



# **MAINTAIN HEALTHY WATERSHEDS GOAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM (GIT 4)**

**HWGIT & PLWG JOINT MEETING  
OCTOBER 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2024**





## AGENDA

1. GIT Background, Scope, & Purpose
2. Updates to the Management Strategy & Workplan  
– *Highlighting Areas of Overlap with the Protected Lands Workgroup*
3. Overview of HWGIT Tools and Resources
4. Connecting Conservation Efforts to Stream and Watershed Health
5. HW Beyond 2025 Recommendations
6. Projects & Opportunities for Future Collaboration



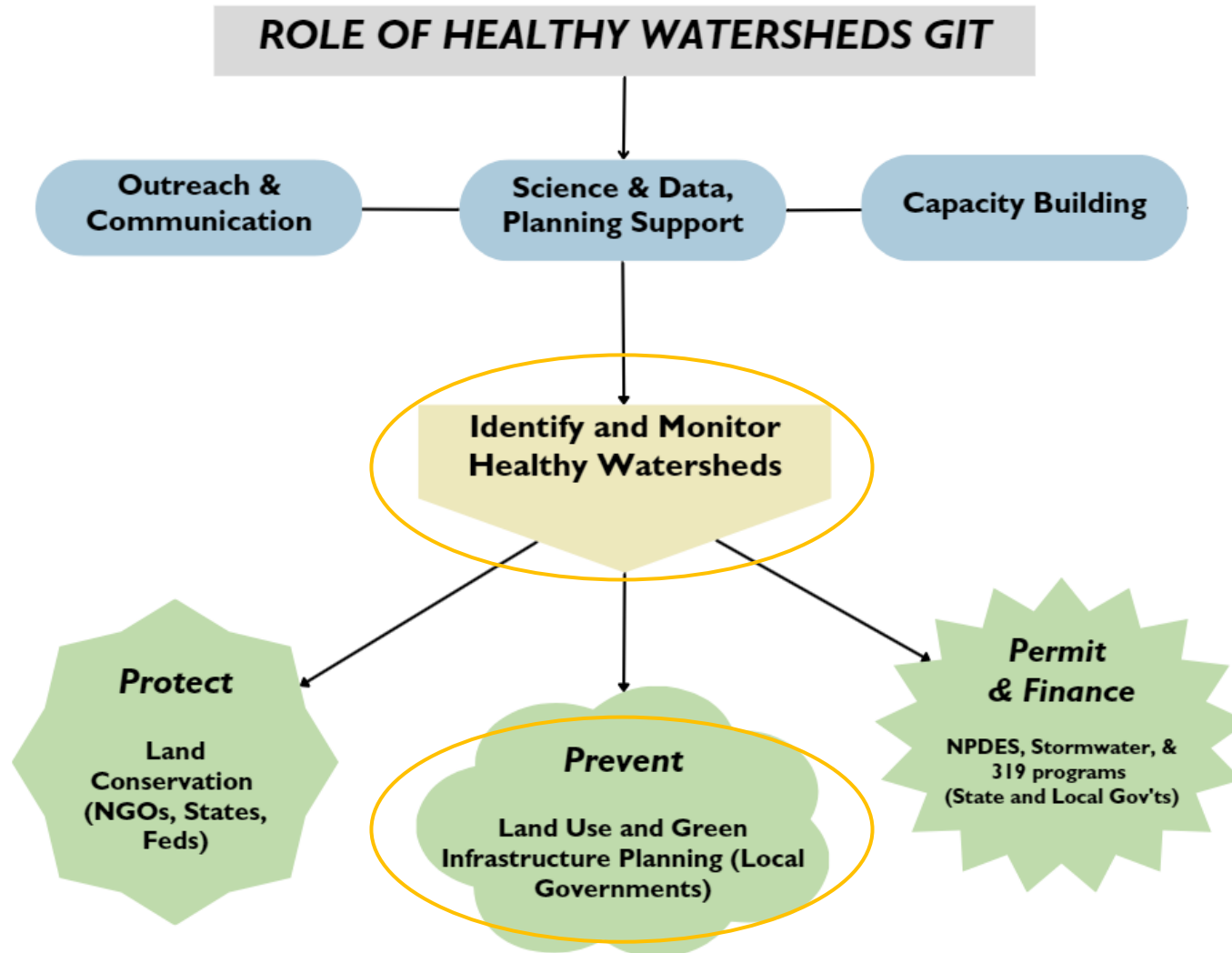
# UNDERSTANDING THE HWGIT WITHIN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

## How We're Organized

Our unique partnership is organized into committees, goal implementation teams, workgroups and action teams, which you can learn more about below. Learn how they function through our [governance document](#).



# HEALTHY WATERSHEDS SCOPE & PURPOSE



## **Goal:**

Sustain healthy waters and watersheds recognized for their high quality and/or high ecological value.

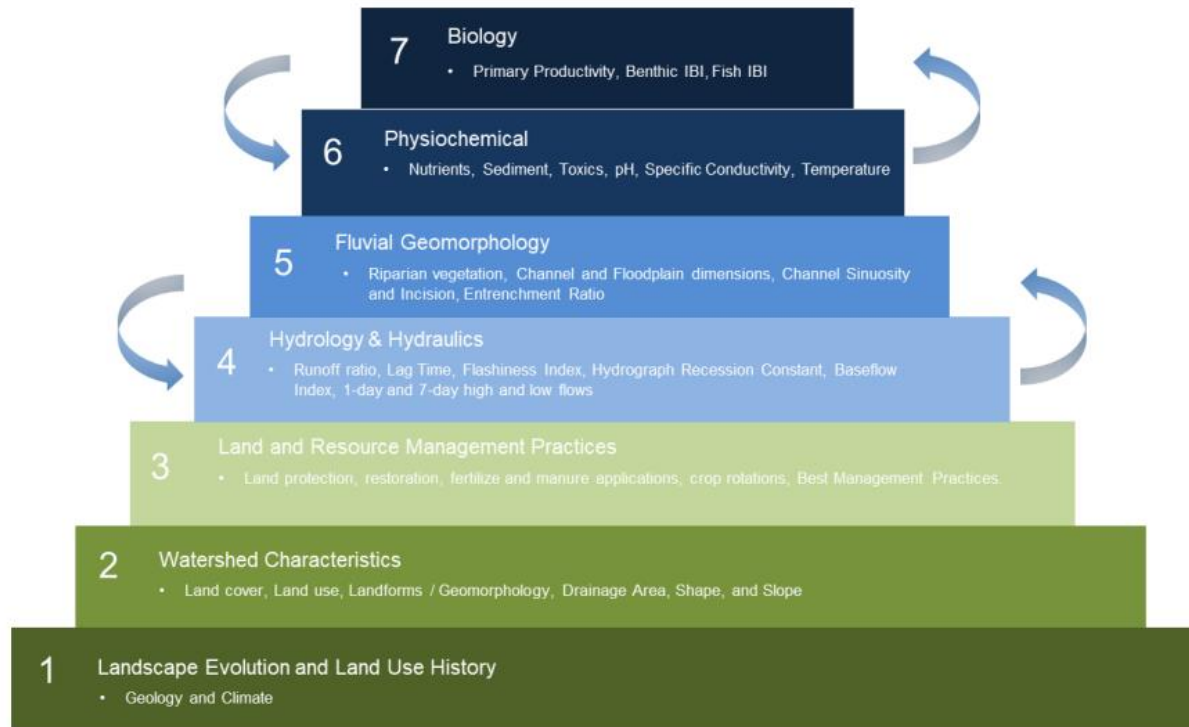
## **Outcome:**

100 percent of healthy waters and watersheds remain healthy.



# HWGIT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & WORK PLAN (2024-2025)

## *Watershed-Stream Functional Pyramid*



- 1) Align outcomes, science, data, policies, and management approaches related to healthy waters and watersheds
- 2) Track the status of healthy waters and watersheds
- 3) Strengthen state and local capacity to maintain healthy waters and watersheds
- 4) Strategically inform land conservation decisions to maintain healthy waters and watersheds



## **HWGIT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & WORK PLAN**

### ***OVERLAP WITH THE PLWG***

- 1) **1.2** Identify shared goals, strategies, and information sources across workgroups and goal teams.
- 2) **2.2** Populate a “date of establishment” field for 90% of all protected lands records in each major Bay jurisdiction.
- 3) **3.1** Prototype an approach to assess local land protection and planning capacity to maintain stream and watershed health while working with regional conservation partnerships.  
**3.2** Leverage the value-added capabilities of the Chesapeake Bay Partnership to improve local capacity to plan for green infrastructure, protect and maintain stream and watershed health. Assist with promoting tools such as the [Protect Local Waterways Guide](#)
- 4) **4.1** Provide information on stream and watershed health and associated ecosystem services to elected officials, land use planning staff, state agencies, local governments, and conservation organizations.  
**4.2** Encourage conservation in healthy watersheds by altering the incentive structure affecting land conservation decisions





## **HWGIT TOOLS AND RESOURCES:**

### ***MECHANISMS TO ENCOURAGE TARGETED CONSERVATION EFFORTS***

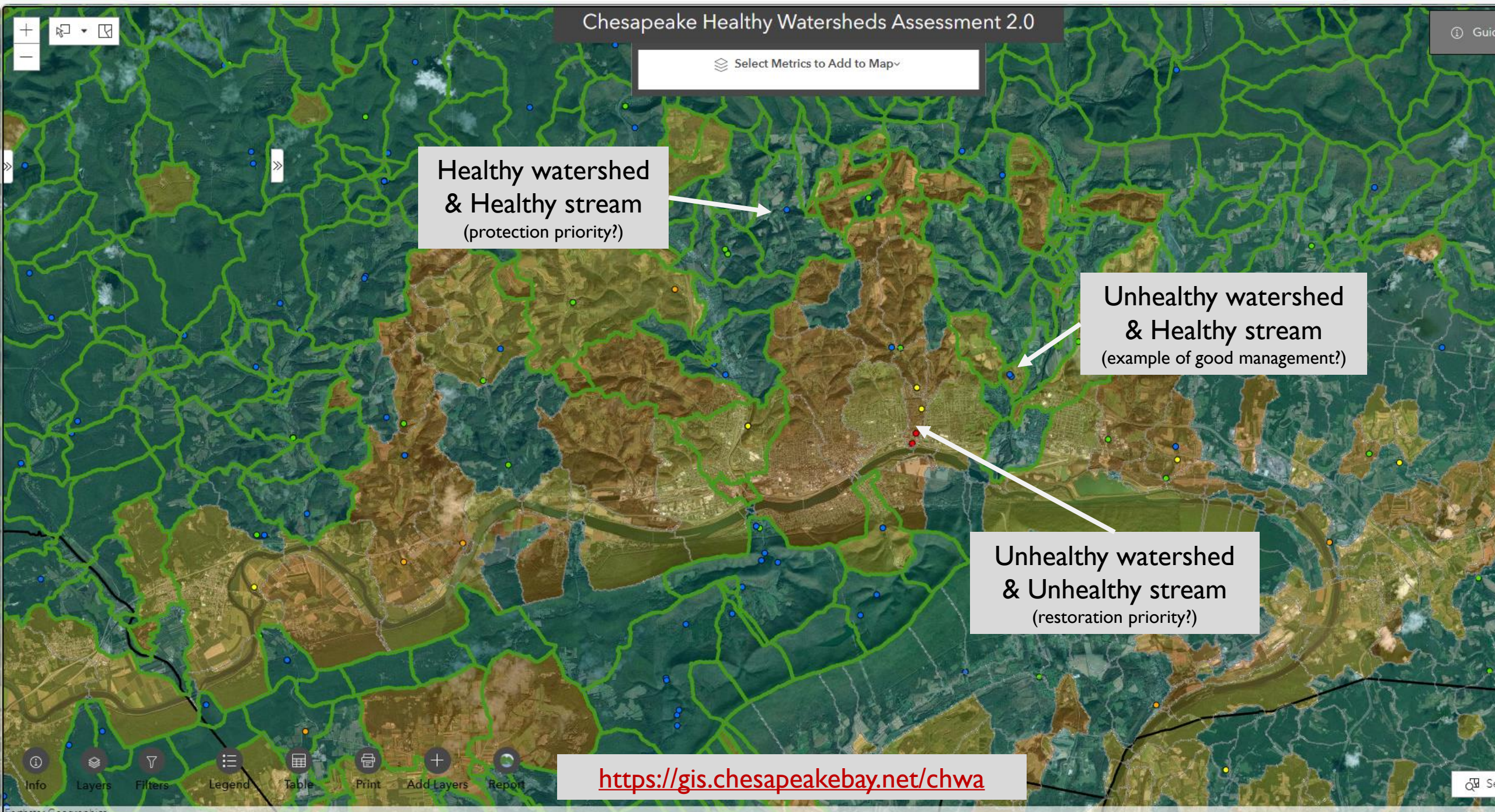
## **Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment 2.0**

- Predicted model of stream health based on 60 watershed metrics
- Local governments can use the CHWA 2.0 to better understand what's happening in their water and serve as an early warning sign if watersheds start to degrade
- Helps identify areas more resilient or vulnerable to climate change impacts
- Provides supporting information for strategies to protect and maintain watershed health
- [Link to CHWA 2.0 tool](#)

## **Conservation Land-Use Policy Toolkit**

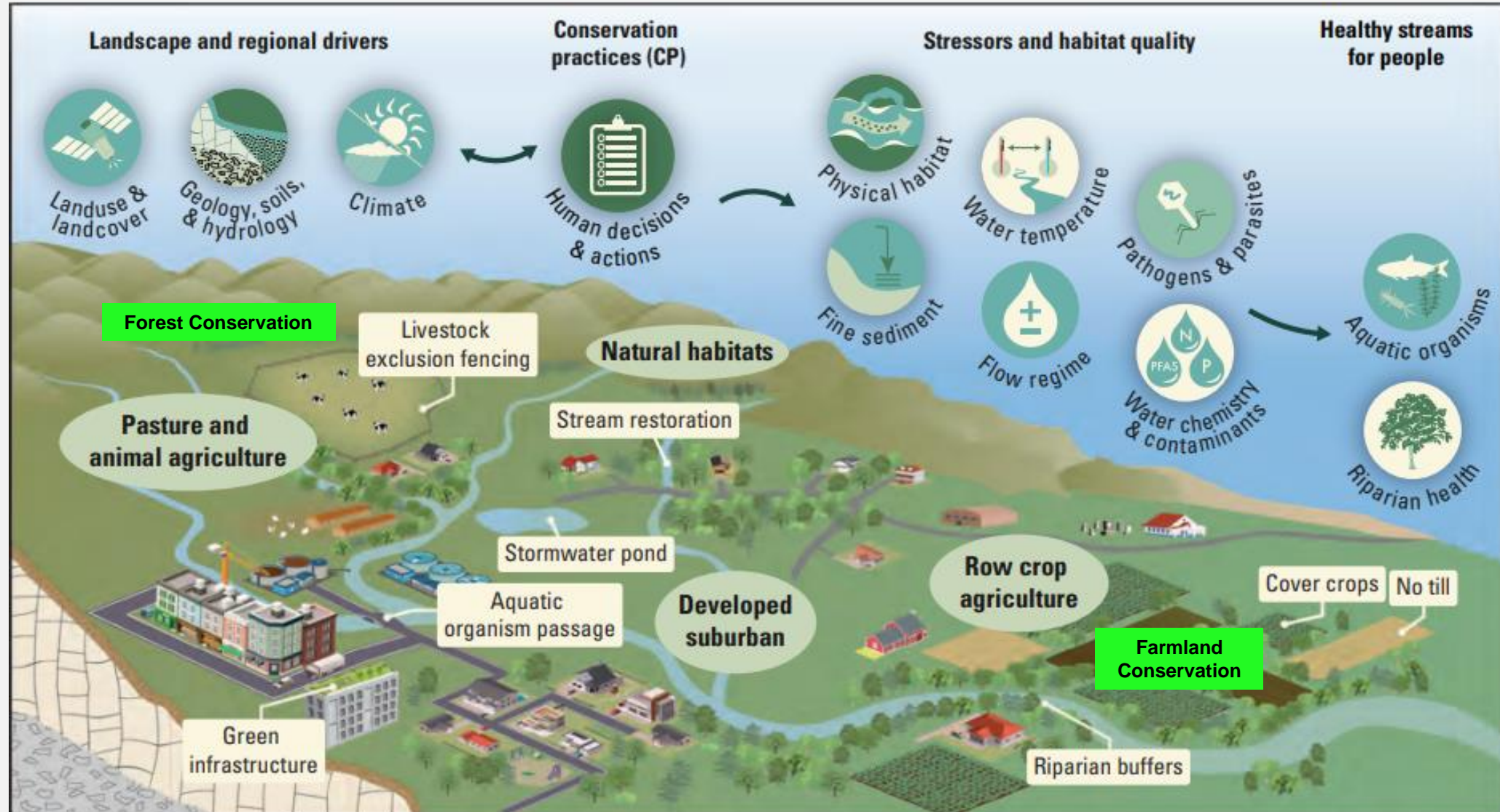
- Provides local governments in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed with information about land use policy tools they can use to slow the conversion of farmland, forestland, and wetlands.
- [Link to tool kit resources](#)







# CONSERVATION, RESTORATION, AND STREAM HEALTH





# HW BEYOND 2025 RECOMMENDATIONS



## Data, Tools and Monitoring:

Provide **consistent and integrated watershed-wide characterization and monitoring of stream and watershed health** and land conservation efforts.

Provide science, data, and tools to target and prioritize land conservation and stream restoration at multiple scales.



## Planning:

Provide science, data, models, and tools to enable **green infrastructure planning** (e.g., forests, farms, and open space as well as GSI) to protect watershed health at multiple scales.



## Local Engagement and Capacity:

Create and support a **network of networks** enabling two-way communication with local and NGO implementers to share needs, information, and data and to improve the functionality and utility of tools.



## Watershed Actions:

**Integrate land conservation, management, and stewardship more explicitly** into the goals of the Bay Program



## Measure Watershed Outcomes:

**Quantify ecosystem services** and integrate them into restoration and conservation decision processes.





## **PROJECTS & FUTURE COLLABORATION:**

### ***HWGIT IDEAS***

- 1) Set future land conservation goals – utilize HWGIT tools to support the PLWVG in identifying and targeting areas for protection related to watershed health.
- 2) Monitor the status of healthy waters and watersheds by tracking protected lands in these areas.
- 3) Create fact sheets to inform states about critical areas in need to help prioritize conservation efforts more effectively.
- 4) Align land use planning with conservation goals.
- 5) Increase local and state capacity in healthy watershed areas.
- 6) Attribute Protected Lands Data with metrics relevant to climate resiliency and DEIJ.
- 7) Work with the PLWVG on the HW Beyond 2025 recommendations.



## PROJECTS & FUTURE COLLABORATION: *BETWEEN THE HWGIT & PLWG*

### **Coordinating Tools and Resources for Conservation:**

- a) **Ecosystem Services Mapping:** Create a map and/or language outlining ecosystem services throughout the watershed.
- b) **High-Resolution Data Use:** Utilize high-resolution data to differentiate wetland conservation from non-wetland forested conservation to update PLWG sub-goals.
- c) **Conservation Status Fact Sheets:** Create fact sheets to inform states about critical areas in need to help prioritize conservation efforts more effectively.
- d) **Tracking Watershed Health:** Monitor the status of healthy waters and watersheds by tracking protected lands in these areas.
- e) **CCP Narrative Toolkit:** Develop tools for communicating conservation messaging.

### **Setting Future Land Conservation Goals:**

- a) **Targeted Conservation:** Using HWGIT tools to support the PLWG in identifying and targeting areas for protection related to watershed health, focusing on existing healthy watersheds.
- b) **Connecting Land Use Planning and Conservation Goals:** Align land use planning with conservation objectives.
- c) **HW Beyond 2025 Recommendations:** Collaborate with the PLWG to advance the goals outlined in the HW Beyond 2025 recommendations.
- d) **Incorporating climate and DEIJ priorities:** Attribute Protected Lands Data with metrics relevant to climate resiliency and DEIJ.

### **Increase Coordination and Communication:**

- a) **Learning Opportunities:** Coordinate learning opportunities among workgroups and at partner events.
- b) **Increasing Capacity:** Enhance local and state capacity in healthy watershed areas.