

Department of Natural Resources

MISSION

The Department of Natural Resources leads Maryland in securing a sustainable future for our environment, society, and economy by preserving, protecting, restoring, and enhancing the State's natural resources.

VISION

In a sustainable Maryland, we recognize that the health of our society and our economy are dependent on the health of our environment. Therefore, we choose to act both collectively and individually to preserve, protect, restore, and enhance our environment for this and future generations.

KEY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Goal 1. Healthy Terrestrial Ecosystems.

- Obj. 1.1** Establish scientifically supported sustainable harvest strategies for game species populations through a variety of survey methods.
- Obj. 1.2** Restore and/or maintain 5,000 acres of critical plant and wildlife habitat by June 30, 2027.
- Obj. 1.3** Preserve and protect Maryland's aquatic and wildlife habitats and populations by increasing the number of conservation inspections conducted to 170,000 by 2021.
- Obj. 1.4** Restore 2,000 miles of riparian forest buffers (RFBs) in Maryland by 2025.
- Obj. 1.5** Provide multiple ecosystem benefits by annually achieving integrated resource management covering 25,000 acres of non-industrial private forest lands and guiding 700 forest landowners in natural resources management that meets their needs.
- Obj. 1.6** Protect and improve water and soil quality to create healthier environment.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of deer hunting participants	70,500	62,000	62,000	59,692	52,783	61,000	61,000
Number of bear hunting participants	2,375	2,643	1,870	1,889	1,848	1,875	1,875
Number of deer harvested	79,457	81,729	70,845	76,687	72,642	77,000	77,000
Number of bears harvested	145	117	54	103	103	100	100
Cumulative number of acres of habitat restored since 2004	4,216	4,235	4,350	5,200	7,098	8,098	9,098
Cumulative acres of early successional habitat created	3,632	5,130	5,381	5,632	5,830	6,030	6,130
Number of Park Service acres restored to preserve biodiversity	131	39	155	376	327	410	270
Number of conservation inspections conducted	170,789	114,965	154,047	142,521	133,441	136,110	138,882
Number of conservation inspections per officer	959	653	1,007	885	691	694	698
Acres of RFBs established	213	169	226	206	341	350	375
Miles of RFBs restored in Maryland	17	10	10	9	23	28	30
Cumulative miles restored in Bay Watershed since 1996	1,448	1,458	1,468	1,477	1,500	1,528	1,558
Number of acres covered by Forest Stewardship Plans	23,449	33,989	22,802	22,047	21,489	21,000	21,000
Total acres of management practices implemented	28,220	17,507	25,015	22,639	23,200	22,000	22,000
Number of wildfires suppressed	158	77	124	183	123	128	128
Acres of wildfires suppressed	1,678	1,153	3,067	4,658	888	1,985	1,985
Number of acres of land protected to increase access for Marylanders	3,461	2,658	2,284	1,623	1,873	3,200	3,200
Number of restoration projects implemented for improving shallow water habitats and addressing community needs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5

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Goal 2. Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems.

- Obj. 2.1** Utilizing the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund, annually reduce coastal non-point source pollution from entering Chesapeake, coastal, and ocean waters. Report on the status of key Chesapeake Bay resources as government, commercial, and citizen efforts to restore water and habitat quality of the Bay and its watershed continue through 2025.
- Obj. 2.2** Annually produce technical assessments on Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) distribution and prevalence for Maryland’s waters, develop new management strategies, and provide timely information to the public and agencies charged with protecting public health.
- Obj. 2.3** Assess ecosystem components within non-tidal waters to evaluate critical fisheries and habitat elements for protection and/or restoration.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Cumulative pounds of coastal non-point sources of nitrogen reduced through annual and structural land use change Best Management Plans (BMPs)	4,591,551	4,330,106	4,464,554	4,683,602	5,038,497	5,174,480	5,291,864
Cumulative pounds of coastal non-point sources of phosphorus reduced through annual and structural land use change BMPs	199,538	213,318	220,550	228,377	235,094	244,696	251,585
Cumulative pounds of coastal non-point sources of sediment reduced through annual and structural land use change BMPs (millions)	370.758	370.766	373.039	370.779	370.780	370.790	370.800
¹ Number of tributaries with Harmful Algal Blooms	18	18	N/A	3	4	8	8
¹ Number of fish or human health advisories events reported/responses	4	4	4	6	6	4	4
¹ Acres of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (goal=114,034)	35,266	35,194	37,738	37,770	39,659	41,641	43,723
¹ Number of sites where Maryland Biological Stream Survey (MBSS) benthic, fish, herpetofauna, or habitat samples are collected	162	171	189	137	137	150	150
¹ Number of freshwater mussel surveys	36	30	36	46	38	50	50
¹ Number of freshwater watersheds with data available	41	84	84	84	84	84	84

- Obj. 2.4** Complete comprehensive reviews of local Critical Area Programs to assure consistency with law and regulations.
- Obj. 2.5** Maximize the preservation and protection of living resources and aquatic habitat by providing annual, comprehensive surveys, charts, and accurate markings of State waterways.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Percentage of Critical Area Programs reviewed and completed during the six-year cycle as required by law, and fully consistent with the Critical Area law and regulation	3%	9%	6%	3%	3%	9%	11%
¹ Number of monitoring stations reporting water quality trends	198	198	199	197	197	206	208
Number of oyster habitat and oyster location surveys completed	104	97	27	30	68	80	90
Number of waterway violation cases supported	71	16	8	16	18	18	18

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Obj. 2.6 Annually achieve fishery sustainability objectives (target fishing level and/or biomass threshold) for blue crab, striped bass and oyster fisheries.

Obj. 2.7 Restore native oyster habitat and populations in 10 tributaries (5 in Maryland) by 2025 and ensure their protection.

Obj. 2.8 Facilitate the development of the Maryland aquaculture industry through collaboration with the Maryland Aquaculture Coordinating Council.

Obj. 2.9 Annually achieve statewide finfish population restoration and enhancement Sportfish Restoration objectives through 2021.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
¹ Number of fisheries being tracked/reviewed annually in accordance to a management plan	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
¹ Harvest rate (exploitation fraction) of female blue crabs relative to target harvest rate (28 percent)	23%	29%	31%	25%	28%	28%	28%
¹ Female crab winter dredge survey index of stock size (density-female crabs/1000m)	14.5	16.5	10.6	15.5	13.5	15.0	15.0
¹ Striped bass juvenile index (abundance of young of the year fish)	2.5	3.2	3.6	1.0	2.0	11.0	11.0
Number of bushels of oysters harvested by the public fishery	274,325	346,549	550,236	722,923	423,455	372,000	372,000
Oyster biomass index (1994 base =1; goal = 10)	1.7	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.5
¹ Number of hatchery oysters planted in large-scale restoration sanctuaries (millions)	164	697	511	940	384	256	120
¹ Acres of oyster habitat restored in large-scale restoration sanctuaries	12	66	41	174	100	51	-
Number of new or expanded aquaculture businesses	41	26	23	43	23	30	45
Stock hatchery-cultured finfish to support population restoration, population enhancement, corrective stocking, put-and-take fishing, outreach, education, and research (millions)	5.2	5.0	6.5	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.0

Obj. 2.10 Certify five additional Clean Marinas annually.

Obj. 2.11 Screen 20 applications per year to provide grants for the purchase and installation of marine sewage pump out stations.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
¹ Clean marinas certified	3	1	0	3	3	3	2
¹ Cumulative number of clean marinas in State adopting best management practices (including those decertified over time)	152	150	148	146	146	147	148
Total number of pumpout stations operating in the State	352	349	350	350	333	339	345
New pumpout stations installed	2	0	2	1	2	1	1
Pumpout stations replaced or upgraded	8	11	8	8	12	11	11

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Goal 3. Fiscal Responsibility: Efficient Use of Energy & Resources and Support of Long-Term Economic Prosperity.

Obj. 3.1 Protect Maryland’s ecologically-valuable lands and waters through effective project review, including permit applications, and policy strategies.

Obj. 3.2 Protect high value natural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities on public and private lands by reviewing more than 2,500 proposed projects and permits, on an annual basis, to minimize environmental harm and preserve investments in public lands.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of requests for new critical maintenance capital projects on DNR lands	84	75	60	202	673	120	110
Number of requests for new major capital development projects on DNR land (not including critical maintenance projects)	58	47	33	37	35	36	37
Number of projects on DNR lands initiated or completed	96	76	56	195	236	300	300
Percent of major capital development projects on DNR lands initiated or completed	90%	72%	75%	92%	78%	80%	80%
Number of reviews for projects on public lands	364	354	340	310	325	340	384
Number of external permits and projects reviewed for impacts	2,360	2,210	2,148	2,043	2,120	2,240	2,194
Total number of proactive measures developed that afford additional protection to Maryland's natural resources	18	12	11	14	15	16	13
Number of project proposals reviewed for impacts to threatened and endangered species and other species of concern	2,296	2,025	1,974	2,021	2,241	2,115	2,115

Obj. 3.3 Increase the number of State and local governments prepared for the impacts of future storm-events, shoreline changes, and sea level rise.

Obj. 3.4 Annually issue assessments and recommendations to minimize the environmental, public health, and socioeconomic impacts of electric energy facilities.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Cumulative number of Maryland’s state agencies and coastal communities who have incorporated sea level and climate considerations into planning and management strategies	7	46	59	11	14	58	10
¹ Number of new power plant/transmission line projects under review	8	6	7	8	28	35	40

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Goal 4. Citizen Stewardship, Outdoor Recreation, & Opportunities to Take Action.

Obj. 4.1 Annually increase the number of youth conservation program participants and projects.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Additional number of youth participants in corps programs	387	85	56	76	52	60	75
Number of stewardship projects completed by youth corps	2,621	101	198	202	210	215	225

Obj. 4.2 Increase attendance of Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) sponsored workshops and trainings.

Obj. 4.3 Contribute to achieving State education mandates and goals for environmental literacy by providing a combination of workshops, training, and educational opportunities that support schools (through professional development for educators and classroom and outdoor experiences for students), parks, and partner environmental education providers.

Obj. 4.4 Annually provide and enhance outdoor recreational, historical, and cultural resource experiences for over 10 million visitors to public lands.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of trainings, training materials, and technical assistance offered to land managers, outdoor recreation providers, and the public on enhancing outdoor recreation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	30	32
Number of communication, mapping and wayfinding planning efforts or projects to improve the visitor experience for outdoor recreation.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	26	30

Obj. 4.5 Annually increase customer service satisfaction rating and improve fiscal sustainability.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of people attending MET educational and outreach events	151	270	438	524	361	300	300
Number of educators trained	410	650	438	276	262	300	300
Number of students participating in classroom, field and other activities	16,259	9,154	19,131	27,049	13,417	15,000	17,000
Number of DNR social media followers	N/A	180,380	184,267	197,165	200,988	204,811	208,634
Number of State Park acres available to the public	141,180	141,568	142,228	142,433	142,815	143,015	143,230
Acres of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)	128,714	129,101	129,160	127,587	127,831	128,281	128,681
Number of visitors using parks (millions)	17.49	21.66	19.35	17.76	17.40	17.65	17.90
Number of trail miles available	1,134	1,153	1,170	1,173	1,177	1,187	1,203
Number of Park Service interpretive and environmental education program participants	126,000	90,000	171,509	166,853	221,884	230,000	250,000
Percent of visitors rating their park experience as excellent or above average	94%	93%	93%	92%	92%	92%	92%

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Obj. 4.6 Annually reduce the number of accidents and injuries through education programs, to include public relations outreach efforts targeted at the prior years boating and hunting accident stats for causal factors.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of reportable boating accidents	148	151	138	122	132	112	95
Number of hunting accidents	14	12	7	19	20	17	14

Obj. 4.7 Ensure safe and enjoyable recreational opportunities for boaters, hunters, park visitors, and others participating in outdoor recreation activities by providing effective law enforcement services as a public safety agency.

Obj. 4.8 Conduct and perform daily patrols and activities that support Maritime Homeland Security designed to provide a safe and secure environment for Maryland citizens and visitors alike.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of hunters checked	19,312	13,014	19,338	19,094	19,605	19,997	20,937
Number of boating inspections	34,504	23,253	33,809	31,662	29,318	29,904	30,502
Number of law enforcement officers	178	176	153	161	193	196	199
Number of law enforcement contacts	116,635	110,669	118,737	115,932	114,582	116,874	119,211
Number of law enforcement citations/warnings	27,077	30,427	25,175	25,793	28,589	29,161	29,744
Hours spent on Waterway Patrols	43,395	44,348	86,892	84,577	99,612	101,604	103,636
Hours spent on Public Land Patrols	55,554	36,653	74,416	72,501	71,791	73,227	74,692
Uniform Crime Report data – Part 1 crimes	127	194	104	100	138	135	132
Number of Homeland Security patrol checks	14,529	10,444	17,801	14,968	11,471	11,700	11,934

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- Obj. 4.9** Coordinate with Departmental units and other Federal, State and local agencies to develop assessments of existing and potential boating access sites and maps for the general boating public and annually provide new or enhanced public boating access sites throughout the State.
- Obj. 4.10** Support the Maryland State Boat Act Advisory Committee in reviewing and implementing regulations affecting the equipment and operation of vessels in Maryland waters. Ensure that State-owned and State-leased marina facilities remain viable. Oversee the completion of capital projects at these facilities to maximize slip occupancy and public access.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
¹ Cumulative number of public access points	490	493	496	496	498	500	498
Number of projects provided technical assistance	114	122	98	125	150	150	150
¹ Number of public boating sites enhanced or created	38	31	38	21	24	37	35
Number abandoned vessels removed from State waters	67	39	27	32	41	45	50
Cumulative miles of water trails established in State	788	788	800	800	800	810	825
Number of waterway projects funded annually	58	43	60	45	47	62	60
Amount of funding awarded for waterway projects (\$)	13,500,000	13,500,000	15,081,254	13,500,000	21,500,000	21,500,000	21,500,000
Number of projects incorporating sustainable components	32	28	30	18	22	32	28
Number of dredge projects funded annually	16	5	12	14	15	21	18
Amount of funding awarded for dredge projects (\$)	6,012,000	2,232,603	4,240,900	4,751,713	5,817,060	7,175,345	7,000,000
¹ Number of long-term slip leases realized	253	278	284	282	312	312	312
¹ Number of transient slip leases realized	507	554	793	686	686	750	820

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Goal 5. Vibrant Communities & Neighborhoods.

Obj. 5.1 Annually meet Departmental land conservation goals to protect strategic natural resources while providing recreational and economic opportunities.

Obj. 5.2 Protect an additional 1,000 acres annually with MET conservation easements, and seek to visually inspect (monitor) each property once annually.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Program Open Space (POS) acquisition acres approved by the Board of Public Works (BPW)	4,444	3,763	2,980	2,090	1,884	4,400	4,400
Rural Legacy easement/fee simple acres approved by the BPW	6,249	4,793	3,825	5,437	3,764	4,500	4,000
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) permanent easement acres approved by the BPW	322	343	528	243	242	400	400
Number of acres protected annually by MET easements	1,217	1,260	1,421	1,255	1,084	1,000	1,000
Number of acres of protected lands	12,231	10,159	8,754	9,025	6,974	10,300	9,800
Percent of POS Stateside acquisition acres approved by the BPW located within a Targeted Ecological Area	67%	61%	88%	94%	53%	70%	70%
Percent of all easements monitored and under compliance with easement conditions	100%	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of MET easements monitored by volunteers	127	212	174	269	2	100	120
Number of MET easements monitored by local land trusts	337	378	397	389	352	400	400

Obj. 5.3 Annually fund more than 100 projects to assist local subdivisions in the planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space area.

Obj. 5.4 Annually, 80 percent of acquisition contracts negotiated by Land Acquisition and Planning (LAP) are below the highest appraised value for acquisitions.

Obj. 5.5 Work with communities and jurisdictions to conserve existing tree canopy and expand it by 45 acres annually.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Number of local POS projects	139	175	131	136	117	100	100
Number of community parks and playgrounds projects	19	20	31	40	20	30	30
Number of negotiations conducted annually by LAP	39	33	24	23	15	39	39
Percent of approved contracts negotiated by LAP with contract price below the highest appraised value	93%	100%	79%	86%	78%	80%	80%
Acres of trees planted in developed areas	53	26	42	78	126	90	100
Acres of trees planted in rural areas (non-buffer)	229	169	368	718	583	600	600
Acres reforested for Forest Conservation Act (FCA) mitigation	580	445	467	518	582	500	500
Acres conserved through FCA long-term protection	3,747	3,645	3,644	3,611	3,723	3,600	3,600
Number of roadside tree permits issued	1,575	1,298	1,424	1,250	1,353	1,300	1,300
Acres of practices on Municipal Watersheds	201	235	163	65	160	157	157
Acres of restored forest land (afforestation and reforestation)	780	627	737	923	1,026	950	1,000

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Obj. 5.6 Preserve and restore the protective functions of near shore tidal habitats such as marshes, beaches, dunes, and wetlands.

Performance Measures	2020 Act.	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Est.	2026 Est.
Square feet of near shore habitat created or protected	11,000	0	25,000	5,110	0	7,000	12,000

NOTES

¹ Data for 2024 is estimated or not available because it is reported on a calendar year basis.