



Chesapeake Bay Program
A Watershed Partnership

Background

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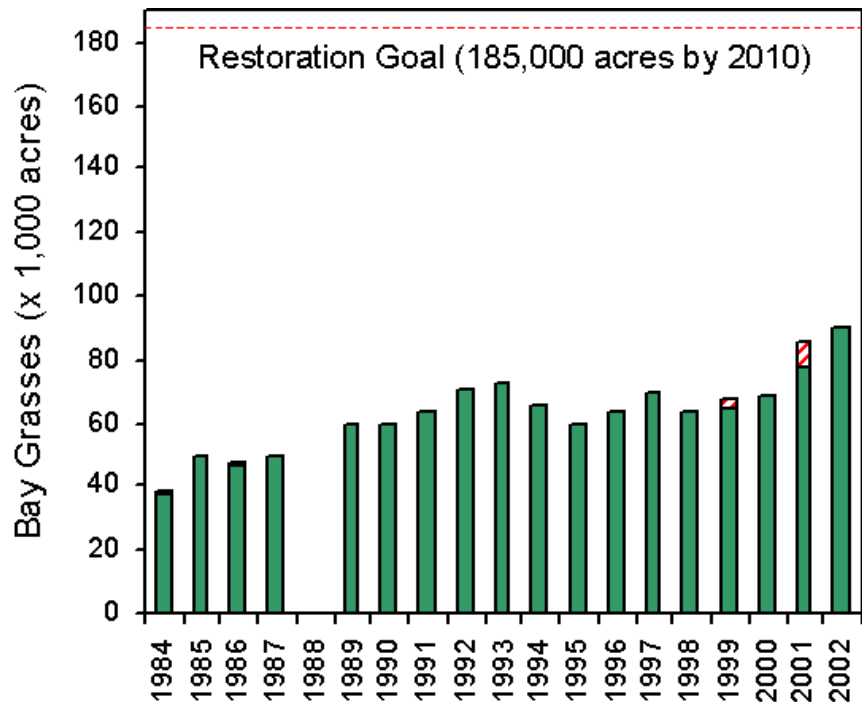
Since 1978, scientists have annually gathered data on the abundance of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers. Bay grasses serve as a unique yardstick for measuring our progress in restoring the Bay, as they are not under harvest pressure and their health is closely linked to the quality of local waters.

Currently, the annual SAV survey is conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and is derived from the analysis of more than 2,000 black-and-white aerial photographs taken between May and October.

Bay scientists believe that long-term resurgence of underwater Bay grasses is critical to the overall Bay restoration effort. As such, Bay Program partners have placed a great deal of emphasis on developing the best science available to assist the return of underwater grasses to historic levels.

2002 Chesapeake Bay SAV Abundance and New Baywide Restoration Goal

In 2002, SAV coverage reached a record 89,658 acres - more than twice the level first recorded in 1978. While this increase is impressive, a great deal more needs to be done to reach the Bay Program's new 185,000-acre baywide restoration goal.



*Note - Hatched area of bar includes estimated additional acreage. No survey in 1988.

To help put SAV restoration efforts into perspective, the table on the following pages highlights SAV acreage in 1984 (the sparsest year on record), 2002 (the most abundant year on record) and new segment specific restoration goals adopted by the Bay Program in April 2003.

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Mainstem Chesapeake Bay

Chesapeake Bay Program Segment	1984 SAV Abundance (acres)	2002* SAV Abundance (acres)	SAV Restoration Goal (acres)
Northern Chesapeake Bay	5,377.91	9,227.29	12,908
Upper Chesapeake Bay	27.47 (pd)	502.16	302
Upper Central Chesapeake Bay	944.13	94.69	943
Middle Central Chesapeake Bay	45.03	269.44	2,511
Lower Central Chesapeake Bay	679.55 (pd)	4,904.97	14,961
Western Lower Chesapeake Bay	754.46	767.24	980
Eastern Lower Chesapeake Bay	6,971.48	9,801.07	14,620
Mouth of the Chesapeake Bay	0.00	10.42	6

Western Shore Tributaries

Chesapeake Bay Program Segment	1984 SAV Abundance (acres)	2002* SAV Abundance (acres)	SAV Restoration Goal (acres)
Bush River	5.93 (pd)	349.83	158
Gunpowder River	0.00 (pd)	463.07	2,254
Middle River	nd	629.46	839
Patapsco River	0.00	7.88	298
Magothy River	23.51	208.77	545
Severn River	0.00	282.04	329
South River	0.00	35.61	459
Rhode River	0.00	0.00	48
West River	0.00	0.00	214
Upper Patuxent River	0.00	170.67	5
Middle Patuxent River	0.00	21.03	68
Lower Patuxent River	35.37	140.62	1,325
Upper Potomac River	1,185.45	3,673.06	4,379
Piscataway Creek	344.74	631.63	783
Mattawoman Creek	0.00	792.64	276
Middle Potomac River	536.21 (pd)	2,235.08	3,721
Lower Potomac River	147.95 (pd)	2,618.66	10,173
Upper Rappahannock River	nd	3.42	20
Lower Rappahannock River	33.25	1,006.88	5,380
Corrotoman River	0.00	768.62	516
Piankatank River	25.27	701.66	3,256
Upper Mattaponi River	nd	22.59	75
Upper Pamunkey River	nd	170.98	156
Middle York River	0.00	0.00	176
Lower York River	441.19	921.81	2,272

Chesapeake Bay Program Segment	1984 SAV Abundance (acres)	2002* SAV Abundance (acres)	SAV Restoration Goal (acres)
Mobjack Bay	6,758.41	8,743.47	15,095
Upper James River	nd	83.58	1,600
Appomattox River	nd	0.00	319
Middle James River	nd	11.63	7
Chickahominy River	nd	186.40	348
Lower James River	0.00	1.47	531
Mouth of the James River	0.00	279.83	604
Lynnhaven River	95.05	38.34	69

Eastern Shore Tributaries

Chesapeake Bay Program Segment	1984 SAV Abundance (acres)	2002* SAV Abundance (acres)	SAV Restoration Goal (acres)
Northeast River	0.00	75.99	88
Bohemia River	0.00	136.19	97
Elk River	33.84	435.15	1,648
Sassafras River	49.47	830.36	764
Middle Chester River	nd	0.00	64
Lower Chester River	1,032.81	204.86	2,724
Eastern Bay	215.14	2,779.61	6,109
Middle Choptank River	nd	0.00	63
Lower Choptank River	0.00	154.45	1,499
Mouth of the Choptank River	142.64	6,584.53	8,044
Little Choptank River	69.46	2,904.93	3,950
Honga River	33.15	6,319.91	7,686
Fishing Bay	0.00	108.91	193
Middle Nanticoke River	nd	0.00	3
Lower Nanticoke River	nd	0.00	3
Wicomico River	nd	0.00	3
Manokin River	0.00	727.77	4,359
Big Annemessex River	0.00	782.03	2,014
Lower Pocomoke River	1,064.94	1,811.76	4,092
Tangier Sound	11,136.79	15,023.95	37,947

Totals

Chesapeake Bay Program Segment	1984 SAV Abundance (acres)	2002* SAV Abundance (acres)	SAV Restoration Goal (acres)
Baywide Total	38,210.58 (pd)	89,658.41	184,878

Notes: *These are preliminary 2002 SAV totals. (9/25/03). 'nd' indicates that the segment was not surveyed that year. 'pd' indicates that the segment was not fully surveyed that year.