

## **PLANS: PLankton And Nutrient Studies for the Chesapeake Bay, a NOAA B-WET Program**

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**PLankton And Nutrient Studies for the Chesapeake Bay (PLANS)** is a NOAA B-WET sponsored program designed to provide hands-on experiences for Calvert County Public High School students by investigating nutrient enrichment/limitation and phytoplankton dynamics in the Chesapeake Bay. The goal of the program is to teach students the sources of nutrients, the relationship of nutrients to phytoplankton population dynamics and the role that man plays in managing the Chesapeake Bay. This project has partnered Advanced Placement, Honors, and Ninth Grade Environmental Science teachers and students with Bay scientists and educators. A teachers' workshop was held to introduce teachers to the program, followed by classroom, field and web-based activities for the students. The teachers are encouraged to use information provided on the **PLANS** website ([www.plansforthebay.org/index.html](http://www.plansforthebay.org/index.html)) including activities adapted from the National Geographic Society FieldScope site. The specific student activities include viewing live plankton, understanding the basics of the plankton food web, establishing the types and sources of nutrients, setting up nutrient limitation bioassays and learning field techniques for the collection of plankton and water quality data. The conclusion to the students' experiences is the **PLANS** Summit for the Chesapeake Bay, a meeting at which the students present the findings of their experiments, fieldwork and photographs of their plankton to parents, teachers, scientists, and the public. During year-2 of the program a station will be established in the Chesapeake Bay that becomes part of the NOAA citizens-based Phytoplankton Monitoring Network. Samples taken from this site will be examined taxonomically by a subset of the AP and Honors students and the data reported to NOAA. The **PLANS** program enables high school students and teachers to work directly with Chesapeake Bay scientists and educators on some of the major issues facing the health of the estuary.

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