



More Than 150 Military, Civilian Senior Leaders attend CNRMA-hosted Chesapeake Bay Commanders' Conference

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NORFOLK, VA – More than 150 military and civilian senior leaders attended the Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (CNRMA)-hosted 2022 Chesapeake Bay Commanders' Conference, Aug. 17-18. The Department of Defense (DoD), Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP)-supported virtual event also included secretariat-level attendees, and key environmental, planning and climate resilience support staff, from multi-service installations throughout the Chesapeake bay watershed, to include the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

Participants had the opportunity to learn about the DoD collective progress in Chesapeake Bay restoration and protection, innovative funding opportunities, the DoD Climate Adaptation plan, the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration and Sentinel Landscape programs, and more from 25 guest speakers and presenters during the two, half-day event.

"This year's conference was focused on providing information on DoD's responsibility to meet the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 13508 and the 2014 Watershed Agreement, and on providing funding and collaboration opportunities for installations to use in meeting those requirements," said Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Rear Adm. Scott Gray, who is also the Region 3 Environmental Coordinator for the DoD and U.S. Navy.

The theme of this year's event concentrated on how to integrate partnerships and leverage assets to build resilience and drive progress in Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration. The conference also provided leadership with background on DoD responsibilities under EO 14008 (Tackling the Climate Crisis), and EO

14057 (Clean Energy), as well as explain how DoD CBP activities support mission sustainment.

Throughout the conference, participants also learned about installation success stories that demonstrated DoD leadership in Chesapeake Bay restoration and protection.

“It was wonderful to hear about the extraordinary achievements of installations in accomplishing Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration,” said DoD/Navy Region I and III Regional Environmental Coordination Director Sharon Baumann. “I was struck by the urgency needed to address climate impacts on military readiness but at the same time, I am hopeful that funding for cooperative planning and implementation of natural and nature-based solutions seems to be both available and expanding.”

Baumann added that the time is now to implement projects with co-benefits that meet multiple installation goals and objectives.

The goals for the conference were for installation commanding officers to consider environmental regulatory obligations and stewardship responsibilities as critical enablers to mission readiness, increase interactions with non-DoD partners, and to highlight the successes of their environmental staff.

During the conference-featured break-out sessions, DoD leaders and support staff met with their state, federal agency, and non-government partners to discuss collaborative approaches to meet installation needs. These sessions also provided the opportunity for engagement across service lines and echelon levels to discuss novel ways to reach Chesapeake Bay restoration and protection goals through co-benefit projects.

The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and the largest estuary in the United States. The DoD continues to show leadership in Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration by instituting the goals of the conference and the DoD CBP mission to integrate restoration, engage all levels of DoD, and partner with federal, state, and local government and organizations. Through this, the DoD CBP can continue progress towards the mission of protecting the Chesapeake Bay for military readiness, for the community, and for future generations.

NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic provides facilities engineering, public works and environmental products and services across an area of responsibility that spans from South Carolina to Maine, and as far west as Michigan, and down to Indiana. As an integral member of the Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic team, NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic provides leadership through the Regional Engineer organization to ensure the region’s facilities and infrastructure are managed efficiently and effectively.

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