index Survey after revisions are made. Additionally, we can use web analytics to track how many times digitally shared equity guidance is accessed (e.g., email click through rates and web click/download rates on the future stewardship hub).</p>	<p>The results of this approach will be shared with workgroup members and the larger CBP through various means, including discussion in workgroup, GIT and other meetings; through the regular adaptive management processes and reporting to CBP leadership (Strategy Review System); as well as in coordination with the CBP Communications Team using press releases, Chesapeake Progress, etc.</p>
--	---	--	--