



Chesapeake Bay Program

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News Release

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Chesapeake Executive Council Releases Plans to Restore and Protect Bay Watershed

Washington, D.C. – This afternoon, the [Chesapeake Executive Council](#) announced the release of twenty-five [management strategies](#) outlining the Chesapeake Bay Program’s plans for achieving the goals and outcomes of the landmark [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), advancing the restoration, conservation and protection of the Bay, its tributaries and the surrounding lands. To further accelerate these efforts the Executive Council also:

- Passed two resolutions: 1) Endorsing the recommendations of the State Riparian Forest Buffer Task Force and committing to collaborative efforts across the watershed that will increase the miles of forests on agricultural lands, where they can filter runoff and send clean freshwater to rivers and streams; and 2) Calling for the Bay Program hold a symposium on innovative financing opportunities for environmental restoration efforts.
- Agreed to two joint letters supporting: 1) Improvements to programs to keep livestock out of watershed streams; and 2) Appropriations of all funding in the President’s 2016 budget for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies, which includes more than \$33 million going toward the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal.

Executive Council members—including Virginia Governor and Executive Council Chair Terry McAuliffe, Maryland Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford, District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy, Chesapeake Bay Commission Chair L. Scott Lingamfelter (Virginia Delegate) and representatives from Delaware and Pennsylvania—met to review the state of the Bay Program and finalize the strategies at their annual meeting, held at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.

“Our partnership to restore the Bay continues to move forward” said Executive Council Chair, Governor Terry McAuliffe. “We recognize the significant challenges we face and look forward to meeting them head on to ensure the restoration of our ecologic and economic treasure, the Chesapeake Bay.”

Each management strategy addresses one or more of the Watershed Agreement’s thirty-one measurable, time-bound outcomes that will help create a healthy watershed by: lowering nutrient and sediment pollution; ensuring our waters are free of the effects of toxic contaminants on living resources and human health; sustaining blue crabs, oysters and forage fish; restoring wetlands, underwater grass beds and other habitats; conserving farmland and forests; boosting public access to and education about the Bay and its tributaries; and increasing the climate resiliency of the watershed’s resources, habitats and communities.

These strategies represent a collaborative effort between Bay Program partners, academic institutions, local governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses and citizens in defining how we will accomplish

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the Agreement's goals and outcomes. In addition to signatory representatives, citizens and stakeholders from throughout the watershed participated in the development of the management strategies and submitted hundreds of comments during the public review period. In the continued work toward accomplishing the goals of the Watershed Agreement, Bay Program partners are currently drafting two-year work plans that summarize the specific commitments, short-term actions and resources required for success.

In [June 2014, Executive Council members signed](#) the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, with the vision of fostering an environmentally and economically sustainable watershed with clean water, abundant life, conserved lands and access to the water, a vibrant cultural heritage, and a diversity of engaged citizens and stakeholders. For the first time, the Bay's headwater states of Delaware, New York and West Virginia participated as signatories and full partners in the Bay Program and our watershed-wide work.

This year prior to the annual meeting, Executive Council Chair, Governor McAuliffe, met to discuss recommendations of local government, citizen and scientific communities with the council's three advisory committees. The Citizens Advisory Committee, the Local Government Advisory Committee and the Science and Technical Advisory Committee annual reports to the top Bay Program leadership, as well as all other materials from the day, are available on the [Council's 2015 meeting page](#).

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The Chesapeake Bay Program is a regional partnership that has coordinated and conducted the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since its creation in 1983. Members of the Chesapeake Executive Council include the governors of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia; the mayor of the District of Columbia; the chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission; and the administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of the federal government. This group is responsible for setting the Chesapeake Bay Program's policy agenda. To learn more, visit www.chesapeakebay.net.