

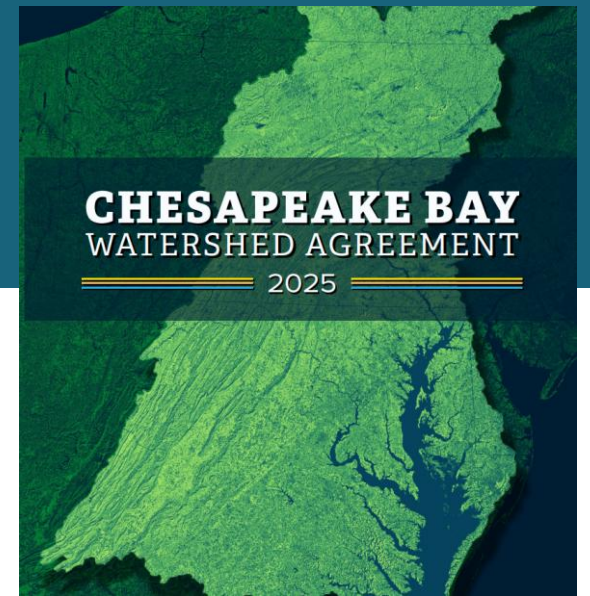
Healthy Forests and Trees Draft Management Strategy:

July 2026 Healthy Landscapes Goal Team

Baseline Data and
Tracking

New Healthy Forests and Trees Outcome

Conserve, manage and restore forests and tree cover to maximize benefits for water quality, habitat and people throughout the watershed, with a particular focus on riparian areas and communities.



TARGETS

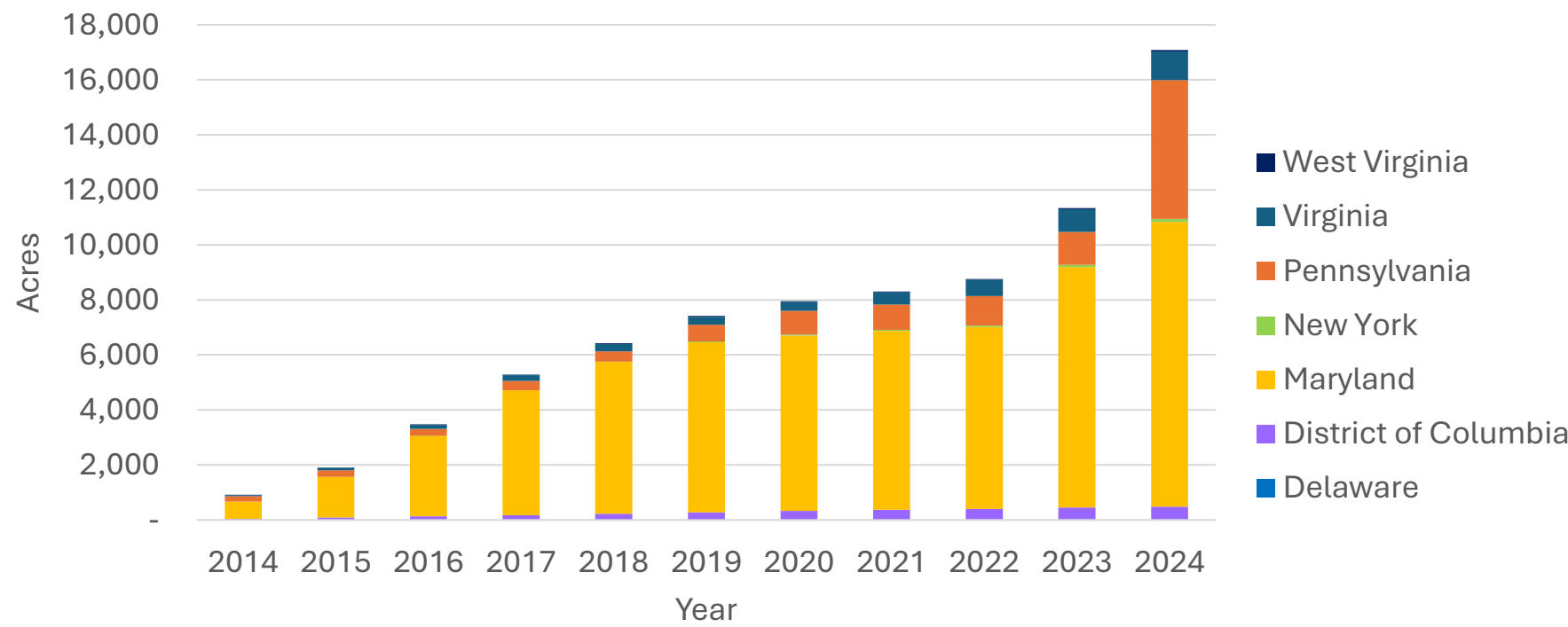
Tree Canopy: Conserve tree canopy within communities by reducing the rate of loss of existing canopy and planting and maintaining 45,000 acres of community trees by 2040 to achieve a net gain in canopy over the long term.

Forest Buffers: Conserve riparian forest by reducing the rate of loss of existing buffers and planting and maintaining 7,500 acres of forest buffers annually to achieve no less than 71.5% riparian forest cover by 2040 and 75% riparian forest cover over the long term.

Forest Conservation: Achieve a net gain in forests over the long-term by reducing the rate of forest conversion to other land uses by 33%, permanently protecting a total of 9 million acres of forested land, and planting, maintaining and managing 202,000 acres of new forests by 2040.

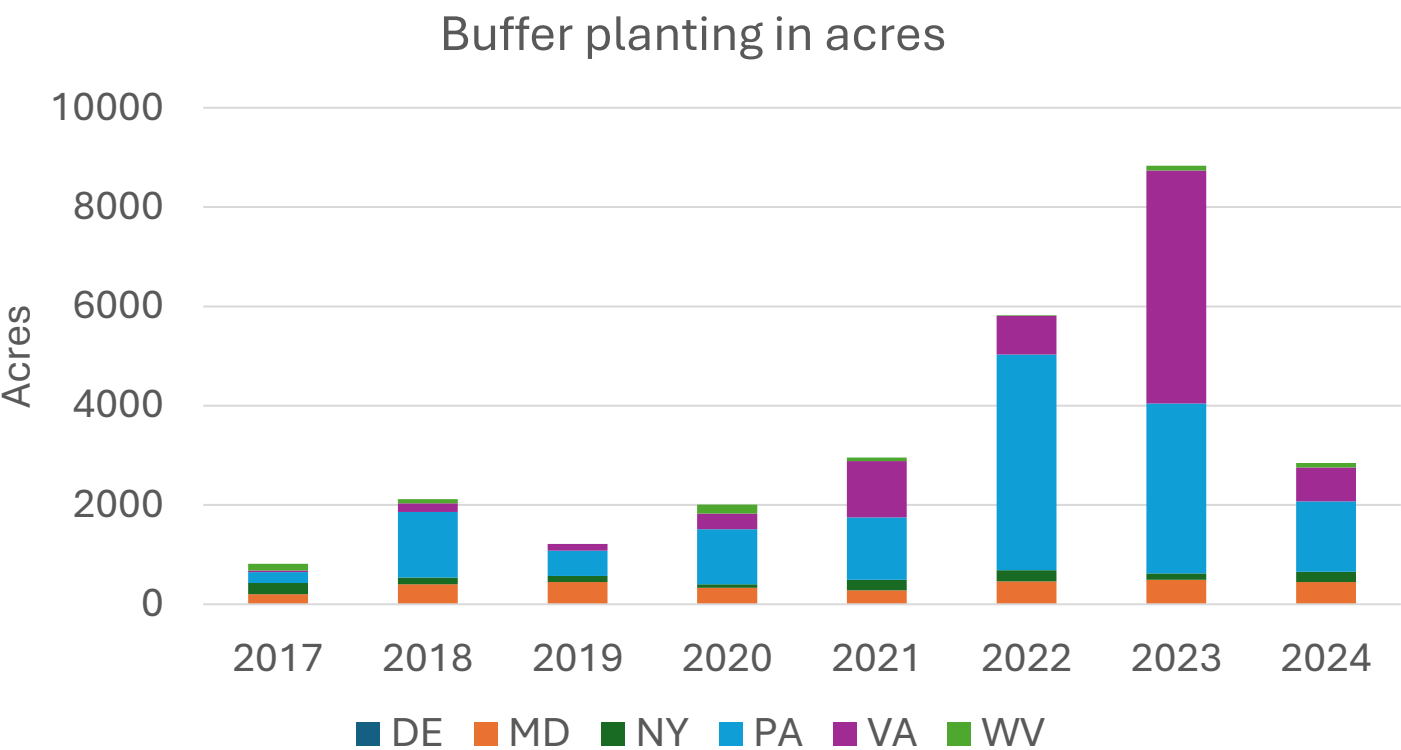
Community Tree Canopy: Conserve tree canopy within communities by reducing the rate of loss of existing canopy and planting and maintaining 45,000 acres of community trees by 2040 to achieve a net gain in canopy over the long term.

Community Tree Planting BMPs Reported by Jurisdiction (cumulative acres)



Jurisdiction (CB Only)	Net change in tree cover to development in census places (2013/14-2021/22)
Delaware	-32
DC	0
Maryland	-11,867
New York	-1,318
Pennsylvania	-3,709
Virginia	-11,873
West Virginia	-109
Total	-28,908
Average Annual Rate of Change	-3,755

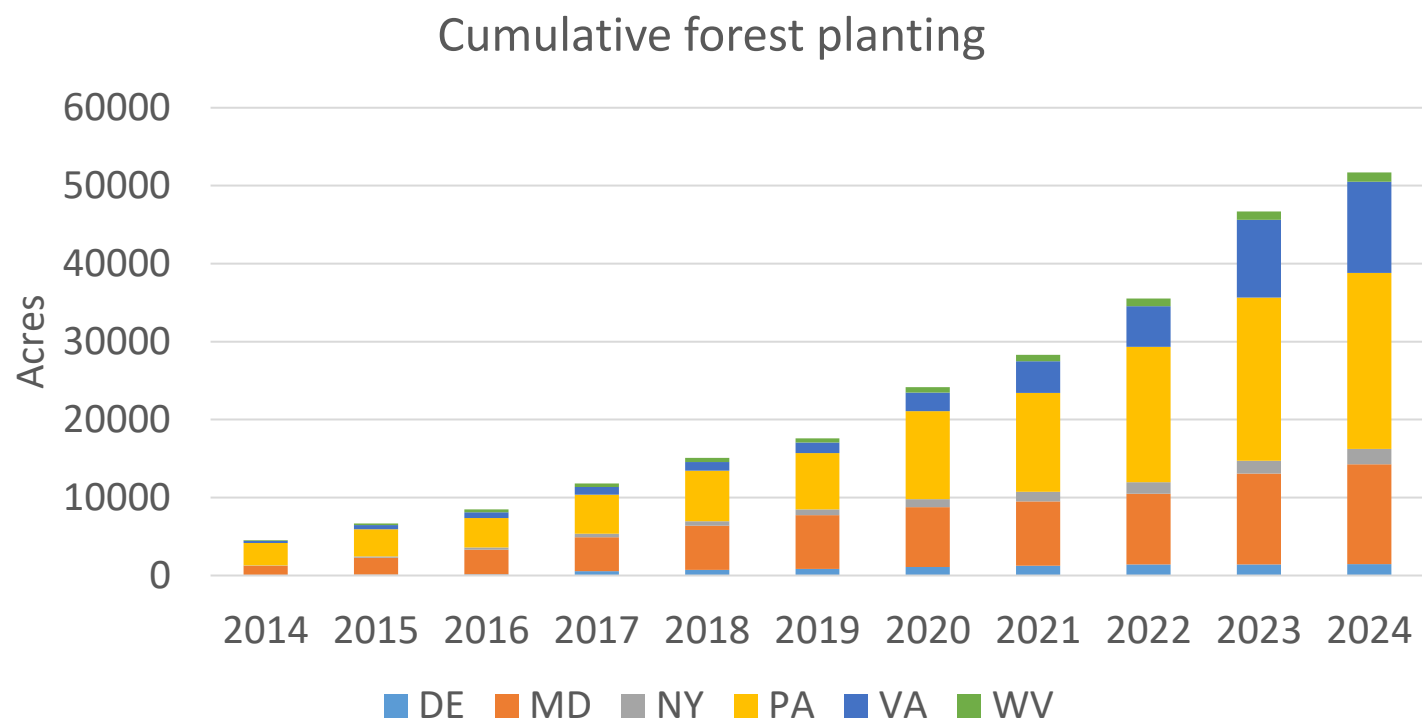
Forest Buffers: Conserve riparian forest by reducing the rate of loss of existing buffers and planting and maintaining 7,500 acres of forest buffers annually to achieve no less than 71.5% riparian forest cover by 2040 and 75% riparian forest cover over the long term.



2021/22 Riparian Forest Cover: 69.96%

Jurisdiction (CB Only)	Net change in riparian forest cover (100 ft buffer)
Delaware	-337
DC	2
Maryland	-1,828
New York	-2,991
Pennsylvania	-7,416
Virginia	-27,353
West Virginia	-2,018
Total	-41,941
Average Annual Rate of Change	-5,587

Forest Conservation: Achieve a net gain in forests over the long-term by **reducing the rate of forest conversion to other land uses by 33%**, permanently protecting a total of 9 million acres of forested land, and **planting, maintaining and managing 202,000 acres** of new forests by 2040.

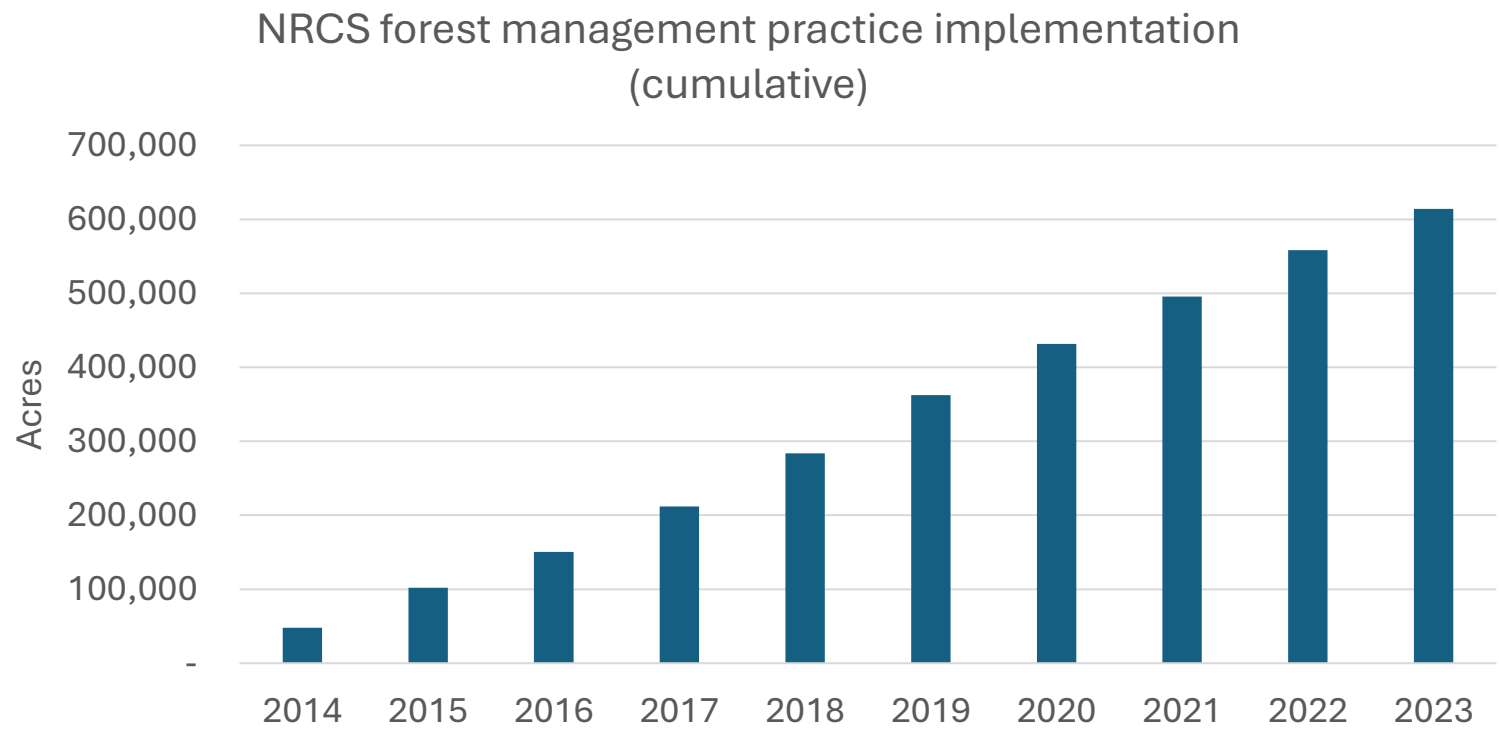


Jurisdiction (CB Only)	Net change in forest cover to development
Delaware	-692.45
DC	-84.29
Maryland	-19,741.24
New York	-7,378.85
Pennsylvania	-28,841.97
Virginia	-48,813.33
West Virginia	-3,661.93
Total	-109,214.06
Average Annual Rate of Change	-14,020

Forest Conservation: Achieve a net gain in forests over the long-term by reducing the rate of forest conversion to other land uses by 33%, **permanently protecting a total of 9 million acres of forested land**, and planting, maintaining and managing 202,000 acres of new forests by 2040.

Jurisdiction	Acres of Protected Forest	Total Acres of Protected Land	Percent of Protected Lands in forest
Delaware	70,235	130,606	54%
DC	4,926	8,386	59%
Maryland	929,874	1,700,266	55%
New York	276,967	307,393	90%
Pennsylvania	3,023,979	3,688,214	82%
Virginia	2,493,238	3,118,595	80%
West Virginia	304,689	319,921	95%
Watershed	7,103,907	9,273,380	77%

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State	# of FSP Plans	Acres in FSP Plans	<u>FSP Plan</u> Implementation %	<u>Acres of FSP Sustainably</u> Managed
DE	93	10,819	84.41%	9,132
MD	8,534	798,423	85.78%	684,903
NY	505	70,624	65.50%	46,260
PA	414	107,645	39.34%	42,347
VA	1,519	285,208	81.24%	231,707
WV	276	69,567	83.49%	58,079
TOTAL	11,341	1,342,285	70.95%	952,364

Challenges and Management Approaches

Challenges

- **Funding: Inconsistent funding and availability of effective programs for planting and maintenance**
- Capacity: Workforce capacity for technical assistance, implementation and maintenance
- Maintenance and management: Insufficient maintenance of new plantings and inadequate or unsustainable long-term management of existing forests
- **Land use change: Fragmentation and conversion of forests and tree canopy to other land uses**
- Stressors: Increasing forest health pressures (invasive species, pests, disease, deer overabundance) degrading forest structure, function and resilience*
- Changing environmental conditions: Increasing variability in temperature and precipitation, saltwater intrusion, and extreme events (i.e. storms, droughts) degrading forest structure, function and resilience*

Challenges

- Nursery stock: Insufficient availability of planting stock reflecting the size classes, quality, quantity and diversity of species needed by partners
- **Policy: Inadequate state and/or local policies that support effective reforestation, forest and tree canopy conservation, and forest management**
- **Local government engagement: Inadequate engagement with local governments to support planning and decisions to support forests and tree canopy**
- Landowner engagement: Barriers to effectively engaging landowners to participate in planting, maintenance, management and conservation
- Markets: Insufficient forest products markets and processing infrastructure, particularly for low-value wood products

Management approaches

1. Increase workforce capacity and tree supply to accelerate implementation
2. Bolster funding, programs and partnerships
3. Leverage networks to enhance coordination and restoration impact
4. Address drivers of forest and canopy loss
5. Expand outreach and engagement with local governments around forests and tree canopy
6. Ensure adequate maintenance and management

Next steps

- Workgroup/Goal Team review period: 7/24-8/14
 - Optional office hours held 7/29
- Revisions: 8/17-8/25
 - Send revised version 8/26 (one week in advance of September meeting)
- Sept 2nd FWG meeting: Discuss any remaining issues before finalizing draft for goal team