

# Communications Strategic Plan: Phase 3 of Pennsylvania's Plan for Clean Local Waters in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

**Note:** *This plan is a living document. It is updated and modified as warranted as Phase 3 progresses and presents new information and initiatives, such as the roadmap for the engagement of local leaders and partners now under development as part of the Local Government Engagement Initiative being implemented by the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership through the Local Government Advisory Committee.*



**Department:** Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection: Chesapeake Bay Program

**Partners:** Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Chesapeake Bay Program Executive Council

**Project:** Awareness-raising and action-inspiring public relations campaign

## **Target Audiences:**

1. Primary: Agricultural community leadership; local governments (boroughs, townships, towns, cities, counties) and related associations; state government leaders.
2. Secondary: Phase 3 supporters and amplifiers (see below); residents of Pennsylvania's part of the Bay watershed.

## **Communications Goals:**

### ***Goals:***

- Commitment by at least 20 local or state government leaders to secure funding for projects to clean up local waters.
- Increased implementation of best management practices by farmers in watershed counties.
- Demonstrably increased public conversation about the need to reduce pollution in local waterways, and the value of this.
- We aim to ensure this strategy is incorporated as a key component for the development and implementation of Pennsylvania's Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan for the Chesapeake Bay.

### ***Measurable Objectives toward Goals:***

1. Verbal commitment or action by at least 20 local or state government leaders to secure funding for local water cleanup projects.
2. Verbal commitment or action by at least 20 agricultural leaders to help secure funding for local water cleanup projects.
3. [Specify number or percentage] more farmers in our Bay watershed counties implement or commit to implementing clean water best management practices.
4. At least 250 shares of our social media content on this project. Sharing is imperative.
5. At least 200 media placements of our stories on the Phase 3 plan.

**Key Messaging:**

1. Pennsylvania communities benefit economically, environmentally, and in quality of life in specific ways when their local waters are clean and healthy. When a fish in a local creek is healthier, the community is healthier.
2. Local leaders are urged to act to commit funding to clean up the waters in their communities in Pennsylvania's bay watershed.
3. While Pennsylvania has made significant progress toward meeting the EPA targets, particularly since launch of Governor Wolf's [Chesapeake Bay Restoration Strategy](#) in early 2016, considerable work remains to be done.
4. Phase 3 is taking a different approach from previous phases. Phase 3 is being developed from the bottom up. Many local experts and advocates are engaged at the outset, bringing fresh thinking and good energy and momentum.
5. Phase 3 emphasizes partnership, transparency, and inclusivity. DEP, the Department of Agriculture, and DCNR are strongly committed agency partners.
6. The challenge for the Pennsylvania Bay watershed is great, but we're not starting at zero. We've made some progress. With our new approach, partnerships, and momentum, Pennsylvania will keep making progress.

**Talking Points:** See talking points document.

**Examples of Potential Supporters, Amplifiers**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State agency partners</li> <li>• Steering Committee and Work Group members</li> <li>• Agricultural community: farmers, associations</li> <li>• Municipalities</li> <li>• Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs</li> <li>• Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River basin commissions</li> <li>• Watershed associations</li> <li>• Clean water advocacy groups</li> <li>• Conservancies</li> <li>• Penn State Extension</li> <li>• Environmental educators, such as DEP Environmental Education Grant recipients</li> <li>• Pennsylvania Environmental Council</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association</li> <li>• County Commissioners Association</li> <li>• County conservation districts</li> <li>• Pennsylvania Municipal League</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor recreation organizations and businesses—fishing, boating, tour groups</li> </ul>
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**Communications Strategy:**

1. **Partner on local government engagement with the Work Groups and facilitating consultants.** Equip, refine, and implement their concepts, strategies, recommendations, preferences.
  - a. If they have strong plans on engagement, facilitate them by developing communications/channels.
  - b. If they'd like more guidance, take more of a strategizing role.
  
2. **Sustain a broader surrounding, continual communications outreach:**
  - a. **Focus on Pennsylvania's local streams and rivers.** The Bay is important but secondary.
  - b. **Focus on local water connections, experiences, and impact.** For example, safe drinking water, healthy outdoor recreation and experience economy (such as fishing, wineries), reducing instances of beach closings because of bacteria, reducing flooding
    - i. Use research to target messages to different audiences.
  - c. **Share success stories and emphasize momentum to keep moving forward toward clean local waters.**
  - d. **Build and enlist influencers:** Fully leverage the peer influence potential of our key early adopters and supporters-- the farmers, MS4 municipalities, and conservation district leaders who've already joined forces with us on watershed cleanup initiatives and are enthusiastically willing to publicly champion this cause.
  - e. **Move people emotionally** to inspire commitment and action on clean local water projects, and communications amplification.

**Tactics:**

In 2017 we'll roll out the following:

- We will solicit input on the key components of Pennsylvania's Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan through the creation of a steering committee and possibly a Public Participation Workgroup, the use of the [Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Program Office web site](#) to solicit comments, and the scheduling of public listening sessions or workshops or incorporate this into the activities below.
- We'll secure commitments from at least 25 already-supportive individuals and organizations in the farming community, MS4 municipalities, and conservation districts, to join our communications campaign as peer influencers.
- To these we'll add early supporters in business (e.g., fishing guides, boat tour companies, regional recreation tourism companies), nonprofit communities (e.g., Scouts, Trout Unlimited, and others who benefit from clean water), and government (e.g., Agriculture, DCNR, DCED). We'll meet with them to establish a unified communications process.
- We'll support the Work Groups' local engagement outreach in whatever ways needed to the fullest extent we can: Providing strategy if needed; providing stories, information, in-person and digital outreach, digital tools and channels.
- We'll launch a leader/partner/steward recognition campaign (through, for example, a graphic logo that serves as a stamp of approval) for individuals and organizations (our peer influencers and others) who've contributed to local efforts to reduce phosphorous, nitrogen, and sediment. *Important.* We'll share this recognition steadily on our social media and ask participants to share it on their social media and web sites.
- We'll research and establish an exhaustive media distribution list in Pennsylvania bay watershed counties, including hyperlocal news sources and the magazines and newsletters of organizations such as chambers of commerce, farming news, associations, and others.
- We'll create integrated social media promotions, including a tagline that serves as a hashtag and full use of social media tools, such as boosted posts, infographics, and Facebook live town halls to increase conversation about the impacts of clean local waterways.
- We'll create a compelling, story-based video or PSA on the beneficial economic and environmental IMPACT of clean rivers and streams to local communities. We'll tell the story of how, when a fish is healthier, a community is healthier.
- We'll schedule public and media field events that announce success stories and educate.

- We'll create a graphic identity kit to increase impact through visual consistency.
- We'll share educational information and our project efforts and successes in user-focused web content on the [Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Program Office web site.](#)