







High-resolution Land Use/Land Cover for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and Applications for Tree Canopy Tracking

Peter Claggett¹, Michelle Katoski¹, Sarah McDonald¹, Katie Brownson²

¹ Lower Mississippi-Gulf Water Science Center, U.S. Geological Survey

² U.S. Forest Service

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments – Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee September 24th, 2025



Chesapeake Bay Program Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Project: A Brief History













2013/14

- 16-classes
- First 1-meter LULC product

2017/18

- 54-classes
- First 1-meter LULC Change product (2013/14 – 2017/18)

2021/22

- 56-classes
- Three dates of 1-meter LULC and three LULC Change products

2025/26

- 56-classes?
- First time mapping land cover and change with Al

2017

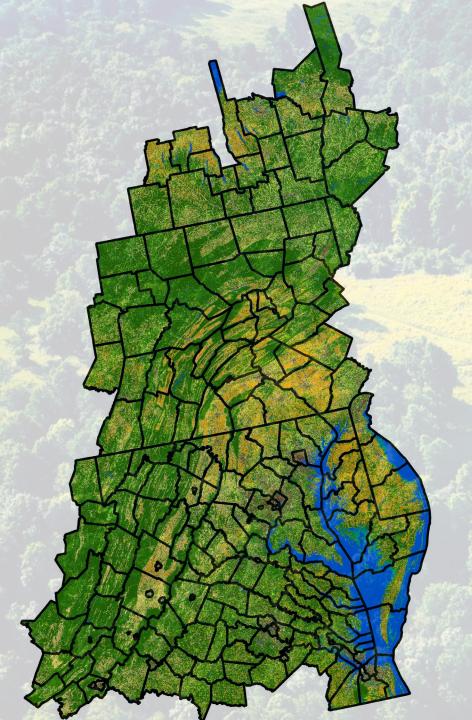
2022

2024

2028

Land Use/Land Cover Monitoring

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

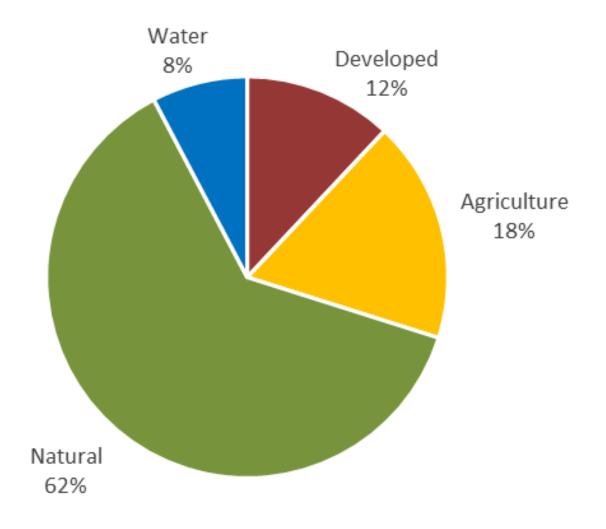


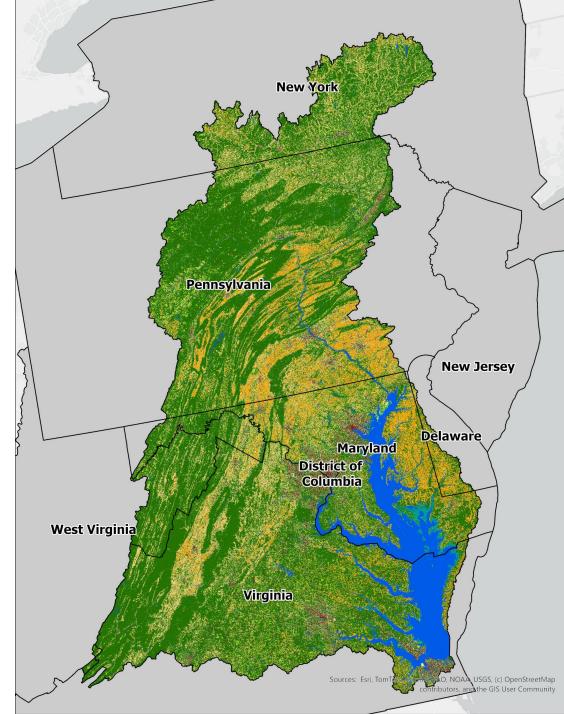
Spatial Extent and Resolution

- Mapped extent
 - 205 counties intersecting or adjacent to the Chesapeake Bay watershed
 - 99,000 square miles
- Spatial Resolution
 - 1-meter² cells
- Temporal Resolution
 - 2013/14, 2017/18, 2021/22
- Categorical Resolution
 - 56 Land Use/Land Cover classes

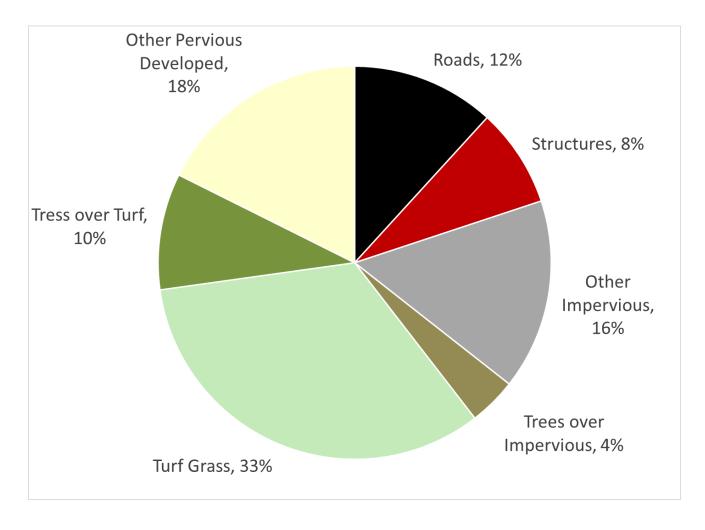
Chesapeake Bay Basin Land Use

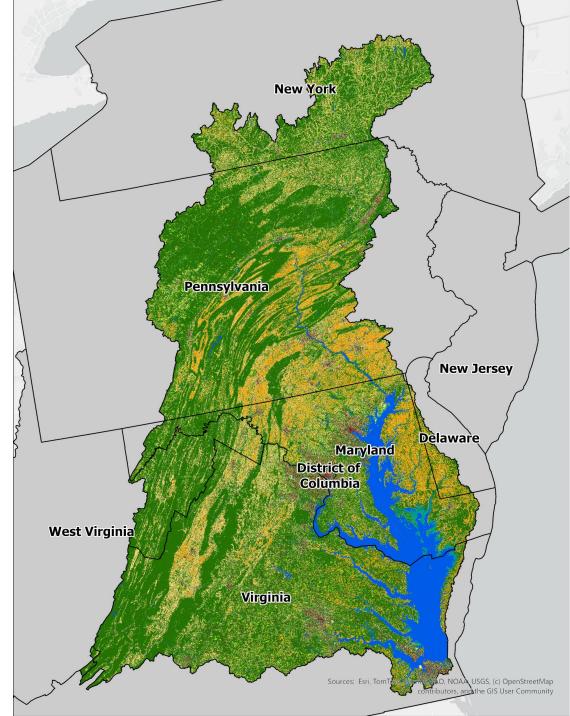
2021/22 1-meter resolution imagery





Components of Development

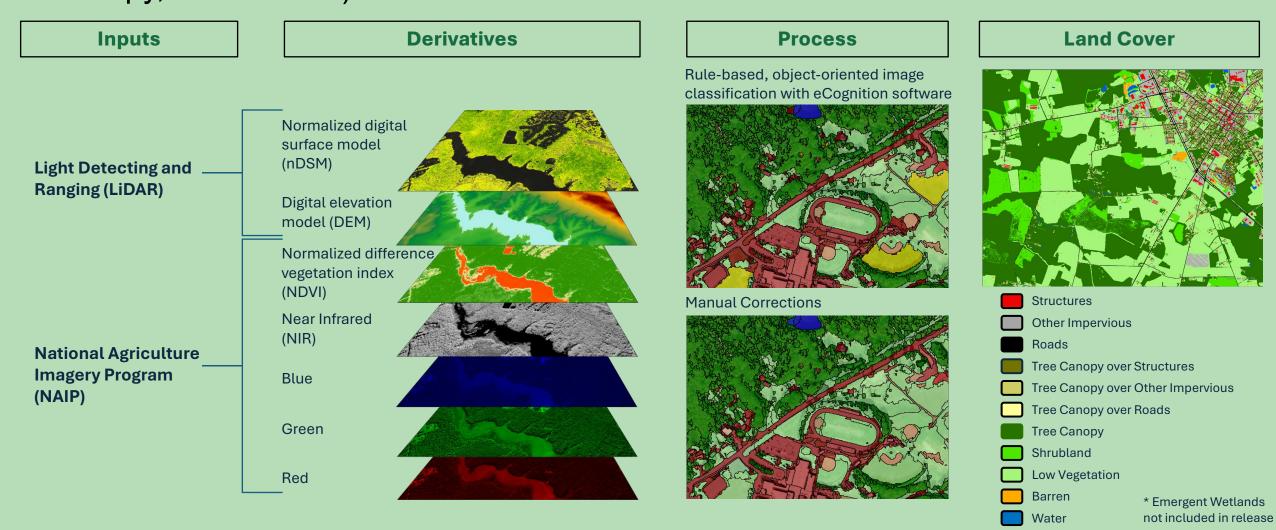




What is Land Cover?



The physical characteristics of the land surface (e.g., impervious, tree canopy, herbaceous)

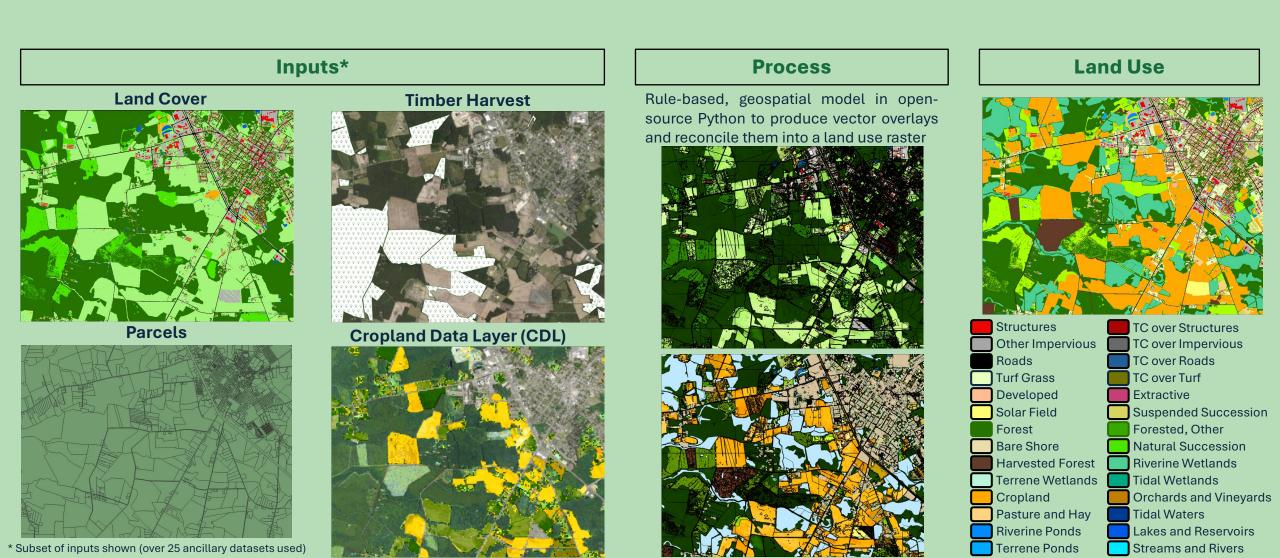


What is Land Use?



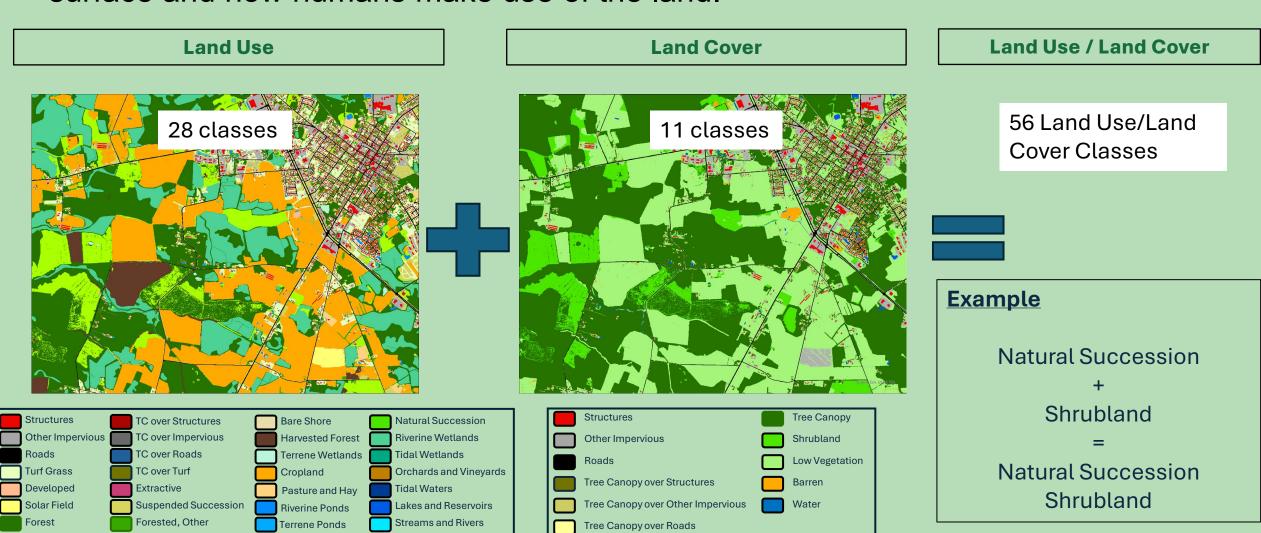


How humans use the land (e.g., residential, agriculture, recreation)



What is Land Use/Land Cover (LULC)?

The combination of land use and land cover, reflecting both the physical surface and how humans make use of the land.



Land Use / Land Cover (LULC) 56-Class Schema

Development

Roads

Structures

Other Impervious

Solar Field Panel Arrays

TC over Roads

TC over Structures

TC over Other Impervious

Turf Grass

Tree Canopy over Turf Grass

Bare Developed

Solar Field Barren

Solar Field Herbaceous

Solar Field Shrubland

Suspended Succession Barren

Suspended Succession Herbaceous

Suspended Succession Shrubland

Extractive Barren

Extractive Impervious

Agricultural

Cropland Barren

Cropland Herbaceous

Orchards and Vineyards Barren

Orchards and Vineyards Herbaceous

Orchards and Vineyards Shrubland

Pasture and Hay Barren

Pasture and Hay Herbaceous

Water

Tidal Waters

Lakes and Reservoirs

Riverine Ponds

Terrene Ponds

Streams and Rivers

Natural

Forest

Riverine Wetlands Forest

Terrene Wetlands Forest

Tidal Wetlands Forest

Forested, Other

Riverine Wetlands Tree Canopy

Terrene Wetlands Tree Canopy

Tidal Wetlands Tree Canopy

Natural Succession Barren

Natural Succession Herbaceous

Natural Succession Shrubland

Bare Shore

Harvested Forest Barren

Harvested Forest Herbaceous

Riverine Wetlands Harvested Forest

Terrene Wetlands Harvested Forest

Tidal Wetlands Harvested Forest

Riverine Wetlands Barren

Riverine Wetlands Herbaceous

Riverine Wetlands Shrubland

Terrene Wetlands Barren

Terrene Wetlands Herbaceous

Terrene Wetlands Shrubland

Tidal Wetlands Barren

Tidal Wetlands Herbaceous

Tidal Wetlands Shrubland

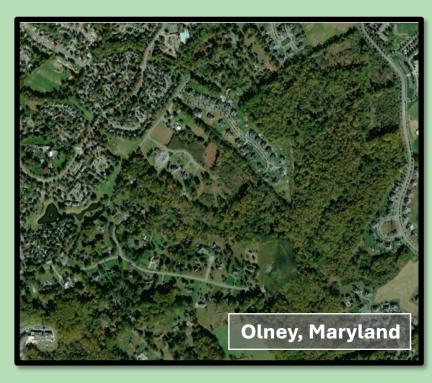
Aggregating Land Use/Land Cover Classes

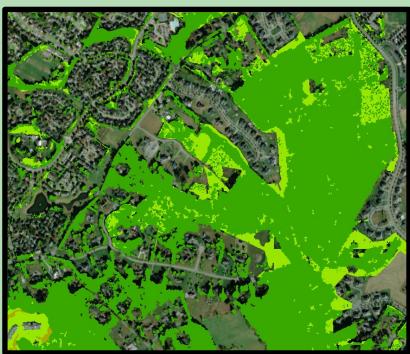
Land Cover (11) Land Use (28) **General Land Use (18) Macro Land Use (4)**

Defining Tree Canopy and Forested Extent

Forested Extent

Tree Cover







Tree canopy with an unmanaged understory (i.e. forest) and early successional forests, including recently harvested areas and areas undergoing natural succession

All tree canopy cover including tree canopy over turf, tree canopy over impervious, and forested areas.

Tree Canopy and Forested Extent

Forested Extent

Tree Cover

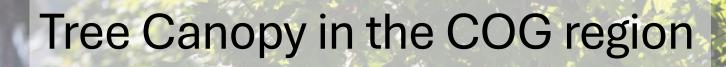


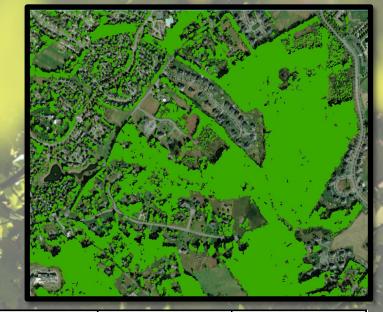


State	% Total tree cover	% Total forested extent		
DC	34.8%	23.3%		
MD	49.4%	50.1%		
VA	64.0%	70.0%		

Tree canopy with an unmanaged understory (i.e. forest) and early successional forests, including recently <u>harvested areas</u> and areas undergoing <u>natural succession</u>.

All tree canopy cover including tree canopy over turf, tree canopy over impervious, and forested areas.





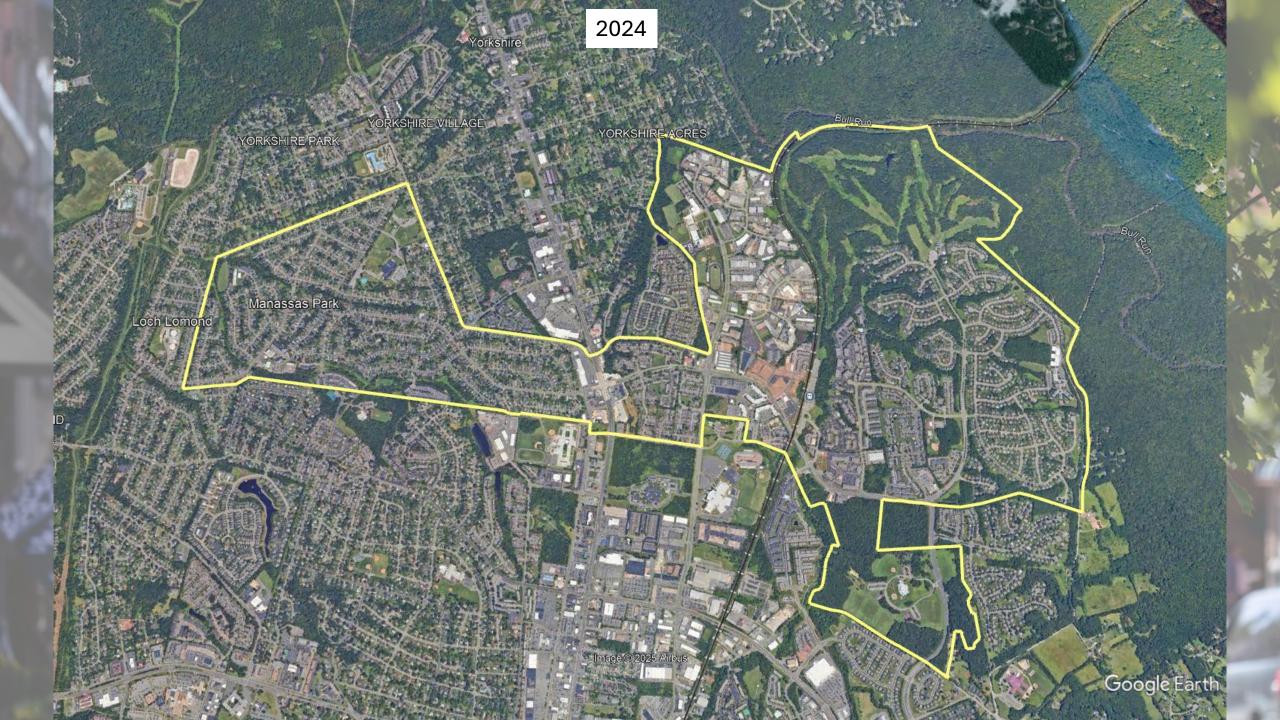
FIPS	Name	Land_Area	TC_2013/14	TC_2018	TC_2021	pTC_2013/14	pTC_2018	pTC_2021
24017	Charles County	292,735	198,905	198,128	196,872	67.9%	67.7%	67.3%
51153	Prince William County	214,374	122,147	120,974	118,800	57.0%	56.4%	55.4%
51059	Fairfax County	251,866	140,172	139,276	137,859	55.7%	55.3%	54.7%
24033	Prince George's County	308,031	168,030	160,768	160,509	54.5%	52.2%	52.1%
24031	Montgomery County	316,587	153,217	147,597	148,301	48.4%	46.6%	46.8%
51107	Loudoun County	330,872	147,947	145,066	141,359	44.7%	43.8%	42.7%
24021	Frederick County	423,252	181,584	181,696	180,079	42.9%	42.9%	42.5%
51610	Falls Church city	1,310	540	535	531	41.2%	40.9%	40.5%
51600	Fairfax city	4,008	1,638	1,628	1,612	40.9%	40.6%	40.2%
11001	District of Columbia	39,339	13,662	13,650	13,694	34.7%	34.7%	34.8%
51013	Arlington County	16,625	5,660	5,657	5,562	34.0%	34.0%	33.5%
51685	Manassas Park city	1,939	621	619	607	32.0%	31.9%	31.3%
51510	Alexandria city	9,622	2,646	2,658	2,631	27.5%	27.6%	27.3%
51683	Manassas city	6,287	1,498	1,494	1,476	23.8%	23.8%	23.5%
					The second second	100		400

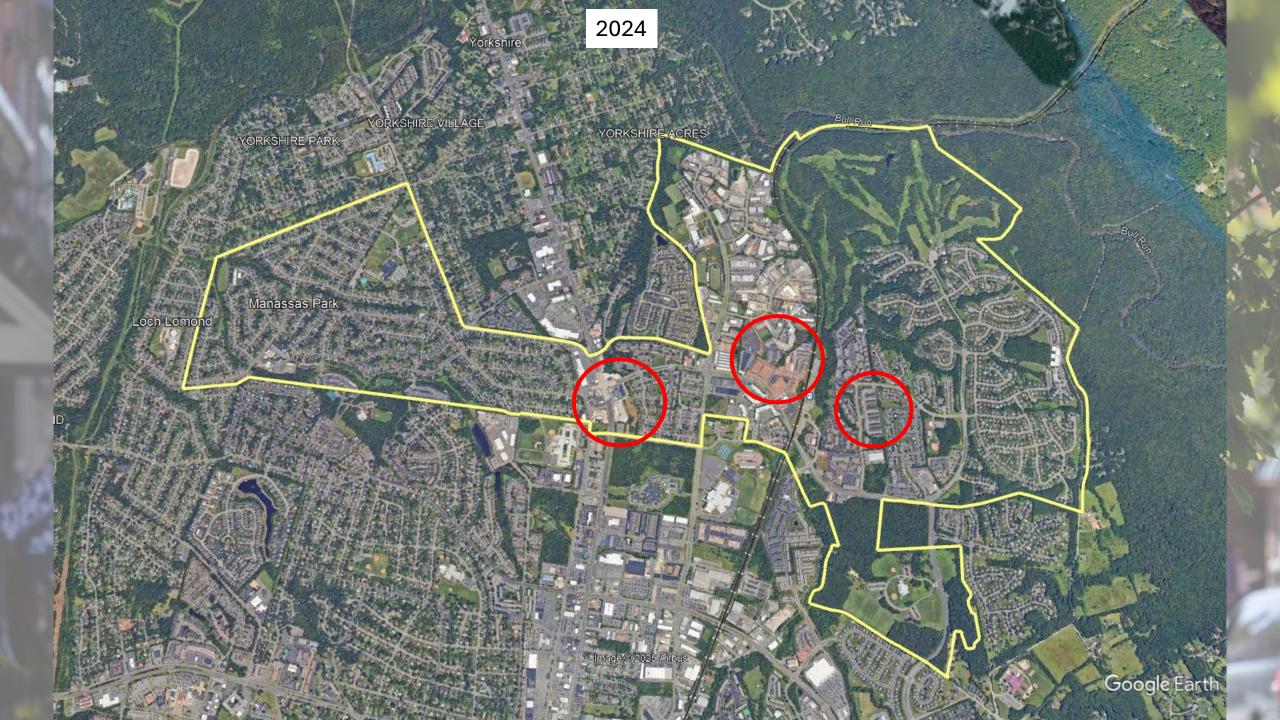
Tree Canopy Change in the COG region

FIPS	Name	TC_2021	TC_2013/14_2018_22ed	TC_2013/14-18	TC_2018-21	TC_2013/14-21	pTC_chng
24033	Prince George's County	160,509	(7,291)	(7,262)	(259)	(7,521)	-4.7%
51107	Loudoun County	141,359	(2,863)	(2,881)	(3,707)	(6,588)	-4.7%
24031	Montgomery County	148,301	(5,784)	(5,620)	704	(4,916)	-3.3%
51153	Prince William County	118,800	(1,234)	(1,173)	(2,173)	(3,347)	-2.8%
51685	Manassas Park city	607	(1)	(2)	(12)	(14)	-2.3%
51013	Arlington County	5,562	8	(3)	(96)	(99)	-1.8%
51610	Falls Church city	531	(5)	(5)	(5)	(9)	-1.8%
51059	Fairfax County	137,859	(821)	(896)	(1,417)	(2,313)	-1.7%
51600	Fairfax city	1,612	(10)	(11)	(16)	(26)	-1.6%
51683	Manassas city	1,476	(4)	(4)	(17)	(21)	-1.5%
24017	Charles County	196,872	(789)	(778)	(1,256)	(2,034)	-1.0%
24021	Frederick County	180,079	2,117	113	(1,618)	(1,505)	-0.8%
51510	Alexandria city	2,631	19	12	(27)	(15)	-0.6%
11001	District of Columbia	13,694	(458)	(12)	44	32	0.2%

Tree Canopy and Forested Extent Change to Development in the COG region

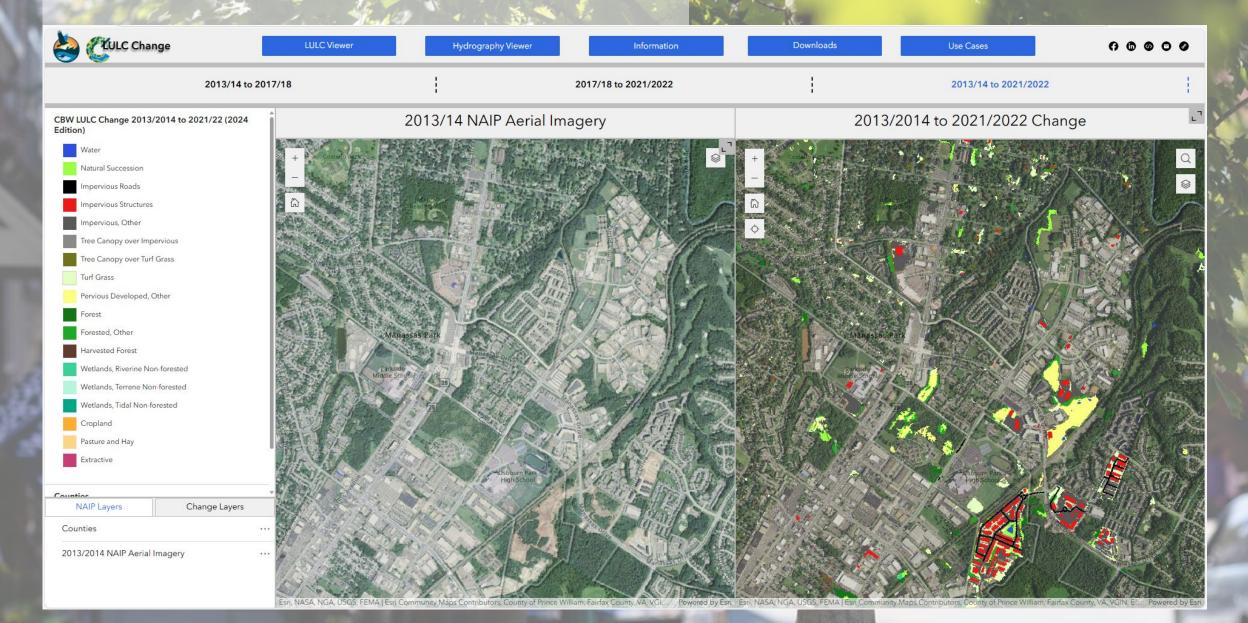
FIPS	Name	TCdev_t1_t2	TCdev_t2_t3	Tcdev_t1_t3	pTCdev_chng	FEdev_t1_t2	FEdev_t2_t3	FEdev_t1_t3	pFEchng
51685	Manassas Park city	(1.6)	(14.5)	(16.2)	-2.6%	(10.5)	(19.8)	(29.6)	-3.0%
24033	Prince George's County	(4,312.4)	201.2	(4,102.9)	-2.4%	(3,719.5)	(1,378.2)	(4,917.8)	-1.6%
24031	Montgomery County	(4,078.3)	431.1	(3,666.2)	-2.4%	(2,940.1)	(1,049.9)	(3,884.8)	-1.5%
51107	Loudoun County	(1,947.5)	(1,410.4)	(3,399.9)	-2.3%	(3,912.2)	(1,987.3)	(5,821.3)	-2.0%
51683	Manassas city	(4.4)	(27.0)	(31.4)	-2.1%	(22.2)	(41.8)	(62.8)	-3.6%
51610	Falls Church city	(4.7)	(5.4)	(10.0)	-1.9%	(8.8)	(2.8)	(11.5)	-3.3%
51600	Fairfax city	(10.7)	(19.0)	(29.8)	-1.8%	(13.6)	(12.2)	(25.3)	-1.5%
51153	Prince William County	(918.6)	(1,001.5)	(1,951.8)	-1.6%	(1,482.3)	(1,374.9)	(2,814.2)	-1.2%
51013	Arlington County	0.2	(83.0)	(82.9)	-1.5%	(22.0)	(42.6)	(63.7)	-1.2%
51059	Fairfax County	(650.0)	(1,086.1)	(1,735.6)	-1.2%	(1,258.1)	(1,177.6)	(2,390.6)	-1.1%
24021	Frederick County	(439.4)	(1,151.2)	(1,574.8)	-0.9%	(1,365.8)	(2,408.8)	(3,644.2)	-1.0%
24017	Charles County	(937.5)	(161.5)	(1,105.0)	-0.6%	(1,365.5)	(773.2)	(2,105.3)	-0.5%
51510	Alexandria city	12.1	(14.6)	(2.4)	-0.1%	(10.9)	(28.8)	(39.4)	-1.5%
11001	District of Columbia	(16.0)	16.4	(1.2)	0.0%	(97.2)	(170.5)	(259.4)	-1.5%





Manassas Park City, Virginia

(https://lulc-viewer.cicapps.org/)



Manassas Park City, Virginia

Tree Cover Status & Change

FOR MANASSAS PARK, VA 2014-2021

31%

Total percent of land with Tree Cover

\$483,000

Annual benefits provided by Tree Cover (in reduced air pollution, stormwater, & carbon dioxide)

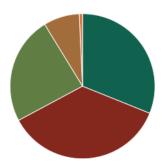
-16 Acres

Net loss of Tree Cover on developed lands, 2014 to 2021

What is the land use/land cover breakdown in your community?

1,938 ACRES OF LAND AREA

IN MANASSAS PARK



- 31% Tree Cover^I
- 24% Turf Grass
- 0.73% Agriculture

36% Impervious

8% Other²

< 0.1% Non-Forested 0.13 acres

- 1. Tree cover includes all trees occurring on all land uses, such as individual trees found over turf, impervious, agricultural, wetlands, or other lands. It also includes areas of "forest," defined in this dataset as patches of tree cover 1 acre or greater, with a minimum patch width of 36 meters.
- 2 . Other includes a mixture of non-treed land uses not captured in the main pie chart categories. See the Data Guide for detailed definitions of "other" and all the land use categories as well as accuracy statistics.

Land use/land cover statistics were generated based on 2021 imagery using the 2024 edition of the Chesapeake Bay Land Use and Land Cover

Where does tree cover occur in your community?







(148 acres)



(115 acres)

What are some benefits of tree cover in your community?



Total Air Pollution Removal Value 29,000 lbs removed annually

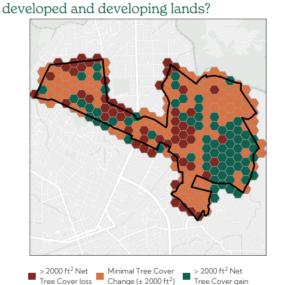
\$48,000 saved annually Total air pollution removal includes CO, NO2, O₂, SO₂, and Particulate Matter (PM2.5, PM10).

Gallons of Reduced Stormwater Runoff Value 8.0 million gallons reduced annually \$72,000 saved annually

Carbon Sequestered Value 760 tons removed annually \$363,000 saved annually

Calculated based on 2021 tree cover data using: landscape.itreetools.org

How is tree cover changing on



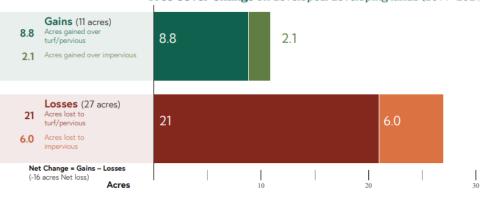
Understanding how your tree cover changes over time can inform the sustainable management of forests and community trees. The map to the left shows where your community has lost and gained tree cover from 2014 to 2021, focusing on land that is already or newly developed.

Tree cover can be lost quickly due to human activities (e.g., construction) or natural events (e.g., severe weather).

Tree cover can be gradually increased through tree planting and natural regrowth, but these gains may take 10-15 years to be detected in high resolution imagery.

Since mature, healthy trees provide significantly greater community benefits than newly planted trees, it is important to both preserve existing tree cover and seek opportunities to grow new trees and forests. Local land use planning, ordinances, and tree programs play a critical

Tree Cover Change on developed/developing lands (2014–2021)



^{*}Hexagons that are >90% water are not shown on the map.

Communities

Help →

+**⊃**Log in

ScienceBase Catalog → USGS Chesapeake Bay → Communities → Chesapeake Bay Land Chan... → Chesapeake Bay Land Use/... → Chesapeake Bay Land Use/...

Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database 2024 Edition



Dates

Publication Date: 2025-06-23 Start Date: 2013 End Date: 2022

Citation

Claggett, P. R., McDonald, S. M., O'Neil-Dunne, J., MacFaden, S., Walker, K., Guinn, S., Ahmed, L., Buford, E., Kurtz, E., McCabe, P., Pickford, J. A., Royar, A., Schulze, K., 2025, Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database 2024 Edition: U.S. Geological Survey data release, https://doi.org/10.5066/P14BEBRC.

Summary

The Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database facilitates the characterization of the landscape over time for three discrete time periods at 1-meter spatial resolution. The database was developed by Chesapeake Conservancy (CC) in cooperation with the University of Vermont's Spatial Analysis Laboratory and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as part of a 6-year Cooperative Agreement between Chesapeake Conservancy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a separate Interagency Agreement between the USGS and EPA to

Child Items (4)

- ⊞ and Use/Land Cover (LULC) Rasters

- □ Region, State, and County Summary Tables
 - Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Summary Tables
 - Land Use/Land Cover Change (LULCC) Summary Tables

Contacts

Map »



Spatial Services

ScienceBase WMS : [https://www.sciencebase.gov/catal]

Communities

USGS Chesapeake Bay **

Associated Items

- · constituent Kent County (10001), Delaware
- constituent Land Use/Land Cover Change (LULCC) Rasters
- · constituent Pennsylvania
- constituent Snyder County (42109), Pennsylvania
- constituent Blair County (42013), Pennsylvania
- View Associated Items

SDC Data Owner: Lower Mississippi-Gulf Water Science Center



ScienceBase-Catalog

Communities

Help +

ScienceBase Catalog → USGS Chesapeake Bay → Communities → Chesapeake Bay Land Chan... → Chesapeake Bay Land Use/... → Chesapeake Bay Land Use/...

Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database 2024 Edition

■ View -

Dates

Publication Date: 2025-06-23 Start Date: 2013

End Date: 2013

Citation

Claggett, P. R., McDonald, S. M., O'Neil-Dunne, J., MacFaden, S., Walker, K., Guinn, S., Ahmed, L., Buford, E., Kurtz, E., McCabe, P., Pickford, J. A., Royar, A., Schulze, K., 2025, Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database 2024 Edition: U.S. Geological Survey data release, https://doi.org/10.5066/P14BEBRC.

Summary

The Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database facilitates the characterization of the landscape over time for three discrete time periods at 1-meter spatial resolution. The database was developed by Chesapeake Conservancy (CC) in cooperation with the University of Vermont's Spatial Analysis Laboratory and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as part of a 6-year Cooperative Agreement between Chesapeake Conservancy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a separate Interagency Agreement between the USGS and EPA to

¥ ... show more ...

Child Items (4) 4-

- - Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Summary Tables
 - Land Use/Land Cover Change (LULCC) Summary Tables

Contacts

Map »



Spatial Service

ScienceBase WMS:

https://www.scienceb

Communities

USGS Chesapeak

Associated Iter

- constituent Kent C
- constituent Land U (LULCC) Rasters
- constituent Penns
- constituent Snyder Pennsylvania
- constituent Blair County

View Associated Items

Access data release, <u>here</u>:

→ Log in





ScienceBase-Catalog

Communities

Help +

ScienceBase Catalog → USGS Chesapeake Bay → Communities → Chesapeake Bay Land Chan... → Chesapeake Bay Land Use/...

New in 2024 edition --

Tabular summaries of

LULC for States and

Counties

Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database 2024 Edition



Dates

Publication Date: 2025-06-23

Start Date: 2013 End Date: 2022

Citation

Claggett, P. R., McDonald, S. M., O'Neil-Dunne, J., MacFaden, S., Walker, K., Guinn, S., Ahmed, L., Buford, E., Kurtz, E., McCabe, P., Pickford, J. A., Royar, A., Schulze, K., 2025, Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database 2024 Edition: U.S. Geological Survey data release, https://doi.org/10.5066/P14BEBRC.

Summary

The Chesapeake Bay Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Database facilitates the characterization of the landscape over time for three discrete time periods at 1-meter spatial resolution. The database was developed by Chesapeake Conservancy (CC) in cooperation with the University of Vermont's Spatial Analysis Laboratory and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as part of a 6-year Cooperative Agreement between Chesapeake Conservancy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a separate Interagency Agreement between the USGS and EPA to

Child Items (4) 4-

- Region, State, and County Summary Tables
 - Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) Summary Tables
 - Land Use/Land Cover Change (LULCC) Summary Tables

Contacts

Map »



Spatial Service

ScienceBase WMS:

https://www.scienceb

Communities

USGS Chesapeak

Associated Iter

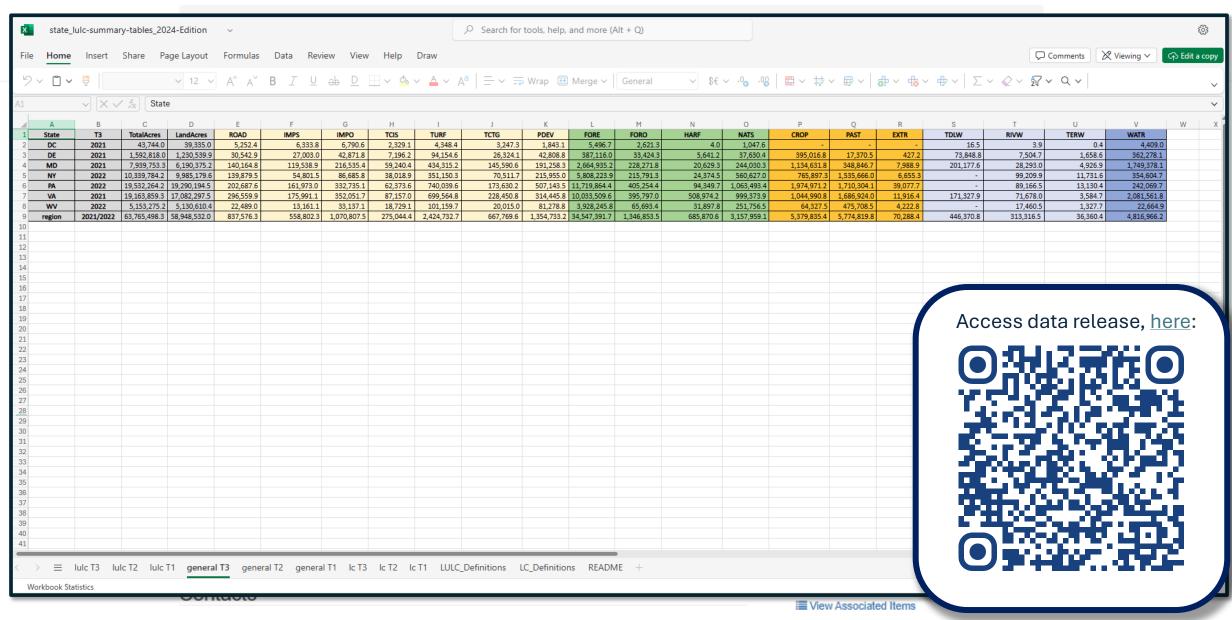
- constituent Kent (
- constituent Land ((LULCC) Rasters
- constituent Penns
- constituent Snyder Pennsylvania
- constituent Blair County

■ View Associated Items

Access data release, here:

→ Log in





Land Use/Land Cover Change Matrices (Loudoun County, VA)

		- ' Bullion of the second					250
2014-2021	ROAD	IMPS	IMPO	TCIS	TURF	TCTG	PDEV
ROAD	-	3.5	8.0	42.4	1.6	2.5	1.3
IMPS	0.2	-	6.8	29.0	1.3	5.3	2.1
IMPO	177.0	247.6	-	64.3	261.5	11.9	96.0
TCIS	38.8	59.6	31.9	-	26.1	0.1	15.9
TURF	8.7	40.1	278.8	0.2	-	145.7	45.6
TCTG	0.4	14.1	38.7	0.7	148.3	-	24.9
PDEV	195.2	426.6	674.3	0.5	1,242.0	76 T	-
FORE	173.7	421.9	840.0	1.3	652.7	1,759 acre	es of <u>9</u>
FORO	28.2	46.6	117.7	1.1	406.3	Forested E	-xtent 3
HARF	4.1	2.3	15.3	0.0	0.5		5
NATS	45.9	233.8	391.4	0.2	699.7		to Turf Grass 8
CROP	34.5	11.1	34.6	0.0	9.3	from 2014	-2021 <u>3</u>
PAST	61.7	180.9	422.0	0.1	37.7	15.0	//. <mark>0</mark>
EXTR	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	16.3
TDLW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RIVW	0.6	1.7	5.1	0.0	10.3	-	-
TERW	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.7	-	-
WATR	0.1	1.9	7.1	0.0	3.1	0.1	3.7
Increase	769.4	1,692.5	2,871.9	140.1	3,602.0	746.9	1,468.6
Decrease	73.9	48.3	995.2	256.8	581.3	330.9	3,249.9
Net Change	695.5	1,644.2	1,876.6	(116.7)	3,020.7	416.0	(1,781.3)







Thank you!

Contact:

Peter Claggett, USGS
pclaggett@usgs.gov | pclagget@chesapeakebay.net

Michelle Katoski, USGS
mkatoski@usgs.gov | mkatoski@chesapeakebay.net

Katie Brownson, USFS
Katherine.Brownson@usda.gov

Sarah McDonald, USGS smcdonald@usgs.gov | smcdonald@chesapeakebay.net Visit the State of the Forests StoryMap, here:



Access the Chesapeake Conservancy's LULC Viewer, here.

Access 2024 edition LULC data release, here:

