



Nanticoke Watershed Alliance

Strategic Plan 2018

Community Collaboration



Environmental Education



Nanticoke Creekwatchers



Recreation and Eco-Tourism



Saving one of our last wild rivers

Mission:

Fostering partnerships and progress in conserving the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Nanticoke River watershed through dialogue, collaborative outreach, and education.

Vision:

Community members, businesses, and government value the Nanticoke River and actively conserve its natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

The Nanticoke River begins its journey in southern Delaware, flowing southwest to the Chesapeake Bay through the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. One of the Chesapeake's healthiest rivers, its 725,000-acre watershed is the most biologically diverse watershed on Delmarva. The Nanticoke supports excellent fisheries, has a rich cultural history, is home to the highest concentration of bald eagles in the northeastern United States and boasts the northernmost stands of bald cypress on the Atlantic Coast.

In June of 1992, Maryland and Delaware conservation organizations reached across state lines in a formal agreement to create the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance (NWA). Now a small non-profit based out of Vienna, Maryland, the NWA works with organizations in both states to help preserve the characteristics of this river that make it such a vibrant and diverse community. Our Partners in Conservation include foresters, industries, small business owners, government agencies, environmental groups, land trusts, realtors, academicians, fishermen, restoration groups, farmers, and citizen groups. This strategic plan will be our roadmap as we revitalize our organization.

Programmatic Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Creekwatchers - Monitor and report the health of the Nanticoke River and its tributaries to inform decision makers, encourage environmental stewardship, and prioritize restoration strategies.

- Increase distribution, promotion, and value of the Report Card
- Grow and diversify funding of the Creekwatchers Program
- Recruit additional volunteer monitors as needed
- Expand types of monitoring and fine-tune protocols
- Identify and seek funding for water quality improvement projects based on Creekwatchers data

Goal 2: Environmental Education and Outreach – Educate and empower individuals and groups by providing watershed-focused, fact-based educational programs, workshops, events, and information to inspire action.

- Engage residential property owners in watershed best management practices
- Develop an outreach program to work with non-residential property owners and the business community on watershed best management practices
- Continue outreach to the agricultural community on watershed best management practices
- Develop an outreach program to work with faith-based organizations in the watershed
- Expand K-12 watershed-focused environmental education opportunities
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with regional institutions of higher education

Goal 3: Recreation and Ecotourism – Create opportunities to connect more people in environmentally sustainable ways to the Nanticoke River and its tributaries.

- Engage the public in events and opportunities that highlight recreational use and enjoyment of the River
- Encourage recreational uses that respect private property rights and are compatible with natural resource conservation and preservation goals
- Advocate for maintenance of existing and development of new river access points and water trails
- Raise awareness of the natural and cultural history of area

Goal 4: Community Collaboration – Work together with community members, conservation partners, businesses, government, agriculture, and other industries on projects to improve the health of the Nanticoke River Watershed.

- Bring together stakeholders and provide opportunities for improving communications and collaborations
- Use the Watershed Implementation Plans to identify high priority projects for potential collaboration
- Reevaluate the Partners in Conservation program
- Build relationships with elected officials and government decision-makers (mayors, town managers, county, administrators, etc.)

Organizational Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Board and Staff Development – Strengthen the Alliance and ensure efficiency, accountability, and engagement by focusing on organizational development best management practices.

- Ensure a high performing board through clear expectations, annual work plans, ongoing board training, and regular self-assessment
- Revise board committees and membership to strengthen the work of the committees and to provide guidance and support to the Alliance
- Create a robust board succession plan that will strengthen and diversify Board membership and broaden the board's range of experience and expertise
- Create performance measures for staff that evaluate success based on annual work plans, budget, and personal goals.

Goal 2: Resource Development – Raise awareness of and support for the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance through strong communications, fundraising, partnerships, and community outreach to ensure the organization has the resources necessary to carry out its strategic priorities.

- Increase and diversify unrestricted funding sources
- Develop a 6-month operating reserve to ensure financial stability and sustainability
- Improve the visibility and name recognition of the Alliance
- Evaluate the current office location to maximize visibility, convenience, and cost

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Board of Directors

Mike Pretl, President

Wicomico Environmental Trust

Joe Layton, Past President

Dorchester Co. Farm Bureau

Richard Ball, President Elect

Nanticoke Creekwatchers

Alan Girard, Treasurer

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

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