

X. Conclusion

There are both substantial challenges and significant opportunities in restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay watershed and rich natural heritage that defines this region. To do so, Marylanders must sustain the collective will to revive this national treasure, work to control costs, stimulate a restoration economy, leverage local and regional partnerships, and create private or public partnerships. Moreover, they must implement restoration practices that achieve multiple benefits, promote and adopt innovation, and adaptively manage and build on restoration successes. Finally, successful Chesapeake Bay restoration depends on Maryland's continued strong leadership in the CBP partnership, full commitment from upstream states, and EPA's maintenance of a strong restoration oversight and accountability role.

The Chesapeake Bay is a dynamic system influenced by natural ecosystem processes and the pressures of climate change, population growth, land use changes, and invasive species. Maryland and CBP are committed to the science that informs policy development, measures the effectiveness of management actions, and decisively shows that Bay jurisdictions must sustain restoration beyond 2025. As one participant keenly observed during the State's local engagement process: 2025 is not the end of Bay restoration, but rather another benchmark on the restoration journey.