

Chesapeake Conservancy

Frequently Asked Questions Chesapeake Conservancy

What is the Chesapeake Conservancy?

The Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail and the Friends of Chesapeake Gateways have recently merged under the name of the Chesapeake Conservancy. As one entity, the Chesapeake Conservancy can be a powerful catalyst for conserving the region's most treasured landscapes; expanding public access, recreation and tourism; and educating citizens about stewardship of the nation's largest and most productive estuary.

The organization will marshal new resources, advance federal and state policies and forge public and private partnerships to increase public access, expand conservation of the Chesapeake's treasured landscapes, and promote recreation and stewardship of the region's natural, cultural, and historic resources.

The Chesapeake Conservancy's focus will be the advancement and implementation of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network, and the creation and implementation of a Chesapeake Treasured Landscape Initiative.

What happens to the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail and the Friends of Chesapeake Gateways?

The two organizations have merged; however, the implementation and advancement of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network remain key focus areas of the Conservancy.

The Conservancy will work with the National Park Service and other federal, state and local partners to advance the goals of these two critical initiatives. For example, the Conservancy will continue to provide capacity building support, market and promote Gateway sites and work with Trail partners to implement Trail priorities including sustainable tourism and targeted conservation. The Conservancy will also advocate for the creation of a 21st Century Chesapeake Bay National Park, which complements the goals of the Trail and the Gateways Network.

Putting our organization's resources together strengthens us and creates organizational efficiencies. We have combined our administrative functions and staffing, and we are working more comprehensively to promote public access, conservation, education and stewardship throughout the watershed.

How will the merger affect the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network and individual Gateways and Watertrails?

Individual Gateways—the many parks, museums, and other sites that provide access and interpretation for the Bay—will still be eligible to receive funding just as they are now. The Gateways program, an initiative administered by the National Park Service, will continue with

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no interruption, unless changed by Congress. Focus will remain on building the capacity and providing assistance to all Network sites, including those not on the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The Chesapeake Conservancy will bring new resources to Gateways program and help with marketing, capacity building and outreach among other priorities.

How is Chesapeake Conservancy different from the other conservation organizations?

We partner with groups like the Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Piedmont Environmental Council, and other conservation groups. We recently organized a group called the *Partners for Chesapeake Treasured Landscapes* that includes non-profit organizations, and federal and state agencies to advance funding and other tools to expand conservation and access in the Chesapeake.

The Chesapeake Conservancy will focus on land, public access and community stewardship initiatives and less on water quality, which is the focus of many Bay groups. We will not typically play an active role in the purchase of land and conservation easements—a role traditional land conservation and land trust groups already fill.

Instead, our role includes helping to define conservation priorities in the region and working at the federal and state levels and in the private sector to generate and direct financial and technical resources on behalf of the region's conservation and public access goals. We are currently advocating on behalf of these goals at the federal level in order to bring new federal resources to the Chesapeake. There is currently no organization that is focusing solely on bringing new conservation and public access funding to the Chesapeake Bay.

How will the Chesapeake Conservancy add value to the conservation effort in the Chesapeake region?

Building on our success to advance the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, the Conservancy is advocating at the federal and state levels to bring new resources and tools to bear to advance conservation and public access goals and to enhance recreation and tourism opportunities throughout the Chesapeake. We will continue to advocate for new funding and advance policies and partnerships to draw attention to and expand conservation, public access and stewardship to protect the Chesapeake's Treasured Landscapes.

What are the Chesapeake Conservancy's major programs?

We have three primary programs.

1. Advancing the implementation of the Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail
2. Strengthening and expanding the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.
3. Establishing and advancing a Chesapeake Treasured Landscapes Initiative.

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For each program, the Conservancy is working with partners at all levels to bring new resources to bear and to facilitate conservation, public access, education and recreation/tourism.

Is your major focus going to be facilitating land conservation? I work for a (historic, education, etc) site. Will I be left out of your programs?

No, definitely not. Treasured Landscapes weave together natural, cultural and historic sites into one rich Chesapeake tapestry or story.

The Chesapeake Conservancy will work in multiple program areas. Generating and directing public and private financial and technical resources to conserve the Bay's significant landscapes is one priority. Others include:

1. Expanding public access to the bay and its tributaries throughout the watershed
2. Advancing the goals of the Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network.
3. Coordinating with other water trails in the bay region to promote recreation, tourism and education
4. Supporting the establishment of new conservation, recreation and public access corridor designations

What have you accomplished?

The Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake has worked with the NPS to facilitate implementation and planning of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (designated in '06). In addition, the Friends have partnered with local, state, and federal agencies, businesses and other organizations to enhance public access, educational and conservation activities in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. We worked with National Geographic Society and the Environmental Law Center to develop a broadly accepted concept for the treasured landscapes program; we have convened a working group to continue to develop this program and are steadily developing a consensus on how to advance it.

We have also supported the National Park Service as it develops the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail by providing planning and communication support. We have been instrumental in conserving more than 6,000 acres of land, much of it on major rivers along the Trail. We have advanced the deployment of the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy system and there are now nine buoys in the water. We have signed or are completing working agreements with the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to support our goals and their missions.

The Friends of Chesapeake Gateways (FCG) has sought to bring new resources and expanded capacity to the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. FCG has served as a convener for Gateway member sites, bringing together local, state, federal and nonprofit partners to work together and dialogue on partnership initiatives. FCG has coordinated region-

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wide outreach initiatives and marketed the network to audiences throughout the Bay watershed.

Who is on your board?

Charles A. Stek, Chairman

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Former Projects Director to Senator Paul Sarbanes and Senator Ben Cardin
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Chairman Emeritus, The Conservation Fund

Maryland

Paul E. Hagen, Secretary

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Maryland

Stephen R. Adkins

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Chief Deputy Director, Virginia Department of Human Resources Management

Virginia

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Vice President for Environmental Education, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Maryland

Scott Beatty, Jr.

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Shore Bancshares, Inc.

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Virginia

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Virginia

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Vice President and Mid-Atlantic Director, The Conservation Fund
Delaware

John J. Reynolds
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William H. Street
Executive Director, James River Association
Virginia

Ann P. Swanson
Executive Director, Chesapeake Bay Commission
Maryland

H.W. (Skip) Wieder, Jr.
Senior Vice President Emeritus, Geisinger Health System
Director, Susquehanna Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies
Pennsylvania

Where are you located?

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Where can I learn more?

Please visit our website at www.chesapeakeconservancy.org.