Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration Partnership.

Fish Habitat

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Through the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, the Chesapeake Bay Program has committed to…*

Goal: *Fish Habitat*

Outcome: *Continually improve effectiveness of fish habitat conservation and restoration efforts by identifying and characterizing critical spawning, nursery and forage areas within the Bay and tributaries for important fish and shellfish, and use existing and new tools to integrate information and conduct assessments to inform restoration and conservation efforts.*

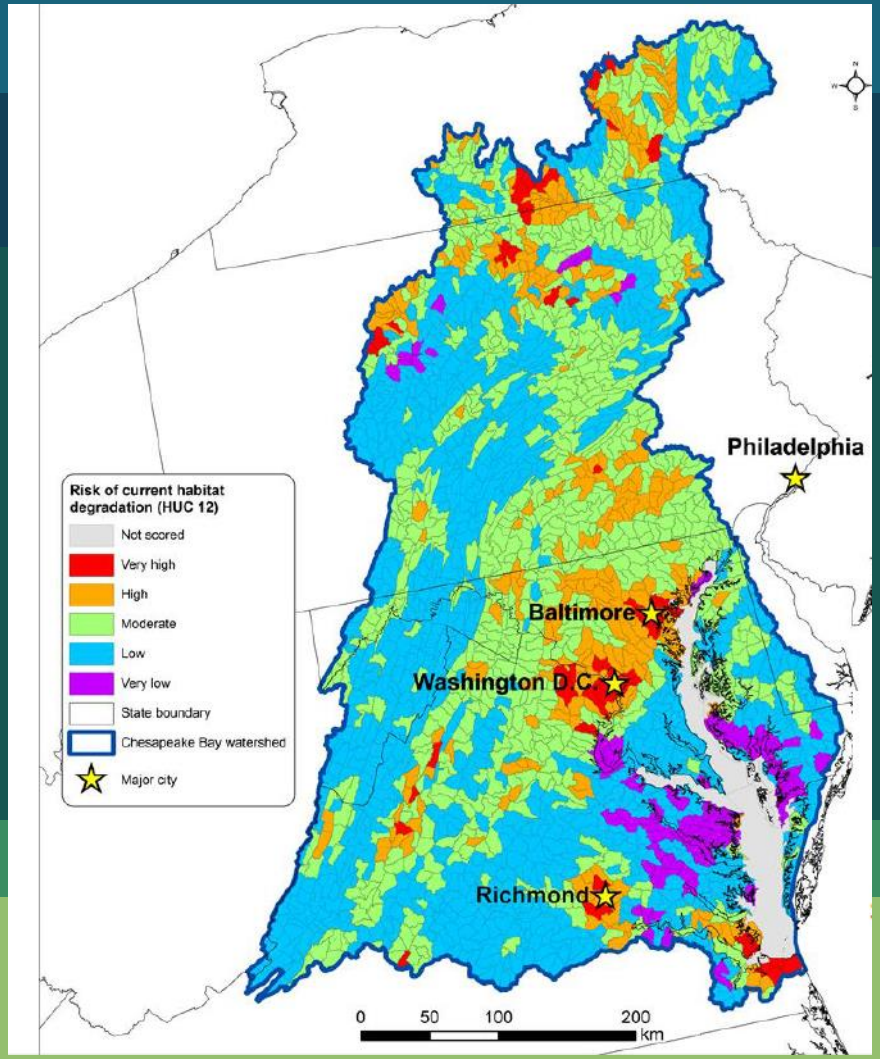
Fish Habitat Definition:

Any area on which an aquatic organism depends, directly or indirectly, to carry out the life processes of the organism, including, an area for spawning, incubation, nursery, rearing, growth to maturity, food supply, or migration

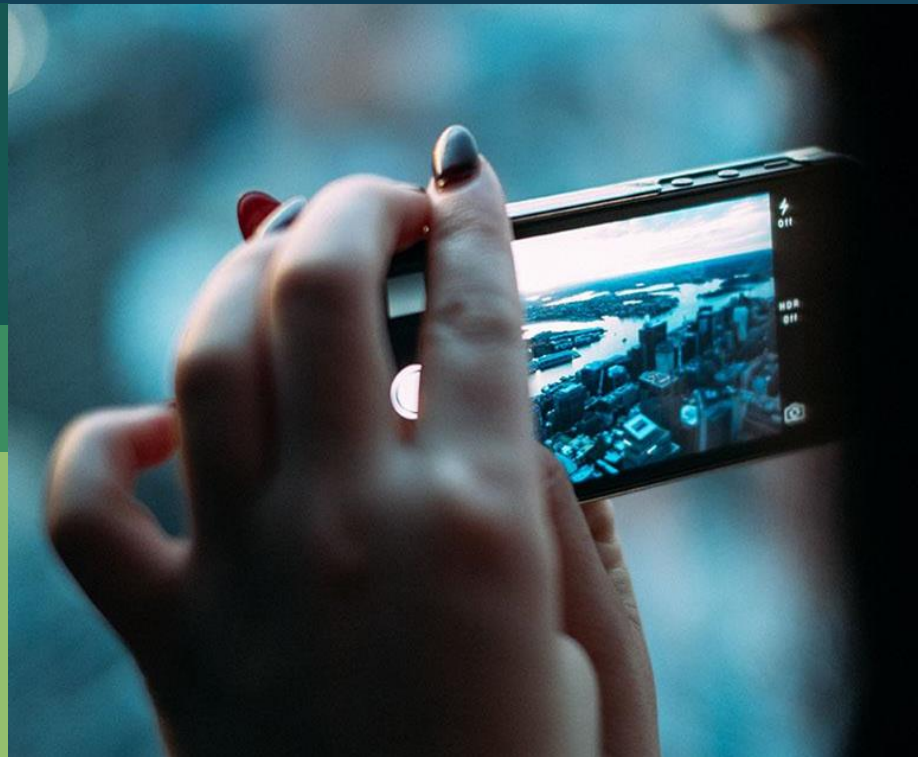
Fish Habitat Map:

Habitat Vulnerability Scores were calculated using data from anthropogenic disturbances and accounting for natural variation.

Agriculture, urbanization, mining, and nutrients were the most limiting disturbances for Chesapeake Bay habitats



What We Want



We want a pathway to communicate with communities and local government.

1

Setting the Stage:

What are our assumptions?

Logic Behind Our Outcome

Following the Decision Framework:

Factors	Current Efforts and Gaps	Management Approaches
• Scientific/Technical Understanding • Government Engagement • Public Engagement	• Understanding of habitat contributions to habitat function • Agency coordination • Lack of public engagement	• Use priority species to evaluate habitat function • Communicate agency advancements in understanding • Improve communications with partners and local community

2

Progress:

Are we doing what we said we would do?

What is our progress?

Identified fish habitat threats and stressors among selected species

Synthesized results from a multiyear shoreline and land use impact study

Partners are identifying critical spawning, nursery and overwintering areas for select species.

Received funding for a workshop which will identify representative species and evaluate factors influencing habitat function

Analysis

Fish Habitat

3

Challenges:

Are our actions having the expected effect?

Challenges

- We need a pathway to engage Chesapeake Bay Program partners and the local community
- We need a defined measure of success

4

Adaptations:

How should we adapt?

Based on what we've learned, we plan to…

- Conduct a workshop which will inform priority habitat stressor information
- Improve outreach to local communities and counties
  - Co-benefits in WIPs
  - Materials and tools

- Meaningful actions that have communication as the end goal

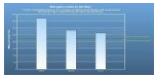
Agreement Goals and Outcomes

Sustainable Fisheries

- Blue Crab Abundance
- Blue Crab Management
- Oyster
- Forage Fish
- Fish Habitat

Vital Habitats Goal

- Wetlands
- Black Duck
- Stream Health
- Brook Trout
- Fish Passage
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)
- Forest Buffer
- Tree Canopy



Water Quality Goal

- 2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP)
- 2025 WIP
- Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring

Toxic Contaminants Goal

- Toxic Contaminants Research
- Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention

Healthy Watersheds Goal

- Healthy Waters

Stewardship Goal

- Citizen Stewardship
- Local Leadership
- Diversity

Land Conservation Goal

- Protected Lands
- Land Use Methods and Metrics Development
- Land Use Options Evaluation

Public Access Goal

- Public Access Site Development

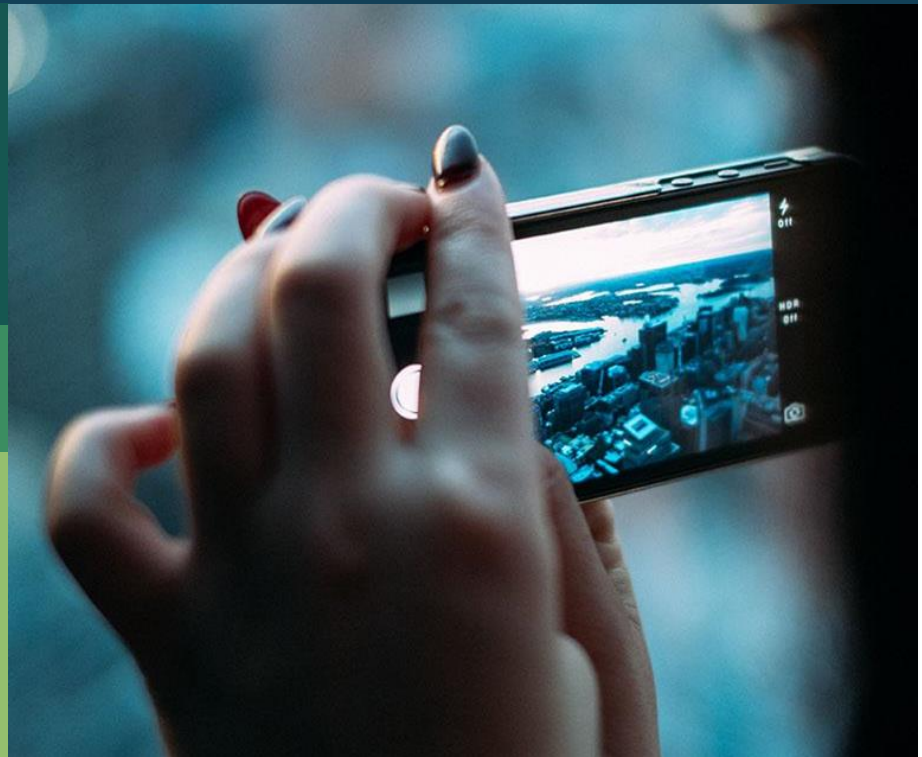
Environmental Literacy Goal

- Student
- Sustainable Schools
- Environmental Literacy Planning

Climate Resiliency Goal

- Monitoring and Assessment
- Adaptation Outcome

What We Want



We want to incorporate fish habitat into the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans.

Discussion

Photo Credits

Slide 2: Fish in Seagrass (Will Parson)
Slide 7: Aerial Farm and River (Will Parson)
Bulkhead (Encyclopedia of Puget Sound)
Herring Spawn in Choptank (Dave Harp)
Eelgrass (Delaware Inland Bays)
Slide 9: Forage (Virginia Institute of Marine Science)
Forest Buffers (Heather Richards)
Oyster Restoration (Michael Eversmier)
Healthy Watersheds (Mike Zarro)
Climate (Lee Goodwin)
Protected Lands (Middleton Evans)