Restoration Alone isn’t the Answer: Protecting and Maintaining Healthy Watersheds through Local Engagement

Tuana Phillips
Chesapeake Research Consortium
Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Team, Chesapeake Bay Program
Overview

1. Background: The Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership and Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Team

2. Importance of healthy watershed protection for the long-term health and resilience of the Chesapeake Bay

3. Using local engagement as a strategy
The Chesapeake Bay Watershed

- 17+ million people
- 64,000 sq miles
- 6 states and the District of Columbia
- 14:1 land-to-water ratio
Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP)

A unique regional partnership made up of federal, state, local, and non-government agencies working collectively to restore the Chesapeake Bay since 1983.
### Benefits of Protecting Healthy Watersheds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clean water</td>
<td>Flood control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat and biodiversity</td>
<td>Carbon sequestration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erosion control</td>
<td>Nutrient cycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>Lower restoration and compliance costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>Increased quality of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased property value</td>
<td>Increased resiliency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Healthy Watersheds Goal:
Sustain state-identified healthy waters and watersheds recognized for their high quality and/or high ecological value.

Healthy Watersheds Outcome:
100 percent of state-identified currently healthy waters and watersheds remain healthy.
Achieving our Outcome requires two things...

**Outcome:** 100% of state-identified currently healthy waters and watersheds remain healthy

**Tracking**
Where are the healthy waters and how are they doing?

**Action!**
Activities that secure the health of waters and watersheds
Achieving our Outcome requires two things...

**Outcome**: 100% of state-identified currently healthy waters and watersheds remain healthy

**Tracking**: Where are the healthy waters and how are they doing?

**Action!**: Activities that secure the health of waters and watersheds

- Direct protection
- Policies and programs
- Local engagement

**Build and maintain inventory; track progress**
What is local engagement?

We asked ourselves: what do we mean?

• There is a broad spectrum of activities that we could put into the “local engagement” category.

• Local engagement is getting the boots on the ground to move. That is, moving people to action.

• “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”
Why “Action!” through local engagement?

Our Assumptions:

1. Healthy watersheds provide various local and Bay water quality benefits.
2. Cumulative impact of unsustainable development is the primary threat to “healthy watersheds.”
3. Land use change is controlled to a significant degree by local decisions and local factors.
4. The status quo is loss of healthy watersheds.
5. Change in locally-driven land use trends will be required to maintain healthy watersheds, and “local engagement” is the proposed intervention.
Who are we engaging with?

Examples of local actors:

- Local governments
- Land trusts
- Citizens
- Watershed organizations and other NGOs
- Non-traditional partners (hiking groups, bird clubs)
How?

Our charge:

“**build capacity** for local actors and help further healthy watershed and water protection at the local level”

The reality: local actors’ needs may not match our needs.
But if we can empower them to do more, we all win.

Our roles:

As a Goal Team and partnership, we are conveners, aggregators, and supporters. Using these roles, what can we do to help local actors maintain healthy watersheds?
Next steps for our local engagement efforts

• Continue the local engagement and “building capacity” conversation
• Coordinate with other Chesapeake Bay Program Local Engagement efforts
• Develop a local pilot demonstration project?
Questions?

Contact information:
Tuana Phillips
Phillips.tuana@epa.gov

Healthy Watersheds Goal Team website page:
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/groups/group/maintaining_healthy_watersheds Goal_implementation_team