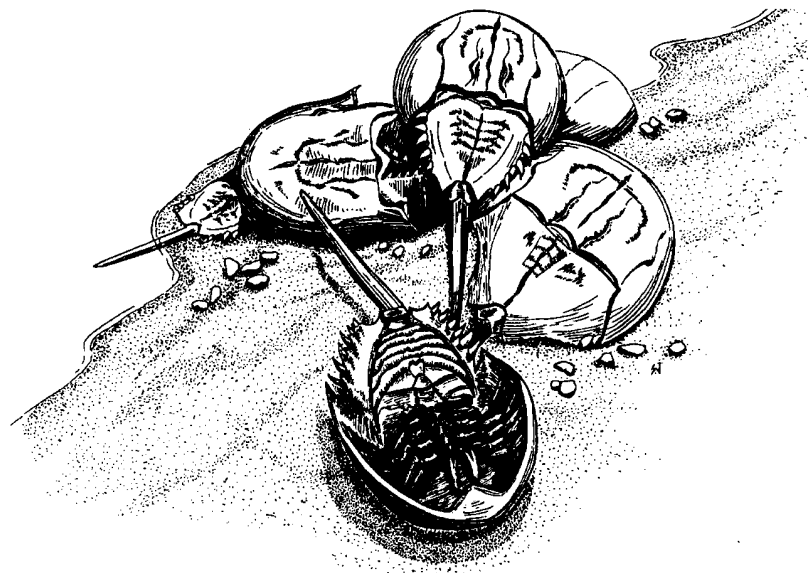


Chapter Seven

Preserving Chesapeake Bay: the Big Picture

If we want to preserve the Chesapeake Bay and its many delights for future generations, we must change our perspectives. We must view not only what is occurring in the Bay itself but on the land surrounding it. It is not enough to protect shorelines, regulate fisheries and prevent direct disposal of pollutants. We must take into account all the activities that occur throughout the watershed from Cooperstown, New York to Virginia Beach, Virginia, and from Pendleton County, West Virginia to Seaford, Delaware. Released into this watershed, fertilizers from farms, sediment from residential developments, and toxic compounds travel in a single direction, downstream to the Chesapeake Bay.



However, even a watershed perspective is not adequate without personal responsibility. Even though we acknowledge that activities in the watershed affect the Bay ecosystem, we must also realize that individual actions impact the Bay everyday. Fertilizers and pesticides from yards and gardens affect the Bay as much as those from large farms. Excessive use of cars requires more roads, decreasing vegetated areas that could intercept runoff. Indiscriminate use of water results in more water that must be treated and then discharged into the Bay.

If we want a clean, healthy Bay that can sustain the biological diversity and be economically stable, we must identify, alter and, if possible, eliminate our own individual actions that impact the Bay. People alter ecosystems. The solutions to problems threatening the Chesapeake Bay lie in the lifestyles we choose. The Chesapeake Bay ecosystem is one unit where forests are linked to oyster reefs, housing developments to SAV, and choices to responsibility.

Education is also required. Informed people choose actions that are beneficial for themselves, their culture, their community and the Chesapeake Bay.

THE BAY'S FUTURE: "When we see the land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." Aldo Leopold, 1945

• **Be Part of the Solution, Not Part of the Problem**

1. Reduce your nutrient input to the Bay.

Start a compost pile instead of using a garbage disposal. Limit the amount of fertilizers spread on gardens and lawns. Plant native vegetation that requires less fertilizing and watering. Leave grass clippings on lawns and gardens, instead of fertilizing. If you have a septic system, make sure it is functioning properly.

2. Reduce the use of toxic materials around your house and yard.

Use cleaning agents made from natural substances. Talk to a Cooperative Extension Agent to find natural pest controls and alternatives to herbicides.

3. Reduce erosion.

Plant strips of vegetation along streams and shorelines. Divert runoff from paved surfaces to vegetated areas.

4. Save water.

Use water-saving devices in toilets and sinks. Turn off water when not in use. Wash cars in grassy areas to soak up soapy water.

5. Drive less.

Join a carpool or use public transportation.

6. Obey all fishing, hunting and harvesting regulations.

7. Be a responsible boater.

Avoid disturbing shallow water areas and submerged aquatic vegetation beds. Pump out boat waste to an onshore facility

8. Get involved.

Join a citizens' environmental advocacy group or start your own. Talk to your city, town or county elected officials about your concerns. Join or start a watershed association to monitor growth and development locally. Participate in citizen monitoring and clean-up activities.

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Other Alliance Offices:

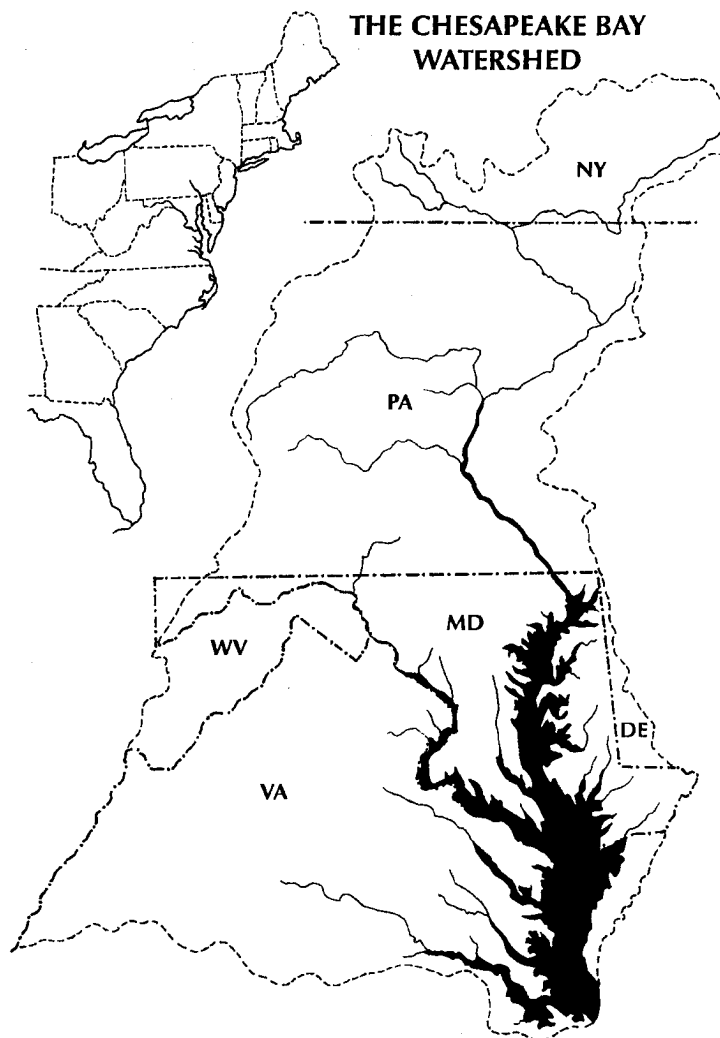
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