

## Health and Restoration in the District of Columbia

All of Washington, D.C. sits within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which means all the District's rivers—including the Anacostia and the Potomac—flow into the Chesapeake Bay. The following outcomes of the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#) were updated in 2023 and the Chesapeake Bay Program is pleased to present specific data for Washington, D.C.

### Tree Canopy

**Outcome:** Continually increase urban [tree canopy](#) capacity to provide air quality, water quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed. Expand urban tree canopy by 2,400 acres by 2025.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** Washington, D.C. reported roughly 357 acres of community tree plantings in 2021, and gained 21 acres of tree canopy between 2013/14 and 2017/18.

### 2025 Watershed Implementation Plans

**Outcome:** By 2025, have all [practices and controls](#) in place to achieve applicable water quality (i.e., dissolved oxygen, water clarity/submerged aquatic vegetation and chlorophyll a) standards as articulated in the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load.

**Progress in the the District of Columbia:** Washington, D.C. has best management practices (BMPs) in place to achieve 100% of its pollutant reduction goal for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment by 2025. BMPs put in place from 2021 to 2022 in Washington, D.C., are estimated to have lowered the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment flowing into the Bay by .8%, 1.8% and .5%, respectively. In 2022, Washington, D.C. released 1.6 million pounds of nitrogen, .1 million pounds of phosphorus and 35.4 million pounds of sediment into the Bay.

### Water Quality Standards and Attainment

**Outcome:** Continually improve our capacity to [monitor and assess](#) the effects of the management actions being taken to implement the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL) and improve water quality. Use monitoring results to report annual progress being made in attaining water quality standards and trends in reducing nutrients and sediment in the watershed.

**Progress in Maryland:** As of 2021, 28.1% of the Chesapeake Bay has attained water quality standards. This is a slight decrease from the previous assessment period, when the Bay was estimated to have attained 28.9% of water quality standards. Short-term trends (2012-2021) show the following for the Potomac River:

- Potomac River: Improving for nitrogen and phosphorus, and no trend for sediment

### The District of Columbia's Progress Towards Meeting its 2025 Targets

100%	100%	100%
Nitrogen	Phosphorus	Sediment

### Toxic Contaminants

**Outcome:** Continually improve practices and controls that reduce and prevent the effects of [toxic contaminants](#) below levels that harm aquatic systems and humans. Build on existing programs to reduce the amount and effects of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the Bay and watershed. Use research findings to evaluate the implementation of additional policies, programs and practices for other contaminants that need to be further reduced or eliminated.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** 2.2% of Washington, D.C.'s portion of the Chesapeake Bay's tidal waters was considered to be impaired by toxic contaminants in 2020. Seventy-eight percent of the entire Bay was considered to be impaired in 2020, a decrease from 83% in 2018.

## Land Use Methods and Metrics

**Outcome:** Continually improve our knowledge of [land conversion](#) and the associated impacts throughout the watershed.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** 12.3% of Washington, D.C.'s land is covered by 5% or less impervious surfaces, 4.1% is covered by 5-10% impervious, 0% is covered by 10-25% impervious and 83.6% is covered by over 25%.

## Protected Lands

**Outcome:** By 2025, [protect an additional two million acres of lands](#) throughout the watershed—currently identified as high-conservation priorities at the federal, state or local level—including 225,000 acres of wetlands and 695,000 acres of forestland of highest value for maintaining water quality.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** According to data collected through 2022, nearly 1.64 million acres of land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been permanently protected since 2010. Within the watershed, Washington, D.C., has about 8,733 acres of protected lands total as of 2022.

## Public Access

**Outcome:** By 2025, add 300 new [public access](#) sites to the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for boating, swimming and fishing, where feasible.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** Between 2011 and 2022, 284 boat ramps, fishing piers and other public access sites were opened on and around the Chesapeake Bay. Washington, D.C., has opened three of these sites.

## Environmental Literacy Planning

**Outcome:** Each participating Chesapeake Bay jurisdiction should develop a comprehensive and systemic approach to [environmental literacy](#) for all students in the region that includes policies, practices and voluntary metrics that support the environmental literacy goals and outcomes of the Watershed Agreement.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** In 2022, 1 local education agency (LEA) from Washington, D.C., responded to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool (ELIT) that measures the degree of environmental literacy preparedness among school districts across the watershed. This LEA reported that schools were "somewhat prepared".

## Student

**Outcome:** Increase [students'](#) age-appropriate understanding of the watershed through participation in teacher-supported Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) and rigorous, inquiry-based instruction, with a target of at least one MWEE in elementary, middle and high school depending on available resources.

**Progress in the District of Columbia:** ELIT survey responses captured the extent to which Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) were available at schools. In Washington, D.C., 1 LEA responded and reported offering system-wide MWEEs in at least one grade level.

## Bay-Wide Outcomes

In addition to the above, the following outcomes were updated in 2023 and their Bay-wide data and information can be found on [ChesapeakeProgress.com](#):

- [Blue Crab Abundance](#)
- [Oysters](#)
- [Submerged Aquatic Vegetation](#)
- [Wetlands](#)
- [Forest Buffers](#)
- [Stream Health](#)
- [Climate Monitoring and Assessment](#)
- [Local Leadership](#)
- [Diversity](#)