

## **Chesapeake Bay: A Case Study of Citizen Science and Executive Order 13508**

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Efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay watershed have had mixed results over the years. The recent Executive Order (E.O.) 13508 directs federal agencies to coordinate federal Chesapeake Bay restoration projects to reinvigorate the overall Bay clean-up process. E.O. 13508 requires the federal government to increase citizen stewardship throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed in an effort to engage the public in assisting with the watershed restoration work. One way to increase citizen stewardship in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is through greater federal government engagement with existing citizen science organizations that provide water quality monitoring data for Chesapeake Bay restoration projects. On-going Chesapeake Bay citizen science water quality monitoring projects represent cost-effective solutions that continue to produce large data sets suitable for use by scientists overseeing Bay restoration efforts. At the same time, these volunteer organizations provide a means to increase citizen stewardship in the Chesapeake Bay through hands-on, scientifically-monitored volunteer opportunities to interested individuals regardless of their educational background. Interviews with selected citizen science water quality monitoring groups in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, revealed areas for citizen stewardship collaboration within E.O. 13508, namely federal sponsorship of a centralized data clearinghouse for data collected by citizen science water quality monitoring organizations for broader dissemination of the data sets, streamlining the federal grant process to improve access to federal funds to citizen science organizations for the acquisition of additional field tools needed for water quality monitoring, and collaborating with citizen science organizations to increase citizen stewardship within the context of the federal government's efforts to comply with E.O. 13508.

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