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CHESAPEAKE

An Aerial Overview of One of Our Most Precious Watersheds

Nearly 10,000 years ago, rising sea levels filled a meteor-impact crater to form the Chesapeake Bay—North America’s largest estuary and the world’s third largest. For centuries, these waters mixed with Atlantic Ocean backwash to make a brackish estuary and an ecological superconductor. The Chesapeake was alive with crabs, sturgeon, and rockfish, and the bay’s bounty, which helped sustain Native Americans for centuries, seemed endless. Yet in recent years, the bay has come under siege from the impacts of increasing population and industry, threatening this national treasure.

In **CHESAPEAKE (October 2011)**, Cameron Davidson offers a stunning array of full-color photography arranged geographically and accompanied by the words of David Fahrenthold, who has covered the Chesapeake Bay and other local and national topics for the *Washington Post*. Davidson has been shooting aerial photography of the Chesapeake for over twenty years, and the view from this privileged vantage point reveals both the bay’s intense beauty and humans’ destructive impact on the land and the water. His photos capture the long tendrils of the Bay’s watershed—which cover 64,000 square miles and span six states from Virginia to New York and hold 17 million people within its boundaries—as well as the more than 100,000 streams, creeks, and rivers in the watershed, including 150 major rivers.

Paired with Fahrenthold’s insightful text on the bay’s past, present, and future, Davidson’s poetic pictures bear witness to the bay’s vulnerability and the fragility of its future.

Cameron Davidson is an aerial and location portrait photographer based in Virginia. He shoots on assignment for a variety of print publications, such as *Vanity Fair*, *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, and *Wired*, and his work has been profiled in *Communication Arts*, *Photo/Design*, and *Print* magazines. **David Fahrenthold**, a native of Houston, Texas, has worked for *The Washington Post* since 2000. He has covered the environment for five years, writing about the Chesapeake Bay, climate change, mountaintop coal mining and other topics both local and national.

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