



Social Media News Release

Chesapeake Bay Program Welcomes Feedback on Draft Watershed Agreement

Annapolis, MD – Three decades after the first Chesapeake Bay Agreement was signed, Chesapeake Bay Program partners are seeking public input on a new agreement that will guide the next chapter of restoration across the watershed, recommitting stakeholders to conservation success.

The [draft Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#) outlines a new plan for collaboration across the Bay's political boundaries and clarifies the Bay Program's vision and values. It establishes a series of interrelated goals and outcomes that will achieve results to protect and restore the Bay, its tributaries and the lands that surround them, as well as the health of the more than 17 million people who live here.

The Bay Program values stakeholder input: individual citizens, private businesses, watershed groups and local governments are key partners in the attainment of our restoration goals. Partners received input on an abridged draft of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* last summer, and welcome comments on this draft between **January 29** and **March 17, 2014**.

Interested parties can offer input in three ways:

- Submitting an online comment at www.chesapeakebay.net/watershedagreement
- Submitting an email to agreement@chesapeakebay.net
- Submitting an in-person comment at the March 13 [meeting](#) of the Management Board, which will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Joe Macknis Memorial Conference Room (Fish Shack)

Facts

The draft *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* contains seven high-level goals that will advance watershed restoration. These goals are paired with time-bound, measurable outcomes that will contribute to their achievement and increase transparency and accountability in tracking progress. These goals include:

- Protecting, restoring and enhancing finfish, shellfish and other living resources, their habitats and ecological relationships
- Restoring, enhancing and protecting a network of land and water habitats to support high-priority species and to afford other public benefits
- Reducing pollutants to achieve the water quality necessary to support the aquatic living resources of the Bay and its tributaries and protect human health
- Sustaining state-identified healthy waters and watersheds
- Conserving treasured landscapes in order to maintain water quality and habitat; sustaining working forests, farms and maritime communities; and conserving lands of cultural, indigenous and community value
- Expanding public access to the Bay and its tributaries
- Enabling students in the region to graduate with the knowledge to use scientific evidence and citizenship skills to act responsibly to protect and restore their local watershed



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Importance

By signing the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, Bay Program partners commit to implementing the actions needed to attain a healthy and vibrant Bay watershed. Agreement signatories will include: the states of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay Commission; and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, representing the federal government. This agreement also marks the first time that Delaware, New York and West Virginia will participate as signatories and full partners of the Bay Program.

Quotes

"Healthy, sustainable fisheries, plentiful habitats for wildlife, conservation efforts and citizen actions that support clean water and clean air—this is how we create a healthy Bay. Connecting our citizens to these resources through public access and environmental education completes the picture, instilling the personal sense of ownership key to our progress. Under the leadership of Chesapeake Executive Council Chair Governor Martin O'Malley, we are looking forward to finalizing the agreement and adopting new management strategies to accelerate restoration of our Bay."

--- Joe Gill, Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Principals' Staff Committee and Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

"The goals and outcomes that are outlined in the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* are interrelated: improvements in water quality can mean healthier fish and shellfish; the conservation of land can mean more habitat for wildlife; and a boost in environmental literacy can mean a rise in stewards of the Bay's resources. By signing this agreement, Bay Program partners will acknowledge that our environment is a system and that these goals will support public health and the health of the watershed as a whole."

--- Nick DiPasquale, Director, Chesapeake Bay Program

Related News

- [Draft Watershed Agreement available for public feedback](#)

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We Recommend:

- [Draft Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#)
- [Summary of Public Comments on 7-9-13 Abridged Draft Agreement, and Chesapeake Bay Program Response to Comments](#)

Videos:

- [PSA: What does it take to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay?](#)

Photos:

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