Healthy Landscapes Goal Team
Steering Committee

GOAL: Conserve, protect, restore and enhance landscapes of ecological, economic, recreational and cultural value to improve water quality, provide habitat for wildlife and increase resilience.

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Adaptation
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Land Use
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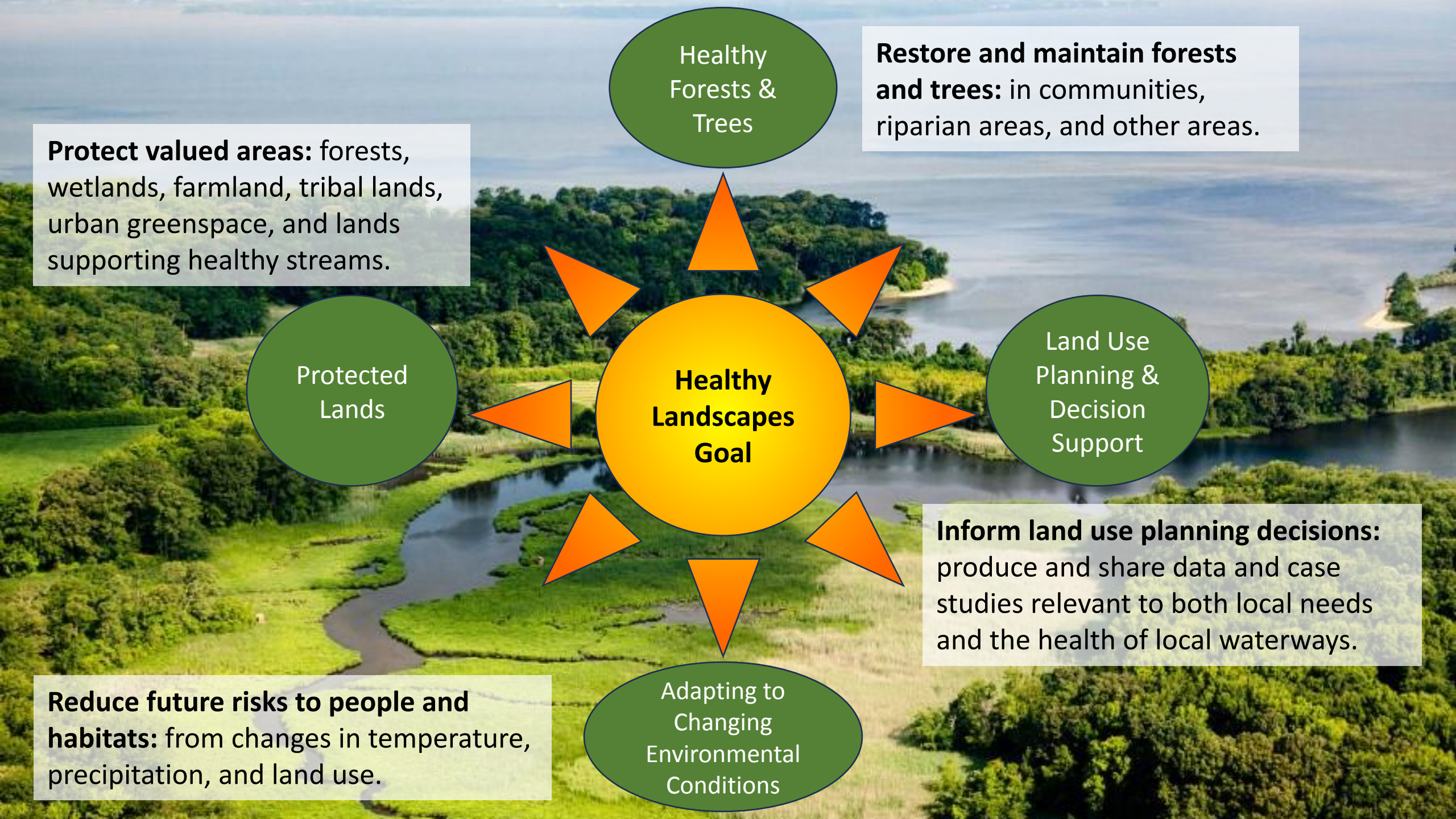
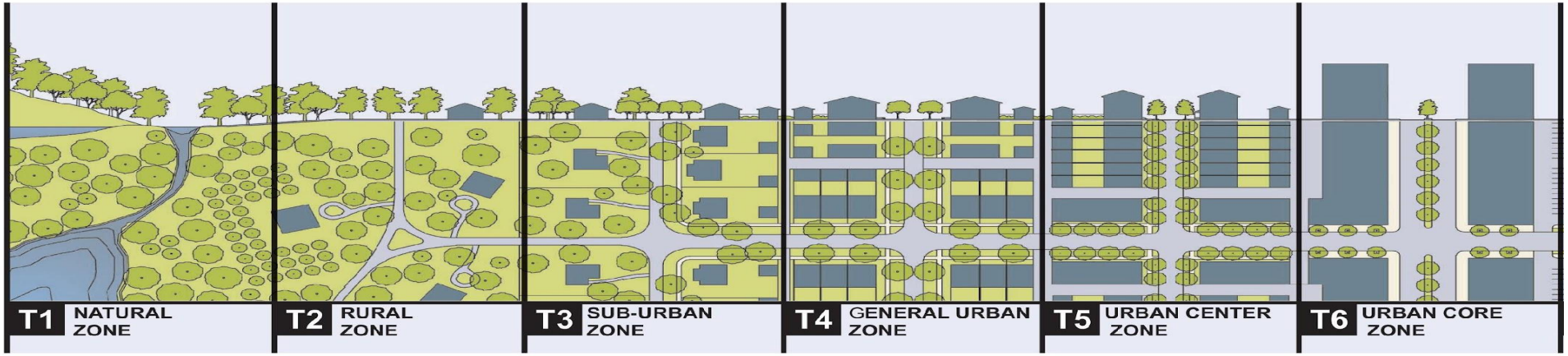
Rosa Hance, Choose Clean Water
Jackie Pickford, USGS

Protected Lands
Jeff Lerner, EPA
Sophie Waterman, USGS


Healthy Forests & Trees
Restore and maintain forests and trees: in communities, riparian areas, and other areas.
Protect valued areas: forests, wetlands, farmland, tribal lands, urban greenspace, and lands supporting healthy streams.
Protected Lands
Healthy Landscapes Goal
Land Use Planning & Decision Support
Inform land use planning decisions: produce and share data and case studies relevant to both local needs and the health of local waterways.
Reduce future risks to people and habitats: from changes in temperature, precipitation, and land use.
Adapting to Changing Environmental Conditions

Complementary Nature of Our Outcomes

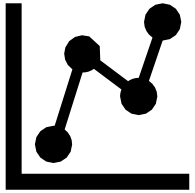


Planning	Very-low density zoning Conservation zoning Park planning Recreation trails	Infill/redevelopment Cluster housing	Walkability Transit-oriented development Redevelopment Mixed use
Resiliency	Living shorelines Floodplain connectivity Wind turbines, solar farms Silviculture	Low-impact development Soil amendments Natural/native landscaping Connected greenways Community and distributed solar	Green roofs Pervious pavement Detention vaults Solar roofs Street trees
Conservation	Working farms and forests Source-water protection Wildlife habitat protection and connectivity	Floodplain and wetland protection Community parks and recreation areas Trail networks	Greenspace conservation Trail networks
Forests	Conservation of forest habitats Conservation of working lands Sustainable forest management Riparian forest buffers	Street trees Riparian forest buffers Reforestation of plantable areas Controlling pests, disease, and invasives	Street trees Controlling pests, disease, and invasives

* Image from the Center for Applied Transect Studies (https://transect.org/rural_img.html)

What is the Land Use Decision Support (LUDS) Outcome?

Developing and delivering relevant land use information to support local planning and decision-making.



Develop the data

Actionable land use information

Deliver the data

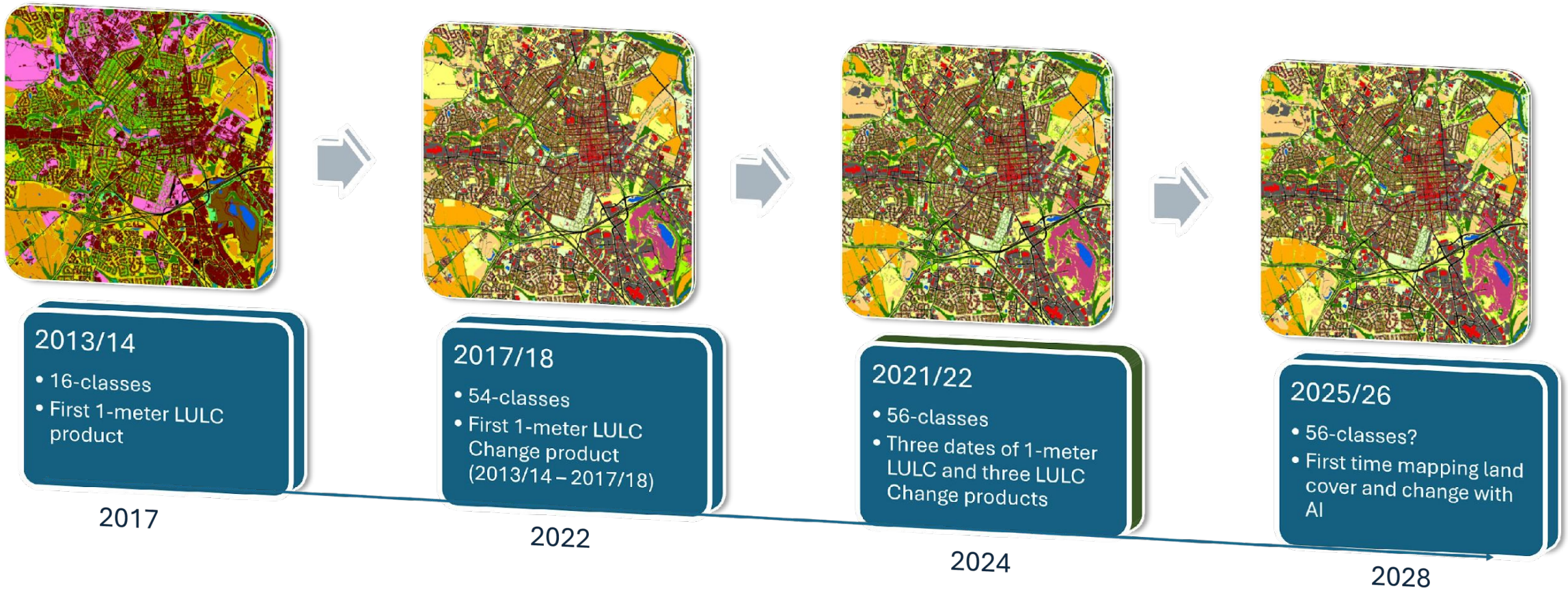
Support planning decision-making C

Document the impact

Collect and communicate use cases

Slide credit: Sarah McDonald, USGS

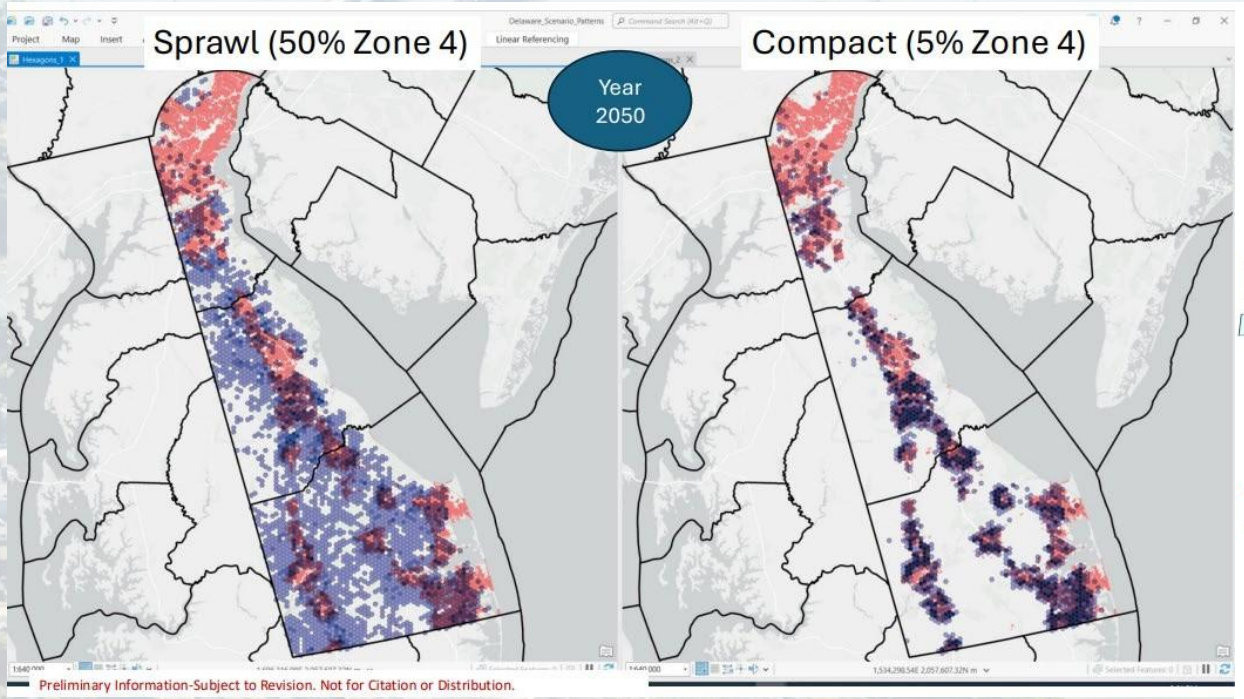
Mapping Land Use/Land Cover (LULC)

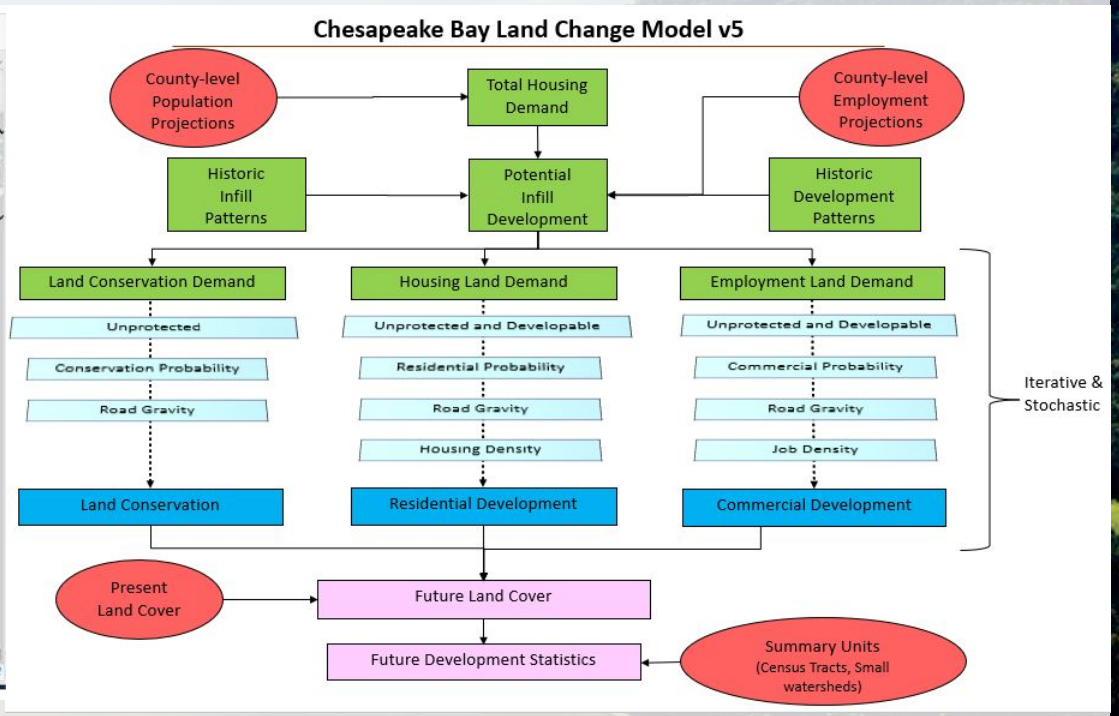


Land Use/Land Cover Monitoring
With each newly mapped year, the previous year(s) are remapped using the same methods for consistent change detection

Modeling future land use and development

Slide credit: Peter Claggett, USGS





Other relevant data s projects

Hyper-resolution hydrography (2025)

Chesapeake Bay Hyper-Resolution Hydrography Database

View

Dates

Start Date : 2008
End Date : 2021
Publication Date : 2025-05-23

Citation

Baker, M., Saavedra, D., Cang, X., and Ahmed, L., 2025, Chesapeake Bay Hyper-resolution Hydrography Database: U.S. Geological Survey data release, https://doi.org/10.5066/P1GRAPEX.

Summary

The Chesapeake Bay Hyper-Resolution Hydrography Database is intended to facilitate analysis of the landscape in the Chesapeake Bay watershed through identification of headwater and other low-order streams or drainage features (e.g. ditches) that, to date, may be absent from existing hydrography data products. A full description of the methodology and accuracy assessment is provided in the accompanying report titled: *Hydrography Mapping Supporting Modeling and Targeted Conservation: Project Overview and Lessons Learned* (Project Overview and

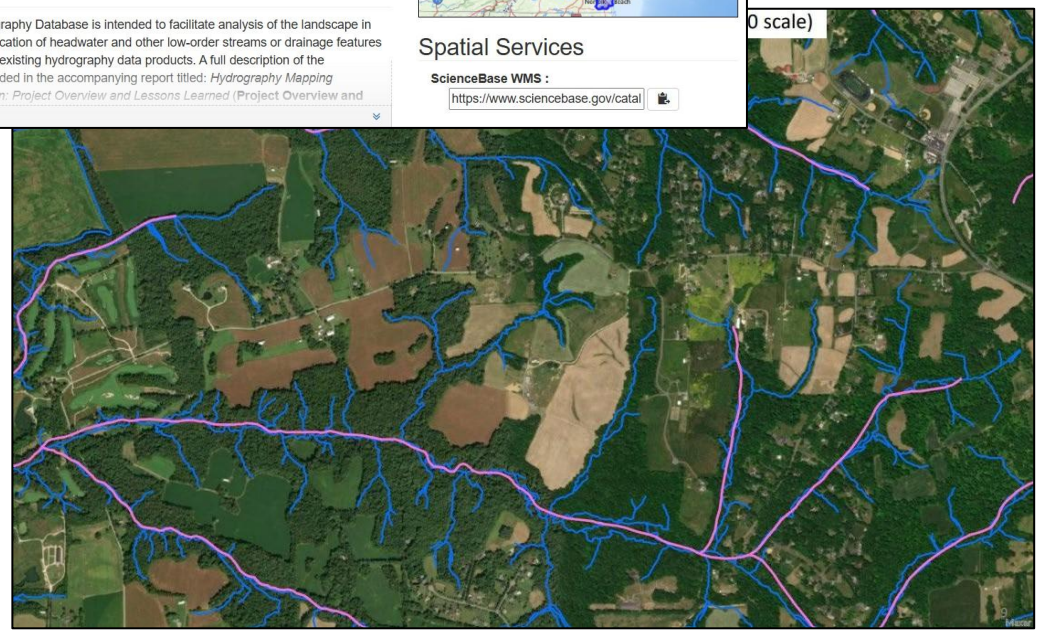
... show more ...

Map »

Spatial Services

ScienceBase WMS :

https://www.sciencebase.gov/catal



Use case survey (ongoing)

Chesapeake Bay 1-meter Land Use/Land Cover Dataset: Use Cases

We are looking to capture information about how these data layers are being used. This information is helpful for:

1. advocating for continued funding of the data production
2. reflections on which classes bear more or less importance for stakeholders
3. communicating about future releases and changes to the data layers

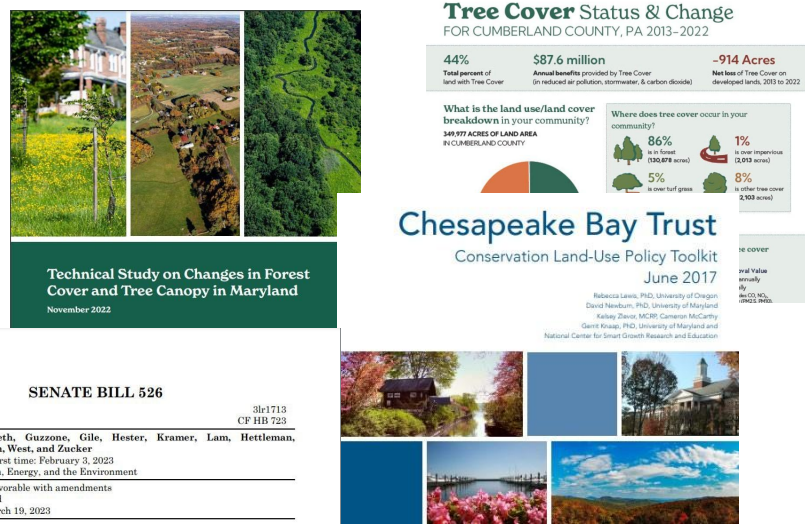
What is your name?

Your answer

What is your contact e-mail?

Your answer

Shifting priorities of the Land Use Workgroup



Mapping/Modeling-Focused

Emphasis on providing technical expertise on the development of the high-resolution land use/land cover data and other land use related products.

shifting towards

Communication/ Applications-Focused

Emphasis on applications C communication of the high-resolution land use/land cover data and other land use related products.

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.

Forestry Workgroup Priorities

Riparian Forest Buffers

Accelerating riparian forest buffer planting and maintenance

Developing and expanding flexible and effective buffer programs

Increasing capacity for restoration

Community Tree Canopy

Supporting local governments to understand and conserve existing canopy

Accelerating community tree planting and maintenance

Forest Conservation

Increasing the permanent protection of forested lands

Accelerating upland reforestation

Supporting additional forest management needed to ensure resilience

What is the Protected Lands Outcome?

Protect water quality, enhance biodiversity, support sustainable livelihoods, bolster local economies, honor cultural heritage, and protect the mission and resilience of military installations.

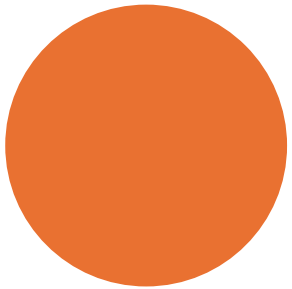
By 2040, permanently protect at least an **additional 2 million acres** of land above the 2025 baseline of 9.3 million acres. The 2 million acres will include the below targets

- Riparian Forests
- Wetlands (including migration corridors)
- Natural areas supporting healthy streams
- Agricultural Lands
- Tribal Homelands
- Urban and Community Greenspace

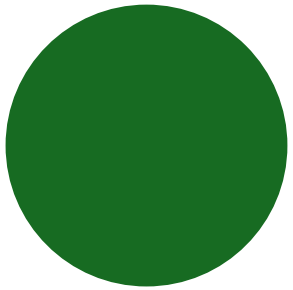
Upcoming/Ongoing Projects

Attributing Date of Establishment within the Protected Lands Indicator	Clarify and standardize how establishment dates are assigned across jurisdictions. Improve consistency to strengthen data quality and comparability. Support more accurate tracking of long-term conservation progress
Defining & Identifying Targets for the Protected Lands Outcome	Riparian forests Wetlands, including migration corridors Natural areas that support healthy stream systems Agricultural lands Tribal homelands Urban and community greenspace
Understanding Jurisdictional Priorities	Reviewing Jurisdictional plans (SCORPs, Forest Action Plans, Wildlife Action Plans, etc.) Examining state priority areas (GIS exercise) Understanding funding options Understanding jurisdictional goals within the context of the 2025 Bay Agreement

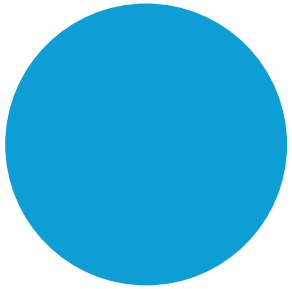
Priorities



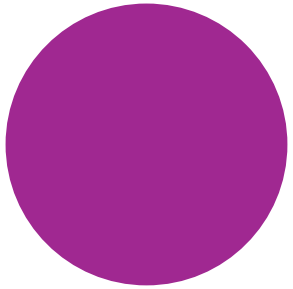
Set **clear conservation targets** (forests, wetlands, streams, ag lands, tribal homelands, greenspace)



Provide **high-quality watershed-wide conservation data** and analysis.



Identify funding mechanisms that can help support conservation efforts and capacity in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



Ensure conservation strategies are **locally relevant** by aligning actions with community needs, priorities, and on-the-ground conditions (e.g., Source Water Protection)

ACEC Outcome

Increase the capacity for pursuing solutions, including those that are nature-based, to improve planning and responses to changing conditions while balancing long-term resiliency of watershed communities, economies, and ecosystems.

Focuses on place-based, capacity-building of nature-based solutions for additive resilience benefit

TARGETS

- By 2040, support at least seven sub-watershed areas with knowledge-sharing and technical assistance to identify adaptation options with a preference for nature-based solutions. These solutions include restoration and protection projects that will help address risks to people, infrastructure and habitats from changes in temperature, precipitation and landscapes.

- By 2040, inform and lead to an increase in the implementation of the identified adaptation options that prioritize and integrate nature-based solutions in the above sub-watershed areas.

Adaptation Initiatives

Marsh Adaptation

- Collaborative identification of marsh restoration and protection opportunities
- Consideration of sea level rise and social vulnerability

Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

- Support partner NbS project proposals for resilience funding
- Support NbS performance research for changing environmental conditions

Community Resilience

- Support partner projects that identify best practices for community engaged adaptation
- Integrate social vulnerability metrics

Next Steps

Strategic Planning

- Recruit membership (~May-Dec 2026)
- Complete strategic networking technical assistance and identify collaborative opportunities with Healthy Landscapes and other workgroups (~May-Jun 2026)
- Outreach to jurisdictions to collect information on adaptation priorities (~Jun-Dec 2026)
- Work on ACEC components of Healthy Landscapes Management Strategy and workplan (due Spring 2027)

Keeping the Momentum on the Work

- NbS STAC Synthesis Project 2nd monitoring indicator and metrics charrette (Jun 2026)
- Disseminate Choptank marsh adaptation report & develop communication materials (~Jun-Sep 2026)
- Work with Envision the Choptank partners to evaluate a workgroup framework for supporting tidal and nontidal subwatershed activities (~Oct-Dec 2026)

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