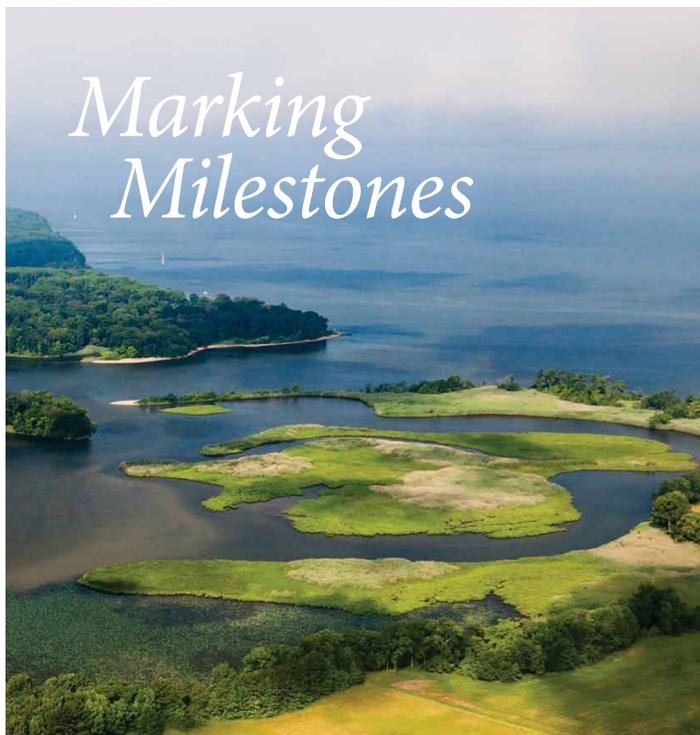


New Report on Saving AMERICA'S GREAT ESTUARY

In September the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership (CCP), a coalition of more than 50 organizations, released “Marking Milestones: Progress in Conserving Land in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.” The report is the most comprehensive survey of land conservation and funding in the Chesapeake watershed in a decade.

Marking Milestones showcases the tremendous value of the Chesapeake watershed and the remarkable success stories of people working to protect the land that supports the quality of life of the watershed’s more than 18 million residents. Eighteen profiles provide examples of land conservation projects, from new wildlife management areas to newly protected farms and urban parks.



Marking Milestones



PROGRESS IN CONSERVING LAND
IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED

Data from the multiagency Chesapeake Bay Program shows that as of the end of 2018, 1,358,456 acres of land throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been permanently protected since 2010. This achieves 68% of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement goal to protect an additional 2 million acres by 2025. Only five years remain to conserve the remaining 640,000 or so acres to achieve this goal. The agreement was signed in 2014 by the governors of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia, the mayor of the District of Columbia, the administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of the federal government, and the chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission.

“Land conservation successes and challenges in the Chesapeake watershed present an international example of how communities can use innovative science, partnerships and finance to achieve ambitious conservation goals,” said Joel Dunn, president and CEO of the Chesapeake Conservancy and a lead convener of the CCP. “The Marking Milestones report provides very convincing evidence that if we sustain and enhance current public funding and attract new private capital investments, then it will be possible for us to meet our 2025 goal of protecting 2 million acres and more ambitious goals in the future.”

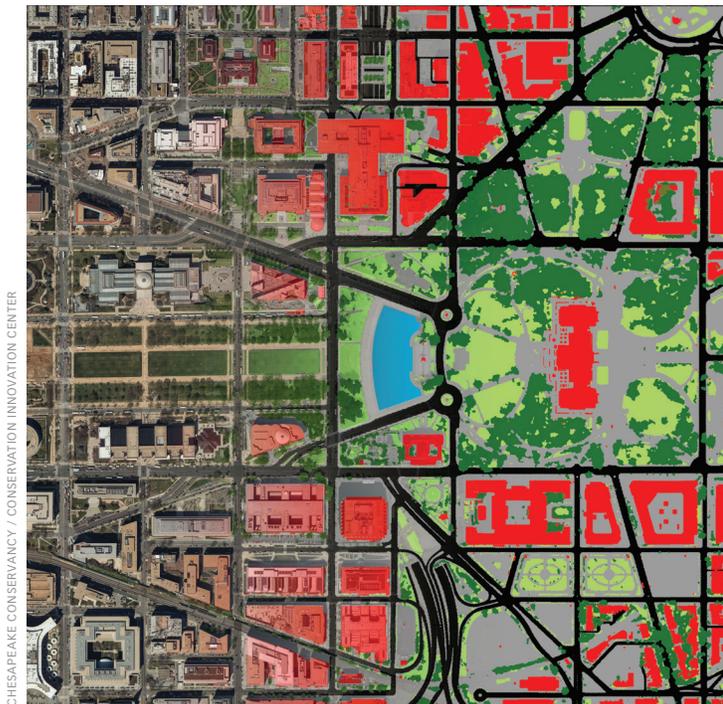
He explains, “We choose to do this important land conservation work because we all depend on land for clean water, for habitat so that our wildlife can thrive, and for sustaining and enhancing our way of life. We choose to do this because we believe that current and future generations deserve the opportunity to enjoy a healthy Chesapeake and a livable planet. The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership has accepted this challenge and will continue to work together to create and expand protected areas, leverage science and take conservation actions around the watershed in concert with our community priorities.”

“The Marking Milestones report is a significant waypoint for the land conservation community in the Chesapeake,” says Jennifer Miller Herzog, Mid-Atlantic senior program manager for the Land Trust Alliance and a member of the CCP’s steering committee. “It helps us recognize what’s already been accomplished by land trusts and local, state and federal agencies in conserving the watershed’s critical land and water resources and it points the way forward.”

Find the report at www.chesapeakeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/CCP_publication_SD_FD-R-FINAL.pdf. •



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Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center has produced precise land cover data for the entire Chesapeake watershed, represented here for the U.S. Capitol. It is 900 times more detailed than before and is available for free download.

Sharing Data for the Good of All

"I'M A SENIOR GEOSPATIAL ANALYST AT THE CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY, and I've been here for a little over three years now," says Jake Leizear. "I work mostly in the world of geographic information systems, using high-level mapping technologies to help identify areas for precision conservation."

Leizear works at the conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center, created to leverage cutting-edge research and technology and make it accessible to the conservation community. In 2016, CIC and its partners completed the Chesapeake Bay High-Resolution Land Cover Project, an immense one-meter resolution land cover dataset that classifies landscape features for use in planning and goal tracking. The database is available to all nonprofits, governments and businesses for free as open data to help conservation organizations of all sizes better protect habitat, water quality and heritage sites. A new grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will build on this database to provide updated, high-resolution data about landscape changes.

"When there's only so many hours, funding, capacity and people to do conservation work, it's more important than ever to make sure conservation efforts get the most bang for their buck," Leizear says. "That's why precision conservation, or getting the right practices, in the right places, at the right scale, at the right time and making sure they are working, is so key to what I do here."

Bookmarks

Report and Website

When it comes to harnessing the ability of America's farms and ranches to combat climate change, women farmers and non-operating landowners may be the key to success, according to a new report from American Farmland Trust.

There are now nearly 1 million women farm operators and over half a million additional women landowners who lease their land to farmers.

The report, featured on an AFT website along with profiles and videos, is part of its Women for the Land initiative. "Testing the Women Landowner Conservation Learning Circle Model" has found that women landowners are important in the broader implementation of conservation practices on farms and that women-only learning circles work as a means for expanding conservation actions.

Learn more about this new research and the Women for the Land initiative at <https://farmland.org/women-for-the-land>.

Blog

From Bloomerang comes the blog post "3 Ways to Use Your Form 990 as a Marketing Tool." Explaining that GuideStar and Charity Navigator pick up 990s from the IRS and post them for public consumption, "Even if you think people aren't reviewing your Form 990, it's out there and available. GuideStar published an article [<https://trust.guidestar.org/new-research-shows-nonprofit-transparency-matters>] about how nonprofit transparency truly matters. A study of over 6,000 nonprofits revealed that 'nonprofits that earned a GuideStar Seal of Transparency averaged 53% more in contributions the following year compared to organizations that didn't earn a Seal.' They concluded that donors give more to transparent organizations and that transparent organizations are stronger organizations."

The post concludes, "This is a compelling argument for putting your best foot forward on the 990, to ensure that anyone who's reviewing the form on GuideStar or elsewhere gets a true sense of your organization." See the blog at <https://bloomerang.co/blog/3-ways-to-use-your-form-990-as-a-marketing-tool>.

Leizear, who describes himself as a millennial but "almost a Gen Z'er," adds, "This is the work that's worth doing and work I believe in. Getting to bring my skillset to a greater movement dedicated to protecting and restoring the special places of my home is something I'm really grateful for, and I'm always coming to work excited about what we can do next to meet those goals!" 🍌