Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

February 28, 2024

Beyond 2025 Symposium

Healthy Watersheds

Hello!

Agenda

1. Overview
2. Approach
3. Recommendations
4. Cross-Cutting
5. Thank you/Credits
6. Discussion

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Overview

Healthy Watersheds

Vision

We envision a more comprehensive and holistic approach to a healthy Chesapeake Bay watershed where protection, improvement, restoration, and stewardship actions are deployed strategically, achieve ecological function, and align with state and/or local priorities to meet Bay program goals.

Vanguard Idea

Integrate a more holistic and people-centric approach to improving and maintaining watershed health as a foundational goal of the partnership

Moving towards healthy watersheds

Data, Tools, Monitoring

Planning

Community Engagement

Watershed Actions

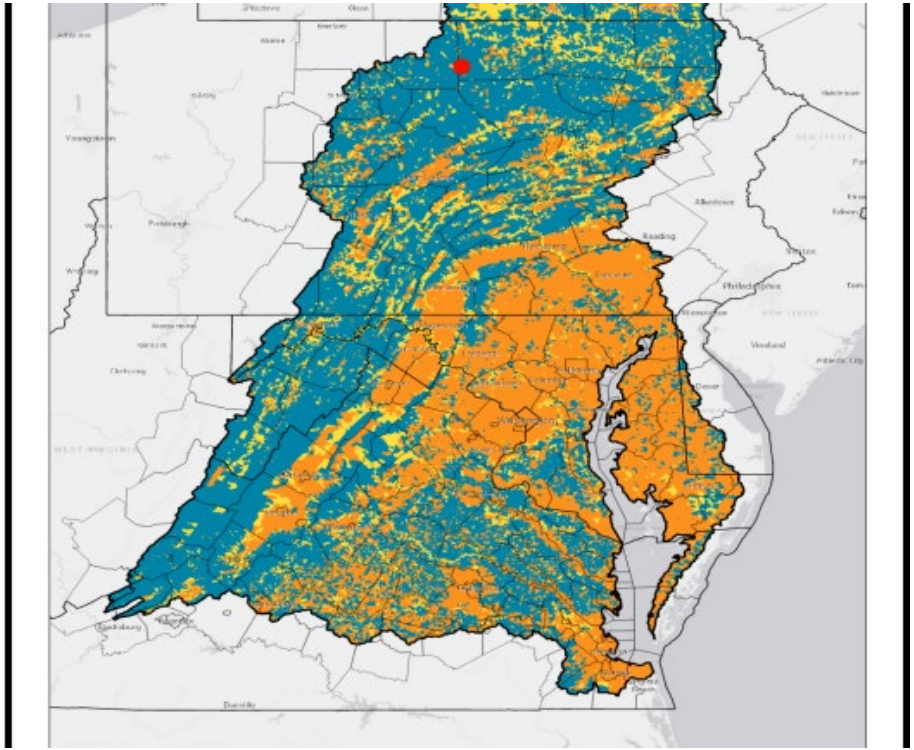
Accountability

Habitat
Climate
EJ

What is a healthy watershed?

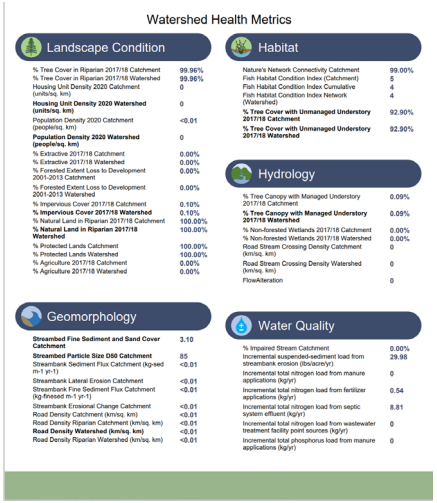
A healthy watershed can be defined as an area draining to a stream, lake or wetland where natural land cover supports the dynamic processes, habitats, and water quality conditions able to support healthy and climate-resilient ecosystems and communities.

Data, Tools and Monitoring



CHWA

- Stream Health
- Landscape Integrity



https://gis.chesapeakebay.net/chwa/?page=Overall

Planning

Many scales: Local, Regional, State, Basin-wide

Green Infrastructure Concepts

Integrate into existing plans

State Plans

- **Wildlife (SWAPs)**
- **Forests (SFAPs)**
- **Recreation (SCORPs)**
- **Water (Nonpoint Source Plans)**

Community and Partner Engagement

DE Grant Assistance Program
D.C. City Council, COG, DOEE
MD Sea Grant watershed restoration specialists
NY Regional Economic Development Organizations
PA Community Clean Water Action Plan Coordinators
VA Assoc. of Planning District Commissions
WV Regional Planning Councils

Progress Through Partnerships

On October 11, 2023, DEP's Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management (BWRNSM) hosted the first Clean Water Gathering of State Program Action Leaders and Countywide Action Planning (CAP) leaders. Over 80 partners, representing county, state and federal organizations, came together to celebrate successes and discuss high level needs, issues and challenges to continued progress. BWRNSM's Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division is using the recommendations from this meeting to build collaborative county/state partner Progress Teams that focus on "Strategies for Success" that address challenges and build on successes from Phase 3 WIP and CAP efforts.

Circuit Riders/Coordinators

- Facilitation
- Communication
- Planning
- Funding/Finance
- Project Management
- Watershed Action
- Tracking

Watershed Actions

- Land Protection
- Stewardship
- Restoration

Accountability Framework

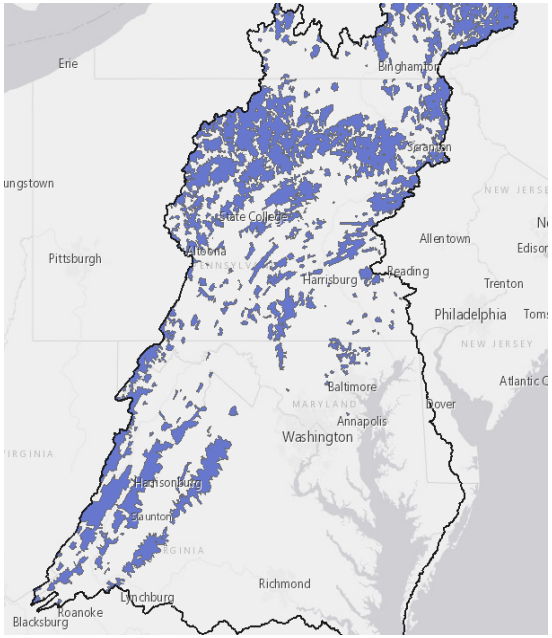
- Prevention of pollution
- Habitat for Living Resources
- Condition of Living Resources
- Thresholds for impervious surface or forest cover
- Stewardship of our investments

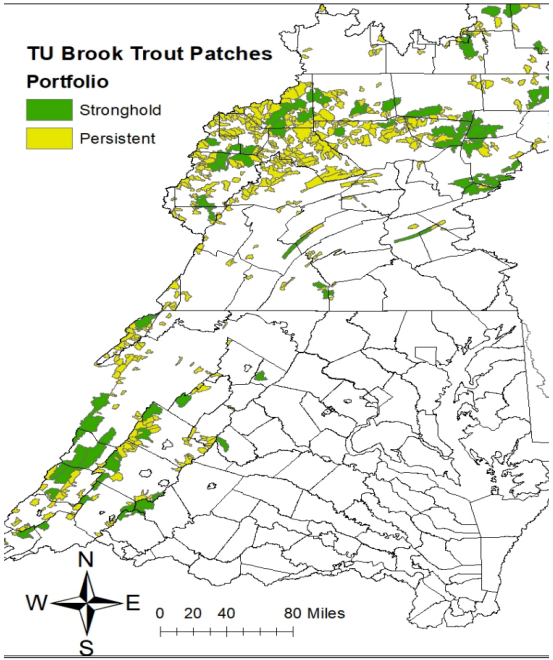
- Pollution reduction (N, P, S)
- Count Practices
- WIPs designed for TMDL

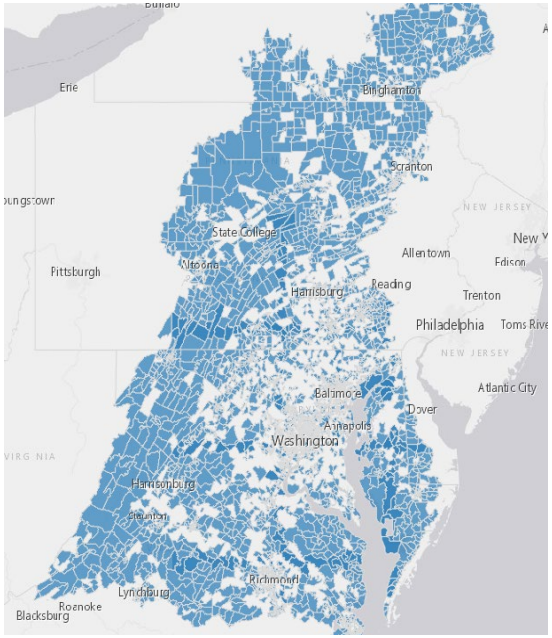
Shift toward counting outcomes rather than practices

Integration

Brook Trout







Habitat **Climate** **EJ**

Recommendations

1. **Data, Tools and Monitoring – Characterize Watershed Health**
2. **Planning – Green Infrastructure at multiple scales**
3. **Community Engagement – Capacity for coordinators**
4. **Watershed Actions – Accelerate and elevate**
    - Land Conservation
    - Stewardship
    - Restoration
5. **Accountability – Outcomes vs. Outputs**

Integrate Habitat, Climate and DEIJ into above recommendations.

“Chesapeake Bay Program partners envision an environmentally and economically sustainable Chesapeake Bay watershed with clean water, abundant life, conserved lands and access to the water, a vibrant cultural heritage, and a diversity of engaged stakeholders.”

Credits

A special thanks to:

- Katie Brownson
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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Thank you!

Any questions? Jeff Lerner, HWGIT chair
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