



16th Annual Meeting

Chesapeake United: Strategies for Regional Conservation

November 19-20, 2024

The Claggett Center, 3035 Buckeystown Pike, Adamstown, MD

Day 1: Tuesday

8:15 Registration/ Check-in

10:10 Welcome to our 16th Annual Meeting

Co-conveners Mike Slattery, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Regional Landscape Conservation Program Manager; Wendy O'Sullivan, National Park Service, Superintendent of the Chesapeake Gateways Office; and CCP Program Director Ben Alexandro will welcome us with initial remarks. After interactive introductions, we will review the agenda.

10:50 Learning to Think and Partner Differently: A Conversation with Indigenous Leaders

Dominique Daye Hunter and Kesha Braunskill for a dynamic conversation on how land trusts can best partner with resilient Indigenous communities engaged in land repatriation work. Drawing from their environmental justice and cultural revitalization expertise, they will explore strategies for fostering community trust, prioritizing self-care, and building meaningful alliances. With insights from their experiences at Indigenous conservation gatherings, this panel will offer practical guidance for fostering hope and driving positive change in Indigenous-led conservation and land repatriation efforts. Melissa Ehrenreich, Executive Director of the Indigenous Conservation Council of the Chesapeake Bay, will introduce our panelists:

- Dominique Daye Hunter, Afro-Indigenous Storyteller and Program Manager, Indigenous East
- Kesha Braunskill, Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware & Native Roots Farm Foundation.

12:05 Lunch

1:15 How are States Leading and Learning in Land Conservation?

States have always played a pivotal role in leading and catalyzing land conservation across the watershed. In this special session, Secretary Cindy Dunn (PA), Secretary Josh Kurtz (MD), and Director Matt Wells (VA) will share what has worked in their states as they learn from each other. Mark Conway, Executive Vice President of External Affairs for the Chesapeake Conservancy, will moderate.

2:40 Break

2:55 Going Deeper with Smaller Working Groups

Please join one of the topical working groups to further your thinking on important topics.

Success, Challenges, and Opportunities in Urban Land Conservation.

Stewards: Katie Lautar, Executive Director, Baltimore GreenSpace and Spenser Balog, Conservation Planner, Casey Trees.

Solar Siting: Staying on Top of the Challenges and Opportunities. Mitigation for the millions of acres of solar energy in the Bay Region.

Stewards: Nicole Faraguna, Director of Policy and Planning at Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) and Chris Miller, Piedmont Environmental Council.

Scoping Habitat Corridors: A Mini Workshop. Stewards: Jonathan McKnight, Associate Director, National Heritage Program, Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Dan Murphy, US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Making Conservation Foundational to the Bay and the Importance of Good Data. Stewards: Aurelia Gracia, Outdoor Recreation Planner for NPS Chesapeake Gateways; Peter Claggett, Research Geographer, U.S. Geological Survey; Sophia Waterman, Researcher, U.S. Geological Survey; and Steve Storck, Chesapeake Conservancy.

4:05 Break

4:25 Frederick as an Epicenter

Frederick County, MD has been an epicenter of important conservation work. David Lillard, Executive Director of the Catocin Land Trust and Ava Hampton, Public Outreach Manager of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, are each at the center of multiple networks. They will talk about some of the most intriguing local projects that create active networks between community, tourism, the recreation economy, and conservation.

4:45 Debrief and Preview of Day 2

5:00 Adjourn

6:15 Dinner

After dinner, join your colleagues for a campfire, refreshments, and maybe even a game night!

Day 2: Wednesday

7:30 Breakfast and Checkout (checkout by 10 am)

8:00 Breakfast Conversations

You are welcome to join one of the designated breakfast groups or join in a meal with your friends and colleagues. Designated groups include:

- State Officials. Host: Judd Vickers, Deputy Director, Land Acquisition and Planning (MD)
- Land Trusts. Host: Marcia Fox, Delaware Wildlands
- We will seek additional topics at the end of Day 1.

9:15 Reflections and Agenda Review

9:25 Measuring What's Important – Balancing Large and Small-Scale Conservation Work

At last year's annual meeting, some participants who are leaders in urban conservation noted the lack of metrics that measure their important work. We agree. Our field has traditionally focused on what has been colloquially called "bucks and acres." We need to move beyond that. In this session, Will Klein, Director of Parks Research, Land and People Lab and Brendan Shane, Climate Director, will kickstart our conversation with examples of other possible measures that help to both guide and track more meaningful and equitable strategic decisions and actions. Louis Keddell of Chesapeake Conservancy will give a brief presentation of some metric options to prime the pump of our discussion. Then, working in our table groups, we will discuss what might work best for the Chesapeake watershed as we consider our goals and available data.

10:40 Break

10:55 Success Begets More Success. Lightning Rounds

And shared success begets more shared success. We have an extraordinary history of land conservation in our watershed. In this session, we will feature our recent successes through presentations and lightning talks.

- Beyond 2025 - Making Conservation foundational to the future of the Bay Program. Katie Brownson (USFS) and Ben Alexandro (CCP)
- Evergreen Cemetery. Nathan Burrell (VOF)
 - The Boy Scouts and Camp Tuckahoe. Cameron Weiser Land Protection Specialist with Central PA Conservancy
 - Chesapeake WILD Program, Revitalizing Habitats for the Future. Chase Douglas Partnership Coordinator Chesapeake Conservation Partnership
- Land Conservation Efforts in the Upper Susquehanna. Gregory Farmer Executive Director for Otsego Land Trust
- New Southern MD National Wildlife Refuge. Joe McCauley (Chesapeake

Conservancy) and Dan Murphy (USFWS)

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Keeping Land Conservation and Public Access Front and Center

The Bay Program, as we heard in the Lightning Talk, is considering its post-2025 goals. In this session, Wendy O'Sullivan (NPS) will lead us in a conversation about our current and possible new goals we might consider supporting for the post-2025 era.

1:45 Bringing our New Strategic Playbook to Life!

The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership has a new strategic playbook. After Andrew Swzak (LTA) and Ben Alexandro (CCP) provide a summary of the playbook, we will work in small groups to focus on actions that will operationalize the playbook.

2:45 Closing Reflections and Next Steps

After brief closing reflections from participants, Co-conveners Superintendent Wendy O'Sullivan of the National Park Service and President Joel Dunn of Chesapeake Conservancy will bring us to a close.

3:00 Adjourn

3:30 Join a Tour of the Claggett Center

For those Interested in the 268 acres that comprise the Claggett Center, James Ryder (Claggett Center Co-Executive Director) will give a tour of this amazing property including its fascinating history.