



Join communities across the watershed in celebrating Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week

The fifth annual event will be held June 6-14, 2020

The fifth annual Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week will take place June 6-14, 2020. While this week has been officially designated in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, we will be celebrating rivers throughout the entire watershed to raise awareness about this valuable economic and environmental resource—a national treasure that directly connects over 18 million residents.

Typically, Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is marked by a wide variety of events spanning the Bay's 64,000 square-mile watershed. This year's celebration will look a bit different, as watershed residents continue to socially distance as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite not being able to gather together, there are still plenty of ways to enjoy and celebrate the Chesapeake region.

One of the Bay's iconic annual events will still occur this year: Senator Bernie Fowler's Patuxent River Wade-in. Join in virtually as former Senator Bernie Fowler wades into the Patuxent River during the 33rd anniversary of this event to check water quality on June 14, 2020. The event will be broadcast live from 1:00-4:00 p.m. on the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum's [Facebook](#) page. For more virtual events throughout the week, visit the Chesapeake Bay Program's [calendar](#).

In 2016, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative commission that advises members of the general assemblies of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia on matters of Bay-wide concern, championed the idea of designating a week in June as Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week. The designation encourages all who reside in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia to commemorate Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week with events, activities and educational programs to acknowledge the significance of the Chesapeake Bay.

In addition, many local governments in the region choose to officially proclaim and celebrate Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week. There are nearly 1,800 local governments in the Bay watershed, including towns, cities, counties and townships, and much of the important work to protect and restore the Bay and its tributaries happens at the local level.

This year's theme highlights the many creeks, rivers and streams that thread through the Chesapeake Bay region. These tributaries send fresh water into the Bay, offer vital habitat to aquatic plants and animals and provide people with [public access](#) points where they can fish, boat and swim. Various agencies and organizations throughout the watershed will celebrate the

Media Contact:

[Marissa Spratley](#)

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
(443) 949-0575

[John Surrick](#)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation
(443) 482-2045

[Rachel Felver](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program
(410) 267-5740

[Jody Couser](#)

Chesapeake Conservancy
(443) 703-8678

[Drew Robinson](#)

Choose Clean Water Coalition
443-927-8049

[Megan Goodman](#)

Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments
(202) 962-3209

[Kelly Donaldson](#)

Pennsylvania Sea Grant
(717) 350-3913



Bay's major tributaries, including the Potomac, James, Rappahannock, York, Patuxent and Susquehanna Rivers, as well as the rivers of the Bay's Eastern and Western Shores, throughout the week.

Valued for its commercial and recreational value, the Chesapeake Bay is the nation's largest estuary, whose 64,000 square mile watershed includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia and West Virginia.

Follow #OneChesapeake on social media during June 6-14 as we celebrate the rivers of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Quotes:

"From local streams to the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers to the Chesapeake Bay, we have a large, interconnected system that provides us with incredible environmental, economic and recreational benefits. We know that the best way to care for and revitalize a system like this is through a balanced approach that improves the entire system."

- Jon Stehle, Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee Chair, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Councilmember, City of Fairfax, Virginia

"Pennsylvania continues engaging local watershed organizations with their effort by many volunteers to improve local waterways within their regions. Farmers have adopted no-till farming as the expedient method of reducing runoff and erosion. Tree plantings spearheaded by local associations have been undertaken in many localities. Local government officials have inserted land use guidelines into development. We are extremely fortunate to have assistance from many avenues as we continue our part in a healthy Bay."

- Ann Simonetti, Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Local Government Advisory Committee and former councilmember to Marysville Borough in Pennsylvania

"During this week-long celebration of the Chesapeake, we welcome everyone to virtually explore what makes the Chesapeake Bay region so special and how its rivers and waterways can connect us to each other and to our shared cultural, natural and recreational heritage. And during these difficult times of widespread sickness, hurt and frustration—find your Chesapeake, find yourself outdoors—nature stands ready to help heal us all."

- Wendy O'Sullivan, Superintendent, National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office

"Now more than ever, nature is providing all of us with a much-needed respite. Those who reside in the Chesapeake watershed are fortunate to have a wide variety of conserved lands and scenic waters at their disposal, thanks in large part to the efforts of our partnership to protect lands and increase public access to the Bay and its tributaries. Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week gives us the opportunity to learn more about our local waterways, appreciate the services they provide and remember that we all have a role in their protection."

- Dana Aunkst, Director, Chesapeake Bay Program, Environmental Protection Agency



"Throughout these last couple of months, those of us that live, work and play in the Chesapeake Bay region have visited the woods, rivers and trails of our backyard now more than ever. One of the many things the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us is that we depend on the lands and waters of this region to help us find peace, hope and to spark curiosity and learning. This Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week, we urge you to take action for the lands and waters you love by learning how to take actions that can make a difference for cleaner water."

- Kate Fritz, Executive Director, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

"This is a critical time for Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts. Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is a time for all of us to examine our role in restoring water quality in local rivers, streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Whether it is planting native plants in your yard, reducing energy use or volunteering in efforts to reduce pollution, take a moment this week to commit to doing your part to save the Bay."

- Beth McGee, Director of Science and Agricultural Policy, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

"The Chesapeake is one of the major natural and cultural wonders of the world. Its vastness, diversity, beauty and magic fill us with wonder and fuel our sense of adventure and we fight for access for all. This year more than ever, many of us are finding solace in nature by reconnecting with our Chesapeake waters and wildlife, which is raising our collective awareness of this national treasure. A new generation of conservation stewardship is happening right now, and as people learn more about the Chesapeake and feel a connection to it, they'll be more likely to protect it."

- Joel Dunn, President and CEO of Chesapeake Conservancy

"Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is a wonderful annual reminder of the beauty, value and splendor of the Chesapeake Bay and the rivers and streams that feed it. And with millions of Americans venturing outdoors for fresh air to reinvigorate their minds and bodies amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, this national treasure is more important than ever. At the Choose Clean Water Coalition, our more than 250 members are excited to celebrate this week by not only recognizing the tremendous benefits clean water provides, but by also renewing our commitment to protect and restore local waterways."

- Kristin Reilly, Director, Choose Clean Water Coalition

"Our world and our watersheds are intimately connected and interdependent; from headwaters to coastal waters, the resilience of our economies and communities are tied to healthy waterways and sustainable ecosystems. Pennsylvania Sea Grant is proud to partner with the Chesapeake Bay Program and other organizations to celebrate Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week and promote the value of the Chesapeake Bay—a vast ecosystem and national treasure."

- Sarah Whitney, Director, Pennsylvania Sea Grant College Program



Participating Partners:

