

# Chesapeake Bay in Crisis

## The Solution: Regional Public Education

Council of Governments Institute for Regional Excellence

Environmental Project Team

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# Treasured Natural Resource

- Largest estuary in United States
- Accounts for 59% of the northeast coastal water
- Chesapeake 2000 Agreement
  - To restore, enhance and protect the Bay's living resources
  - To address nutrient and sediment problems in the Bay
  - Through public/private agreement
  - By voluntary action to **remove Bay** from the list of **impaired waters** by **2010**

# Individuals Pollute

- 16 million individuals live in Bay watershed
  - 4.2 million in local COG region
- Individuals **contribute** over **16%** of Bay **pollutants**
  - animal waste
  - lawn fertilizer
  - vehicle care and maintenance

# Jurisdictional Education Programs

- Good but fragmented
- Multiple topic areas
  - Stream restoration, litter reduction, conservation
- Mixed medium utilized by jurisdictions
  - Community meetings, newsletters, websites, etc...
- Messages don't always cross jurisdictional boundaries

"Changing behavior starts with the individual and a message that is simple, memorable and unique."

Academy for Educational Development

# Common Message is the Way to a Cleaner Bay

- Behaviors changed by public education
  - Successful efforts include:
    - drunk driving, recycling, safe kids, seat belts
- Critical need for a **regional public education** campaign
  - reduces pollution in the Bay
  - targets individual behavior change

# Success Factors

common message (brand identity)

+ pooled resources (increased exposure)

Changed Behavior (pollution reduction)

# Driving Force

- Chesapeake Bay Program
  - Founded in 1983
  - Leads and directs the protection and restoration of the Bay
  - Coordinates restoration efforts across jurisdiction boundaries
    - regional media campaign



# Vehicle for Change

- Chesapeake Bay Program Media Campaign
  - research-based
  - regional message
  - targets individual behaviors
- **Kick-off – February, 2005**
- Contributions to date = \$620,000
  - Commonwealth of Virginia, District of Columbia and Federal funds

# How You, the Local Jurisdictions, Can Help

- **Participate** in the Chesapeake Bay Program Media Campaign
- **Contribute** local funding to the campaign
  - Increased distribution of message to more people over longer period of time
- **Embrace** a common message
- **Encourage** others to do the same

# The way to a cleaner bay

a consolidated regional  
public education campaign