Demonstrating the Value of Retaining Forestland in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

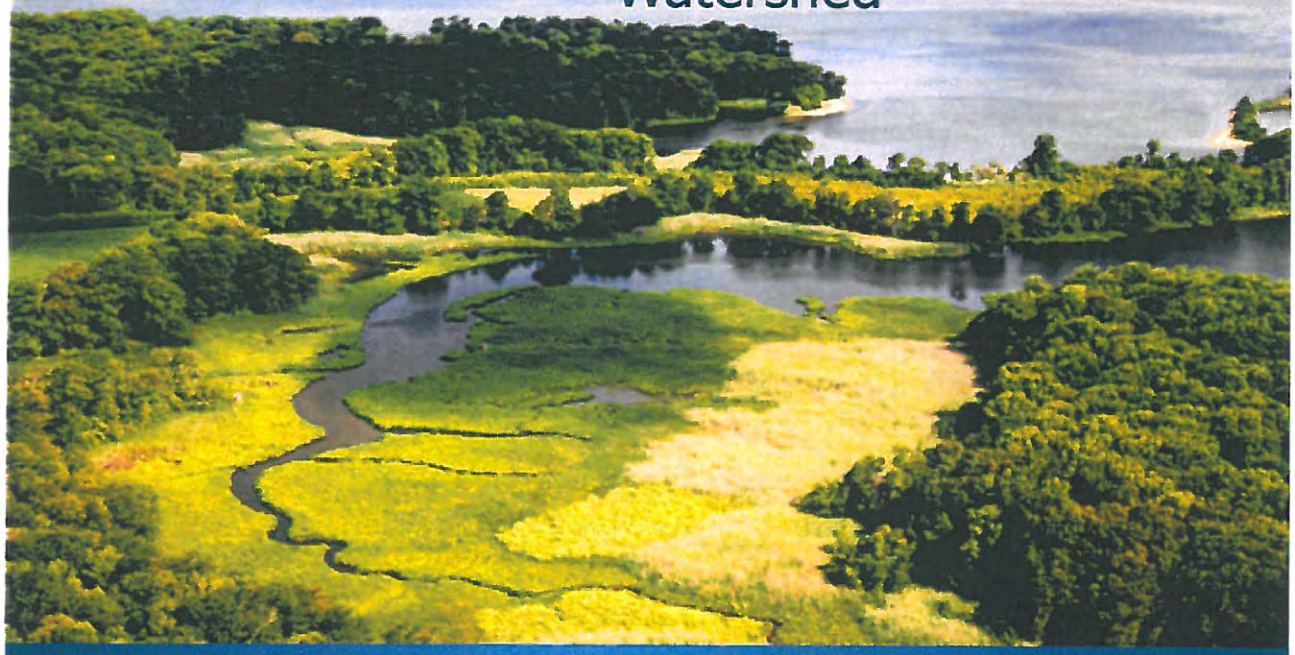


Photo by Will Parson
Chesapeake Bay Program

Greg Evans, Virginia Department of Forestry

November 2, 2016

Why Retaining Forests and Healthy Watersheds Matter...

Restoration is Not an Easy Answer

The cost of repairing damaged ecosystems is high and has a low success rate

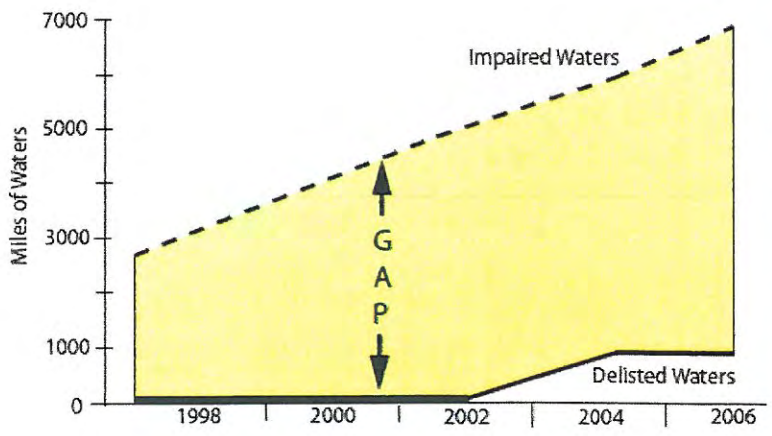


Figure 1-2 Gap between impaired and restored waters in EPA Region 3.

The Challenge

KEEPING THIS FROM BECOMING THIS

....While Still Promoting Economic Growth

Project Goals

PHASE I: PLANTING THE SEEDLING

Build economic case for increased forestland retention actions by localities valued in the TMDL.

PHASE II: GROWING THE TREE

Build consensus on policies, practices and incentives necessary to stimulate land use decisions that retain high conservation value forestland.

Healthy Watersheds Forest/TMDL Project Partners

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

DEQ
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

George Washington Regional Commission

pennsylvania
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Virginia Department of Forestry

Be River Friendly
It's Your Backyard
The Rappahannock River Basin Commission

pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Protection

Chesapeake Bay Commission
Maryland · Pennsylvania · Virginia

Virginia Water Resources Research Center

Phase I Economic Findings:

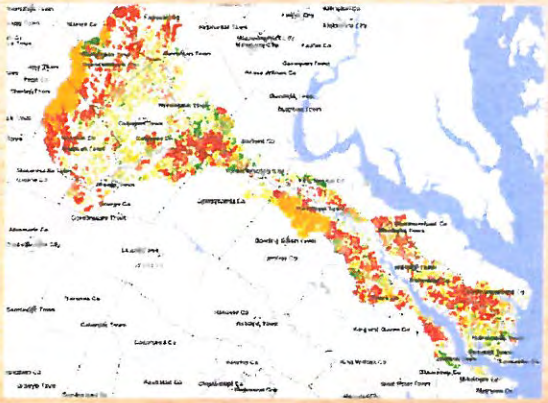
$125 Million

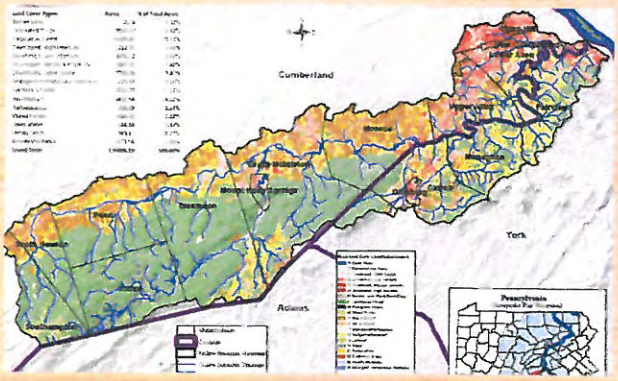
Possible Future Offset Savings

Key Benefit of VA/PA Partnership

- Diverse solutions
- Enhanced applicability
- Increased impact

Phase II Study Areas:





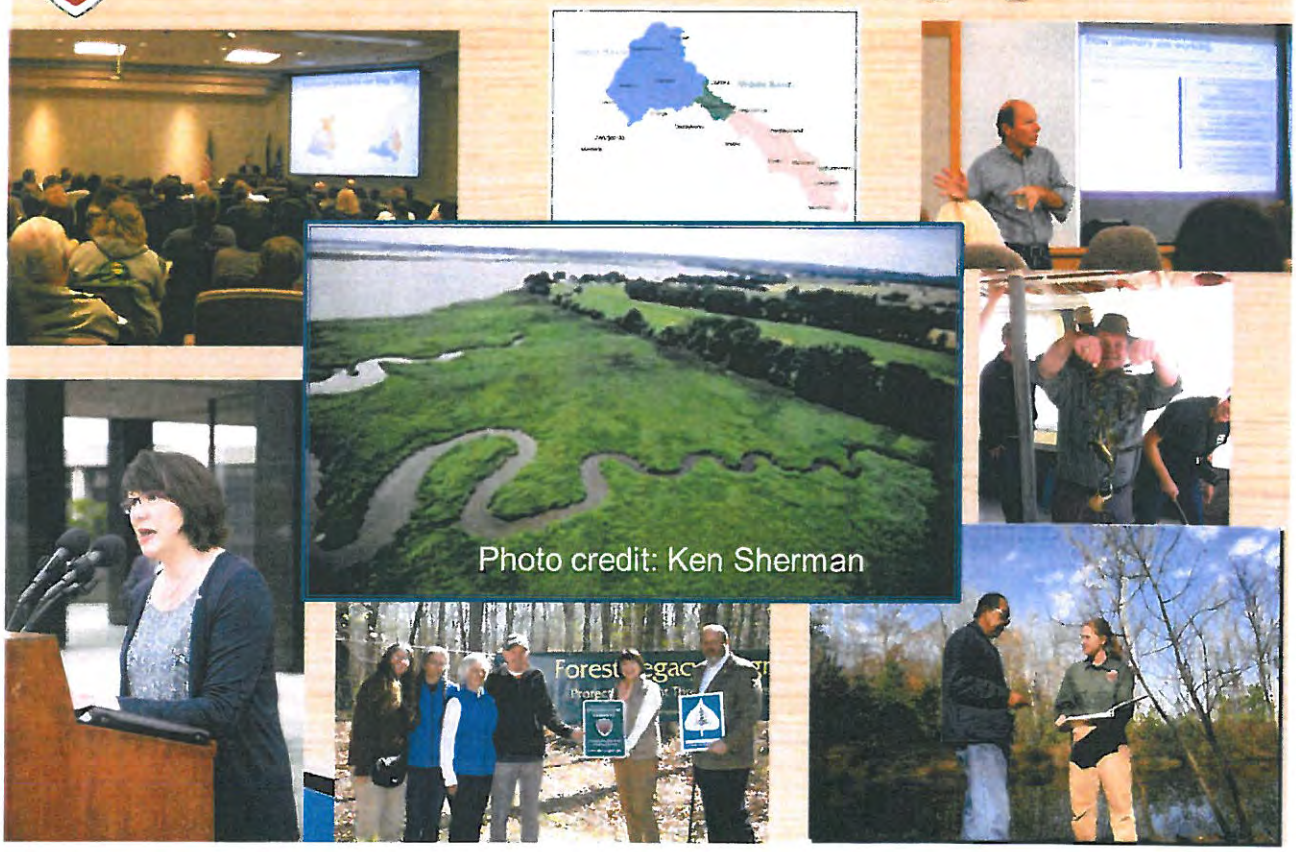
Virginia

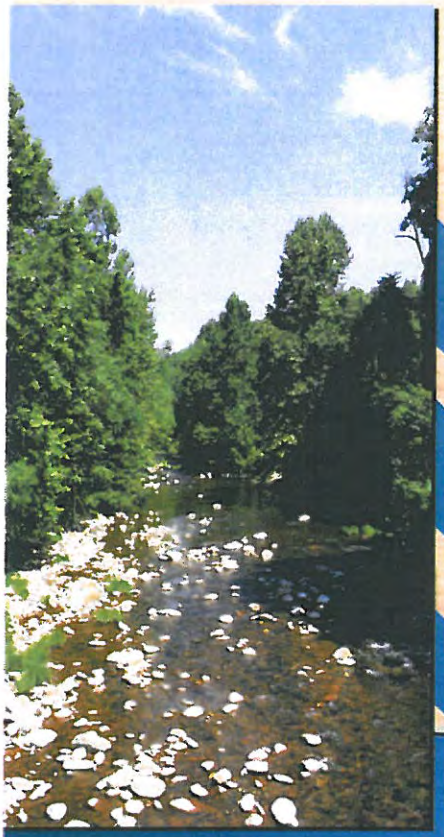
Rappahannock River Basin

Pennsylvania

Yellow Breeches Watershed

Phase II Goal: Local Engagement

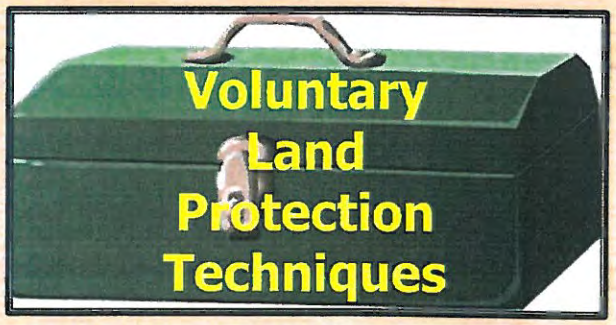




Phase II Objectives

- PA duplicates VA Phase I Modeling effort
- VA/PA/localities agree on toolkit of incentives and land use policy changes
- Make recommendations to EPA and Chesapeake Bay Program

Potential "Tool Box" Mechanisms



Success Outcomes – Ripple Effect

Empowered governments at local level

Policies at all government levels provide incentives for forestland retention

Quality communities and healthy watersheds at reduced cost

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