Water is the essential—and renewable—natural resource. It sustains the land, wildlife and communities. Modern cities could not exist without water for food, sanitation, cooling, energy and recreation. However, the effects of global climate change, changing land use, population growth and development are placing added stress on water resources across the country. Traditional water management approaches and institutions must adapt, or our communities will become water insecure. The Conservation Fund is demonstrating that integrating water management strategies that knit together “green infrastructure” approaches with grey (engineered) approaches can create durable, cost-effective solutions.

Our Approach
We forge partnerships—with municipal partners, utilities, community organizations, state and federal agencies and the private sector—to protect water quality and build resilient communities. For nearly three decades, the Fund has been an innovative leader in planning and implementing multiple-benefit green infrastructure projects and a source of cutting-edge research on sustainable freshwater conservation strategies.

We offer a unique blend of programs and skills, including:

- structuring land conservation deals
- strategic conservation planning
- business and community lending
- integrated water management
- community engagement
- water quality
- aquaculture technology
- infrastructure mitigation
- restoration
- climate resiliency

Our expertise in these areas enables The Conservation Fund to be an effective and innovative partner.

Whether the challenge is addressing persistent urban flooding caused by inadequate and outdated infrastructure, increasing the reliability of water supplies in a rapidly developing region or implementing dynamic resiliency measures to address rising sea levels and increased coastal storm risks, the Fund is working with partners to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.
Projects at a Glance

Safeguarding Drinking Water. In North Carolina’s Triangle Region, the combination of rapid urban growth, expanding suburban populations and climate change is leading to water shortages, pollution and higher costs. Without change, demand for water is expected to exceed the supply by 2030. To help the region chart a more sustainable future course, we are working with multiple local, regional and state government agencies to deploy integrated water policies and practices. With a goal of protecting 30,000 acres by 2030, one initiative in the upper Neuse River watershed will maximize the role that strategic land protection can play in safeguarding future water supply and quality for the region’s communities, fish and other wildlife.

Helping Marshes Become More Resilient. Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge on Maryland’s Eastern Shore has long been described as the “Everglades of the North.” With tens of thousands of acres of tidal marsh ecosystem, it is known for abundant migratory birds and waterfowl, including several at-risk species. Rising Chesapeake Bay water levels threaten this legacy. To forestall the loss of these essential ecosystems, the Fund is working now with partners on strategies and innovative projects to slow wetlands losses and adapt the landscape for new future marsh to benefit both people and wildlife.

Green and Gray Infrastructure Working Together. As the Milwaukee metro area continues to grow, development overtaking the surrounding wetlands increases risks of major flooding and overflowing sewage systems. The Greenseams® program addresses this issue by protecting and restoring an area of surrounding wetlands and flood plains that can hold more water than 2,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

“We’re on the front lines of a changing Chesapeake Bay here at the Refuge. By helping us think and act differently in response to these new challenges, the Fund has been a key partner in helping us execute our conservation mission.”

Matt Whitbeck
Supervisory Wildlife Biologist
Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge

About The Conservation Fund
At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect more than 7.8 million acres of land.

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