Geography, geology, geomorphology, sedimentology:

## Communicating Chesapeake Bay Health

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The Chesapeake Bay restoration effort was formally agreed upon in 1983 by the Bay political leadership from three states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government. This high level agreement to restore the Chesapeake Bay has led to media attention and a public that is generally informed that the Bay is in poor health and in need of restoration. Contrary to national trends, at least five local media outlets maintain active environmental reporters. In addition to the traditional media, NGOs, government agencies, and universities regularly put out their own news and features related to restoration progress and Bay health through printed materials, e-newsletters, social media, and robust websites. There are at approximately 15 unique articles each week on some aspect of the Bay restoration and health in each the five media outlets that maintain environmental reporters. Many of these articles are often picked-up by other news outlets leading to extensive coverage throughout the watershed. However, the readership and viewership of traditional forms of media have decreased as alternative web-based targeted forms of media become more accessible. Social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc) have become a significant way in which government agencies, NGOs, universities, and traditional media distribute and interact with the public in a highly targeted manner. Most organizations magnify their own news features as well as relevant media stories through their website and social media reaching potentially several hundred thousand additional viewers per day. For example, the mid-sized research institution, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES), has the ability reach several hundred thousand unique visitors per day. This paper will also present analytics of the audience attained by three different types of annual Chesapeake Bay environmental heath report cards presented by a federal agency, a large NGO, and UMCES. In addition, the combined media accounts of Chesapeake Bay health will be discussed.