Land Use/Land Cover: Tree Canopy & Forest Classes

Forestry Workgroup (FWG) Meeting

8/7/2024

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Proposed Changes to Forest & Tree Canopy Classes

Current Tree Canopy/Forest Rule(s)	Proposed Change(s)	Reasoning
To be classified as "Forest"*, a patch must be at least 1-acre of tree cover with a minimum width of 36-meters (120’), excluding adjacent patches of "Tree Canopy over Turf Grass (TCTG)".	To be classified as “Forest"*, a patch must be at least 1-acre of tree cover with a minimum width of 36-meters (120’), including adjacent patches of "Tree Canopy Over Turf Grass (TCTG)".	TCTG class mimics what foresters consider "forest edge". New rule better aligns with work from U.S. Forestry Service (USFS) and University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC).
Class name: "Tree Canopy, Other (TCOT)"	Rename to "Forested, Other (FORO)"	Forest ecologists shared concerns that class name TCOT could be interpreted as not being worthy of conservation.

* Forest also includes smaller patches of tree cover within recently timbered areas that are undergoing managed succession (see slide 6 of LULC updates presentation for examples). This would not be affected with the proposed rule change.

Preliminary Information-Subject to Revision. Not for Citation or Distribution.

Implications of Proposed Rule Change

Forest Acres with & without TCTG

Jurisdiction	Forest Acres, Excluding TCTG	Forest Acres, Including TCTG	Difference (Acres)
Baltimore City	4,155	4,342	187
Baltimore County	119,809	121,211	1,402

An internal test* that includes TCTG in the patch footprint, to better align with work from UMBC and USFS, results in:

- Increase in urban FORE acres
- No change in TCTG acres
- Decrease in urban TCOT acres
- No load implications

If approved, this method will be changed for all time periods (13/14, 17/18, and 21/22) to remain consistent through time.

**This test has only been applied to Baltimore City and County.*

TCTG = Tree Canopy over Turf Grass
FORE = Forest
TCOT = Tree Canopy, Other

Baltimore County, Maryland

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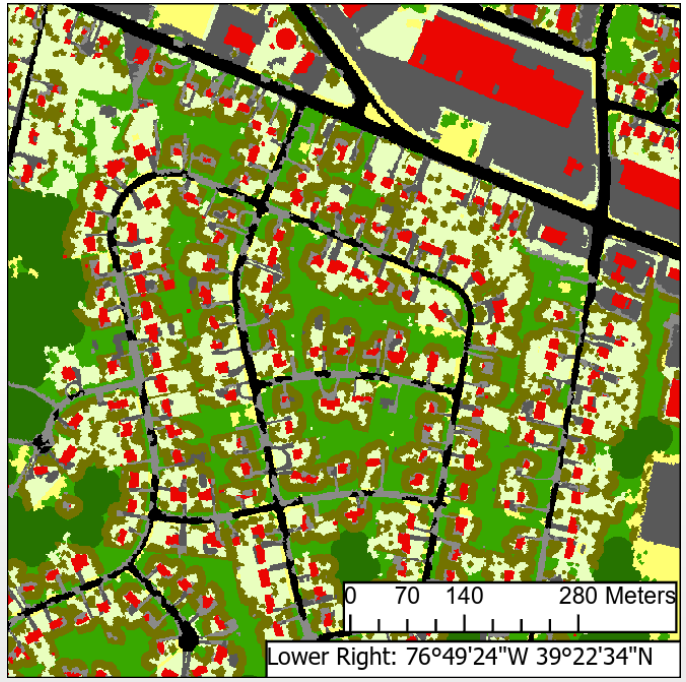
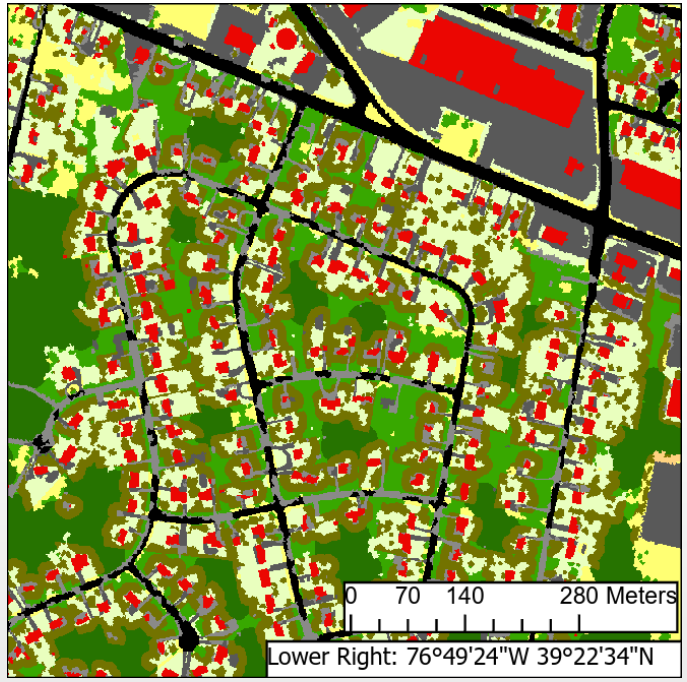
2021 NAIP Imagery

Current Ruleset



Less urban forest, excludes TC over turf

Proposed Ruleset



More urban forest, includes TC over turf

- Roads
- Structures
- Impervious, Other
- Tree Canopy over Impervious
- Turf Grass
- Tree Canopy over Turf
- Pervious, Developed
- Forest
- Tree Canopy, Other

Baltimore County, Maryland

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Baltimore County, Maryland

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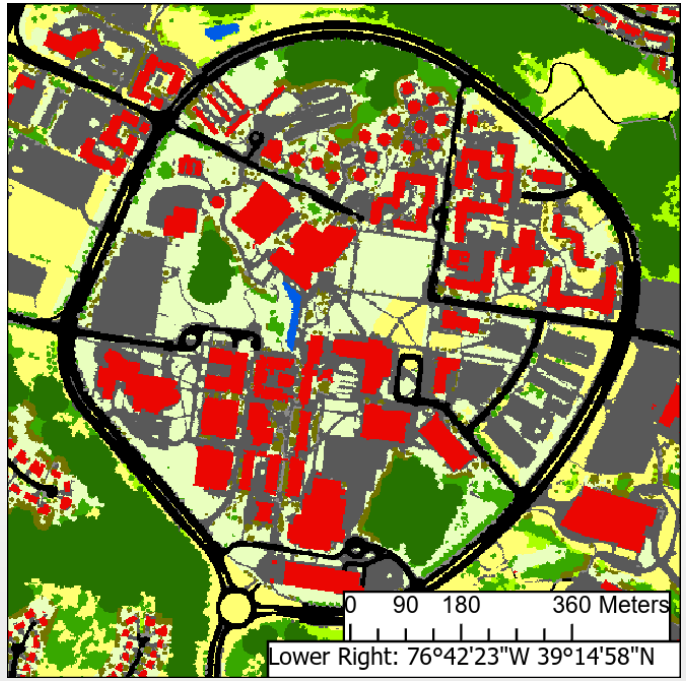

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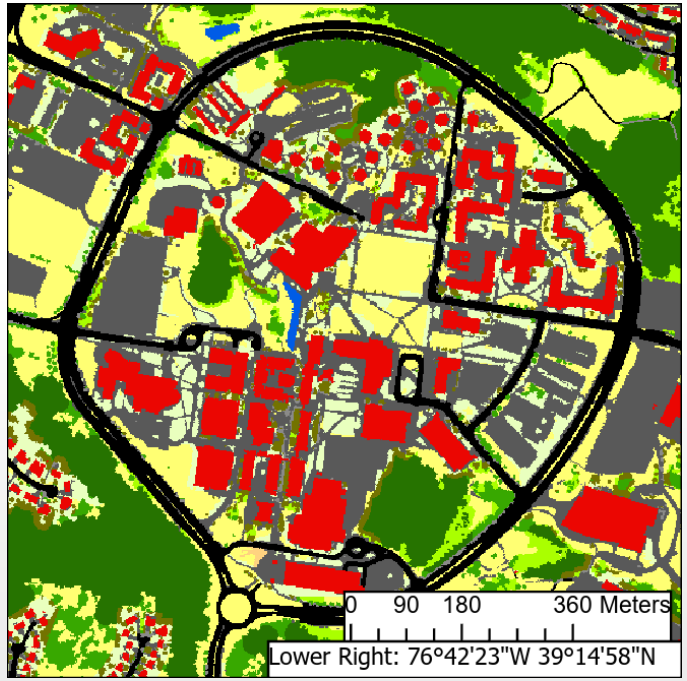

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- Roads
- Structures
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- Tree Canopy over Impervious
- Turf Grass
- Tree Canopy over Turf
- Pervious, Developed
- Forest
- Tree Canopy, Other
- Water

Baltimore City, Maryland

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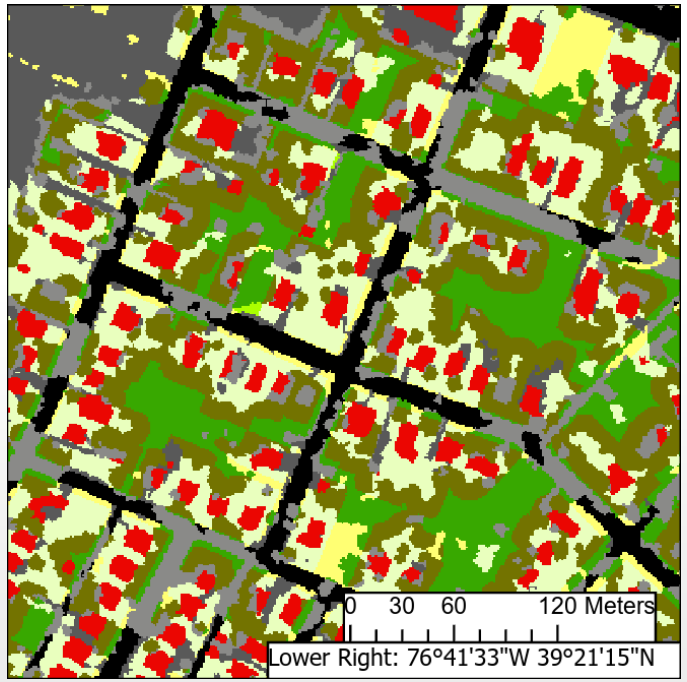

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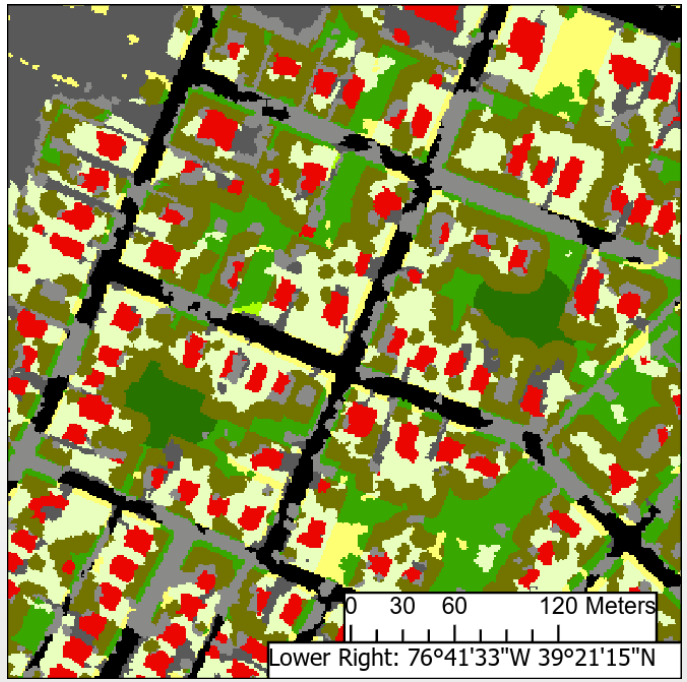

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Baltimore City, Maryland

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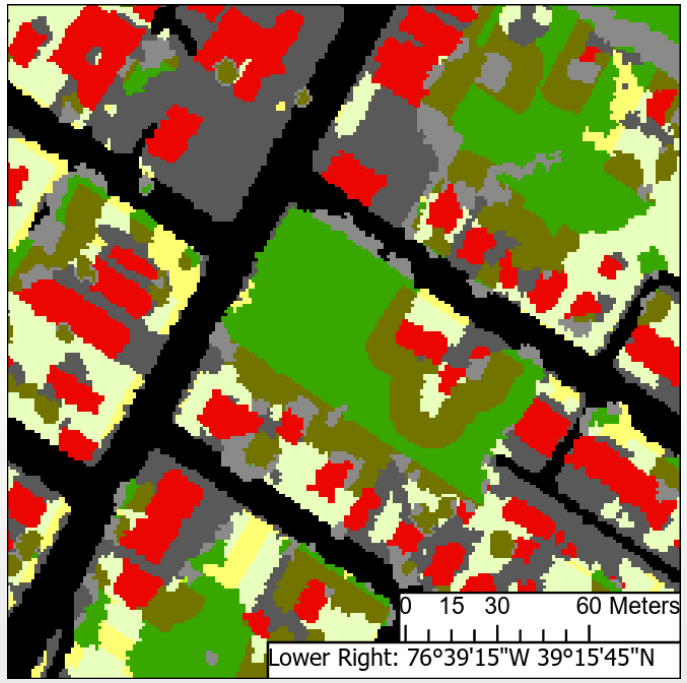

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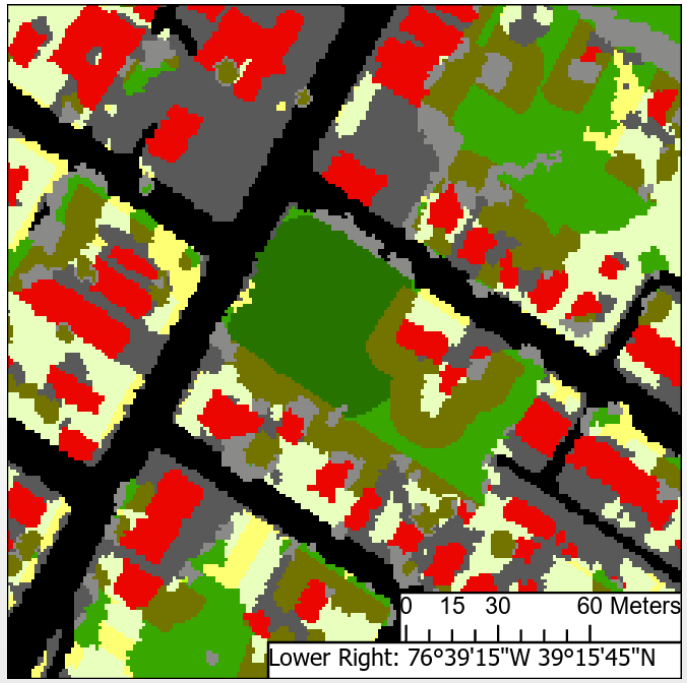

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- Forest
- Tree Canopy, Other

Decision Requested

Forestry Workgroup approval of a rule change to determine how "Forest (FORE)" is classified in the 2024 Edition of the high-resolution land use/land cover data:

adjacent patches of "Tree Canopy Over Turf Grass (TCTG)" will be included in the footprint when determining the patch size threshold for the "Forest (FORE)" class.