



Chesapeake Bay Program

FRAMEWORK FOR HABITAT RESTORATION



In the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement, the Chesapeake Executive Council agreed to "provide for the restoration and protection of living resources, their habitats, and ecological relationships." In fulfillment of this commitment, specifically in the area of habitat restoration, various state, federal and local entities have been initiating plans, programs and projects that support these overall goals.

THROUGH OUR EFFORTS TO DATE WE HAVE LEARNED THAT:

- ◇ The Chesapeake Bay watershed offers protection and sustenance to over 2,700 migratory and resident animal species.
- ◇ These species depend on habitat types ranging from mixed hardwood forests of the Appalachian mountains to freshwater streams, nontidal wetlands, saltwater marshes, aquatic reefs and the open water of the mainstem of the Bay.
- ◇ These habitats are influenced by climate and topography, soils, hydrology, plant and animal interactions, and an ever-expanding human population.
- ◇ Significant amounts of key Bay habitat have been lost, degraded, or fragmented.
- ◇ Living resources are profoundly affected by the loss or degradation of their habitats.
- ◇ Restoring key habitats will help sustain Chesapeake Bay living resources for their vital recreational, commercial, and ecological functions.
- ◇ Many habitats act to reduce and abate nutrient pollution and restoration of these habitats will help our attainment of nutrient goals.
- ◇ Restoration activities recently undertaken by the signatories demonstrate that habitat can be successfully restored. For example, water quality improvements have helped increase SAV acreage from 38,000 acres in 1984 to over 70,000 acres in 1993.

THERE IS A CRITICAL NEED TO ACCELERATE EFFORTS TO RESTORE HABITAT ACROSS THE BASIN TO BENEFIT LIVING RESOURCES.

- ◇ We have committed to restore 114,000 acres of SAV Bay-wide, open 1,357 miles of historic habitat for anadromous fish by the year 2003, and designate specific acreages for oyster reef habitat creation by the year 2000 in Maryland, Virginia, and the Potomac.
- ◇ An integrated habitat management plan would help set priorities, avoid conflicts and dilution of effort, and build the programmatic structure necessary to implement a fully coordinated habitat restoration and management program for the Bay.

THEREFORE THE CHESAPEAKE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DIRECTS THE BAY PROGRAM TO IMPLEMENT AN INTEGRATED AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH FOR HABITAT RESTORATION IN THE BAY WATERSHED THAT WILL:

- ✧ Continue Bay Program emphasis on coordination among existing federal, state, local and private entities to ensure that all habitat restoration activities provide optimal benefit to living resources.
- ✧ Restore habitats in four areas:
 - Fresh water tributaries and streams for anadromous fish;
 - Shallow water for juvenile fish, crabs, diving ducks, herons;
 - Open water for adult fish, shellfish, and waterfowl; and
 - Inlands and islands for waterfowl and migratory song birds.
- ✧ Target expenditures of Bay Program funds for habitat

restoration to maximize the benefits of available funding and to progress toward meeting existing habitat goals by December 1994 and ongoing.

- ✧ Improve the scientific and analytical base for program integration and targeting through the development of a preliminary geographic data base for use by Program participants and citizens by Fall 1996.
- ✧ Accelerate the development of a network to advance habitat restoration throughout the Bay watershed by integrating mitigation, enforcement decisions, and public and private restoration activities and expertise by June 1997.
- ✧ Relate progress annually in restoring habitat to existing quantifiable goals (i.e., fish passage, SAV, wetlands, aquatic reef, and waterfowl).
- ✧ Report annually on progress to develop additional quantifiable goals.

By this DIRECTIVE, we reaffirm our commitments made in the Chesapeake Bay Agreement to restore and protect the ecological integrity, productivity and beneficial uses of the Chesapeake Bay. In recognition of our commitments, we the undersigned agree to further our efforts through this directive which is hereby incorporated into the overall Chesapeake Bay Program.

DATE October 14, 1994

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