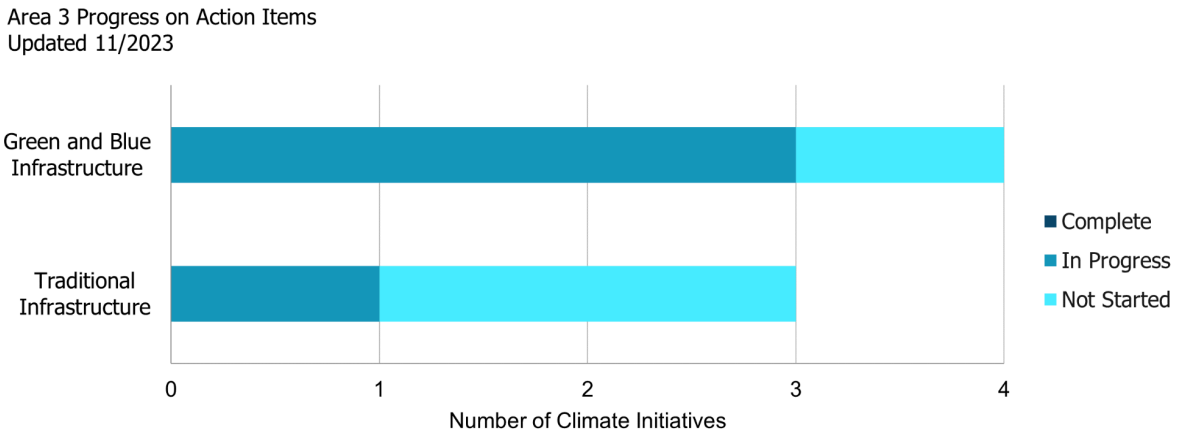
Maryland
Department of
the Environment

WSA Climate Change Adaptation Priorities

Priority Area 3: Green, Blue, and Traditional Infrastructure

Accelerate the scale and pace of implementing green, blue, and traditional infrastructure that builds resilience to climate change stresses, mitigates pollution, and enhances natural habitat.

Overall Progress



Green and Blue Infrastructure

Blue and green infrastructure refers to nature-based practices, like aquatic grasses, wetlands, upland vegetation, trees. This natural infrastructure can lessen the impact of climate change by reducing flooding, damping tidal storm surges, trapping pollutants including greenhouse gasses, serving as a windbreak, and moderating local temperatures.

1. **Tidal & Nontidal Wetland Mitigation Regulation (In Progress)**: Adjust wetland impact fees to promote mitigation banking thereby increasing the quantity, quality, and targeting of wetlands projects, which will improve climate change resilience.
2. **Living Shoreline Stabilization Plan (In Progress):** Develop a strategy for reducing the installation of hardened shoreline stabilization structures relative to living shorelines.
3. **Living Shoreline Stabilization Goal (In Progress):** Reduce the installation of hardened shoreline stabilization structures on undeveloped shorelines statewide annually with a goal of decreasing the proportion by 15% from baseline data collected between 2015-2023.

4. **Green & Blue Flood Mitigation Project Identification (Not Started):** Identify and prioritize green and blue infrastructure flood mitigation projects via watershed and coastal flood studies.

Traditional Infrastructure

Traditional infrastructure, sometimes called "gray infrastructure" due to its common use of gray-colored materials, like concrete, stone, or metal, plays a critical role in our communities. This includes water supply systems in the environmental sector, often involving dams for water storage, stormwater drainage systems that can mitigate flooding, wastewater treatment systems, and more. Depending on the situation, traditional infrastructure can be at risk of climate impact, and can play a role in lessening the impacts.

1. **Dam Maintenance and Repair Fund Legislation (In Progress):** Develop and introduce legislation to establish a private dam repair fund, means of capitalizing it, and a program to implement it. Doing so will reduce the risk of dam failure, which is increased by extreme amounts of rain due to the changing climate in our region.
2. **Dam Repair and Maintenance Fund Program (Not Started):** If legislation authorizing and capitalizing a Private Dam Repair Fund is adopted, work with the Water Infrastructure Finance Administration to develop a program to implement the new statute.
3. **Traditional Infrastructure Flood Mitigation Project Identification (Not Started):** Identify and prioritize traditional infrastructure flood mitigation projects via watershed flood studies.