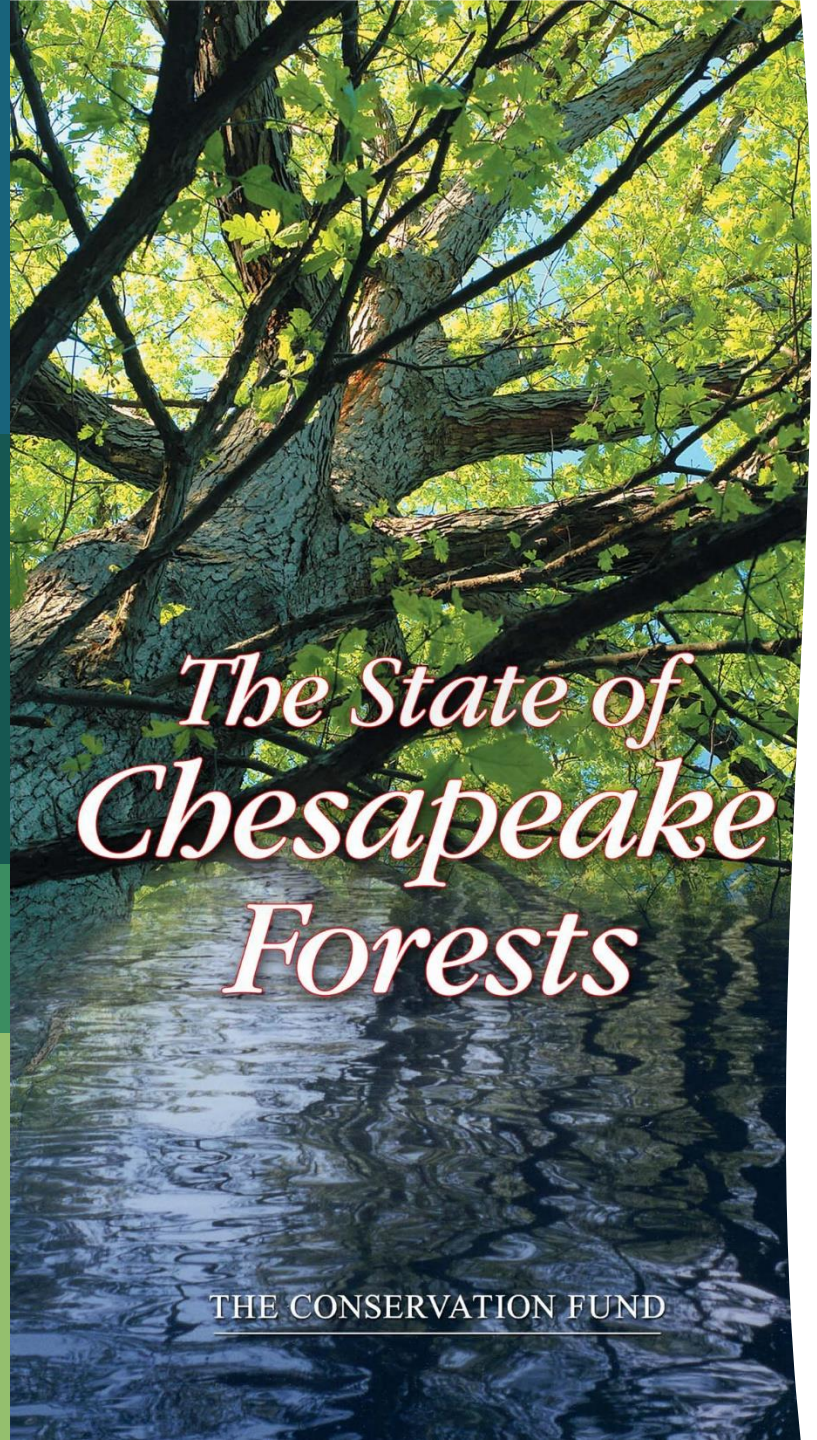
State of Chesapeake Forests 2.1

Katie Brownson, USFS



State of the Chesapeake Forests

- History
- Importance of forests for habitat, watershed function, economy
- Current and expected future conditions
- Strategies for protection, restoration and stewardship

SOTF 2.0 Goals

- Characterize current state of the forests based on high-res data
- Characterize forest/tree cover change since 2013
- Evaluate implications for water quality and other ecosystem services
- Identify potential management and policy implications

Phase 1: State of Chesapeake Forests 2.0 Storymap

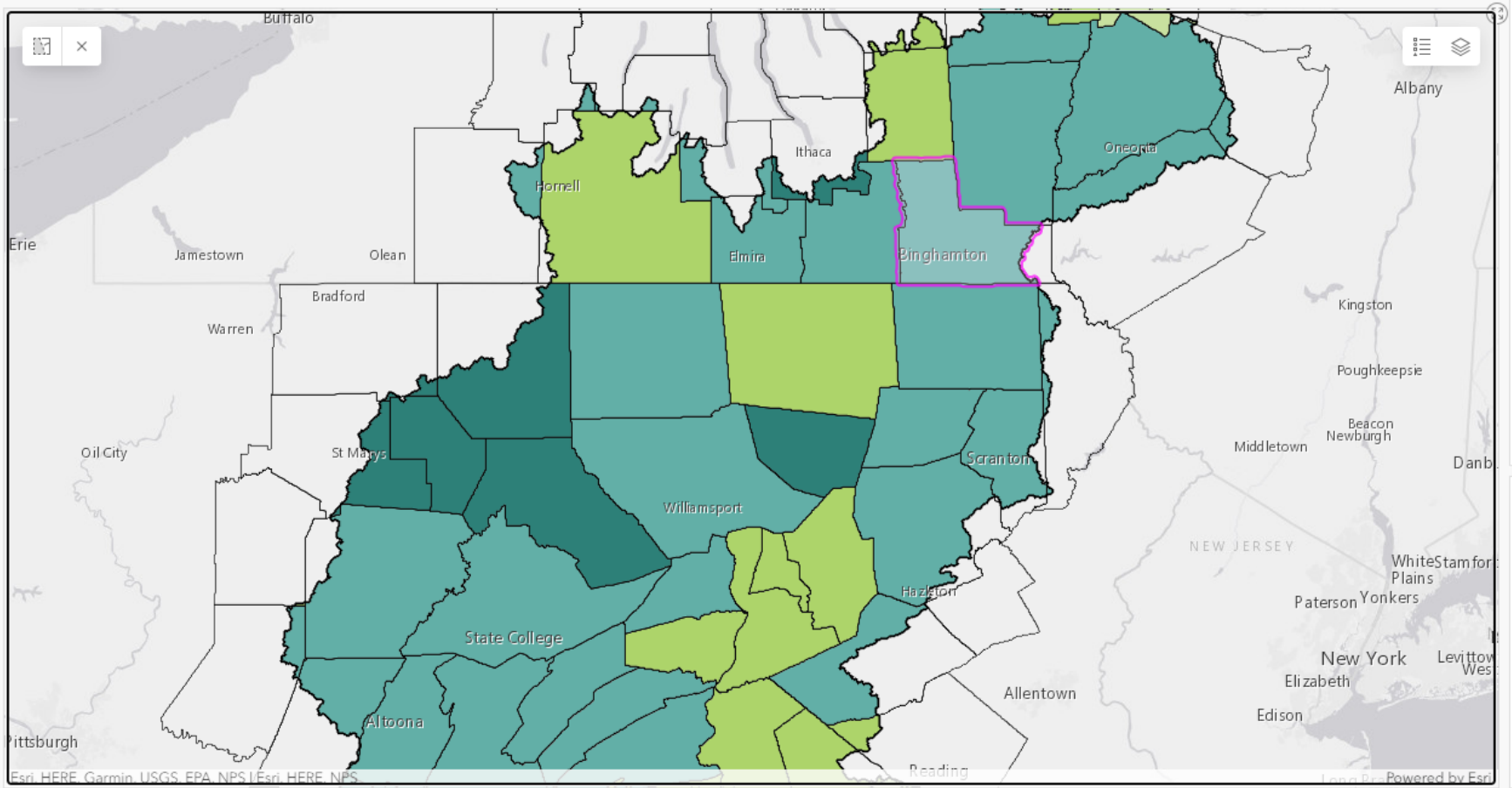
State of Chesapeake Forests 2.0

Forest and tree distribution | Tree cover (2017/18) | Forested extent (2017/18) | Tree cover change | Forested extent change | Next Steps

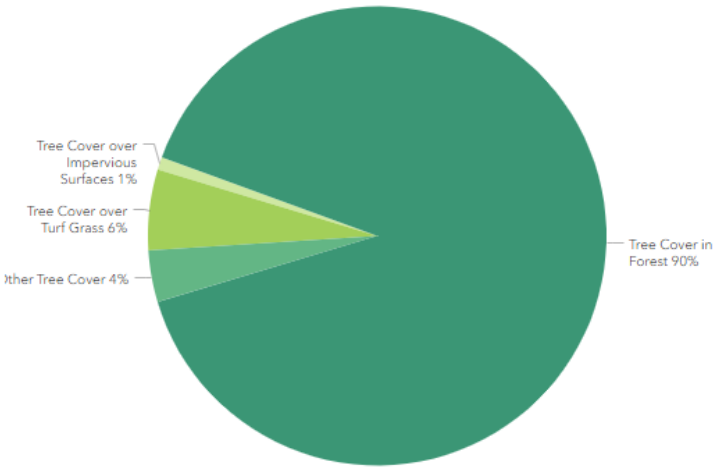
Broome County, NY

Percent Tree Cover: 62.8%

Within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

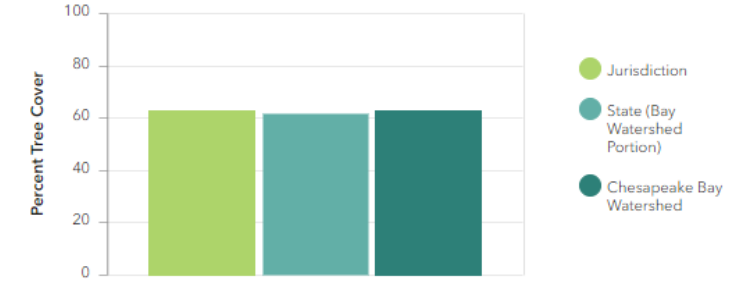


Distribution of Tree Cover Classes



Tree Cover in Forest: Patches of tree cover 1 acre or greater, with a minimum patch width of 72M
Other Tree Cover: smaller patches of tree cover that are assumed to have an unmanaged understory

How Does Your Jurisdiction Compare?



Planning for SOCF 2.1

- Update Storymap with 2021/22 data
  - Update Tree Cover and Forested Extent status maps for 2021/22
  - Update change analyses for full 2013/14-2021/22 period
  - Develop new graphics summarizing tree cover status and change at the watershed and state-level
  - Re-evaluate benefits of tree cover at the watershed and state-level using i-Tree
- Equity analyses- state and watershed-level analyses of tree cover status and change in EJ vs. non-EJ communities
- Protected lands analyses- state and watershed-level analysis of forested extent change in protected vs. unprotected areas
- Riparian forest cover and change analyses
- Use CAST to evaluate water quality implications of forest/tree loss to development
- Chesapeake Conservancy-supported analyses (to be discussed next)

Process for Phase 2

- Work directly with the Chesapeake Conservancy and the USGS CBPO GIS team
- Bring in subject matter experts to consult on specific analyses
- Use FWG meeting times to get periodic input
- Continue to engage advisory team for input on text, draft map products
  - Let me know if you'd like to join the advisory team!

Beyond SOCF 2.1

- Integrate hyper-res hydrography data into riparian forest analysis
- Complete seral stage analysis
- Other analyses to consider:
  - Overlays with climate layers
  - Parcelization
  - Tree cover change on ag lands
  - Integrating USFS Forest Health data
- Explore additional formats for communicating information from the Storymap (PDFs, printed products, etc.)

Questions or suggestions?

Katherine.brownson@usda.gov