



**Chesapeake
Bay Trust**

Chesapeake Bay Commission Meeting

January 2nd, 2025

Kacey Wetzel

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About the Trust



Mission

To engage and empower diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region.

Vision

The Chesapeake Bay and local watersheds are healthy and safe, our waters are fishable and swimmable, local communities benefit from these healthy resources, and everyone participates in restoring and protecting our natural resource treasures.



Funding Sources

The Chesapeake Bay Trust receives funding from a variety of public and private sources;

The Trust receives the Chesapeake vehicle license plate, donations made through the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund on the Maryland State income tax form, donations from individuals and corporations, and partnerships with private foundations and federal, state, and local agencies.

Many of our grant programs are operated as pooled funds with federal, state, and local funding partners.

What We Do

We empower local community - based groups on the ground with the resources they need to take on a meaningful and measurable role in restoring and protecting local natural resources.

- Education
- Conservation and Restoration
- Community Engagement
- Science and Innovation
- Capacity Building



Our Programs



01

Environmental Education

Environmental Education
 Youth Environmental Education
 Outdoor Learning Network Initiative



02

Outreach & Engagement

Outreach and Restoration
 Community Engagement and
 Restoration Mini -Grant
 Veteran's Engagement Mini -Grant
 DC Stormwater Solutions
 DC Urban Ag



03

Restoration & Science

Chesapeake Oyster Innovation
 Goal Implementation Team
 Support
 Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green
 Towns
 Non -Tidal Wetlands Awards
 Pooled Monitoring Initiatives
 Restoration Research
 Watershed Assistance



04

Environmental Justice

Urban Trees
 Urban Trees Mini Grant
 Mid -Atlantic Environmental
 Justice Fund
 Supplemental Environmental
 Project Funds

Our Programs



05

Capacity Building

Capacity Building Initiative Grant Program

Regional Capacity Building Initiative Network Program



06

DC Programs

DC Stormwater Solutions

DC Donate and Reuse

DC Urban Ag



07

MD County - Specific

Anne Arundel County: Community Tree Planting, Forestry and Forested Land Protection, and Watershed Restoration

Charles County : Forestry

Montgomery County: City of Rockville RainScapes Rebate, and Clean Water Montgomery

Prince George's County : Community Garden Mini Grant, Rain Check Rebate, and Stormwater Stewardship



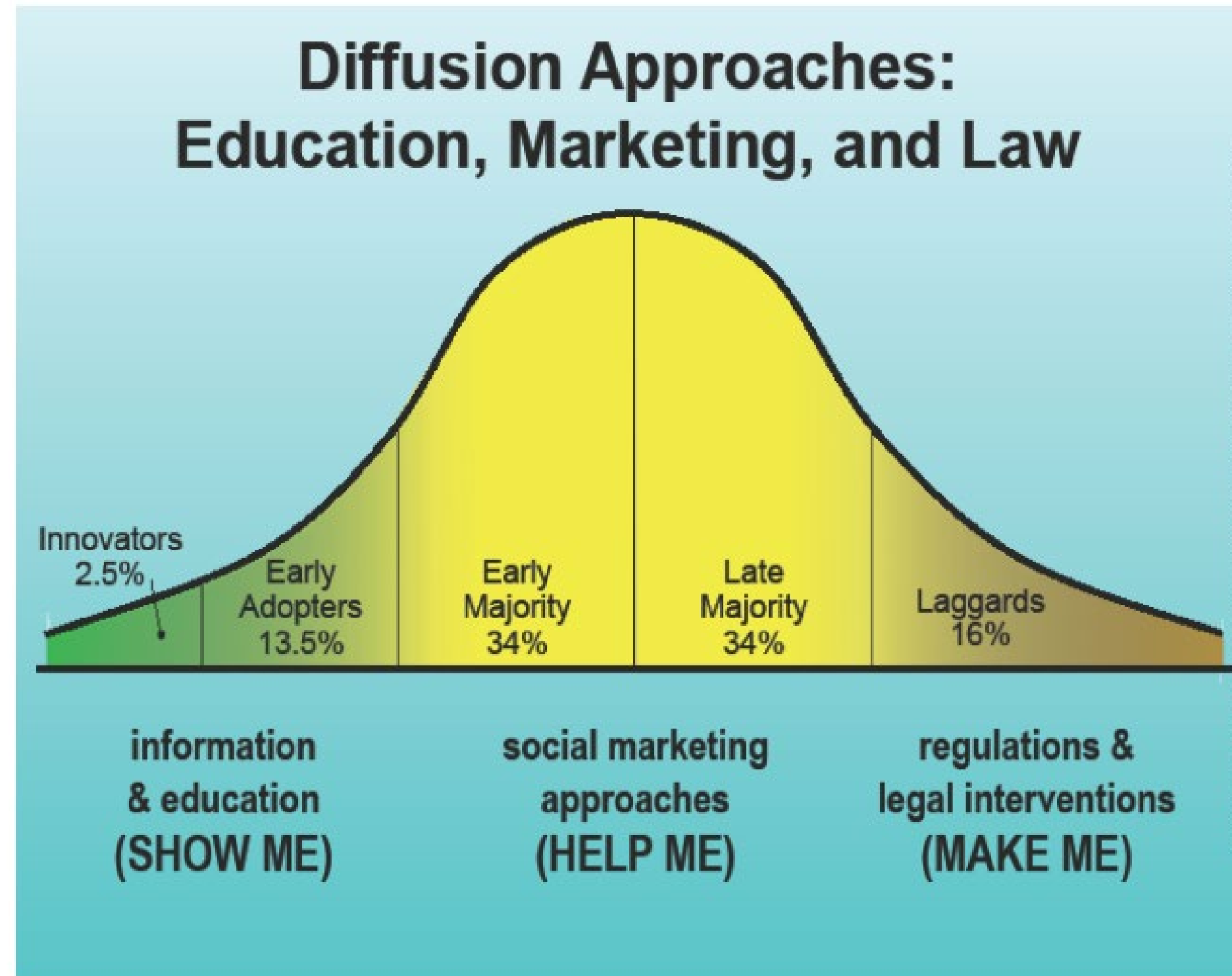
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Conservation and Climate Corps

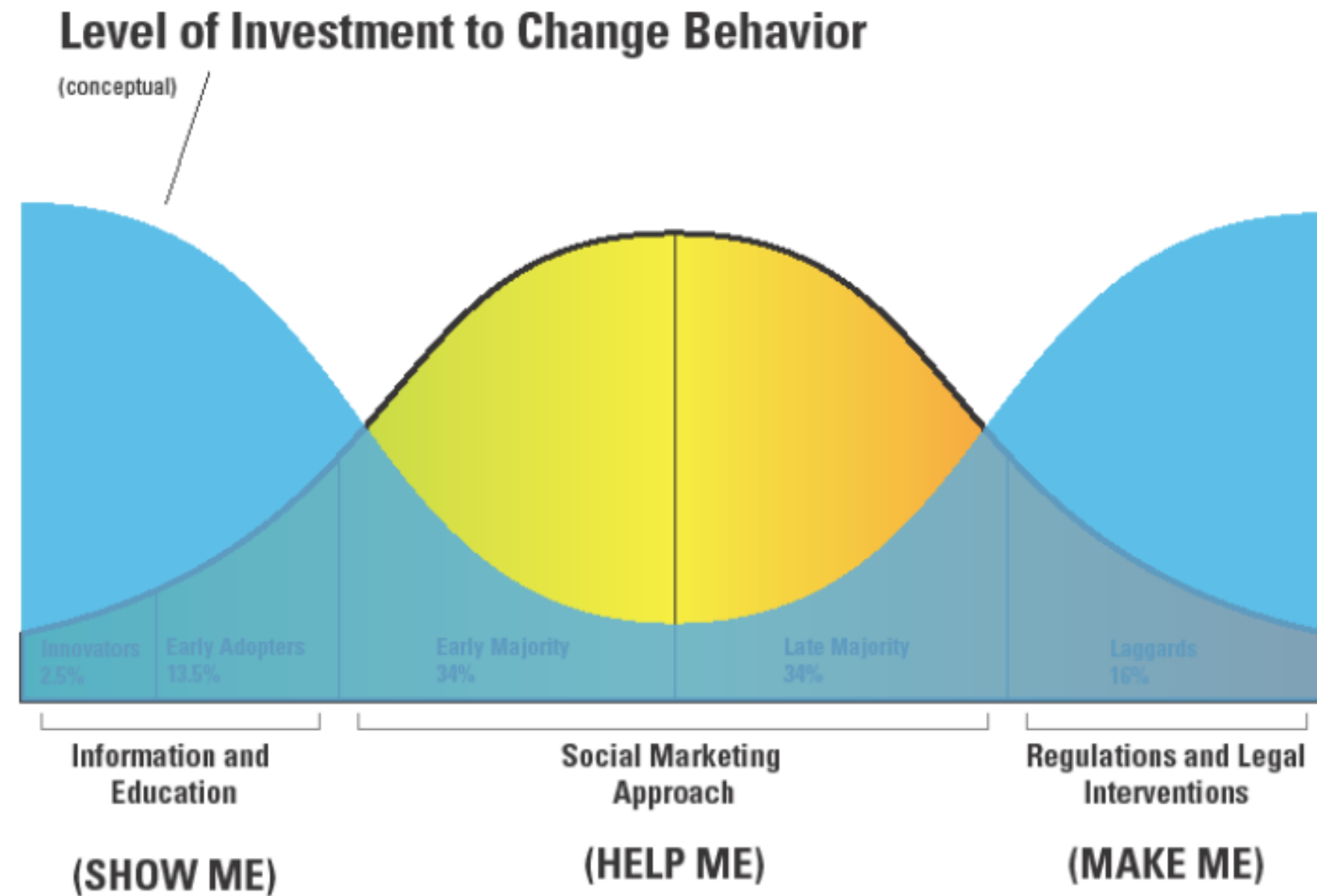
Year-Long Program for young adults interested in the Environmental/Conservation movement

Chesapeake Conservation Corps Mini Grants and All -Hands Contest

Information is Not Enough



Information is Not Enough



Credit: Nancy R. Lee, University of Washington & Puget Sound Partnership
Adapted from Everett Rogers, Jay Kassirer, Mike Rothschild, Dave Ward, Kristen Cooley

The Need for Technical Assistance



- The watershed is predominantly held in private ownership
- Bridging the knowledge gap and building trust
- Overcoming complexity
- Increasing confidence
- Addressing site specific challenges
- Addressing resource barriers



Connector Group Technical Assistance Model

Key Point: Not everyone is their own best messenger

Who: Community Based Organizations, Connectors & TA Providers

What: Outreach, technical assistance, grants

How: Pair connectors with experts in the field to provide TA to applicants and awardees

Outcomes: New applicants with increased capacity to apply for and manage funds.



Capacity Building Initiative - TA Model

Key Point: Networks work but require investment

Who: Local Networks of cross-sector organizations committed to working collaboratively. Example – Lancaster Clean Water Partners

What: Includes training, technical assistance, and grants.

How: Leverages the social science of networks to accelerate innovation

Outcomes: Measurable capacity built to accomplish shared goals at the intersection of community and watershed health.

Deepens trust and increases impact.

**CAPACITY
BUILDING
INITIATIVE**

**Chesa
Bay Tri**



Bonnie Sorak

Director of Outreach

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Learn more at www.InterfaithChesapeake.org

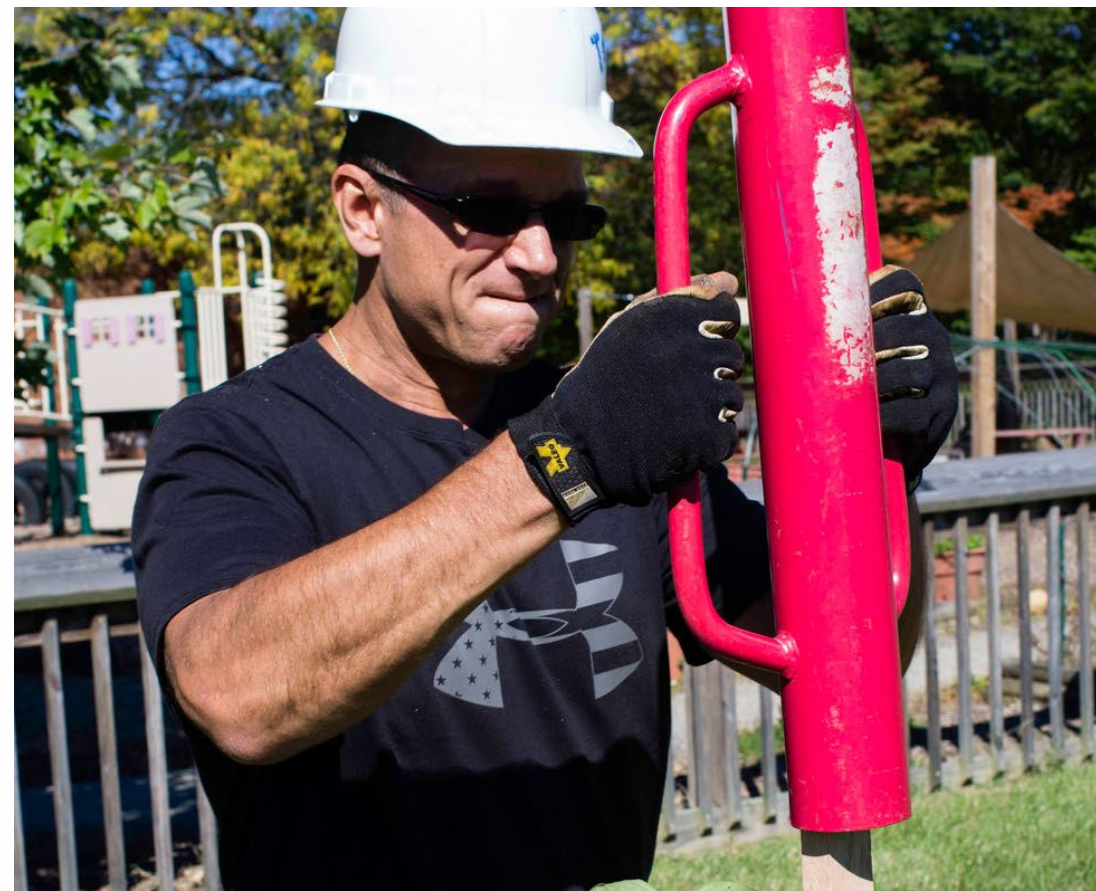


Interfaith
Partners for the
CHESAPEAKE

Forming Faithful Stewards, Caring for Sacred Waters



DNR Tree Planting at Oakland Mills Interfaith Center



Oakland Mills Interfaith Center -
DNR 60 Tree planting Oct. 2015



Forming Faithful Stewards, Caring for Sacred Waters.

IPC's mission is to inspire and equip people of faith to
protect, and restore our shared watershed.



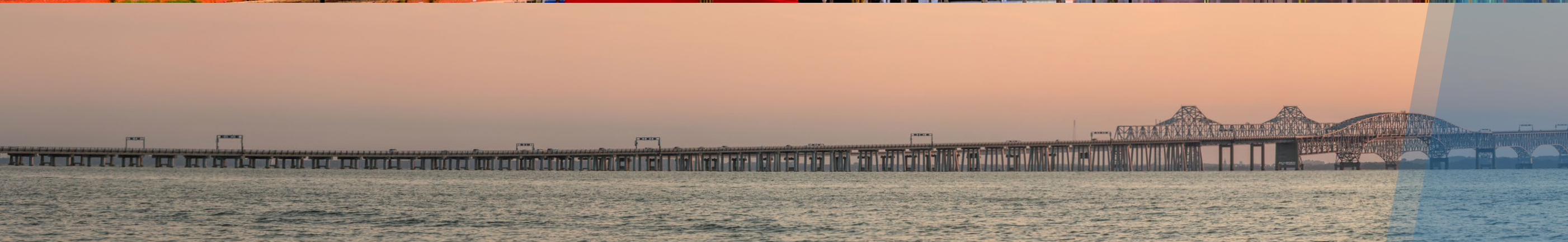
Our



Faith



Calls



Us



Together



Translator & Connector

Environmental
Partners

Local
Government
s

Faith
Communities

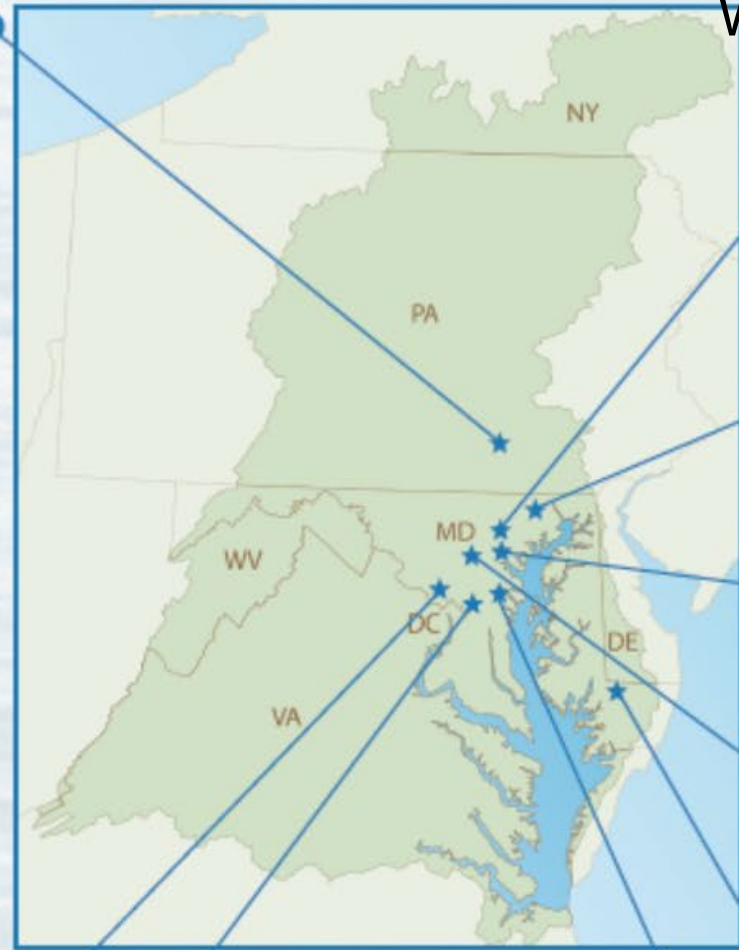


“Do unto others downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you.”

Wendell Berry



“I had no idea about the faith community’s environmental role, but IPC’s guidance empowered me to become a better steward of our land. Working alongside IPC on projects like our riparian buffer and Eagle Scout birdhouses has been such a joy. I can’t wait to see what’s next!” — *Rhonda Miller, Green Team Leader, Ascension Lutheran Church, Lancaster, PA*



“IPC helped NACC start their green team and Community Garden, offering continuous support and collaboration to engage community members and involve children in nature stewardship. Partnerships made through IPC have been instrumental in our community taking meaningful action for the environment.” — *Tarun Poudel, Nepali American Cultural Center, Baltimore County*

“Interfaith Partners has such a positive, ‘yes it is possible’ attitude. They have been and continue to be an important source of support.” — *Beth Babikow, Friends School of Harford Chair, Board of Trustees, Harford County*



“I don’t know how to change the world. I don’t know how to change the country. But I do know how to have an impact in my neighborhood, where my parish is.” — *Pastor Michael Martin, Stillmeadow Community Fellowship, Baltimore City*



“Our efforts would not have gotten off the ground without the help of IPC. I had no idea that this level of support and resources were available. This organization is such a blessing.” — *Marti Simpson and Kathy Gross, Saint John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Howard County*



“Nature is the great equalizer — it impacts everyone, regardless of religious background. IPC understands how nature touches every living being, offering a unique way for us to connect. When we’re in nature, we can engage with each other in new ways, opening up channels of spirituality and togetherness.” — *Susana S. Altmann, Beth Sholom, Montgomery County*



“Working with IPC has empowered us to live out our call to care for Creation. Their Faithful Green Leaders Training, resources, and grant assistance has shown our congregation how to be environmental stewards at home and in our church, helping to build a community where we can grow together in our care for the watershed.” — *Rev. Dr. Mark Whitlock, Reid Temple AME, Prince Georges County*



“St. Alban’s has long embraced environmental stewardship with solar panels, a community garden, and composting. Signing the IPC Partner Pledge was a natural next step, refocusing our congregation and opening new relationships and grant opportunities.” — *Jim Cockey, Saint Alban’s Episcopal Church, Eastern Shore of Maryland*

“IPC does an amazing job providing resources to help our congregation succeed. And their One Water Partnership Google Group where we posted a question is an invaluable resource to not only receive and share information but also to build community.” — *Marjorie Kehoe, Annapolis Friends Meeting, Anne Arundel County*



Biodiversity thrives in Ethiopia's church forests.

Ecologists are working with the nation's Tewahedo churches to preserve these pockets of lush, wild habitat.



Nature Magazine, August 2023 By Alison Abbott
Photography by Kieran Dodds/Panos Pictures

A protective wall surrounds the Mekame Selam Kolala Meskel church's forest in South Gonder, a region of northern Ethiopia.



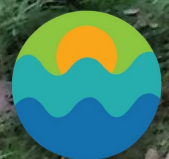
"The question that must be addressed is not how to care for the planet, but how to care for each of the planet's millions of humans and natural neighborhoods, each of its millions of small pieces and parcels of land..."

- Wendell Berry

The Futility of Global Thinking,
1989

Congregation Kol Shalom, Anne Arundel County,

MD



“I don't know how to change the country. I don't know how to change the world. But I do know how to have an impact in my neighborhood, where my parish is,”

-Pastor Michael Martin

Stillmeadow Community Fellowship, Baltimore City, MD



Waste in the Potomac River,
WASHINGTON D.C., MD

Faithful Green Leaders Training



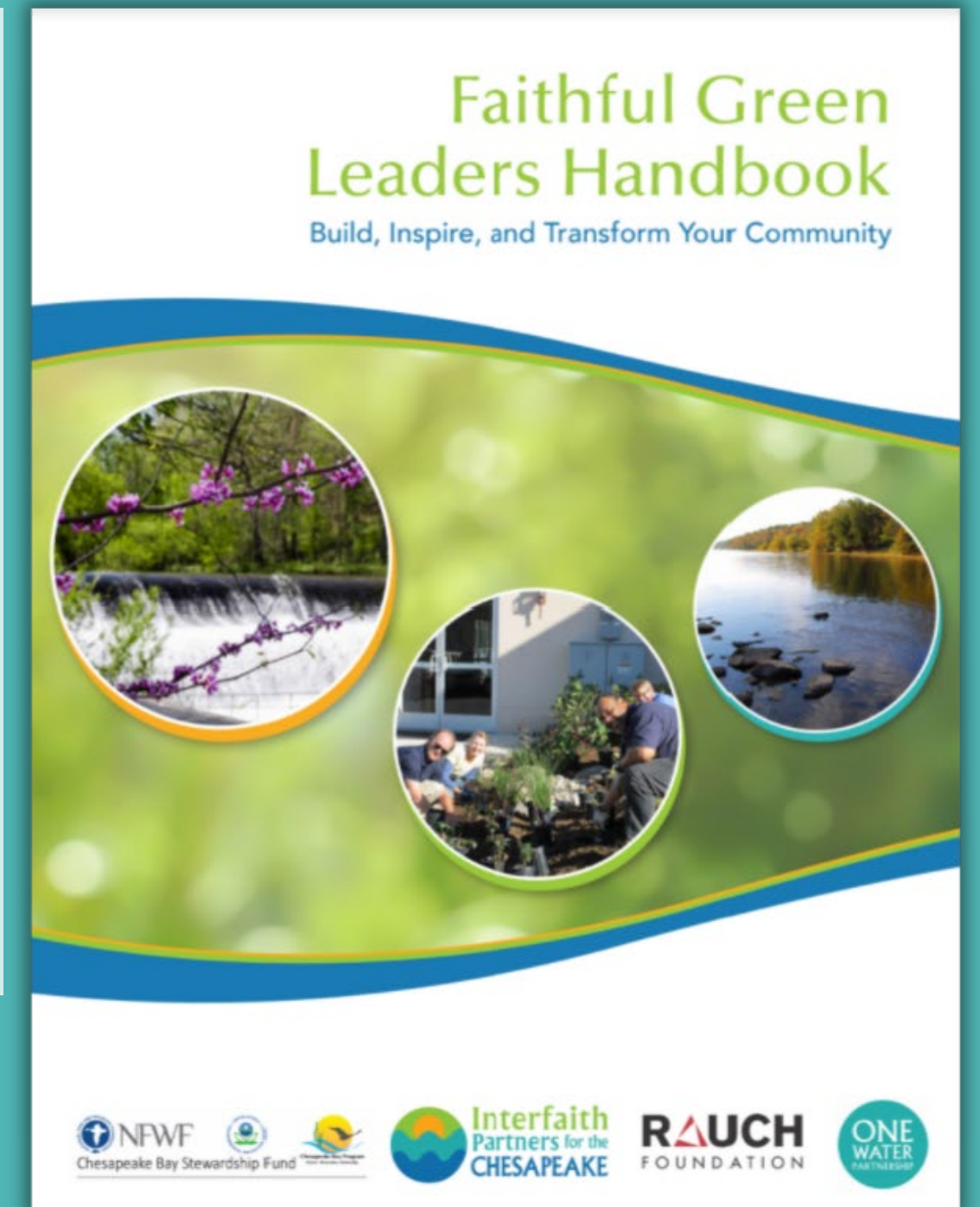
**Next
training!**
03/11
03/18
03/25

Mt. Olive UMC,
Community Garden

Acquire the knowledge, skills, tools, and support needed to lead communities in raising awareness and restoring sacred waters.

Learn more at...

www.InterfaithChesapeake.org/programs



**Faithful Green
Leaders Handbook**
Build, Inspire, and Transform Your Community



What Can My Faith Community Do?

There are many ways to help, and we tailor solutions to your congregational needs!

Forming Faithful Stewards:
Education; Raise awareness

Caring for Sacred Waters:
Restoration; Taking action

Going forth:
Growth; Engage with others



Menu for Action | FOR CONGREGATIONS

Congregations are encouraged to choose one or more of these actions on their path to being faithful stewards of the environment.

Congregation Name: _____



Forming: Build your congregation's knowledge and commitment

1. Host a spiritual outdoor experience/nature walk
2. Organize an environmental movie night, book study group, or scripture study.
3. Host a workshop on "Faith and the Environment" or "How to Talk About Climate Change"
4. Participate in Faithful Green Leaders Training to start or support your congregational Green Team
5. Host a sermon on environmental issues
6. Organize an environmental book study group
7. Offer educational programming about drinking water, environmentally friendly gardening and lawn care or other environmental topic
8. Incorporate environmentally themed programming into your Youth Group, Sunday school, or Vacation Bible School
9. Sign the IPC Partner Congregation Pledge to celebrate, respect, and revere the Earth's blessings
10. Connect holiday celebrations with creation care themes

Caring: Put your knowledge into practice

1. Adopt habits that help reduce waste such as zero waste or recycling
2. Install a rain garden, cistern, rain barrels, treat or remove impervious surfaces
3. Organize and participate in a tree planting
4. Clean up trash at a local waterway, park or neighborhood
5. Remove invasive plant species to help local wildlife
6. Install a community garden on church grounds to benefit your congregants, or to donate the food
7. Design and install a conservation landscape to improve wildlife habitat
8. Explore how to reduce energy use at your congregation and home or solar/community energy

Going Forth: Spread the message

1. Involve other congregations, the neighborhood or general public in any Forming or Caring activities
2. Hold a native tree/plant training and sale
3. Spearhead and participate in multi-congregational storm drain stenciling or environmentally themed mural
5. Spearhead a multi-congregation stream cleanup or neighborhood trash cleanup
6. Collaborate with other faith communities to host a nature walk or spiritual outdoor experience
7. Host an environmental advocacy workshop; take action to advocate for clean water. Contact your state or local representative and/or write a letter to the editor



For more information contact Bonnie Sorak at bonnie@interfaithchesapeake.org

www.interfaithchesapeake.org | 410-609-6952

Signing the Partner Congregation Pledge!

Join our interfaith movement and
network of congregations

Learn more at www.InterfaithChesapeake.org



AS A COMMUNITY OF FAITH, WE ARE CALLED TO HONOR OUR SACRED BOND WITH OUR CREATOR,
SERVE AS GOOD STEWARDS OF THE LAND AND WATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE, AND SUSTAIN THE LIFE
AND HEALTH OF ALL CREATURES. THROUGH OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS,

WE PLEDGE TO

Celebrate, respect, and revere the Earth's blessings

Demonstrate good stewardship in how we manage our land and facilities

Engage members of our community in the work of caring for the environment

*Embrace the mission of Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake to work together
to protect and restore our shared watershed*

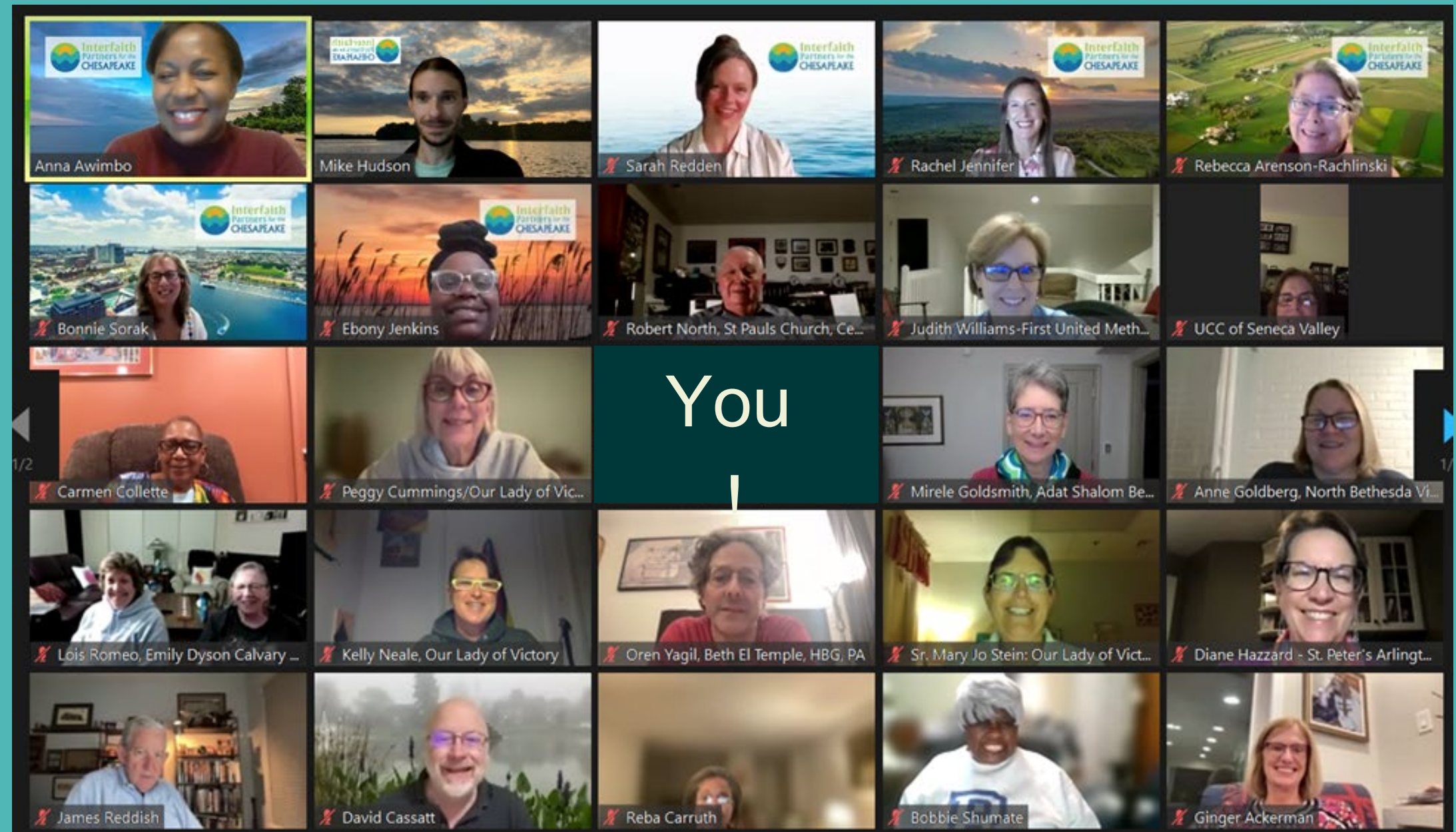


VIEW THE FULL PLEDGE AT WWW.INTERFAITHCHESAPEAKE.ORG

Monthly Learning Labs

Range of Topics!

- Stormwater Management
- Native Plantings & Gardening
- Environmental Justice
- Zero-Waste Campaigns
- Project Maintenance
- Grant Funding
- So many more!



See you there!

<https://www.InterfaithChesapeake.org/programs>



One Water Partnership

Building regionally based collaborations of faith communities, environmental organizations and government agencies.

Current Hubs...

- Anne Arundel - MD
- Baltimore City & County - MD
- Harford - MD
- Howard - MD
- Mid & Lower Eastern Shore - MD
- Lancaster - PA
- Montgomery and Prince George's

(New!)

Please contact us at OneWater@InterfaithChesapeake.org

or by phone at (410) 609-6852.



Adat Shalom Synagogue,
Invasives Removal & Forest
Rejuvenation



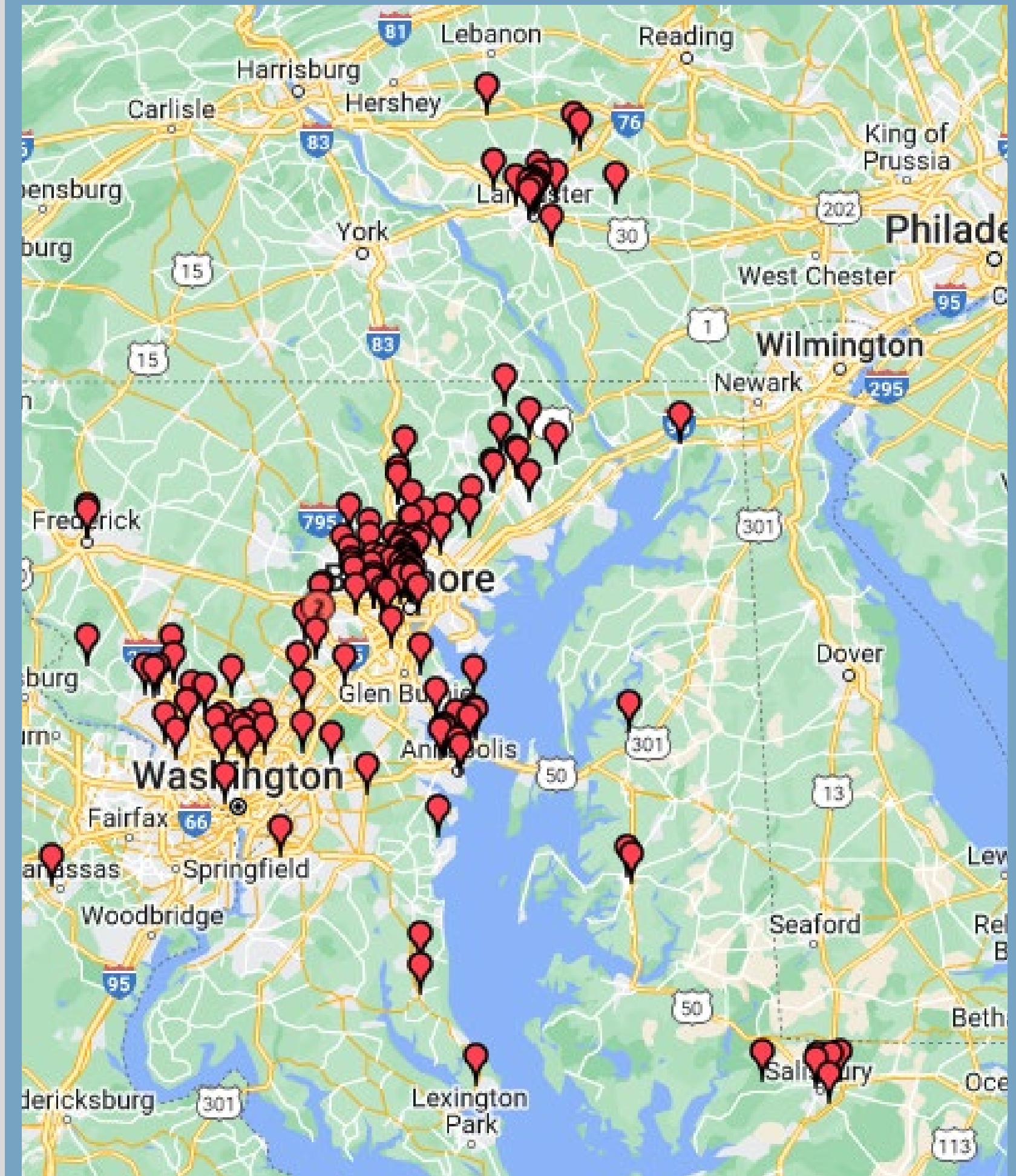
Who's Doing This Already?



177

IPC Partner Congregation Pledge signors

300+ Congregations have taken action
to help keep our
waterways clean, and our
communities healthy!



Getting to Implementation

READY

WILLING

& ABLE



Show Me

EDUCATION is enough for this group to change their behavior.

Help Me

SOCIAL MARKETING is the best return on investment for behavior change.

Make Me

This group needs a LAW to drive behavior change.

“I need an ark!”- Apostle Larry Lee Thomas,
Empowering Believers Church, Glen Burnie, Anne Arundel County, MD



Ascension Lutheran Church in Willow Street, Lancaster, PA



In partnership with the Lancaster Clean
Water Partners collaborative



Sherwood Episcopal Church, Cockeysville, Baltimore County, MD



plex, 25 to 45 percent slopes,	B	9.8	73.7%
percent slopes	B	1.2	9.0%
	D	0.0	0.0%
		13.3	100.0%

DATA TABULATION		ZONING AREAS	
DRAINAGE AREA	13.30 ACRES	DR - DENSE RESIDENTIAL	12.70 ACRES
IMPERVIOUS SURFACE	2.29 ACRES	BL - BUSINESS LOCAL	0.60 ACRES
IMPERVIOUS PERCENTAGE	17.22%		

BOUNDARY TYPE	SYMBOL
DRAINAGE AREA BOUNDARY	— — — — —
IMPERVIOUS AREA	— — — — —
SOILS	— — — — —

Saint Marks, United Methodist Church, Hanover, Anne Arundel County, MD





Islamic Society of Baltimore



Islamic Society of Baltimore, Windsor Mill, Baltimore County, MD

15,000 people attend their Eid Celebration

Combined CBT G3 & DNR \$880,000

Re-construct the north parking area with permeable materials; both permeable interlocking concrete pavers and reinforced turf grass pavers. In addition, two hillside micro-bioretention areas are proposed adjacent to pedestrian ramp improvements. Upon completion of the green infrastructure improvements, the lot should be re-stripped, signed, and marked according to the proposed site plan.

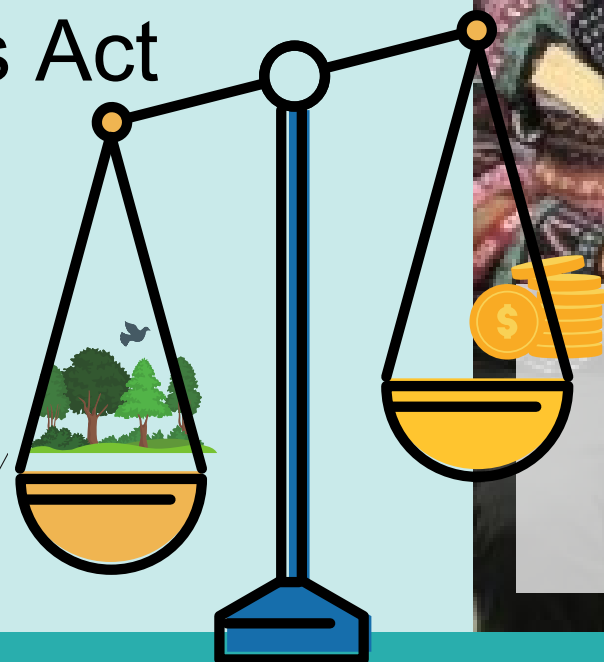
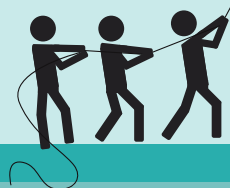
Reaching farmers where they are-~~at~~ the pews!



Advocate for Moral Policies

Using our faith to empower change!

- Maryland the Beautiful Act
- Community Solar
- Whole Watersheds Act
- Local issues
- Many more!



Faithful stewards gathering for a "Trash Free Maryland" Senate hearing on Foam Waste



Imagine the Potential...

There are more than 19,000 Congregations of faith
across the Chesapeake Bay's Watershed

What if we came together...





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CHESAPEAKE

Forming Faithful Stewards, Caring for Sacred Waters



In Summary



Takeaways:

1. Information is not enough; most audiences need technical assistance
2. If you don't center people in program design, you will waste time and money

Recommendations:

1. You must involve priority audiences in the design of legislation to ensure you are addressing key barriers to implementation
2. Don't just tally up supply costs for ecological restoration; budget specifically for community engagement and TA costs in legislation

Questions?

