

**Mission:** To inspire, advise, and mobilize resources to ensure all of Maryland’s youth experience, understand, and conserve the natural environment.

The Partnership serves as an advisory body, working collectively to bring about advancements in the following areas. These actions have been identified to guide CIN work in 2017. All of the actions (except those under “Nearby Nature”) specifically match up with and help achieve Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Environmental Literacy Action Plans for Maryland, 2016-18. [http://www.chesapeakebay.net/chesapeakebaywatershedagreement/goal/environmental\\_literacy](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/chesapeakebaywatershedagreement/goal/environmental_literacy)

**Environmental Literacy (ELit) / Every Student Every Year (ESEY)**  
*Support educators and education systems in advancing environmental literacy through planning, training, exchange of best practices, linking schools with partners, and more.*  
*Increase opportunities to eventually provide outdoor learning experiences for “every student every year.”*

**ELit / ESEY – Professional Development**  
**Leads:** Laurie Jenkins, Montgomery County Public Schools [laurie\\_c\\_jenkins@mcpsmd.org](mailto:laurie_c_jenkins@mcpsmd.org)  
 Joe Harber, National Aquarium [jharber@aqua.org](mailto:jharber@aqua.org)

Actions	Notes or steps	Lead Contact
<p><b><u>ACTION 1:</u></b>                      Professional Development for <b>Pre-Service Teachers</b> –                      Continue working to develop and institute teacher pre-service requirements for environmental literacy. Follow up w/ Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB), participating in committee to review and prepare recommendations.</p>	<p>Work within MSDE and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) structures to influence the standards and certification as feasible; consider model program to integrate E-Lit into coursework, with emphasis on Standard 1 (Issues Investigation and Action).</p>	<p>Laurie Jenkins,                      Montgomery County Public Schools  <a href="mailto:laurie_c_jenkins@mcpsmd.org">laurie_c_jenkins@mcpsmd.org</a></p>
<p><b><u>ACTION 2:</u></b> Professional Development for <b>Teachers</b> –                      Contribute to development of a plan to provide statewide professional learning for teachers in pedagogy to integrate environmental literacy education (including Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences – MWEEs), within local curricula in multiple disciplines, aligned with NGSS and other requirements.</p>	<p>Currently aligning NGSS and ELit standards; CBP group is developing a new MWEE guide.                      Next: develop and implement regional workshops to provide PD in the standards alignment, and roll out MWEE guide.</p>	<p>Donna Balado,                      MSDE  <a href="mailto:donna.balado@maryland.gov">donna.balado@maryland.gov</a></p>
<p><b><u>ACTION 3:</u></b> Professional Development for <b>Environmental Education (EE) Providers</b> –                      Develop a plan to coordinate, promote and track training statewide for non-formal environmental education (EE) providers on current formal education requirements and practices (NGSS, STEM, Social Studies C-3, etc.), and how to align their materials and programming to these requirements across disciplines.</p>	<p>Conduct needs assessment – develop, distribute, and collect results of survey to EE providers.                      Develop plan for training based upon results of needs assessment.                      This <u>may</u> dovetail workshops noted above.</p>	<p>Joe Harber,                      National Aquarium  <a href="mailto:jharber@aqua.org">jharber@aqua.org</a></p>

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## ELit / ESEY – Authentic Experiences In Nature

Promote and assure authentic experiences in nature for all Maryland students by promoting and supporting Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs), which begin in the classroom and include outdoor learning at natural sites on public lands and other partner sites.

Facilitate integration of E-Lit / outdoor experiences into the curriculum so that it becomes part of the school culture.

Actions	Notes or steps	Lead Contact
<p><b>ACTION 4:</b> Facilitate the use of parks and natural areas for outdoor learning through sharing of information – Provide information and connect resources to help encourage and incentivize schools to use parks/ public lands/ natural areas for outdoor learning experiences. (This also fits with Nearby Nature and Promotion...)</p>	<p><i>Example:</i> Facilitate increased use of State Parks by schools – provide schools with improved information on park facilities and resources such as through the “Every Kid in a Park” program, facilitate offering teacher workshops at parks, etc.</p>	<p>Britt Slattery, MD DNR <a href="mailto:britt.slattery@maryland.gov">britt.slattery@maryland.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Ongoing:</b> Improve support for field experiences away from school. Identify/address needs for transportation resources, policies, administrative support, and other logistics.</p>	<p>This was part of the focus of the CIN meeting Oct 2016. In follow-up, will compile and distribute resulting ideas and recommendations; and facilitate/ encourage partners to connect to address priority opportunities.</p>	<p>Britt Slattery, MD DNR <a href="mailto:britt.slattery@maryland.gov">britt.slattery@maryland.gov</a></p>
<p>Improve pathways to conservation-related careers and green jobs.</p>	<p>See actions under Promotion section, below.</p>	

## ELit / ESEY – Sustainable Schools

**Leads:** Laura Collard, Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) [director@maeoe.org](mailto:director@maeoe.org)  
Holly Shields, National Wildlife Federation [shieldsh@nwf.org](mailto:shieldsh@nwf.org)

Coordinate support to help increase the number of certified sustainable schools.

Increase the ability of schools to utilize the schoolyard as a means for authentic hands-on outdoor learning and a place to practice stewardship – toward an eventual culture shift to embrace sustainable practices at school and in the community.

<p><b>ACTION 8:</b> Develop a framework for sustainable schools – Assist with and participate in development and adoption of a framework for sustainable schools, and subsequent activities to promote its use – as guidance to inform the development of school system sustainability plans.</p>	<p>Use this as a tool to support efforts among partners to encourage establishment of sustainability plans in all school systems.</p>	<p>Laura Collard, MAEOE <a href="mailto:director@maeoe.org">director@maeoe.org</a></p>
<p><b>ACTION 9:</b> Enable the establishment of outdoor classrooms – Work with partners to identify and recommend policies and existing funding sources to establish outdoor classrooms at schools.</p>	<p>Provide assistance and resource information to school systems statewide, using the MD School Grounds for Learning project as a key resource for staff training, improved communication, integration into instruction, etc.</p>	<p>Laura Collard, <a href="mailto:director@maeoe.org">director@maeoe.org</a> Holly Shields, <a href="mailto:shieldsh@nwf.org">shieldsh@nwf.org</a></p>
<p><b>Ongoing:</b> Encourage all MD schools to become Green Schools, provide support as needed to schools. Assist with efforts to build interest and awareness, especially among administrators at both the LEA/local level and at individual schools.</p>	<p>Assure outreach to and inclusion of schools in high need / underserved areas.</p>	<p>Laura Collard, MAEOE <a href="mailto:director@maeoe.org">director@maeoe.org</a></p>

## Nearby Nature

**Leads:** Sandi Olek, MD DNR [sandra.olek@maryland.gov](mailto:sandra.olek@maryland.gov)

Increase **access to “nearby nature,”** to assure opportunities for youth and others to experience nature within close proximity of communities, or to reach larger natural places.

Connect more children outside of the school day with opportunities to play and learn in nature and practice stewardship through structured programs as well as self-directed activities.

Actions	Notes or steps	Lead Contact
<p><b><u>ACTION 10:</u></b> Engage the local and state planning community –</p> <p>Develop and promote planning policies and tools that increase safe access to parks and public lands for <u>all</u> Maryland citizens, addressing physical access, safety, facilities and more as part of community development; and use gap analysis data as a guide.</p>	<p>Collaborate with local and state planning authorities on green space initiatives, supporting and promoting parks and public lands, and more. Host an opportunity to work together to identify needs, promote best practices, engage decision makers.</p>	<p>Sandi Olek, DNR <a href="mailto:sandra.olek@maryland.gov">sandra.olek@maryland.gov</a></p>
<p><b><u>ACTION 11:</u></b> Provide a centralized resource for local partners and community planners –</p> <p>Develop a Community Planning Pattern Book website to provide ideas and guide inclusion of easily accessible green space. Include best practices and examples from across Maryland and beyond; examples of policy, practices/programming, and design; examples of and recommendations for successful coordination among partners; and more resources.</p>	<p>The new guide is live! See the following website hosted by DNR:</p> <p><b>Community Green Space Guide</b> <a href="http://dnr.maryland.gov/cin/Pages/GreenSpaceGuide/home.aspx">http://dnr.maryland.gov/cin/Pages/GreenSpaceGuide/home.aspx</a></p>	<p>Sandi Olek, DNR <a href="mailto:sandra.olek@maryland.gov">sandra.olek@maryland.gov</a></p>
<p><b><u>ACTION 12:</u></b> Coordinate with other public awareness tools and promotion campaigns to connect Marylanders to nature.</p>	<p><i>This is being combined with other actions found under Promotion... see below.</i></p>	
<p><b><u>ACTION 13:</u></b> Identify green space access and infrastructure needs that can be addressed through existing and new funding sources.</p> <p>Promote efforts that improve citizen interest and comfort level in using natural areas at parks and public lands and other green spaces.</p>	<p>Includes intentional efforts to increase inclusion of community members from diverse backgrounds.</p>	<p>Sandi Olek, DNR <a href="mailto:sandra.olek@maryland.gov">sandra.olek@maryland.gov</a></p>
<p><b><u>Ongoing:</u></b> Nature Play Spaces – Developing recommendations, guidance, providing training for decision-makers and others, supporting demonstration projects.</p>		<p>Sandi Olek, DNR <a href="mailto:sandra.olek@maryland.gov">sandra.olek@maryland.gov</a></p>

## Promotion / Building Support

**Leads:** Britt Slattery, MD DNR [britt.slattery@maryland.gov](mailto:britt.slattery@maryland.gov)

Promote and build support for use of the outdoors for learning, discovery, and healthy play; and promote outdoor experiences as a means for career exploration.

Identify gaps and barriers, and make recommendations to decision-makers regarding solutions that will bring about change to advance in all of these areas.

**Promotion – Building Administrative, Leadership, and other Support;** outreach, messaging, etc.

Contribute to widespread recognition and acceptance of the importance and benefits of interacting with nature, from early childhood through adulthood, so that it becomes a priority consideration across educational and community planning.

Actions	Notes or steps	Lead Contact
<p><b><u>ACTION 6:</u></b> Build administrative support for outdoor learning –</p> <p>To increase the number of administrators / decision-makers/ curriculum writers who support, encourage, and facilitate teachers taking students outside (on and off school sites) for authentic learning opportunities; and</p> <p>To better align state-administered funding sources with E-Lit goals and requirements, including MWEEs.</p>	<p>Currently planning, identifying needs, opportunities, and resources for: <u>regional</u> activities through Chesapeake Bay Program to reach higher-level administrators; and <u>statewide</u> measures to reach school system administrators and content supervisors (at State and local levels); and to facilitate ongoing communication and partnerships.</p>	<p>Tom Ackerman, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, <a href="mailto:tackerman@cbf.org">tackerman@cbf.org</a></p>
<p><b><u>ACTIONS 5, 7, 12, 15, combined:</u></b></p> <p>Develop an outreach and marketing plan and tools for specific audiences. <i>See below.</i></p> <p>All will be coordinated and linked among key partners’ websites to serve as hubs of information, including CIN, MSDE, MAEOE, and Bay Backpack.</p>	<p>Actions 5, 7, 12, and 15 will be combined to the extent appropriate. First steps include identifying audiences and appropriate tools needed, defining scope and intent.</p>	<p><b>TBD –</b> <i>need to form a small planning committee</i></p>
<p><b><u>ACTION 5:</u></b> Develop a “playbook” portal for outdoor learning – Feature resources and tools to build awareness and support for outdoor learning as part of E-Lit, as well as unstructured outdoor time – such as: examples that define authentic experiences in nature, links to research on the benefits of outdoor structured learning and unstructured play, marketing tools, additional resources.</p>	<p><i>Actions 5, 7, 12, and 15 will be combined, as above.</i></p> <p>– for educational professionals, decision makers, advocates, etc.</p>	
<p><b><u>ACTION 7:</u></b> Promote an on-line community of practice for outdoor learning – Centralize and promote online information sharing resources among partners to improve their content, reach and use by educators – to provide improved access to instructional resources, PD opportunities, program models, and research supporting outdoor learning and environmental literacy.</p>	<p><i>Actions 5, 7, 12, and 15 will be combined, as above.</i></p> <p>– for educators</p>	
<p><b><u>ACTION 12:</u></b> Coordinate with other public awareness tools and promotion campaigns to connect Marylanders to nature – To build interest and awareness, bridge barriers, encourage and facilitate increased participation in outdoor pursuits at parks / public lands. May include outreach, social media, as well as coordinating existing park-finding tools, websites, and apps.</p>	<p><i>Actions 5, 7, 12, and 15 will be combined, as above.</i></p> <p>– for the public</p>	

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<p><b>ACTION 15:</b> Plan and conduct promotional/ marketing activities to increase awareness of opportunities and benefits of connecting with nature. Utilize existing and develop new outlets for social media, email and online networking and information sharing, integrated with other similar actions. – Develop a manageable plan for social media and other promotional activities, to be shared among partners and tie into national, statewide, and local efforts, campaigns and events; promote “places” to go to experience nature; distribute articles and research to support benefits, etc.</p>	<p><i>Actions 5, 7, 12, and 15 will be combined, as above.</i></p> <p>– for educators, decision-makers, parents, public... various audiences.</p>	
<p><b>Promotion – Career Pathways</b></p> <p><b>Leads:</b> Tara Baker, Chesapeake Bay Trust, <a href="mailto:tbaker@cbtrust.org">tbaker@cbtrust.org</a> Britt Slattery, DNR, <a href="mailto:britt.slattery@maryland.gov">britt.slattery@maryland.gov</a></p> <p><i>Support and present clearer pathways for career opportunities and workforce development for environment-based 21st Century jobs (conservation careers and green jobs).</i></p> <p><i>Promote development of student leadership and enrichment programs, and prepare youth for environment-based jobs through various opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Improve awareness of the wide array of jobs and careers in environmental, science, and STEM fields – working through formal education academic and guidance programs at all grade levels preK-20.</i></p>		
<p><b>ACTION 14:</b> Identify and help increase awareness of environmental career pathways –</p> <p>Identify existing environmental career development opportunities and how they contribute to and lead to paid jobs/careers. Identify gaps, needs, and ways to improve this path for more students. Compile information on programs and resources for use by schools, youth programs, etc.</p>	<p>Career pathways forum held Dec 2016; several follow-up recommendations and actions are being planned, including 1-2 additional events in 2017.</p> <p>Includes intentional outreach to youth from diverse backgrounds and/or in underserved communities.</p>	<p>Tara Baker <a href="mailto:tbaker@cbtrust.org">tbaker@cbtrust.org</a></p>
<p><b>Promotion – Evaluation and Tracking</b></p> <p><i>Improve practices as a result of ongoing evaluation that measures the impact on Maryland’s children of formal environmental literacy programs/student outdoor learning experiences, and informal nature experiences outside of school.</i></p>		
<p><b>ACTION 16:</b> Develop recommendations for evaluating the impact of E-Lit work on schools (formal education) and how to use the evaluation for program improvement.</p>	<p>This action supports CBP’s Environmental Literacy Indicator (“ELIT”) Tool and the MSDE COMAR Survey; using ‘baseline’ data to identify areas of need, to focus support efforts such as professional development, and to help highlight future growth of E-Lit.</p>	<p>Donna Balado, MSDE <a href="mailto:donna.balado@maryland.gov">donna.balado@maryland.gov</a></p> <p>Shannon Sprague, NOAA <a href="mailto:shannon.sprague@noaa.gov">shannon.sprague@noaa.gov</a></p>
<p><b>ACTION 17:</b> Develop an evaluation plan similar to above for actions regarding connecting children to the outdoors in the community.</p>	<p>Pilot survey instrument developed to provide initial information. Will identify possible approaches to and/or resources for evaluation, and seek partners and/or funding as needed.</p>	<p>Stephanie Oberle, <a href="mailto:stephanie.oberle@montgomeryparks.org">stephanie.oberle@montgomeryparks.org</a></p>
<p><b>ACTION 18:</b> Track statewide progress toward Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Environmental Literacy actions.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing activity</p>	<p>Britt Slattery, DNR <a href="mailto:britt.slattery@maryland.gov">britt.slattery@maryland.gov</a></p>

