Healthy Watersheds Indicator

Sarah McDonald (she/her)[1] and Sophie Waterman[2]

[1] U.S. Geological Survey

[2] Chesapeake Research Consortium

Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team
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Healthy Watersheds Indicator Action Team

Outcome: Maintain 100 percent of state-identified healthy waters and watersheds remain healthy.

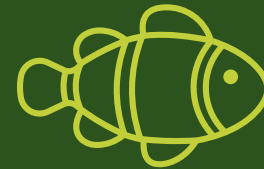Goal: Identify indicators of watershed health to monitor progress on the outcome.

Expertise: biology, habitat, ecology, hydrogeomorphology, forestry, and geography.

Step 1: Define a "Healthy" Watershed

Land Protection?

Public access? Parks? Recreation?
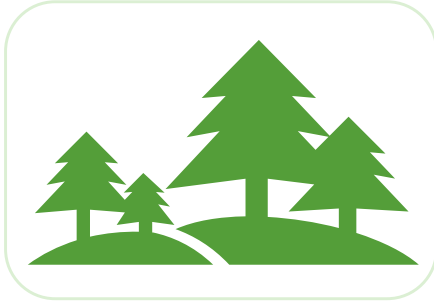
Habitat?

Black Duck? Brook Trout? Others?

According to the states…

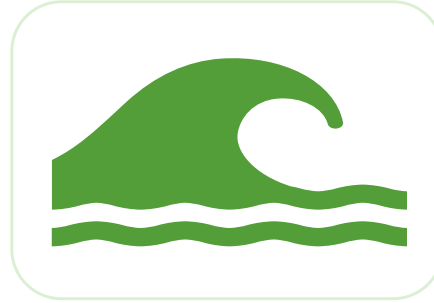| Jurisdiction	Definition of "Healthy"	Categories
D.C. *	No identified healthy watersheds.	
Delaware*	Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) are achieved, and their surface water quality standards are met (toxins, nutrients, DO, temperature, etc.).	Water quality
Maryland	Tier II waters. Biological characteristics are significantly better than minimum water quality standards.	Biology
New York	Absence of use restrictions (nutrients, DO, etc.).	Water Quality
Pennsylvania	High Quality or Exceptional Value waters. Biological (wilderness trout stream and benthics), chemical (DO, pH, toxics), and habitat assessments (located in designated state or national protected, owned, or managed areas).	Biology, Water Quality, Habitat, Land Protection
Virginia	High aquatic integrity and ecologically healthy waters. Fish and macroinvertebrate communities, instream and riparian habitat. High numbers of native/broad diversity of species, few or no non-native aquatic species, few generalist species.	Biology, Habitat.
West Virginia	Tier 3 waters. Exceptionally high benthic macroinvertebrate communities, located in Federal Wilderness areas, state and national parks, national forests, and protected by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, naturally reproducing trout streams.	Biology, Habitat, Land Protection

* Currently no healthy watersheds.
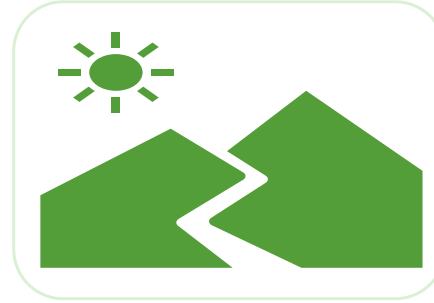
According to CBP and EPA…

CHWA 2.0 Health Categories and EPA Watershed Health Index
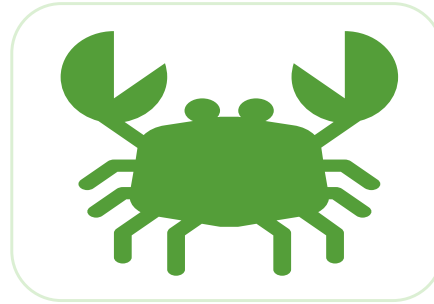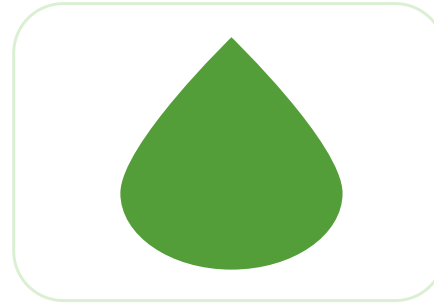

Landscape Condition

Hydrology

Geomorphology

Habitat

Biological Condition

Water Quality

Step 2: Catalog Data Availability

What metrics are in the Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment 2.0?

Other metrics not in CHWA 2.0 that are related to watershed health?

What can be measured for monitoring purposes?

Step 3: Identify Available Data that are Indicators of Watershed Health

- Jamboard exercise to rank metrics.
- All metrics included in the jamboard were marked as important by at least one person.

Protected lands

Land use

Population density

Proposed Indicators

Percent protected natural lands (forests and wetlands) in state-identified healthy watersheds

Percent natural lands (forests and wetlands) in state-identified healthy watersheds

Contact

Sarah McDonald (she/her/hers)
Geographer, U.S. Geological Survey
Land Use Workgroup Coordinator, Chesapeake Bay Program
smcdonald@chesapeakebay.net
smcdonald@usgs.gov