

Federal Partners

- Department of Defense
 - Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program
 - Department of the Navy
- Department of Interior
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - National Park Service
- US Department of Agriculture
 - Forest Service
 - Farm Service Agency
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service

State Partners

- State of Maryland
- State of Delaware
- Commonwealth of Virginia

Local Partners

- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
- Lower Shore Land Trust
- Maryland Environmental Trust
- Northern Neck Land Conservancy
- Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust
- Southern Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Board, Inc.
- St. Mary's County, Maryland
- Chesapeake Conservancy
- The Conservation Fund
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trust for Public Land
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
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Navy representatives conduct a site visit with a local land trust at a property now protected by a conservation easement in Dorchester County, MD. Photo: US Navy

Cover photo: An F-35B flies with a legacy fighter in the skies above Patuxent River in Maryland. Photo: US Navy



MIDDLE CHESAPEAKE SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

Protecting lands important to the nation's defense, working lands, and wildlife habitat



Public and private partners celebrate the protection of pristine woodlands along a tributary to the Nanticoke River in Delaware within the MCSL.

What is a Sentinel Landscape?

Sentinel Landscapes are working or natural lands important to the Nation's defense that have been *officially designated* by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense, and the Interior. This unique partnership brings together federal, state, local, and private stakeholders with overlapping interests in and around military installations and ranges.

When and why was the Middle Chesapeake designated?

Naval Air Station Patuxent River and the Atlantic Test Ranges is the Navy's premier aircraft research, development, test, and evaluation location and covers 2,360 square miles of restricted airspace spanning parts of Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake region is considered a national treasure for its ecological value, economically important agricultural lands and fisheries, and rich history and culture. These values and the importance of the area to the military mission led to its designation as the **Middle Chesapeake Sentinel Landscape (MCSL)** in 2015.

Designation creates an opportunity to enhance partnerships between federal agencies and local partners, advance mutual priorities, and leverage financial resources.

Where is it located?

The MCSL has a specified boundary (see map) which includes lands beneath vital military airspace and important working lands and habitat. The landscape is divided into three focal areas: Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, and Northern Neck of Virginia.



MISSION STATEMENT

To establish a mutually beneficial partnership to identify innovative approaches, leverage funds from multiple sources to maximize benefits of land conservation, and coordinate the delivery of federal, state, and county programs to landowners whose working and natural lands serve to protect the military missions, fields and forests of the rural landscape, habitat for fish and wildlife, and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Photo courtesy of Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Funding

Partners leverage federal, state, local, and private funding sources to advance their individual goals related to military missions, working lands, and resource conservation. A significant portion of the total investment comes from state and local governments and private organizations who are committed to supporting the mission of the MCSL.

Benefits to Military Installations, Communities and the Environment:

- Increased collaboration among federal, state, and local partners
- National recognition of the region's significance
- Participating partners can better prioritize and leverage financial resources

Goals



1

Preserve large contiguous tracts of land beneath the Navy's area of operation to limit incompatible development and ensure military readiness.



2

Prevent the conversion of working lands to non-agricultural uses.



3

Protect and restore habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species and create connected wildlife corridors.

These activities support Executive Order 13508 *Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* goal of preserving two million acres of land by 2025.

