

# Chesapeake Conservancy

EXPLORE. CONSERVE. INNOVATE.



2016  
*Annual*  
REPORT





# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN & THE PRESIDENT

## Our Results

The Chesapeake Conservancy had an exciting and highly productive year in 2016. Working with the National Park Service and other partners, we enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities through Chesapeake Bay access projects, created parks and trails through land conservation projects, and developed innovative conservation and restoration technology for our community. Our board, staff, and volunteers worked hard to deliver these results for the benefit of current and future generations.

## Our Beliefs and Values

We believe that the Chesapeake is a national treasure which should be accessible to everyone and a place where our communities and wildlife thrive. We also believe that land conservation contributes significantly to Bay restoration and ecosystem health. Lastly, we believe that a healthy and accessible Bay is essential to a thriving economy and successful communities. Given ever-present threats to these values, your support for the Conservancy's work is vitally important.

## Mapping New Directions

In the 17th century, exploration and mapping of uncharted territory was a global imperative. European countries funded explorers and entrepreneurs like Captain John Smith to establish permanent settlements, extract natural resources, and define unknown geographies. Exploration is once again the key to new horizons in the 21st century, but this wave is associated with computers, the democratization of data, and new ways of achieving societal goals, including conservation and saving the planet.

We are 21st-century conservation entrepreneurs. We are purposely exploring new ideas and creating new strategies for conservation. Like Smith, we see the need for exploration and innovation. Following the framework of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, we are changing conservation in the Chesapeake through the application of mapping technology to environmental challenges, robust community engagement, and partnership with allied interests.

Noted conservationist Edward O. Wilson advocates a goal to devote half the earth to nature. Following his half-earth theory, we will need to protect or restore roughly 50% of the Chesapeake watershed to maintain ecosystem function and biological diversity. With only 21% protected now, reaching 50% will require epic levels of collaboration, cutting edge tools and techniques, sufficient financial resources, and passionate supporters. We hope that we can count on your continued participation in this 21st-century voyage of discovery.



Doug Wheeler  
Chairman of the Board



Joel E. Dunn  
President & CEO

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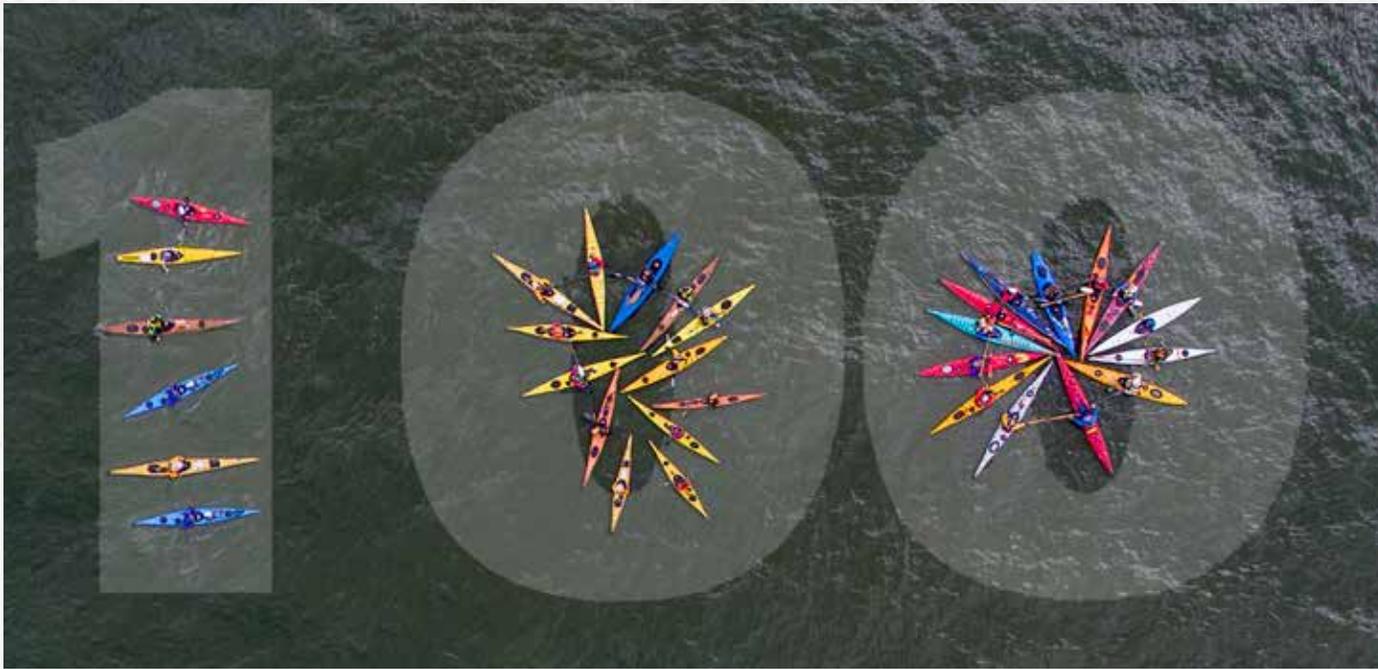
KAYAKS AT SUNRISE BY PETER TURCIK

Inset photos by Peter Turcik (kayaker, eagle), Jody Couser (dog and child).

Inset technology image by the Chesapeake Conservancy Conservation Innovation Center (CIC). CIC processes aerial imagery and transforms it to land cover to help quantify the landscape (e.g., how many square miles of trees, roads, etc.) to be used in models, planning, prioritizing, and goal tracking. Without land cover data, there is no easy way of getting at these numbers. This is the town of Denton, Maryland. Aerial imagery, acquired from planes, not satellites, is on bottom, and land cover data is on top.

BACK COVER PHOTO OF CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY STAFF BY PETER TURCIK.





MEMBERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION AND CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY CREATED THIS FORMATION ON THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AT SANDY POINT STATE PARK, MARYLAND, TO CELEBRATE THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

PHOTO BY MID-ATLANTIC AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LAND



COURTESY PHOTO

*"We love that the Chesapeake Conservancy shares our commitment to expanding public access in the Chesapeake for the 18 million people who live, work, and play in our watershed."*

— Matt Liddle, REI

## CONNECT AND EXPLORE

In 2016, we celebrated both the 10th anniversary of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, our principal partner. It was also a year that we celebrated many achievements, including increased public access along the trail and a new partnership with the outdoor recreation consumers' co-operative, REI.

To be able to explore the Chesapeake, residents and visitors first need places where they can access the Bay. With 98% of the Chesapeake's shorelines in private ownership, the Conservancy has made it a priority to partner with the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office to develop and enhance public access along the national historic trail as participation in outdoor recreation activities continues to grow along with Bay access.

Our advocacy and support for federal funding in fiscal year 2016 (\$2 million) led to the creation of 24 new public access sites throughout the watershed in 2016, including 14 in Virginia, 4 in Pennsylvania, 4 in Maryland, and 2 in West Virginia. This makes a total of 132 new access sites in the Chesapeake since 2010.





THE NANTICOKE RIVER ON MARYLAND'S EASTERN SHORE

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM



In 2016, through a unique public-private partnership between the State of Delaware, the Chesapeake Conservancy, and the U.S. Navy, 48 acres of pristine woodlands were conserved along a tributary of the Nanticoke River in Sussex County.

PHOTO BY PETER TURCIK



In November, we celebrated with the National Park Service and other partners the permanent protection of Werowocomoco on the York River in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PHOTO BY MEGAN MCSWAIN

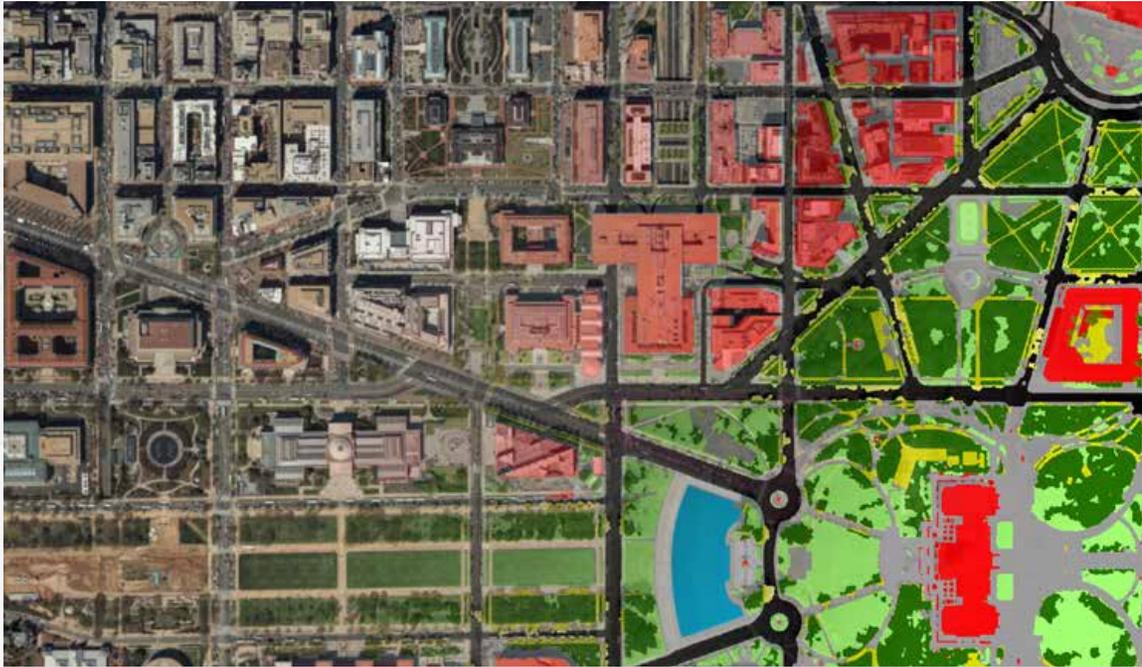
## CONSERVE AND RESTORE

**M**ore than 18 million people call the Chesapeake region home and have fallen in love with its awesome landscapes and rivers. But the physical space needed by such a large population is causing thousands of acres of open space to disappear each year.

In 2016, Chesapeake Conservancy advocated with our partners to successfully restore more than \$260 million in funding for Maryland's Program Open Space and maintained \$75 million for Virginia's Land Conservation Tax Credit program. As a result, we have helped protect farms, forests, fields, and cultural resources across these states. We also partnered to secure \$1 million in Department of Defense conservation funds for the Chesapeake along the Atlantic test ranges.

Chesapeake Conservancy advocated for special places such as national marine sanctuary status for Mallows Bay – Potomac River, home to the Ghost Fleet, one of the largest shipwreck graveyards in the Western Hemisphere; the Middle Chesapeake Sentinel Landscape (Nanticoke River), a key conservation area and one of the few places Captain John Smith and the American Indians he met would still recognize today; Fones Cliffs on the Rappahannock, a relatively pristine area now under threat to become a luxury resort and golf course; and Werowocomoco, where the Conservancy partnered to protect one of the most important American Indian sites in the East.





THE CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY TRANSFORMS AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS TO ONE-METER RESOLUTION LAND COVER DATA THAT CLASSIFY AND QUANTIFY LANDSCAPE FEATURES FOR USE IN PLANNING, PRIORITIZING, AND GOAL TRACKING. DEPICTED HERE IS THE U.S. CAPITOL IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

IMAGE BY THE CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY CONSERVATION INNOVATION CENTER

## INNOVATE AND COLLABORATE

Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center is pioneering new technology to advance land conservation and protect clean water for future generations. With our partners, Chesapeake Conservancy completed the Chesapeake Bay High-Resolution Land Cover Project, one of the nation's largest high-resolution land cover datasets. In December 2016, the data was released to all nonprofits, governments, and businesses for free as open data to help conservation organizations of all sizes better protect habitat, water quality, and heritage sites. The dataset was created for the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program and will be used to accelerate future pollution reduction efforts and help local communities protect their water and land resources throughout the 64,000 square-mile watershed.

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successfully secured funding for the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, a program that created 24 new public access sites throughout the watershed in 2016
- Successfully advocated for hundreds of millions of dollars to restore funding for state parks and protect open space
- Secured federal funding to permanently protect more than 1,200 acres of public land
- Produced one of the nation's largest high-resolution land cover datasets, free to all
- Published virtual reality video of shipwrecks at Mallows Bay - Potomac River and virtual tours of Fones Cliffs in Virginia and Patapsco River in Maryland
- Released six videos promoting partnership website FindYourChesapeake.com with the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office
- Created stormwater tool for York County, Pennsylvania
- Used crowd funding to launch new Great Blue Heron webcam
- Released Park Finder: Baltimore, an app that helps users find public open spaces in Baltimore City
- Engaged with the Rappahannock Tribe, the National Park Service, and St. Mary's College of Maryland to investigate the indigenous cultural landscapes along the Rappahannock River
- Launched John Smith Cross Marker Project to mark his explorations

# PARTNERING FOR CONSERVATION

*JeJe Moore,  
Lower School Science Coordinator,  
The Key School*



"I'm JeJe Moore, lower school science coordinator at The Key School in Annapolis. I have with me some of my second-grade students. We love the Chesapeake Conservancy wildlife cams, and we watch them every morning. We are really enjoying learning about the wildlife in our own backyard by watching the Chesapeake Conservancy's webcams every day."



[Click to view video](#)

*Judy Lathrop, Outfitter,  
Atlantic Kayak Company*



"My name is Judy Lathrop. I own Atlantic Kayak Company, based on Mattawoman Creek in the town of Indian Head, Maryland. We provide educational and interpretive kayak programs at Mallows Bay and truly appreciate the leadership of the Chesapeake Conservancy to shine light on this destination. Mallows Bay offers a unique view of U.S. history and is key to building a local, sustainable economy based on heritage and ecotourism."



[Click to view video](#)

*Michelle Grafton, Land  
Trust Coordinator, Maryland  
Environmental Trust*



"Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) does not have the technical staff that are available at the Conservation Innovation Center (CIC), and thus working with Colin Stief and the rest of the CIC on the MET Easement Monitoring App has been a great enhancement to our easement stewardship efforts. This app is significantly improving the efficiency of our field data collection procedures, and will also improve those of our local land trust partners."



[Click to view video](#)



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Support and Revenue	2016 Total	2015 Total
Contributions, Grants & Other Income	\$1,348,677	\$2,982,315
Government Grants and Contracts	\$1,778,091	\$1,295,892
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$3,126,768</b>	<b>\$4,278,207</b>
Expenses	2016 Total	2015 Total
Program Services	\$3,198,139	\$2,072,081
Management and General	\$554,824	\$364,088
Fundraising	\$358,454	\$213,087
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,111,417</b>	<b>\$2,649,256</b>
<b>Change In Net Assets</b>	<b>(\$ 984,649)</b>	<b>\$1,628,951</b>
<b>Net Assets, Beginning Of Year</b>	<b>\$5,091,768</b>	<b>\$3,462,817</b>
<b>Net Assets, End Of Year</b>	<b>\$4,107,119</b>	<b>\$5,091,768</b>

Government grant and contract revenue was higher than normal in both 2015 and 2016 due to a one-time investment to create the Chesapeake high-resolution land cover dataset.

The annual audited financials of the organization are available upon request.



# 2016 DONORS



THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION SO THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS CAN ENJOY THE WONDERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE.  
PHOTO BY IAN PLANT

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National Park Service  
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Forest Service  
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PHOTO BY IAN PLANT

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## About the Chesapeake Conservancy

Chesapeake Conservancy is a nonprofit organization based in Annapolis, Maryland. We are conservation entrepreneurs. We believe that the Chesapeake is a national treasure that should be accessible for everyone and a place where wildlife can thrive. We use technology to enhance the pace and quality of conservation, and we help build parks, trails, and public access sites. We have embraced the National Park Service's Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail as an inspiration and framework for our work in the region. The Conservancy works in close partnership with the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as other federal, state, and local agencies, private foundations, and corporations to advance conservation.



# STAFF

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# Chesapeake Conservancy

EXPLORE. CONSERVE. INNOVATE.

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