

2024–2025

# Bay Barometer

Health and Restoration in the  
**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



***Bay Barometer*** shares the most up-to-date information and data about our progress toward the goals and outcomes in the **2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement**.

The entirety of the **District of Columbia** falls within the Chesapeake Bay watershed—approximately 39,501 acres. It is also home to one of the Bay’s largest tributaries—the Potomac River. Below is a snapshot of progress in the District of Columbia.

## Abundant Life

### Wetlands

Since 2014, the District of Columbia has enhanced 1.5 acres of wetlands, contributing to the watershed-wide total of 61,163 acres, which marks 40.77% of the 150,000-acre goal.

Additionally, the District of Columbia created or restored 491 acres of wetlands, contributing to the watershed-wide total of 4,862 acres, which marks 5.72% of the 85,000-acre goal.

## Clean Water

### 2025 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs)

As of 2024, the District of Columbia has achieved 100% of its 2025 reduction goals for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment.

### Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention

As of 2024, 2.2% of tidal waters in the District of Columbia are considered partially or fully impaired by toxic contaminants. Just over 80% of the entire Chesapeake Bay’s tidal segments are considered partially or fully impaired by PCBs, PFAS, metals and other contaminants.

### Water Quality Standards Attainment

During the 2021–2023 assessment period, 29.4% of the Chesapeake Bay’s tidal waters attained water quality standards. Short-term monitoring trends (2014–2023) show that nitrogen and phosphorus in the Potomac River are improving, with no discernable trend for sediment.



Read the **2024–2025 Bay Barometer** at  
[Chesapeakebay.net/what/publications](https://Chesapeakebay.net/what/publications)

# Conserved Lands

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## Land Use Methods and Metrics

The Chesapeake Bay Program's 2021/22 [High-Resolution Land Use/Cover and Change Data](#) show that 2,066,925 acres, or approximately 4.7% of the watershed, is covered by impervious surfaces. In the District of Columbia, impervious surfaces cover 20,706 acres, or approximately 53% of the land.

## Tree Canopy

The District of Columbia planted 31 acres of trees in 2024, bringing the total amount of trees planted across the city since 2014 to 449 acres. Overall, 5,743 acres of trees were planted across the watershed in 2024, continually increasing tree canopy.

Overall, the Chesapeake Bay Program's High-Resolution Land Use/Cover and Change Data show that from 2013/14-2021/22, the District of Columbia had no net change in tree canopy acreage.

# Engaged Communities

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## Environmental Literacy

In 2024, one local education agency in the District of Columbia voluntarily reported that they are somewhat prepared to teach environmental education by having a comprehensive, system-wide approach in place.

The local education agency reported that at the elementary and high school levels, some [Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences \(MWEs\)](#) are in place for at least one grade level, while in middle schools, system-wide MWEs are in place for at least one grade level.

## Public Access

In 2024, the District of Columbia opened five new sites to connect the public with the water, bringing the total number of public access sites opened in the city since 2011 to 30. Overall, 1,451 new public access sites were opened across the watershed during this timeframe, completing the Public Access Outcome.



Read the revised *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* at [Chesapeakebay.net/watershed-agreement](https://Chesapeakebay.net/watershed-agreement)