

Environmental Strategic Framework

George Washington Regional Commission

FY2022, CZM Technical Assistance Product

Working Document as of September 30, 2023



This document is a working document meant to tie together the 2020 Environmental Strategic Plan and the 2022 GWRC Strategic Plan. The framework provides vision and focus for the Environmental Plan from the GWRC Plan as well as updated action items for the Environmental Services program.

Strategic Vision

"We aspire to see a region **using land wisely and growing thoughtfully**, better appreciating the natural beauty of its piedmont and coastal realm, working to **protect its natural resources** (land, air, and water), taking actions to **minimize the impacts of natural disasters**, and preserving its cultural heritage and historic resources."

From the GWRC 2022-2027
Strategic Plan

Focal Areas:



Resilience Strategy

"Using land wisely and growing thoughtfully"

- **Expand Outreach and Engagement**

- Create an environmental website to host a library of media toolkits, maps, studies, and interactive tools.
- Work with state-wide partners to coordinate efforts surrounding septic implementation, regulation, and modeling.
- Continue to offer trainings and coordination of partners through the Regional Resiliency meetings.

- **Offer Training Coordination and Technical Tools**

- Increase opportunities for locality staff and interested community members to receive training on resiliency.
- Work with partners to conduct a cost benefit analysis of urban heat island in our region.

- **Support Planning & Implementation Efforts**

- Work with basin-wide partners to write grant applications that expand resilience programs.
- Support efforts to strategically increase urban tree canopy and green infrastructure in the region.

Water Quality Strategy

"Protecting natural resources"

- **Expand Outreach and Engagement**

- Make meaningful strides to participate in and engage communities across all three river basins.
- Start a regional newsletter for community leaders with resources on water quality improvement.

- **Offer Training Coordination and Technical Tools**

- Increase opportunities for locality staff to receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) towards certifications and trainings on erosion and sediment control and stormwater management.
- Facilitate ongoing conversations around green infrastructure through charettes and trainings.

- **Support Planning & Implementation Efforts**

- Work with regional partners to create a living document of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in non-MS4 localities.
- Continue to secure funding for an in-house septic cost-share program.

Hazards Strategy

"Minimizing the impacts of natural disasters"

- **Expand Outreach and Engagement**

- Continue to staff Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).
- Work with emergency managers to disseminate information on hazard mitigation and vulnerability to risk.

- **Offer Training Coordination and Technical Tools**

- Increase opportunities for local Emergency Management (EM) staff to receive training and run hazards scenarios.
- Address research gaps in Hazard Mitigation Plan to prepare for the next iteration of the plan.

- **Support Planning & Implementation Efforts**

- Coordinate with Regional EM staff to support implementing hazard mitigation strategies.
- Write and support Hazard Mitigation Planning on a 5-year cycle.