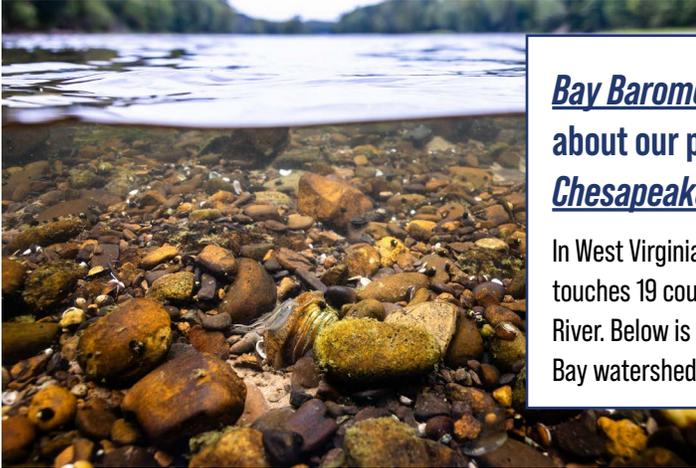


2024–2025

Bay Barometer

Health and Restoration in
WEST VIRGINIA



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***.

In West Virginia, the Chesapeake watershed spans approximately 2.3 million acres, touches 19 counties and is home to one of the Bay's largest tributaries—the Potomac River. Below is a snapshot of progress in West Virginia's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Abundant Life

Black Duck

Between 2017 and 2024, West Virginia created or restored 1.5 acres of wetlands deemed suitable habitat for black ducks. Watershed-wide, only 4.08% of the goal to restore or create black duck-suitable wetland habitat has been achieved.

Brook Trout

Between 2016 and 2024, West Virginia saw a net increase of 96 square miles of habitat occupied by naturally reproducing brook trout, contributing to the 12,823 square miles of occupied brook trout habitat across the watershed.

Wetlands

Since 2014, West Virginia has enhanced 41 acres of wetlands, contributing to the watershed-wide total of 61,163 acres, which marks a 40.77% achievement of the 150,000-acre goal.

Additionally, West Virginia has created or restored 1.5 acres of wetlands, contributing to the watershed-wide total of 4,862 acres, which marks a 5.72% achievement of the 85,000-acre goal.

Clean Water

2025 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs)

As of 2024, West Virginia has achieved 100% of its 2025 reduction goals for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment.

Water Quality Standards Attainment

During the 2021–2023 assessment period, 29.4% of the 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

Conserved Lands

Forest Buffers

West Virginia contributed 13 of the 227 miles of riparian forest buffers planted across the watershed in 2024, helping to achieve 25.2% of the watershed-wide goal to plant 900 miles each year.

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 West Virginia's portion of the Bay watershed, impervious surfaces cover 49,017 acres, or approximately 2.1% of the land.

Protected Lands

As of 2024, 320,122 acres of protected lands can be found across West Virginia, a decrease of 14% from 2022. Over 1.8 million acres of lands have been conserved across the watershed since 2010, achieving 90% of the goal to protect an additional two million acres.

Tree Canopy

West Virginia planted 4.1 acres of trees in 2024, bringing the total amount of trees planted across the state since 2014 to 45.2 acres. Overall, 5,743 acres of trees were planted across the watershed in 2024, continually increasing tree canopy.

Despite these gains, the Chesapeake Bay Program's High-Resolution Land Use/Cover and Change Data show that from 2013/14-2021/22, an estimated 109 acres of tree canopy were lost across West Virginia.

Engaged Communities

Environmental Literacy

In 2024, four local education agencies in West Virginia voluntarily reported their preparedness to build environmental literacy, with 75% indicating they were well or somewhat prepared by having a comprehensive and systematic approach to environmental literacy in place.

Additionally, four local education agencies reported that 75% of elementary schools and 25% of middle schools have a system-wide [Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience \(MWEE\)](#) in place for at least one grade level, while 50% of high schools have at least some MWEEs in place for at least one grade level.

Public Access

Between 2011 and 2024, West Virginia opened 77 new sites to connect the public with the water. 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