

# How do we operationalize Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) in our work?

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# Outline for Today

1. Brief overview of three documents that will guide our work to operationalize DEIJ in the CBP partnership
  - CBP DEIJ Strategy
  - Executive Council DEIJ Statement
  - PSC DEIJ Action Statement
2. Discussion

# 1. THE CBP DEIJ STRATEGY

## Restoration from the Inside Out: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay Program

Developed by Skeo Solutions, April 2020

- 59 pages long
- 20 broad recommendations
- Detailed action plans with 48 actions

### Restoration from the Inside Out:

A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategy  
for the Chesapeake Bay Program

April 2020



**Chesapeake Bay Program**

*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

*Developed by Skeo Solutions  
for the Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup  
of the Stewardship Goal Implementation Team*



# THE DEIJ STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

Examples of recommendations from the strategy include:

- ▶ Updating authorizing and governance documents (e.g. the Governance and Management Framework) as well as **management strategies** to include language that reflects DEIJ priorities.
- ▶ Increasing diversity and inclusion for staff, appointees, and volunteer bodies.
- ▶ **Building relationships** with underrepresented groups and **incorporating these leaders into decision-making and implementation.**
- ▶ Advancing DEIJ in **management strategies and workplans, implementation and grantmaking**

# 2. The CBP DEIJ STATEMENT

- Signed by the Chesapeake Executive Council in August
- 2 pages long
- Meant to be an “evergreen” document

## Chesapeake Executive Council *Statement in support of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice*



### CBP Vision from the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

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 citizens and stakeholders.

### Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice

Just as natural ecosystems depend on biodiversity to thrive, the long-term success of the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort depends on the equitable, just and inclusive engagement of all communities living throughout the watershed. This means to include a wide range of people of all races, ethnicities, income levels, faiths, genders, ages, sexual orientations and disabilities, along with other diverse groups, as well as promoting equal employment opportunities and expanding the diversity of the workforce and participants in restoration and conservation activities. For this effort to be successful it will require us to honor the culture, history and social concerns of local populations and communities.

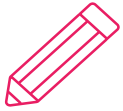
The Chesapeake Bay Program partners acknowledge that individually, each partner has established policies and programs with the goal of advancing environmental and public health protection for all. Through these programs, the seven Bay jurisdictions, EPA, other federal agencies, Chesapeake Bay Commission and partners are working to address and advance diversity and environmental justice issues. We also recognize that there is more we must do as a united partnership, and for this reason we explicitly and tangibly commit to diversity, equity, inclusion and environmental justice. Partners will continue to build on this work, sharing best practices, and with the acknowledgement that this work may indeed look different across the jurisdictions and space represented as a partnership, we will move forward together. Further, we recognize the importance of addressing racism and other forms of discrimination in our efforts, structures and acts of daily practices.

The impacts of discrimination and continuing environmental, economic and health disparities disproportionately burden underserved communities, including those of color, low-income status and indigenous populations. This limits access to clean water and air, fish, wildlife and outdoor recreation, and results in inequitable impacts on the human health and the surrounding environment for these communities. Disparities are only exacerbated by such environmental factors as climate change and pollution, and public health emergencies like the COVID -19 pandemic.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partners believe the full diversity of people who live, work and recreate in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have a right to benefit from, and help guide, the future of an environmentally and economically sustainable Chesapeake Bay watershed with clean water and air, abundant fish and wildlife, conserved lands, access to the water and a vibrant cultural heritage.

We reaffirm our commitment to embrace diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in all areas of the Chesapeake Bay Program to achieve our mission. As a partnership, we commit to:

- Strengthen and improve diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in our organizational structure, leadership, policies, strategic goals, restoration and conservation activities, workplans and program delivery, including guidance on including DEI and environmental justice criteria in grant targeting and evaluations.
- Engage, recruit and retain leadership, staff, appointees, interns and volunteers that reflect the diversity of people living within the Chesapeake Bay region.
- Foster a culture of inclusion, respect and mutual learning within the Chesapeake Bay Program by leading organizational change and empowering new voices and perspectives in our outreach, engagement and internal decision-making.
- Following consultation and coordination, determine how to best include federally recognized tribes in the Bay watershed in partnership activities.
- Develop long-term relationships, partnerships and increased collaborative planning with organizations led by and primarily serving communities of color and other underrepresented populations that result in informed and mutually beneficial decisions and outcomes.
- Ensure the benefits of our science, restoration and partnership programs are distributed in a fair and equitable manner without adverse, disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations, especially those of lower economic status, indigenous, historically underrepresented communities and people of color.
- Continue to learn and share best practices as an organization in our evolving understanding of how best to promote diversity, equity, inclusion and justice.



# NEW **DEIJ STATEMENT** SIGNED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>

The Executive Council DEIJ Statement reaffirms the CBP's **commitment to embrace DEIJ in all areas of the Chesapeake Bay Program** to achieve our mission.

It articulates our commitment to :

- ▶ Strengthen DEIJ in our organizational structure, policies, goals, and activities;
- ▶ Engage, recruit and retain leadership, staff, appointees, interns and volunteers that reflect the diversity of people living within the Chesapeake Bay region;
- ▶ Foster a culture of inclusion, respect and mutual learning;
- ▶ Develop long-term relationships, partnerships and increased collaborative planning with underrepresented stakeholder groups;
- ▶ Ensure the benefits of our science, restoration and partnership programs are distributed in a fair and equitable manner;
- ▶ Continue to learn and share best practices as an organization.

# 3.

## PRINCIPALS' STAFF COMMITTEE DEIJ ACTION STATEMENT

- Signed by the CBP Principals' Staff Committee in August
- 3 pages long
- Includes 5 actionable and timebound commitments



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice

### Action Statement

Chesapeake Bay Program Principals' Staff Committee

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is home to diverse communities with rich variation in culture, demographics and perspectives. It is important to embrace this diversity and promote the meaningful involvement, treatment and inclusiveness of all people in the implementation of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. In doing so, we will be better able to achieve healthy local streams and lands, as well as a vibrant Chesapeake Bay that is shared by all people throughout the watershed.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partners acknowledge that individually, each partner has established policies and programs with the goal of advancing environmental and public health protection for all. Through these programs, the seven Bay jurisdictions, Environmental Protection Agency, other federal agencies, the Chesapeake Bay Program Commission and partners are working to address and advance diversity and environmental justice issues. We also recognize that there is more we must do as a united partnership, and for this reason we explicitly and tangibly commit to diversity, equity, inclusion and environmental justice. Partners will continue to build on this work, sharing best practices, and with the acknowledgement that this work may indeed look different across the jurisdictions and space represented as a partnership, we will move forward together. Further, we recognize the importance of addressing racism and other forms of discrimination in our efforts, structures and acts of daily practices.

Recognizing this, the Chesapeake Bay Program accepts the report and recommendations in the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategy (DEIJ Strategy) - developed by an independent consultant for the Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup of the Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT) and finalized in 2020. To the extent consistent with state and federal law and policy, members of the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) will strive to implement the recommendations of the DEIJ Strategy. The Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup, which was formed in 2014, started working with an independent DEIJ consultant in 2018 to conduct a DEIJ readiness assessment of the partnership and developed a tailored DEIJ Strategy that recommends the partnership:

- Increase racial and ethnic diversity among partnership staff and leadership.
- Help partners develop as DEIJ leaders who understand, respect and embrace cultural diversity.
- Provide partners with the tools to continually assess progress towards diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice goals.

The DEIJ Strategy contains recommendations that are grouped into four DEIJ framework focus areas. The consultant developed these recommendations based on interviews with Chesapeake Bay Program teams and leadership, a DEIJ readiness survey, two focus groups, a review of key partnership policy documents and input from the Diversity Workgroup. They provide a visionary framework to be used by the partnership as a guide to help integrate DEIJ into the implementation of management strategies and inform biennial logic and action plan activities that achieve the outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

# THE PSC DEIJ ACTION STATEMENT

“Continuing our path toward embracing the human diversity in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in our work to restore the Bay, **we hereby strive to implement the recommendations in the Chesapeake Bay Program DEIJ Strategy** to the extent consistent with applicable state and federal law and policy.”



# 5 PSC ACTION STATEMENT COMMITMENTS

To implement the recommendations in the DEIJ Strategy, the PSC commits to:

1. Within **six months** of the signing of the Chesapeake Executive Council statement, **a draft implementation plan for the DEIJ Strategy will be presented to the PSC.** The development of this plan will include direct outreach to underrepresented communities for input and feedback.
2. Within **three months** of the signing of the Chesapeake Executive Council statement, **explore a process for a community advisory board composed of environmental justice leaders and representatives from organizations led by people of color or other underrepresented groups.** This board could be part of one of the partnership's existing advisory boards (Citizens Advisory Committee or Local Government Advisory Committee).

## 5 PSC ACTION STATEMENT COMMITMENTS

3. Advancement of the DEIJ Strategy through work plan development and implementation for all GITs and Workgroups on their respective strategy review system schedules.
4. Meaningful inclusion of DEIJ milestones on the agendas for the Management Board and PSC meetings at a minimum every six months with a commitment to update the Chesapeake Executive Council annually.
5. Meaningful consideration of DEIJ in development of any future Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement(s).

# Ongoing Efforts – DEIJ Action Team

A DEIJ Action Team was recently formed and tasked with overseeing the implementation plan for the DEIJ Strategy (PSC Commitment #1).

This Team is also tasked with continuing to explore options for a Community Advisory Board (PSC Commitment #2).

This Action Team includes representatives from the Bay jurisdictions, federal agencies, and external stakeholders, including federally recognized Tribes.

## Questions for today's discussion

- What are your thoughts and ideas for meeting the *PSC DEIJ Action Statement* commitments, in particular commitment #3 to advance the DEIJ Strategy through **work plan development and implementation for all GITs and Workgroups**?
- What has your GIT done so far in terms of addressing DEIJ and looking ahead what are your plans or thoughts for incorporating DEIJ into your work?