

Chesapeake Bay Forestry Trends

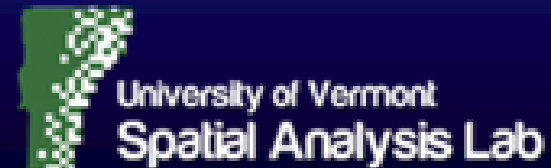
Sarah M. McDonald

USGS, Lower Mississippi Gulf Water Science Center

Forestry Workgroup Meeting

April 2, 2025

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey



Tree Canopy Trends: Chesapeake Bay Watershed Portion of States

Geography	2013/14		2017/18		2021/22	
	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area
Delaware	199,337	44%	198,835	44%	196,719	44%
District of Columbia	13,662	35%	13,650	35%	13,694	35%
Maryland	2,888,760	50%	2,877,848	50%	2,867,882	49%
New York	2,510,600	63%	2,511,003	63%	2,488,079	63%
Pennsylvania	9,216,556	64%	9,162,949	64%	9,083,455	64%
Virginia	9,183,083	67%	8,998,907	65%	8,813,129	64%
West Virginia	1,719,765	75%	1,713,270	75%	1,700,853	75%
Watershed	25,731,762	63%	25,476,461	63%	25,163,810	62%

Tree Canopy = Forest (FORE), Forested, Other (FORO), Tree Canopy over Turf (TCTG), and Tree Canopy over Impervious (TCIS)

Forested Extent Trends: Chesapeake Bay Watershed Portion of States

Geography	2013/14		2017/18		2021/22	
	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area
Delaware	207,957	46%	208,022	46%	207,245	46%
District of Columbia	9,157	23%	9,153	23%	9,170	23%
Maryland	2,922,943	50%	2,921,688	50%	2,913,594	50%
New York	2,693,610	68%	2,713,062	69%	2,703,147	68%
Pennsylvania	9,730,527	68%	9,732,586	68%	9,709,082	68%
Virginia	9,685,045	70%	9,675,521	70%	9,642,114	70%
West Virginia	1,803,436	79%	1,802,227	79%	1,800,209	79%
Watershed	27,052,674	67%	27,062,259	67%	26,984,561	66%

Forested Extent = Forest (FORE), Forested, Other (FORO), Natural Succession (NATS), and Harvested Forest (HARF)

Forest: Chesapeake Bay Watershed Portion of States

Geography	2013/14		2017/18		2021/22	
	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area
Delaware	194,199	43%	193,555	43%	191,413	42%
District of Columbia	8,115	21%	8,070	21%	8,118	21%
Maryland	2,691,360	46%	2,682,700	46%	2,669,181	46%
New York	2,471,573	62%	2,471,607	62%	2,450,950	62%
Pennsylvania	9,056,719	63%	9,001,312	63%	8,921,709	62%
Virginia	8,905,465	65%	8,717,455	63%	8,534,798	62%
West Virginia	1,699,792	75%	1,693,052	74%	1,681,073	74%
Watershed	25,027,224	62%	24,767,751	61%	24,457,242	60%

Forest = Forest (FORE) and Forested, Other (FORO)

Change with Development

Geography	Tree Canopy		Forested Extent		Forest	
	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area	Acres	% Land Area
Delaware	(511)	-0.11%	(1,079)	-0.24%	(677)	-0.15%
District of Columbia	(1)	0.00%	13	0.03%	(84)	-0.21%
Maryland	(18,550)	-0.32%	(20,255)	-0.35%	(19,471)	-0.34%
New York	(8,666)	-0.22%	(823)	-0.02%	(7,329)	-0.19%
Pennsylvania	(25,281)	-0.18%	(26,253)	-0.18%	(27,891)	-0.20%
Virginia	(46,547)	-0.34%	(48,283)	-0.35%	(48,435)	-0.35%
West Virginia	(3,537)	-0.16%	(3,676)	-0.16%	(3,617)	-0.16%
Watershed	(103,093)	-0.25%	(100,354)	-0.25%	(107,505)	-0.26%

* Forested Extent and Forest include change with developed Tree Canopy classes (TC over Turf and over Impervious)

Tree Canopy = Forest (FORE), Forested, Other (FORO), Tree Canopy over Turf (TCTG), and Tree Canopy over Impervious (TCIS)

Forested Extent = Forest (FORE), Forested, Other (FORO), Natural Succession (NATS), and Harvested Forest (HARF)

Forest = Forest (FORE) and Forested, Other (FORO)

Land Cover Accuracy

- The 2021/22 land cover overall accuracy is 95%
- Tree canopy has high accuracies:
 - Producer's Accuracy (how likely is trees in the imagery to be mapped as tree canopy?) : 97%
 - User's Accuracy (how likely is mapped tree canopy to be trees in the imagery?): 95%
- Change Accuracy
 - Very complicated – but overall tree canopy losses have higher accuracy than tree canopy gains
- More detailed accuracy assessment presentation at the March Land Use Work Group:
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/LUWG_LCAccuracyAssessment_20250319.pdf

* All accuracies reported in this slide represent fuzzy accuracies within a 3x3-meter window for 5 aggregate land cover classes (Water, Tree Canopy, Herbaceous, Barren, Impervious)

Questions?

Sarah McDonald

smcdonald@chesapeakebay.net