

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRESS REPORT NEW YORK

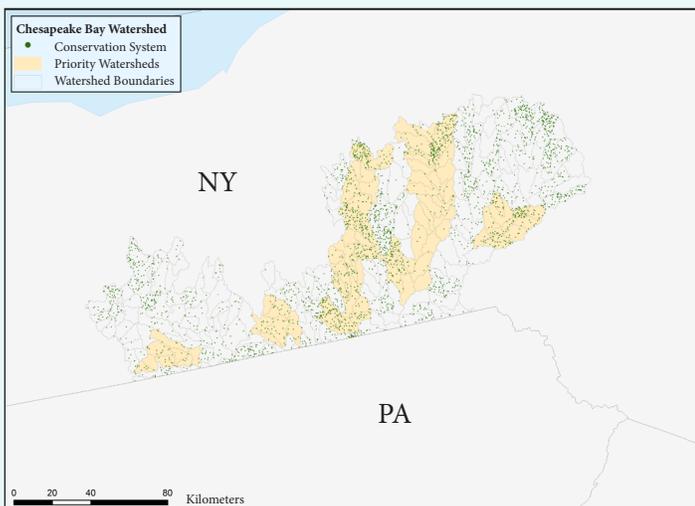
Agricultural Lands in New York Key to Healthy Bay

The saying, “everything flows downstream,” is especially important in a place like New York, where the land management decisions of farmers and forest landowners are helping send cleaner water downstream to the Chesapeake Bay. The headwaters of the Susquehanna River and its tributary, the Chemung River, are in New York, and each day this river system empties 25 million gallons of water into the Bay.

Farmers and forest landowners are using conservation systems that are reducing nutrient and sediment runoff by keeping soil in place and making agricultural lands more efficient and productive.



Much of the conservation work in New York focuses on livestock operations.



Each dot represents a farm where “Avoid-Control-Trap” conservation systems were implemented. Dots are randomly placed within priority watersheds to protect landowner privacy.

Targeted Approach in New York

USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has developed a systems approach for designing and installing conservation activities on farms and forests to protect and improve water quality. The core parts of this approach are conservation activities that avoid, control and trap potential nutrient and sediment losses from farm fields.

Much of the conservation work in New York focuses on controlling nutrients on livestock operations and on croplands where farmers use manure as fertilizer. NRCS targets investments in high-priority watersheds where nutrient and sediment pollution is highest. Since 2009, NRCS and conservation partners have worked with New York farmers and forest landowners to install conservation systems on more than 201,000 acres in the basin. This investment includes hundreds of nutrient management plans and the implementation of a variety of practices, such as residue and tillage management, cover crops and nutrient management.

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Forest buffers prevent nutrients and sediment from washing into waterways.

INVESTMENTS IN NEW YORK

YEAR	INVESTMENT	ACRES
2009	\$7.2 million	27,000
2010	\$10 million	55,000
2011	\$9.9 million	29,000
2012	\$6.3 million	25,000
2013	\$10.4 million	25,000
2014	\$9.9 million	14,000
2015	\$9.4 million	26,000
TOTAL	\$63.1 million	201,000

Source: NRCS Resources Economics, Analysis and Policy Division.

Leveraging the Help of Partners

NRCS investments are often matched two- and three-fold by conservation partners in New York. Through the Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program and Two Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, NRCS is building the next generation of conservation science and innovation and bringing together partners at the grassroots level to address natural resource challenges.

Through CIG, NRCS has invested about \$75,000 in a project with the Tioga Soil and Water Conservation District to

study innovative approaches and methods to minimize and remediate nutrient loss from agricultural production.

Through Two Chiefs', NRCS is working to install 10,000 acres of forest buffers by 2012, part of a state goal to improve water quality. Partners include NRCS, U.S. Forest Service, New York Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Forestry, Upper Susquehanna Coalition, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northeast Brook Trout Joint Venture and Trout Unlimited.

Positive Outcomes in New York

Independent reports show positive trends for water quality, habitat and key aquatic species, and modeled results and monitoring stations show declines in nutrient and sediment loads to the Bay. For example, the USGS estimates that the Susquehanna River delivered 66.2 million pounds of nitrogen to the Bay from January to May 2016, which is 17 percent below average conditions.



Forest buffers prevent nutrients and sediment from washing into waterways.