

Chesapeake: A Network of Conservationists Across 64,000 Square Miles

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FOUR CENTURIES AGO CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH SAILED INTO CHESAPEAKE BAY with a group of English settlers. The tiny colony called Jamestown arose in the midst of a rich, vast, and already inhabited landscape. Powhatan, Rappahannock, Pamunkey, Piscataway, Nanticoke, and Susquehannock peoples—and dozens of other tribes—occupied the lands surrounding the 186-mile-long bay and its many tributaries.

Smith, ever the promoter, described the Chesapeake's wealth in glowing terms: "There is but one entrance by sea into this country, and that is at the mouth of a very goodly bay, 18 or 20 miles broad. The cape on the south is called Cape Henry, in honor of our most noble Prince. The land, white hilly sands like unto the Downs, and all along the shores rest plenty of pines and firs.... Within is a country that may have the prerogative over the most pleasant places known, for large and pleasant navigable rivers, heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation."

Prescient as he was, neither Smith nor the indigenous peoples who called the Chesapeake region home could ever have imagined the degree of "habitation" that was to come, or the changes to the landscape that would result. Yet they would likely understand why this iconic region remains central to the American story and has motivated long-standing conservation and restoration efforts.

This paper explores large landscape conservation work focused on the six-state, 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed (Figure 1), particularly through the evolving role of the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership. What positions the Chesapeake region for this work? What motivates it? Why is it taking place now? And what can be learned from this experience?

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Laying the foundation for large landscape collaboration

Four distinct characteristics of the Chesapeake watershed have positioned conservation partners in the region to work at a large landscape scale.

The connection between nature and culture.

[W]e found, and in divers places that abundance of fish, lying so thicke with their heads above the water, as for want of nets (our barge driving amongst them) we attempted to catch them with a frying pan.

Smith's classic description of Chesapeake abundance may sound exaggerated to some, but few bay watermen, fishers, hunters, birders, or historians would likely question it—though they may lament what has been lost over time. The Chesapeake Bay and the vast watershed around it retain a unique and profound significance. There is a sense of place to the Chesapeake landscape that resonates within our culture.

Part of this is due to the region's ecological richness and wildlife, and the desire to bring that back. Archetypal (and economically valuable) Chesapeake species have long motivated people: blue crabs, oysters, rockfish (striped bass to those outside the region), brook trout, and diverse migratory waterfowl once existed in enormous numbers. During the 19th century, oysters even spawned violent clashes over management in Maryland and Virginia waters known as “the Chesapeake Bay Oyster Wars.” The deep-seated culture of the Chesapeake watermen and their classic workboats evolved around these species. They were shaped by the bay and in turn changed it. Nature and culture intertwined.

The water resources of the Chesapeake—the region's first transportation highways—have had widespread effects across time. American Indian cultures settled and traveled along the bay and its rivers for the same reasons immigrants from Europe did in the centuries after Jamestown: access to water, land, resources, transportation, and commerce (Figure 2). This explains why the Chesapeake's major urban areas are where they are—Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Norfolk, Harrisburg. It influences the patterns of plantation culture in Virginia and Maryland—including those that spawned many of the nation's “founding fathers,” Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe among



Figure 1. The Chesapeake Bay watershed spans 64,000 square miles (43 million acres) in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia and the District of Columbia.



Figure 2. Great rivers link the Chesapeake landscape: the Potomac, James, Rappahannock, York, Shenandoah, and, here, the Susquehanna, flowing through central Pennsylvania. Photo courtesy of Nicholas Tonelli.

them. The pattern of bay, rivers, and settlement shaped how abducted Africans were brought to North America and sold as slaves in Annapolis and other Chesapeake ports. The interrelationship of land and water influenced pivotal battles of the Revolutionary War at Yorktown, the War of 1812 in Washington and Baltimore, and many of the patterns and movements of the Civil War that played out through the heart of the Chesapeake landscape. It explains why and where fortifications were built and modern military bases constructed. The presence of water facilitated vast deforestation in the Chesapeake heartland as huge rafts of timber were floated down the Susquehanna to mills and markets. And the pattern of watercourses also explains the rise of the Chesapeake and its rivers as tremendous recreational resources—meccas for sailing, boating, and relaxation.

How does human interaction with these species and patterns over time position the Chesapeake for large landscape conservation? At least three observations are apparent. First, many people in the region truly view nature and culture as linked—a relationship that can fuel a deep appreciation for both, and more powerfully motivate stewardship. Second, many—including public officials—also recognize the bay, its rivers and its fisheries as shared resources that cross jurisdictional boundaries and collaborative management. Finally, those who work to protect land recognize it typically has multiple, and compatible, conservation values: preserving an acre of valued farmland may also protect an acre of historic battlefield.

A land conservation/preservation tradition. The values found in the Chesapeake landscape have spawned a century and a half of land conservation and preservation. The region

today hosts 55 units of the national park system, 17 national wildlife refuges, five national scenic and historic trails, two national forests, two vast national heritage areas and parts of others, and hundreds of state parks, forests, and wildlife management areas covering large acreages. Think Jamestown, Yorktown, Gettysburg, Williamsburg, Monticello, the Appalachian Trail—and so many more with international name recognition. Further, out of a 43-million-acre landscape that was almost exclusively privately owned as of the late 19th century, today more than 8.5 million acres are permanently protected—some 21% of the watershed.

Conservation progress has been driven by the region's ecological and cultural significance combined with progressive and innovative private-sector leadership, individual land-owner actions, and federal, local, and state agency initiatives. Consider the following illustrations:

- The historic preservation movement was effectively born in the Chesapeake in 1858 when the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association acquired and protected the home of George and Martha Washington overlooking the tidal Potomac River. This effort led to a broader landscape conservation movement focused on the entire Mount Vernon watershed, and a national park created solely to protect it.
- Throughout the early and middle decades of the 20th century, a series of visionary leaders built the state forest and park systems in the region. In Pennsylvania, Joseph Rothrock and later Gifford Pinchot propelled efforts to acquire lands completely deforested in the late 19th century. As a result, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Recreation is today the largest single landholder in the region, with over 2.3 million acres under management.
- Other state-level innovations include the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, established as a public body in 1966, which has protected more than 600,000 acres through conservation easements, many facilitated by the state's groundbreaking Land Preservation Tax Credit Program. Maryland's Program Open Space, established in 1969 as a dedicated funding source for land conservation, has protected over 350,000 acres. Pennsylvania's Farmland Preservation Program has protected over 350,000 acres since 1989 (Figure 3). Governors in Chesapeake states have regularly set significant goals for land conservation during their terms.
- Over 125 public and private land trusts operate in the Chesapeake watershed. These include large state-chartered institutions such as the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and the Maryland Environmental Trust, and entirely independent organizations, often structured around particular geographies, such as the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, which manages 52,000 acres.

These examples point to another observation on what motivates conservation in the Chesapeake: people in the region care about the land they value and they act to protect it; and new conservation activity builds on over a hundred years of land protection accomplishments.

A decades-long history of collaboration. Beyond direct land conservation, agencies and organizations have understood and practiced collaborative conservation across jurisdictional boundaries for decades.

Since the 1980s, state and national heritage areas have strategically and intentionally drawn together cultural tourism and conservation perspectives. Pennsylvania and Maryland led the effort by focusing on distinctive regional landscapes through state heritage area programs created in 1989 and 1996, respectively. Pennsylvania also established a Conservation Landscapes Initiative in 2005.¹ Congressional designation of national heritage areas—driven by local demand—has fueled the movement as well.² For example, the 2.5-million-acre Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District was established in 1996 and the 3.4-million-acre Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area and Scenic Byway in 2006, both of which lie within the Chesapeake watershed. These efforts unite jurisdictions and disciplines around common visions and initiatives for conserving and capitalizing on the region's heritage.

During roughly the same period collaboration began around efforts to restore Chesapeake Bay water quality and aquatic species. A bi-state (now tri-state) Chesapeake Bay Commission was established in 1980 to coordinate bay-related policy across state lines. Since 1983 when the first Chesapeake Bay Agreement was signed, and by subsequent agreements through 2014, state and federal agencies have regularly updated goals and implemented new strategies and programs. Supported by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Chesa-

Figure 3. A view of the storied landscape of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The Chesapeake region has a rich agricultural heritage; some nine million acres (22% of the watershed) are in agricultural use. Photo courtesy of Nicholas Tonelli.



apeake Bay Program utilizes agency and nonprofit staff, working groups, meetings, modeling, and analysis to facilitate progress.³ Since 2000, the program has included goals for other conservation objectives beyond water quality and fisheries, including protecting 20% of the watershed by 2010. However, water quality improvement has remained the primary focus of both conversation and resources within the program.

Almost four decades of collaboration has created another reality about conservation in the Chesapeake: agencies and nongovernmental organizations are used to meeting and collaborating regularly across jurisdictional lines and at multiple scales. They do it routinely and many know one another on a first-name basis. People are used to regional goal-setting, sharing data and analyses to inform decision-making, and tracking collective progress.

An evolving partnering role for the National Park Service (NPS). The Chesapeake is undeniably nationally significant in many ways. Yet few of the 55 NPS units in the Chesapeake watershed are located on the bay proper, and none have the bay or watershed as their principal focus or theme. This has stimulated continuing exploration of how to better represent the Chesapeake in the national park system.

The search for an appropriate and beneficial role for NPS in the Chesapeake began as a partnership and regionally focused mindset. The skill sets to support implementation were developing within the agency and especially its Northeast region. Decades of work by the NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, the growth of the national heritage area movement, and an increasing number of partnership parks in the system shaped this partnerships-first approach.

In the early 1990s, NPS explored partnership options for the Chesapeake in the first of two special resource studies.⁴ A few years later the agency placed a staff person at the Chesapeake Bay Program. In 1998, Congress passed a new and creative piece of legislation—the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act—giving NPS direction to provide technical and financial assistance to a broad range of partners for identifying, interpreting, conserving, and restoring Chesapeake resources. It effectively said “go forth and build partnerships” to connect the public with the Chesapeake. And the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office did that through the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, establishing relationships and partnership agreements with over 170 sites regionwide by 2006.

That same year, Congress established the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, spanning over 2,000 miles of waterways throughout the tidal Chesapeake (Figure 4). The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office adopted the same collaborative approach to implementation, recognizing that as the only way to build the sprawling trail’s identity. An advisory council was formed that gathered members across the watershed, and new partnership projects and initiatives resulted. When charged with planning and developing the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail in 2009, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office again took the same approach.

Through the Gateways Network and the national trails, over the past decade, NPS has built dozens of long-standing relationships with local, state, and federal partners around the watershed. Collaboration over the years has built mutual trust and understanding between many organizations and NPS.



Figure 4. City of Baltimore, National Park Service, and national heritage area staff lead “Kids in Kayaks,” a program connecting youth with the John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. Eighteen million people live in the Chesapeake watershed, concentrated in metropolitan areas arcing from Norfolk to Washington to Baltimore. Photo courtesy of James Chang.

By 2009, these four major threads—the unique interconnectedness of culture and nature, 150 years of land conservation, decades of cross-jurisdictional collaboration, and a fundamentally partnership-oriented NPS working at a landscape scale—had built a foundation for the next phase of large landscape conservation. What would spark the next step?

A call to action

The first decade of the 21st century is nearing its end. The Great Recession hits in 2008, jarring state and local budgets, two of the biggest funders of land protection. While the ten-year Chesapeake Bay Program land protection goal (permanently protecting 20% of the watershed) is met, cleaning up bay water quality by 2010, a centerpiece of the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, is not. There is concern about “bay fatigue” from the inability to bring the bay back. Water quality regulation looms in the form of certain limits on the total maximum daily load (TMDL) for nutrients and sediment flowing into bay waters. There is no clear time frame for a new bay agreement among the watershed states.

Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, an advocate of bay conservation and land protection, has chaired the Democratic National Committee in the lead-up to the election of President Obama. On May 12, 2009, the President signs the first “environmental” executive order of his new administration: E.O. 13508—Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration.⁵ The order directs federal departments and agencies to ramp up Chesapeake efforts on a series of

fronts. Reports are required within six months and a combined strategy within twelve, which motivates federal Chesapeake partners and many others into action.

The National Park Service takes on coordination of the report and recommendations focused on land conservation and public access to the water. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office utilizes its partnership orientation and relationships to convene more than 50 representatives of nongovernmental organizations and state and federal agencies to consider the needs and craft recommendations. These collaboratively developed ideas form the basis of the report⁶ and supply the actions included in the implementation strategy.⁷ The strategy sets new goals—to protect an additional 2 million acres and develop 300 new public access sites by 2025.⁸ While the order only directs federal agencies, collaboration on implementation actions begins more broadly.

The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership

Building a network of networks. The collaborative development of action items in 2009 by land conservation and public access partners stimulated a desire to reconvene over the next several years.

In 2010, NPS, in collaboration with the Chesapeake Conservancy, a regional nonprofit, re-convened the group to focus on implementing actions called for in the executive order strategy: creating a shared, conservation priority system,⁹ developing a watershed-wide public access plan,¹⁰ and expanding a youth conservation corps network. A series of work groups were created, propelling accomplishments on all three fronts by 2011.

NPS and the conservancy reconvened the group in 2012 under a tentative name, the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partners. The gathering highlighted successes of the partners over the prior eighteen months and identified common principles that united the group. The meeting ended with an expectation that the “loose affiliation” of the group would benefit from further structure. Work on key action items continued, including a new effort to secure a larger share of federal Land and Water Conservation Fund allocations for the Chesapeake.

By 2013, NPS had conducted research looking at models and best practices in large landscape efforts around the nation,¹¹ and participants at the annual meeting considered how these examples might apply within the Chesapeake. The group viewed itself as a “network of networks” linking together broad geographic and programmatic networks in the Chesapeake land conservation community. A steering committee was formed and charged with drafting a mission, vision, and logo. NPS funded a position to assist with coordination. At the subsequent 2014 annual meeting, and again at the National Workshop on Large Landscape Conservation held shortly thereafter in Washington, D.C., the group debuted as the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership, with the National Park Service and the Chesapeake Conservancy serving as co-conveners. The group’s purpose: “to foster collaborative action to conserve culturally and ecologically important landscapes to benefit people, economies, and nature throughout the six-state watershed.”¹²

Principles for collaboration. How do you form a working partnership of representatives of dozens of organizations and agencies across a multi-state landscape? Despite the advantag-

es evident in the Chesapeake, building partnerships is still a challenge. Shared recognition of a series of principles linking the group has been essential.

Embrace iconic landscapes with multiple values: In the Chesapeake watershed, conservation is not just about protecting one species or historical event—landscapes are too layered for that. The region is ecologically complex, with corridors serving as vital migratory pathways and breeding areas for vast numbers of fish, crabs, and birds. The quality of streams, rivers, and the bay itself depends on uses on the land. Chesapeake lands and waters feed the region through farms and fishing. Layer upon layer of history rests in the landscape. People use the landscape for working farms and forests and for all forms of recreation, and have done so for centuries.

The partnership embraces these values; they are the defining characteristics of the region. Attention to multiple values brings more people, more resources, and more opportunities for collaboration for conservation. It enriches stories and creates the potential for ecotourism and heritage tourism in the same landscapes. And it brings richer results, benefiting more of the public. Large landscape conservation efforts in the region typically see conservationists and tourism partners collaborating closely to achieve mutual goals. The partnership's membership reflects this.

Approach priorities inclusively: The vast Chesapeake watershed landscape combines many individually recognized regional landscapes, some spanning a million or more acres themselves. Regions often include many more localized landscapes important to particular communities. At each geographic scale—Chesapeake watershed, regional, local—passionate conservationists focus their work of pieces of the larger landscape. As a network of networks, the partnership brings these three scales—and their networks—together.

The partnership recognizes that everyone's land conservation goals and priorities—at each scale—are important. They are what motivate engagement and conservation action. Further, the partnership sees that pooling priorities provides greater influence. So, conservation goals for the Chesapeake landscape level must be inclusive of all conservation partners' priorities. A partnership initiative begun in 2015 to articulate and map long-term landscape conservation goals for the watershed is doing just that.¹³

Bake a bigger pie: The Great Recession contributed to a flat or downward trend in public funding for land conservation at all levels of government. The partnership has no interest in simply dividing up the existing pie by rearranging priorities or criteria current programs use. Rather, it is focused on how to make a bigger pie, both supporting and expanding existing programs and creating new resources for conservation amidst the pressures of development and a changing climate. The diverse makeup of the partnership, intentionally including both nongovernmental organizations and state and federal agencies, facilitates information-sharing and collaboration on new strategies, as well as private-sector support for policy and funding initiatives.

Share data, track progress, and communicate success: One of the earliest partnership initiatives stemming from the executive order was creation of a broadly accessible system for sharing conservation priorities and data. LandScope Chesapeake now includes more than 175 geospatial datasets of a broad range of conservation priorities.¹⁴ It also houses a regularly

updated comprehensive watershed-wide protected lands dataset; this draws from more than a dozen different data sources to provide significantly more complete information for the Chesapeake than nationwide datasets.

Good information supports collaboration among partners and tracking collective progress. Partners use the awareness and understanding of each other's priorities to achieve mutual objectives, divide up the work, match funding, and assemble collaborative proposals. Reporting regularly on progress—the partnership is 29% toward achieving the 2025 2-million-acre goal and 36% toward the public water access goal—informs strategy and the need for resources and conveys accountability to each other.

While networking is vital, remain action-focused: Conservationists are busy and focused people. But there is value for organizations in working outside their individual agendas. Partners get that value in part from networking—learning from the innovative experiences of others across the broad Chesapeake landscape, and strategizing with them by being in the same room. At the same time, the partnership takes on annual and long-term initiatives in addition to acting as a network. This action-driven outlook has continued since the initial 2009 executive order strategy session.

Challenges and lessons

While collaboration at a large scale is not new in the Chesapeake, the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership—and other similar large landscape collaborations—faces a series of challenges as it evolves. We all learn from each other's lessons.

Broad-based stimuli motivate action: Groups typically come together in response to some stimulus, often a perceived threat or opportunity. The partnership benefited greatly from the sense of urgency and short-term results that the Chesapeake executive order generated. There was an immediate call to action, and a broad one, that engaged many partners with diverse interests.

An inclusive approach creates more room for collaboration: While the Chesapeake executive order could only bind federal agencies, convening a range of state and nongovernmental land conservation and public-access partners early on resulted in a mutually developed and more broadly shared agenda.

A consistent convener perceived as fair is vital: A consistent, unbiased convener is particularly helpful as a group evolves and grows. As a co-convenor with the Chesapeake Conservancy for seven years, the National Park Service Chesapeake Office has consistently strived to check its ego at the door and convene for the greater good of all partners.

Meet regularly, but with well-planned sessions and a good facilitator: Groups need to meet regularly to sustain momentum, but no one can afford to meet for meeting's sake. The Chesapeake conveners have consistently worked to have objectives and agenda-driven sessions whether in large annual meetings or smaller working groups. The services of a highly skilled facilitator for many sessions have been invaluable. While we do not always succeed at the level we might hope, our test is always, "Did people feel their time was well spent?"

The meeting space makes a difference: For its annual meetings the Chesapeake partnership has been fortunate to use a conservation-themed facility in West Virginia along the Poto-

mac River. An inspirational setting positively influences the level of discourse. As the partnership has grown to include more people, sustaining the intimacy of a smaller group remains important, and requires recalibrating meeting and space planning. It may seem mundane, but the optimal design of a room often proves critical to the quality of collaboration.

GIS documentation of resource information is priceless: After several decades of regional resource documentation the Chesapeake likely has a far better than average set of spatial data. The data helps people work together, it facilitates effective conservation, it ties large landscapes together by making their connections clear, it is crucial for avoiding impacts from infrastructure projects. That said, there are still significant gaps in documentation in the Chesapeake and elsewhere. This is particularly true for cultural landscapes and scenic resources where comprehensive identification of landscape patterns and connectivity is woefully incomplete.

Complexity does make the simple narrative more difficult: Some large landscape conservation efforts organize around a single theme—a migratory route, a single type of resource. Doing this in the Chesapeake is complicated by its ecological and cultural richness. There are great benefits to bringing all these interests and people to the table. Yet, this does make the conservation narrative harder to convey to funders who often seek turning the dial significantly on one simple indicator.

A western bias sometimes predominates: The vast acreage managed by federal agencies in the western US can sometimes lead large landscape conservation to orient more to the West than the East. Generally higher eastern land costs and the perceived greater extent of development in the East can influence this view as well. This highlights the importance of encouraging policy-makers to explore the eastern landscape to understand its values, successes and threats (Figure 5).

Find the niche, make some space: The Chesapeake conservation community can often be dominated by the big water-quality players, even more so since the advent of the bay TMDL.¹⁵ While the many motivations for conservation are interconnected, and water can be a powerful driver for protection, partners have consistently expressed the need to focus specifically on land conservation driven by other factors that also happen to support water quality. The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership fits into that niche and creates the venue for this level of focus as the necessary TMDL conversations continue to occur elsewhere.

Sustaining momentum long-term requires increasing capacity: The early period of any collaborative effort often succeeds through the energy and commitments of the “founders.” But at a certain point, as ambitious agendas are set, there is a need for growing the capacity of the collaborative itself. Dedicated staff who focus daily on how to strengthen the partnership are necessary to sustaining the network’s momentum. Funding ongoing leadership and coordination positions can be a challenge, as funding for operations is limited. Cost-sharing among agencies and private partners is one mechanism for sustaining a staff.

Increasing diversity is a priority: The conservation field lacks a color composition that reflects America’s diversity. Despite the diversity of the watershed’s 18 million residents, the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership faces this problem as well. Deepening the connection between urban areas and landscape protection for the well-being of all populations is essen-



Figure 5. Visitors enjoying the Oakland Run waterfall, York County, Pennsylvania. The stream cascades through a deep ravine filled with rhododendron, moss-covered boulders, and an old-growth forest of hemlocks and mixed hardwoods. Understanding the values inherent in eastern landscapes is important to counteracting the tendency to think of large landscape conservation as being more applicable in the West. Photo courtesy of Nicholas Tonelli.

tial to the long-term health of collaborative conservation efforts. The partnership has more work to do along this vein.

Protecting the past, looking to the future

In the late 1500s there were over 15,000 indigenous peoples living in over 30 distinct groups along the southern shores of the Chesapeake Bay. Many paid tribute to Powhatan, an inspirational leader living at Werowocomoco on the north bank of what is now called the York River. In 1607, Captain John Smith was taken captive and brought to Werowocomoco by Powhatan's military leader Opechancanough and a large group of Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Paspahegh, Chickahominy, Chiskiack, and Youghtanund hunters. This was the first of five visits to Werowocomoco described by Smith, and the one at which Smith reported—years later—that Powhatan's daughter Pocahontas had saved his life.

By the mid-17th century, knowledge of Werowocomoco's location seems to have disappeared. It did not resurface for almost four centuries until the site was rediscovered in 2001. Subsequent archaeology found the site was occupied by indigenous peoples in a sizeable town as early as 1200. Today, Werowocomoco is described as one of the most important American Indian locations along the East Coast.

The National Park Service purchased the 260-acre Werowocomoco property in 2016

to permanently protect it as part of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. This likely would not have happened—or certainly not as quickly—without the chain of events initiated by the 2009 Chesapeake executive order and the broad collaboration on landscape conservation across the Chesapeake region that followed. By 2013, Chesapeake Conservation Partnership members were actively working to bring more federal funding into the Chesapeake to leverage state program funds. These efforts have made protection of Werowocomoco and other important resources around the watershed possible.

Large landscape conservation efforts seek land protection successes every year. But they are truly about progress toward the long game—conserving the broad patterns upon which our culture and the environment that sustains us are based. The complexity of interests in these landscapes dictates the need for collaboration among the networks of people engaged in them. The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership links those networks across 64,000 square miles to create synergy, share expertise and experience, connect the dots on a landscape scale, and create the conversation that helps drive and support the conservation agenda for the decades ahead.

Endnotes

1. Pennsylvania's Conservation Landscapes are large areas "identifying values at a landscape scale, revitalizing communities, and engaging local and regional partners in conservation and economic development." See www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cli/aboutcli/index.htm.
2. National heritage areas are designated by Congress "as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape." See <https://www.nps.gov/heritageareas/FAQ/>.
3. The Chesapeake Bay program is authorized through the Clean Water Act. Partners include the states of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware, New York, and West Virginia; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay Commission; and the Environmental Protection Agency, representing the federal government. See www.chesapeakebay.net.
4. Special resource studies (SRSs) are used by NPS to explore the eligibility of particular resources for inclusion within the national park system. A draft SRS was initially prepared for the Chesapeake in the early 1990s. A second SRS was later requested by Congress, completed in 2004, and subsequently transmitted to Congress. See https://www.nps.gov/chba/learn/management/upload/Chesapeake_Bay_Final_SRS.pdf.
5. See <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/page/About-the-Executive-Order.aspx>.
6. See [http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/file.axd?file=2009%2F9%2F202\(e\)+Access+%26+Landscapes+Draft+Report.pdf](http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/file.axd?file=2009%2F9%2F202(e)+Access+%26+Landscapes+Draft+Report.pdf).
7. See *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* at <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/page/Reports-Documents.aspx>.
8. These goals were subsequently adopted by the full Chesapeake Bay Program through the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement of 2014. See www.chesapeakebay.net/chesapeakebaywatershedagreement/page.
9. The executive order strategy called for creating a publicly accessible, GIS-based system

for sharing a broad range of conservation priorities. This was launched in 2012 as LandScope Chesapeake. See www.landscape.org/chesapeake.

10. See www.nps.gov/chba/learn/news/chesapeake-watershed-public-access-plan.htm.
11. See https://www.nps.gov/chba/learn/news/upload/LLC-Partnership-Analysis_110120-13-1.pdf.
12. For more information see www.chesapeakeconservation.org.
13. The partnership has drafted a set of mappable goals articulating the long-term landscape conservation effort for the watershed. Mapping the resources reflecting these goals on a watershed-wide scale is underway.
14. See www.landscape.org/chesapeake.
15. Total maximum daily load. For more information about the Bay TMDL see <https://www.epa.gov/chesapeake-bay-tmdl>.

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