

# Flood Risk in the Mid-Atlantic

## *Goddard Forum*

September 10, 2025

Penn State Harrisburg



# Scenario planning

- Hi/low (high impact, low probability)
  - Known unknowns
  - Unknown unknowns
- Improved understanding of pathways
  - the unfolding of events and decisions associated with these
  - Grouping these pathways
- When do decisions need to be made now in the face of uncertainty?
- When can decisions be deferred and what are the implications?
- Reversibility and irreversibility – the ratchet effect
- (Increasingly important) Decision-making among polarized ideologies, deep social and political divides

# Breakout groups

1. Hurricane flooding more significant than Agnes with improved flood preparedness
2. Hurricane flooding but with deterioration of preparedness
3. More severe flash flooding on smaller creeks with improved preparedness
4. Flash flooding but with deterioration of preparedness

## Discuss:

- The unfolding of events and decisions associated with these
- Grouping these pathways
- When do decisions need to be made now in the face of uncertainty?
- When can decisions be deferred and what are the implications?

# Forum next steps

- Synthesis of discussions and breakouts
- Draft report – input and vetting
- Dissemination and further engagement
- Coming milestones:
  - PAFPM Conference “Weathering the Changing Regulatory Landscape While Managing Our Resources,” Sept. 15-16, 2025, State College
  - ...
  - Penn State Climate Solutions Symposium, 18-20 May 2026