

Improve the resilience of communities to key regional climate vulnerabilities. (Recommendation 2)

This approach would help mitigate impacts to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed exacerbated by climate change by helping communities protect water quality and habitat while adapting to climate change impacts such as sea level rise, extreme heat, and changing rainfall patterns. Given the inextricable link between natural systems and the human communities across the Chesapeake Bay watershed, climate considerations need to address impacts to both habitats and people. This approach would make the work of the Chesapeake Bay Program more locally relevant and could increase buy-in and participation while allowing for new partnerships.

Impact to how we work: Consider socio-ecological impacts of climate change and how community-level resilience intersects with holistic Bay health.

- Prioritize efforts and resources for adaptation projects in communities most vulnerable to ever-increasing risks or with highest cumulative risk.
- Identify ways to better incentivize community adaptation through our crediting and accountability framework with an emphasis on practices with multiple benefits (water quality, flood protection, habitat, greenspace, etc.) to communities.
- Support research into long-term monitoring of BMPs and other adaptation measures to evaluate real-world performance for community resilience in addition to Bay Program goals.
- Improve involvement and outreach by directly engaging communities and supporting efforts to build networks of practice at different scales throughout the watershed.

Impact on Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement: This approach could include consideration of impacts to community resilience and adaptation in other outcome management strategies, creation of a community-level adaptation outcome and principle, and development metrics towards tracking the progress.

General Level of Effort: High

- Additional resources and capacity would be required to provide technical assistance to communities in order to align community resilience priorities with opportunities associated with water quality, climate adaptation, living resources, etc.

How to Strategies (Phase 2 Actions):

- Cultivate climate-resilient communities by building community capacity to adapt to climate change (i.e., increasing adaptive capacity).
- Promote nature-based solutions to improve infrastructure to withstand the effects of climate change and incorporate into community plans and policies.
- Advance modeling and monitoring of flood impacts for coastal and inland communities.
- Support efforts to develop effective and equitable policies for relocation that account for cultural, economic, and social constraints at the individual and community level.
- Facilitate meaningful engagement with climate-vulnerable and climate justice communities.
- Support development of downscaled climate projections that help communities understand the future impacts of climate change across multiple indicators.
- Broaden CBP scope of climate justice to include public health and other aspects that matter to stakeholders; establish metrics related to community climate vulnerability/resilience.