

NOAA Restoration Day: Volunteering to Restore Chesapeake Bay



NOAA Restoration Day is an annual event that provides a fieldwork opportunity for 150 – 200 agency staff to restore critical wetland and underwater grass habitat in the Chesapeake Bay. It utilizes in-house scientific expertise, existing partnerships, NOAA staff, and supports an ongoing restoration project. Each year the event location varies, and it grows in popularity and complexity.



NOAA Restoration Day is one of the largest voluntary federal employee sponsored environmental stewardship events in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. It allows NOAA employees to put the mission they support in their office work into action by demonstrating their commitment to Bay restoration and protection. The project first began in 2004 through a staff-lead partnership between the NOAA Ocean Service and NOAA Fisheries Service. In 2006, it was expanded from a Maryland event to include a second coordinated event in Virginia. Since it started, over 500 NOAA staff have now had a field experience that educates them about coastal restoration science.

This event helps to build staff morale, allows staff to meet new people within the agency, and improves understanding of NOAA science through interactive learning. This project promotes volunteerism and increases understanding of Bay restoration among NOAA staff, partners and the public. After participating, volunteers are more aware of the issues impacting the Chesapeake Bay and steps they can take to make a difference. The tradition of NOAA Restoration Day continues to inspire a personal sense of stewardship for one of our nation's treasures, the Chesapeake Bay.

Restoration activities vary by location, and often include:

- planting underwater grasses previously grown in NOAA offices
- fish seining and sampling
- removing invasive plants
- planting wetland grasses
- digital elevation mapping
- water quality monitoring
- planting native trees and shrubs
- removing trash
- seeding offshore oyster reefs



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<http://restorationday.noaa.gov>