



## Joel Dunn – President & CEO



Joel Dunn is president and CEO of Chesapeake Conservancy, a nonprofit organization based in Annapolis, Maryland, dedicated to protecting the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed, one of the most vulnerable places in the nation to rising seas and climate change. With global calls to protect 30% of land by 2030 as a climate solution, Chesapeake Conservancy uses artificial intelligence and groundbreaking data to conserve landscapes vital to the Bay's health and its cultural heritage.

With a regional population approaching 18 million and growing and with tens of thousands of acres of open space vanishing each year, Chesapeake Conservancy strives to restore the health of the Bay and its rivers by preserving working farms and forests and protecting the region's rich history and character, ensuring a brighter future for the Bay for generations to come.

Dunn leads Chesapeake Conservancy's efforts to increase public access for everyone and strengthen the connection between people and the Chesapeake Bay watershed to promote a greater appreciation for the need to conserve the Chesapeake's landscapes and special places. Under Dunn's leadership, Chesapeake Conservancy has focused on using technology to practice precision conservation and build successful partnerships with federal, state and local agencies; private foundations; corporations and nonprofits to advance conservation.

Prior to joining Chesapeake Conservancy, Dunn spearheaded government relations and project management in the Chesapeake region for The Conservation Fund. His work helped establish protection for national parks, national wildlife refuges and national trails, including the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. Dunn has also worked on Capitol Hill and in conservation science.

Dunn earned a Master of Public Policy degree from the Terry Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University and a Master of Environmental Management degree from the Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences from Duke University, where he was a Doris Duke Conservation Fellow. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from The Evergreen State College. In 2019, Dunn completed Harvard Business School's Executive Education Course, "Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management."

In 2023, The Rappahannock Tribe Chief Anne Richardson presented Dunn with the "Rising Star Award," and bestowed him the name "Red Warrior," stating, "Joel is a rising star in the 30 by 30 conservation movement. He is a dedicated partner and advocate for tribes and has dedicated his time, energy and resources to generating historic change in equity work that will benefit marginalized communities for generations." In 2021, he was named an "Outdoor Recreation Ambassador" for the state of Maryland by Maryland Commerce Secretary Kelly M. Schulz and Maryland Natural Resources Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio. Maryland Governor Larry Hogan named Dunn "Chesapeake Bay Ambassador" in 2020. This is one of the highest and most prestigious awards that the state confers upon citizens who are active leaders in the fight for the Chesapeake Bay. In 2010, Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment gave him their Rising Star Award for his work in conservation.

Dunn is a former member of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council, co-chair of the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership and serves on the Maryland Joint Study Committee for Program Open Space. In 2018, Dunn was appointed to Maryland Governor Larry Hogan's Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic Commission (MORE) and the Maryland Department of Transportation Attainment Report Advisory Committee (ARAC). Dunn is currently serving as vice chair of Partners for Open Space and served as chairman for two years (2012, 2013). Dunn was a climate leader with The Climate Change Reality Project.

Dunn served on the Severn River Commission and as a member of the Annapolis Conservancy Board (2008-2011). Additionally, Dunn was a member of the Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Mitigation Working Group for Maryland's Commission on Climate Change (2007) and served on the Technical Advisory Committee for the Virginia Outdoors Plan (2006).

In 2009, Dunn received proclamations from the State of Maryland for his work as a member of the Maryland Climate Commission and the City of Annapolis for his work as a member of the IDEA Team to establish a more effective, efficient and transparent city government. Dunn has served as an election judge in Anne Arundel County.

Dunn was co-editor of *A Sustainable Chesapeake: Better Models for Conservation*. In addition, he has written numerous opinion editorials for newspapers in the Chesapeake region and served as a panelist for Maryland Public Television's Chesapeake Bay Summit and Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) OceansLIVE.

He lives in Annapolis with his wife, two daughters and Labrador retriever.