

2026

FISCAL YEAR

IMPACT REPORT

For the Bay. For the Future.





Building momentum toward a healthier Bay

A newly planted tree first sleeps, then creeps, and finally leaps in growth toward its full potential. As its branches expand and leaves multiply, it sequesters more carbon, filters more air and water, and provides more habitat and shade. Its impact compounds over time.

Each of our actions to preserve and strengthen the Chesapeake Bay region grows roots and expands year after year to provide lasting rewards.

Just this year, the number of juvenile oysters (spat) in the Bay was the highest it's been in Maryland in three decades. The world's largest oyster restoration effort is happening right here in the Bay. Our ongoing efforts to restore oysters, build successful partnerships, grow community support, and advance smart policies work together to drive long-term success.

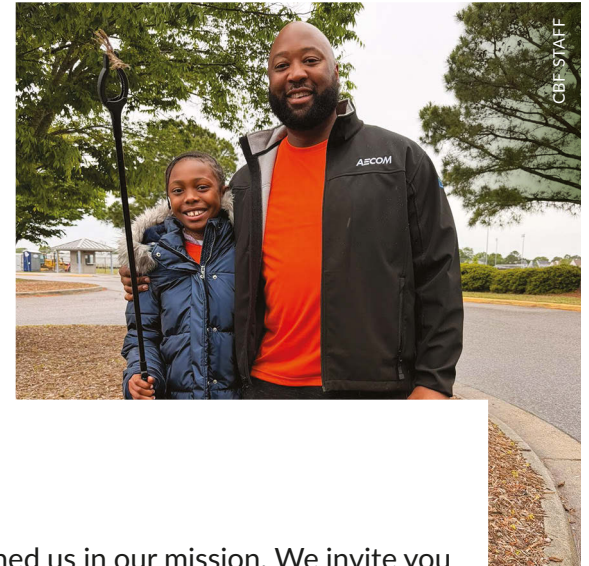
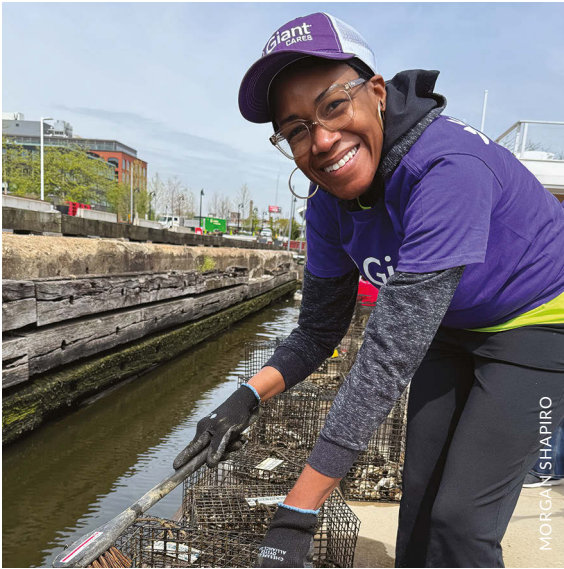
In another major success that came from years of effort, state and federal leaders approved a revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Agreement in December 2025. Vigorous advocacy from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) and our members, plus our feedback on the new goals and our long-term partnerships with elected officials, led to this accomplishment. The stage is set for the next 15 years of Bay cleanup. CBF will continue holding state and federal leaders accountable as we contribute our own hands-on efforts to save the Bay.

Energized by the impacts shared in this report, CBF will keep providing solutions and serving as a watchdog at the federal level and across Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Top priorities include saving the imperiled blue crab, striped bass, and menhaden populations, fighting rollbacks of environmental protections, and helping coastal communities at risk in a changing climate.

CBF's decades of experience steering collaborative, innovative efforts make a difference every day. And our actions today cultivate a better tomorrow.

Thank you for taking action with us to save the Bay.



Thank You

As a CBF supporter, you make Bay recovery possible. We are honored that you have joined us in our mission. We invite you to continue supporting CBF as we seek new advancements in our strategies to clean Bay waters, build the next generation of environmental leaders, and defend the ecosystem through strategic policy and litigation.

Thank you for saving the Chesapeake Bay and inspiring others to do the same.

21 million

oysters planted in sanctuary reefs serving as powerful filters to clean the Bay's water.



ROBERT DILLER

40,000

trees planted to remove pollutants from the air and water, stabilize streambanks, and provide shade and habitat.



CAROLINE PHILLIPS



23,852

advocacy actions taken by CBF members in defense of Bay-smart policies and practices.

97,650

pounds of trash collected by volunteers on Clean the Bay Day, clearing Virginia waterways of harmful debris.



CBF STAFF

30,767 hours dedicated by 5,264

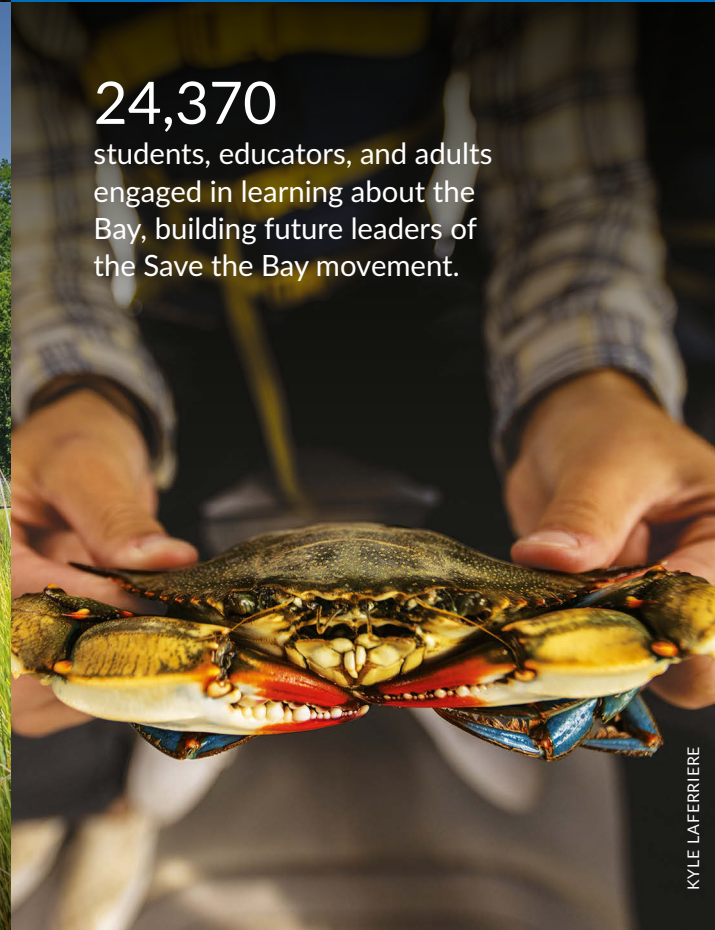
volunteers to plant trees, build living shorelines, and more to restore the Bay.



SUE MANGAN

24,370

students, educators, and adults engaged in learning about the Bay, building future leaders of the Save the Bay movement.



KYLE LAFERRIERE

Advancing Restoration of the Bay

Greening Faith Places and Community Spaces

As CBF restores the Bay, we value the impact this has on the people who call it home. In other words: “To do this work, you have to love people,” says Ann Jurczyk, CBF’s Virginia Urban Restoration Manager. In December 2025, Jurczyk completed a multi-year project called “Greening Faith Places and Community Spaces,” to create resilient neighborhoods and churches within heat islands in Richmond, Virginia.

Heat islands are parts of cities with lots of pavement and very little shade. In Richmond, some neighborhoods can be up to 16 degrees hotter than others because they have fewer trees, according to the Science Museum of Virginia. Urban trees cool streets, filter air, and absorb polluted runoff that flows into the James River and out to the Bay. Runoff is one of the fastest growing and most harmful sources of pollution threatening the Bay.

Jurczyk partnered with Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities to remove pavement and plant 668 trees in community spaces. Interfaith Power and Light, a nonprofit that helps faith congregations go green, connected CBF with five churches. CBF transformed their properties with gardens, cisterns, trees, and bioretention areas. By greening urban spaces, we provide habitat, shade, and soak up city rainwater before it pollutes the Bay.

Your support led to:

10,000,000th tree planted by CBF-founded and -led Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership.

87,768 pounds of vegetables grown at CBF’s Clagett Farm. The farm demonstrates regenerative practices, making land healthier each year while resulting in high yields, including enough produce to donate **21,463** pounds to local food banks.

5,378 bushels of oyster shell collected from CBF’s shell recycling partners across the watershed to grow new oysters.

1,739 oyster gardeners who dedicated **54,017** hours to growing juvenile oysters for the Bay, educating communities about how oysters clean our waters.

1,078 linear feet of living shoreline installed with **22,000** total square feet of wetland, structure for oyster reefs, and native plants to reduce erosion and flooding.

Driving Policy and Accountability



JEFF CARLSON

Making Waves for Menhaden

Menhaden—a forage fish crucial to osprey, sportfish, and local watermen—is the target of Omega Protein, a foreign-owned industrial reduction fishery in Virginia’s portion of the Bay. As menhaden are depleted, warnings ripple up the food chain and osprey chicks are starving in nests.

To turn the tide, CBF launched education and advocacy campaigns. As a result, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission voted in favor of a 20 percent reduction in coastwide catch quota in October 2025. Then, a federal funding bill dedicated \$2.5 million to fund menhaden research in January 2026 and Virginia passed a bill in June 2026 to fund \$2 million for research after CBF members sent 4,631 letters to legislators.

We expect these crucial studies will show that the industrial fishery is unsustainable. Until then, CBF will keep fighting to save menhaden. Explore CBF’s menhaden resources at savemenhaden.org.

Defending Ecological Havens



Serving as the Bay’s watchdog, CBF successfully protected 101 acres of pristine land on Kent Island, Maryland. For more than 30 years, a developer has repeatedly tried to build within a Maryland Critical Area, which prohibits building near tidal wetlands. When the most recent attempt to develop was approved, CBF intervened alongside local landowners and partners including Maryland’s Critical Area Commission. In December 2025, the development was deemed illegal. Now, the forests and wetlands remain a home for wildlife, while filtering runoff and supporting the Kent Island community’s resilience against flooding and climate change.

“I’m grateful CBF took legal action to protect the Chester River, where we paddleboard and my grandchildren help me with oyster gardening. How nice to know that the trees, land, surrounding marsh, and the heron rookery can continue to thrive.”

PEGGY CANTFIL

CBF member and advocate who provided testimony in this case

Your support led to:

A legal challenge against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for repealing the landmark finding that greenhouse gases and climate change are a public threat. The finding provided a legal basis for regulating greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles.

Continued defense of Cuffs Run tributary in Pennsylvania from a proposed hydroelectric dam, which would flood 580 acres, displace families, and pollute the Susquehanna River.

CBF engages and inspires people to make a difference. In 2026, we:

Introduced Bay science and solutions to an estimated **1.38 billion people** through an average of **11 daily media stories** that referenced or quoted CBF.

Engaged and inspired more than **1 million people** through CBF’s articles, emails, magazines, and social media, deepening their knowledge of the Bay and actions needed to protect it.

Inspiring the Next Generation of Environmental Leaders



A New Focus on Schoolyards

For over 50 years, CBF has brought more than 1.5 million learners onto local Bay waterways in canoes and boats for our award-winning, inquiry-based field experiences.

After conducting focus groups with teachers, STEM coordinators, and administrators, CBF launched a pilot program in spring 2026 for a Pennsylvania Streams and Schoolyards Environmental Education Program—adding brand-new schoolyard investigations. Because CBF educators lead lessons on school grounds, we'll reach more schools, teachers, and students in south-central Pennsylvania, a critically important region to build Bay-savers.

While only a certain number of students can join a canoe trip, schoolyard sessions allow multiple classes, of all subjects, to participate in a day. Outdoor classrooms show participants how their Pennsylvania community connects to the Bay, sparking lifelong commitments to protecting the environment.

“Each moment was deeply engaging, motivating me to bring this sense of wonder and real-world connection back to my students.”

DEIDRA ROSE-LAZARD

Teacher at Judge Sylvania Woods Elementary School, on her experience in CBF's 2025 Chesapeake Classrooms teacher training course

Your support led to:

33% of our program participants being from underserved schools, providing many with their first time on the water and learning in nature.

235 educators and school leaders who participated in CBF's professional development courses, empowering them to infuse lessons with environmental literacy.

94 high school students educated all year long as Student Leaders, creating the next generation of leaders for the Bay movement.

160 new advocates trained through the Volunteers as Chesapeake Stewards program to take an active role in restoring the Bay.

157 college students gaining knowledge and advocacy skills, while developing environmental solutions for their communities in the Bay Advocacy Institute.

"As the United States celebrates 250 years, we must ask how we're leaving our waterways for future generations. As goes the Potomac, so go the rest of our rivers.

The challenges we face here, balancing growth with clean water and aligning policy with science, are playing out nationwide."

HILARY HARP FALK
CBF President and CEO,
in *The New York Times*

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CBF's work is grounded in transparency and accountability. We hold high ratings with the top charity rating organizations in the United States, including:



Platinum
Transparency
2026

Candid.

CBF also meets all the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's Standards for Charity Accountability.



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