

# CHESAPEAKE BAY PASSENGER FERRY FEASIBILITY STUDY



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### CONTACT:

BRANDI MCKEATING, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

[BMCKEATING@VISITANNAPOLIS.ORG](mailto:BMCKEATING@VISITANNAPOLIS.ORG)

(410) 280-5671

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### **Five-County Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Consortium Releases Feasibility Study findings at Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Summer Conference**

**Ocean City, MD** – The Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Consortium, comprising representatives from Anne Arundel, Calvert, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, and St. Mary’s counties, released the findings of a feasibility study for a Chesapeake Bay passenger ferry system at this year’s Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Conference in Ocean City, MD, on August 15, 2024. The results of the year-long study were presented during MACo’s Solutions Showcase breakout session, titled *“Navigating Opportunity: Results of the 5-County Coalition on the Chesapeake Bay Ferry System Feasibility Study.”*

The study identified a promising opportunity to enhance transportation and economic growth across 21 coastal communities in Maryland. This initiative aims to restore vital water connectivity, promote tourism, and boost local economies by linking residents and visitors to bayside destinations. The proposed Baseline Passenger Ferry System, initially focusing on 14 key communities, has the potential to generate significant regional economic benefits, including job creation and increased tourism revenue.

The study, conducted by Cambridge Systematics, Inc., also found significant support from community partners and stakeholders for a regional ferry system, with sixty-seven percent of survey respondents expressing interest



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in the ferry service and sixty-two percent of community partners interested in engaging activities for visitors as well as residents.

"The Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study and the Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Consortium showcase the transformative potential of our region," said Kristen Pironis, executive director of Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County. "Five counties across the state joined forces to work on this effort. As we explore next steps, this opportunity can expand to include partners across the Bay. We are optimistic about the study results and the path forward, which could better connect our Chesapeake Bay destinations and create economic impact across the entire state."

## **Members of the Consortium have provided the following quotes with attribution:**

"The results of the Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry feasibility study mark a promising step forward in this project. The ferry service could provide a new transportation link for our community and has the potential to significantly enhance tourism and boost the local economy for not just Calvert County, but all of the Chesapeake Bay region. We look forward to collaborating with our neighboring counties to further explore this opportunity."

-- *President Earl "Buddy" Hance, Calvert County Commissioner*

"We look forward to continued collaboration with the 5-county consortium as we move to the next phase of this initiative. The potential Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry system presents a unique economic development opportunity to boost tourism and strengthen connections within the Chesapeake Bay Region."

-- *Heather Tinelli, Director Queen Anne's County Economic and Tourism Development*

"Somerset County is pleased to be a member of the Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study Consortium; we are excited to release the results of this comprehensive study and are eager to pursue the next steps in the process in cooperation with our partners. The potential realization of this ambitious project could have a significant economic impact for Somerset and the entire region."

-- *Charles Laird, President, Somerset County Commissioners*



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“St. Mary’s County looks forward to participating in the next phase of the Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry project. It is a priority of our Tourism and Hospitality Master Plan and the County Comprehensive Plan to expand water access along our nearly 500 miles of shoreline. This thoughtful and collaborative approach to attract visitors is a recipe for success for St. Mary’s County and the entire State of Maryland.”

-- Chris Kaselemis, AICP Director, Department of Economic Development St. Mary’s County

For the complete report, see [www.ChesapeakeBayFerry.com](http://www.ChesapeakeBayFerry.com).

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## Consortium Media Contacts:

**Calvert County:** Hilary Dailey, Tourism Program Specialist, Calvert County Government, [Hilary.dailey@calvertcountymd.gov](mailto:Hilary.dailey@calvertcountymd.gov), (410) 535-4583

**Queen Anne’s County:** Heather Tinelli, Director, Queen Anne’s County Economic & Tourism Development, [HTinelli@qac.org](mailto:HTinelli@qac.org), (410) 604-2100

**Somerset County:** Clint Sterling, Director, Somerset County Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism, [csterling@somersetmd.us](mailto:csterling@somersetmd.us), (410) 651-4980

**Visit St. Mary’s MD:** Liz Mildenstein, Executive Director, Visit St. Mary’s County, [liz@visitstmarysmd.com](mailto:liz@visitstmarysmd.com) (240) 434-1185

