



2014  
*Annual*  
REPORT







*a message from*  
THE CHAIRMAN &  
THE PRESIDENT

Paul Hagen and Joel Dunn

If Captain John Smith were to retrace his 1608 Chesapeake Bay voyages today, he would see a dramatically changed landscape. Captain Smith's experience inspires a vision of a Chesapeake teeming with fish and wildlife, healthy waters and abundant forests, wetlands, shorelines, and open spaces. Your support makes it possible for the Chesapeake Conservancy to protect these special places of natural wonder and discovery, rich in cultural traditions that we treasure and hope to conserve for the benefit of future generations.

The geography of the Chesapeake naturally weaves together the land and rivers in ways that make the ecosystem and our history inseparable from our daily lives. This landscape shapes our culture and traditions and defines our communities. It is also important to recognize the enormity of the scale at which this Chesapeake ecosystem is connected—from Cooperstown to Virginia Beach—and that our challenges are occurring at several scales simultaneously, ranging from the very local to the global.

With human beings making an ever-increasing impact on our land, water, air, and climate, a land ethic that considers future generations is particularly relevant. The Chesapeake region, which has a population approaching 18 million and climbing, is losing tens of thousands of acres of open space each year. Now more than ever, we as a community hold the power to protect or destroy this place we love.

How we take the next steps is the crux of our challenge. Your help allows the Conservancy and our partners to take action in a new way. We need to be wildly creative and achieve a collective impact. This requires unprecedented collaboration, new tools, and strong community engagement.

Whether your passion for the Chesapeake comes from an interest in history, wildlife, education, public access, or a desire for healthier water and a richer ecosystem—your efforts matter. You help us keep the vision of Captain Smith's Chesapeake alive more than 400 years later and provide the motivation the Conservancy needs to conserve and restore the Chesapeake and its great rivers.

Describing his explorations of the Chesapeake, Captain Smith wrote: "Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation." Smith's explorations provide a framework for this summary of the Conservancy's accomplishments in 2014. Come along with us as we follow the Trail and see what your contributions to the Chesapeake Conservancy's work have done to restore Captain Smith's vision and to keep that vision alive for this and future generations.



Paul E. Hagen, Esq.  
Chairman of the Board



Joel E. Dunn  
President & CEO





*"...The situation of the rivers are so propitious to the nature and use of man as no place is more convenient for pleasure, profit and man's sustanence."*

– Captain John Smith, A Map of Virginia, 1612





Captain John Smith mapped the Chesapeake and its Great Rivers with astonishing accuracy, given his relatively simple tools—a compass, a crude sextant, an hourglass, and a notebook. Smith had help from the American Indians who described the lands and waterways beyond the crosses that he used to mark the extent of his exploration. Smith's map and writings influenced European exploration and settlement in the region for several generations.

The *Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail*, the first water-based national trail in this country, focuses on Smith's explorations of the Chesapeake, the American Indians who lived here, and the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay, both in Smith's time and today. The Trail helps people experience, envision, understand, and protect what the explorers and inhabitants of the region encountered more than 400 years ago. The Chesapeake Conservancy, in partnership with the National Park Service and others, works throughout the Chesapeake watershed to conserve the trail's landscapes and Special Places and make those personal connections.

The Chesapeake is a very different place today than on Smith's explorations. Landscapes and ecosystems have changed, and with these changes, the Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center (CIC) has traded in the sextant and compass for web-based Geographic Information Systems and high-resolution aerial imagery and elevation data to map the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Smith's maps were a blueprint for exploration of the Chesapeake. The CIC's datasets and maps featured throughout this report are a blueprint to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of conservation practices, in an effort to restore the Chesapeake to the way Smith saw it in the 17th century.



In May 1607, English colonists settled on land they named Jamestowne on the river they named after King James I. Captain Smith, a leader in the colony, became acquainted with the surrounding rivers, including tributaries of the James River. He led trips up the Nansemond, the Chickahominy, and other rivers to trade with the Indians who lived along the waterways. Of the Nansemond, he described *“most excellent fertile ground, so sweet, so pleasant, so beautiful, and so strong a prospect for an invincible strong city with so many commodities, that I know as yet I have not seen.”* Of the Chickahominy, he wrote of “more plenty of swans, cranes, geese, ducks and mallards, and divers sorts of fowls none would desire.”

During one trip on the Chickahominy, American Indians captured Smith and held him prisoner for six weeks. In captivity, Smith learned Indian lifeways, their language, and the geography of the region. This knowledge served Smith on future expeditions on the Rappahannock, Potomac, and other Great Rivers in Virginia.



VIRGINIA GOVERNOR TERRY MCAULIFFE

## LAND CONSERVATION FUNDS IN VIRGINIA

Advocacy efforts by Conservancy staff and partners were rewarded when Congress included \$6 million in the Omnibus Spending Bill for fiscal year 2015 for land conservation along the Captain John Smith Trail in Virginia, dedicated through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.



## ENVISION THE JAMES RIPARIAN BUFFER INITIATIVE

Outlined in *Envision the James: A Vision for the James River Watershed*, the Conservancy established partnerships with Virginia’s Soil and Water Conservation Districts and provided high-resolution land cover data and seed funding that will be used to advance riparian buffer projects. These strategically placed vegetated areas provide wildlife habitat and enhance water quality.



CHICKAHOMINY FALL FESTIVAL AND POW WOW

## JAMES RIVER VIEWSHED

The Conservancy collaborated with Virginia state agencies to identify areas throughout the Captain John Smith Trail where visible landscapes overlap with other ecological, historical, and cultural priorities.



Washington, D.C.

Dale City

Frederickshurg

Richmond

## CONSERVANCY HELPS LAUNCH CLIMATE DATA INITIATIVE

Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn joined prominent technology innovators and climate scientists at the White House for the public launch of the Climate Data Initiative, a part of the Obama Administration's climate change program.



## CALEDON PUBLIC ACCESS

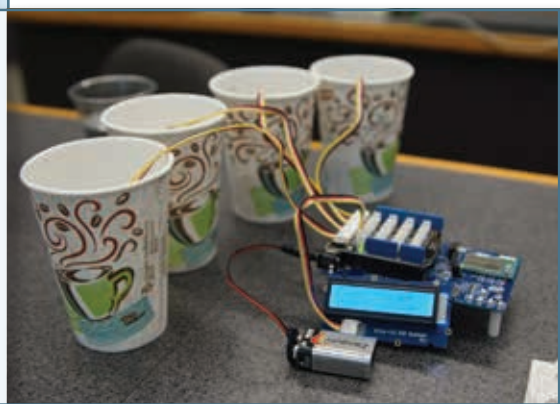
Through partnerships with state, local, and federal agencies, the Conservancy has created more public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its Great Rivers. Sites like Caledon State Park in Virginia provide the opportunity to explore the Captain John Smith Trail.



# *virginia* ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2014

## CLIMATE HACKATHON

In the interest of turning data into insight, the Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center hosted a "Code for Good" event in Virginia Beach to support the Obama Administration's Climate Data Initiative. The collaborative created a conceptual design for a low-cost sensor package that can measure water levels and wirelessly transmits real-time data to manage flood events in vulnerable coastal communities.





During his 1608 voyage, Captain Smith explored what would become present-day Maryland, not only noting the varying landscapes, but, more famously, describing migrations of anadromous fish such as shad and striped bass that happen today, though in fewer numbers.

*"... In divers places that abundance of fish lying so thick with their heads above water as for want of nets we attempted to catch them with a frying pan... Neither better fish, more plenty, nor more variety for small fish had any of us seen in any place so swimming in the water than in the Bay of Chesapeake...."* –Captain John Smith on the Potomac River, 1608

The Conservancy's diverse programs in present-day Maryland reflect the variety of landscapes and ecosystems Smith also found here.



## BALTIMORE WILDERNESS

Following the successful designation of the Masonville Cove Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership, the Conservancy is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other partners to advance urban wildlife conservation, public access, and environmental opportunities in Baltimore through the Greater Baltimore Wilderness initiative. Through this initiative, the partners will work to create a resilient network of parks and open spaces in Maryland's and DC's urban areas.



## HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

The Chesapeake Conservancy supported the designation of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park. The park has locations in Maryland, as well as Auburn and Fleming, New York, and honors the famous African American abolitionist for her efforts in the Underground Railroad. The designation also protects land on Maryland's Eastern Shore that is both environmentally and culturally valuable.



## MOUNT VERNON VIEWSHED

Chesapeake Conservancy staff completed a digital surface model of George Washington's Mt. Vernon. Using Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) elevation data, staff identified portions of the landscape that, if developed, would negatively affect the viewshed of Mount Vernon. The outcomes of this analysis will be used to direct funding for land acquisition across the Potomac River from Mount Vernon in order to maintain as pristine a view from the property as possible.



Greater  
Baltimore  
Wilderness  
Boundary

## THE MAMIE PARKER JOURNEY

Conservancy Board member Dr. Mamie Parker began an urban speaker series called *The Mamie Parker Journey: Inspiring Youth to Embrace the Chesapeake*. These presentations are a way to engage students in the Baltimore area and encourage them to experience the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Dr. Parker hopes to expose students to career options in conservation and environmental studies and inspire the next generation of conservationists.



## PROGRAM OPEN SPACE

The Conservancy contributed to the successful effort to restore \$20 million to Maryland's Program Open Space. These funds are primarily used for state and community parks and green spaces.



*maryland*  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2014

## WILDLANDS EXPANSION

The Conservancy took steps to increase the protection of 22,000 acres of land in Maryland by successfully advocating for the expansion of the state's Wildlands program. The newest Wildlands are evocative of Captain John Smith's explorations and contain irreplaceable species, such as hellbender salamanders and purple-fringed orchids. Visitors will be able to connect to the natural wonders of the Chesapeake ecosystem through hiking, fishing, paddling, and other low-impact activities.





The shallow draft boat used by Smith and his fellow explorers could only travel as far as a river's fall line. Although Smith's shallop did not go past Smith's Falls on the Susquehanna River, this main tributary of the Chesapeake Bay served to connect the American Indians of the eastern seaboard with those of the Great Lakes and Canada.

For thousands of years, the Chesapeake Bay was the center of the world for people who lived along its shores and tributaries. Native inhabitants used the Bay and its great rivers for transportation, migration, communication, and trade. Fish and shellfish provided food, and shells served as valuable trade goods. The Bay served to link the coastal communities with other societies as far away as present-day Ohio. A Sasquesahanock interpreter told Smith about other people that ***"inhabit upon a great water beyond the mountains."***

The work of the Chesapeake Conservancy along the Captain John Smith Trail extends beyond the route of Smith's explorations to include the rivers and upper reaches of the rivers that served as trade and transportation routes for American Indians who lived here before the English arrived.

On June 8 and 9, 1608, Captain John Smith and his crew rowed and sailed up the Cuskarawaok (Nanticoke) River, which Smith described as ***"a pretty, convenient river."***

Today the Nanticoke is regarded as one of the most pristine and ecologically significant watersheds in the mid-Atlantic region. The landscape provides habitat for a diverse community of plants and animals. Scenes along the Nanticoke are still evocative of what Captain Smith saw on his 17th-century travels.



## ENVISION THE SUSQUEHANNA ENDORSED BY DIRECTORS

In an effort to bring partners and funders together to create a clear vision of the Susquehanna River for the future, the Chesapeake Conservancy and the Wildlife Management Institute hosted a meeting that included the Director of the National Park Service, Jon Jarvis, and the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dan Ashe. Directors Jarvis and Ashe presented on the need for collaboration to achieve landscape-scale conservation, with particular focus on the Conservancy's *Envision the Susquehanna* initiative.





## CONOWINGO DAM RELICENSING

Sid Jamieson, of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (Iroquois Confederacy) and member of the Conservancy's Chesapeake Council, speaks about the historical importance of the Susquehanna River to his people and other American Indian tribes. The Conservancy and the Haudenosaunee participated in the Federal Energy Regulatory Committee re-licensing process of the Conowingo Dam to ensure the protection of the landscapes and Special Places along the river.



## LAND CONSERVATION

The Chesapeake Conservancy worked with the state of Delaware and other partners to acquire two properties totaling over 130 acres as part of the *Nanticoke River Conservation Corridor* initiative. These lands are home to important rare plant communities, such as Atlantic white cedar non-tidal wetlands, and rare species, including the seaside alder. They also connect to adjacent natural areas that provide additional access to visitor trails.



*delaware, pennsylvania,  
& new york*  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2014

## DEFENDING THE ENVIRONMENT TO DEFEND THE COUNTRY

A proposal developed by the Conservancy earned a nationally significant \$1 million grant from the Department of Defense for land conservation along the Nanticoke River. The award was made under the 2014 national Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) Challenge competition. The Conservancy was one of only two Challenge winners for 2014, and one of only three since the REPI Challenge began. The REPI award of \$1 million has been leveraged more than five to one with contributions from partners.





Captain Smith did not reach every part of the Chesapeake Bay and its Great Rivers during his voyages. But across the watershed, the Chesapeake's natural systems are interconnected and as inspirational today as they were in Smith's time. Just like Smith did in the 17th century, the Conservancy believes in challenging the norm and contributing new and better ways of accomplishing collaborative goals. All of the Conservancy's programs serve to magnify the scope of conservation to encompass the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. In this pursuit, the Conservancy acts as a catalyst for large landscape conservation, inspiring regional and nationwide conservation efforts.



## CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH TRAIL

The Chesapeake Conservancy uses the John Smith Trail as a framework to connect people to the Chesapeake. Through the efforts of the Conservancy, the National Park Service, and partners, 17 new access sites opened in 2014 to allow people to enjoy the Bay and its Great Rivers.



## CHESAPEAKE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership, convened by the Conservancy and the National Park Service, is a coalition of diverse organizations and agencies engaged in land conservation and related fields within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Partnership provides a forum and an opportunity to improve conservation in the Chesapeake by influencing policy and funding at a higher level for large landscape conservation.



## NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON LARGE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

Conservation advocates gathered at the National Workshop on Large Landscape Conservation, hosted by the Chesapeake Conservancy in Washington, DC. National experts such as U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell shared research and insights about how large landscape conservation efforts are an integral part of our response to challenges such as wildlife habitat degradation, climate change threats to water quality and quantity, loss of working farms and forests, and limited public access to urban, rural, and wild open spaces.



## OSPREY CAM

In its second year, Tom and Audrey's nest camera received over 506,000 views from 123 countries. The birds fledged two chicks, Breezy and Spitz.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGHOUT THE WATERSHED 2014

## CHAMPIONS OF THE CHESAPEAKE

The Conservancy closed the year with the inaugural Champions of the Chesapeake dinner to celebrate the dedication and leadership of policymakers, individuals, and companies in the protection and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. The first group of honorees included U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski, Keith Campbell, and Skyline Technology Solutions.





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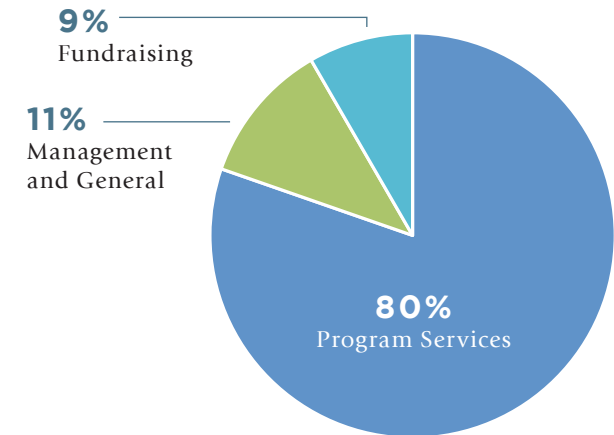
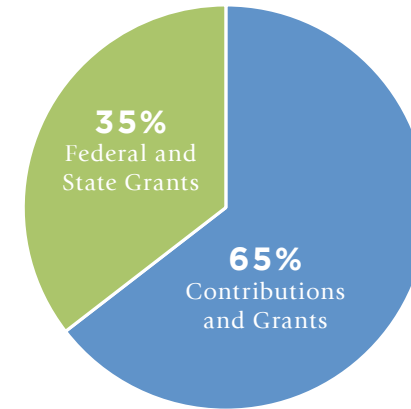
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# 2014 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2014, WITH COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR 2013.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2014 TOTAL	2013 TOTAL
Contributions and Grants	\$1,373,133	\$3,532,113
Federal and State Grants	\$754,647	\$340,023
Donated Goods & Services		\$75,699
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,127,780</b>	<b>\$3,947,835</b>
EXPENSES	2014 TOTAL	2013 TOTAL
Program Services	\$2,267,133	\$1,339,841
Management and General	\$319,525	\$227,135
Fundraising	\$235,704	\$121,075
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,822,362</b>	<b>\$1,688,051</b>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	( <b>\$694,582</b> )	<b>\$2,259,784</b>
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$4,157,399	\$1,897,615
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$3,462,817	\$4,157,399







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*The Chesapeake Conservancy's mission is to strengthen the connection between people and the watershed, conserve the landscapes and special places that sustain the Chesapeake's unique natural and cultural resources, and encourage the exploration and celebration of the Chesapeake as a national treasure.*

