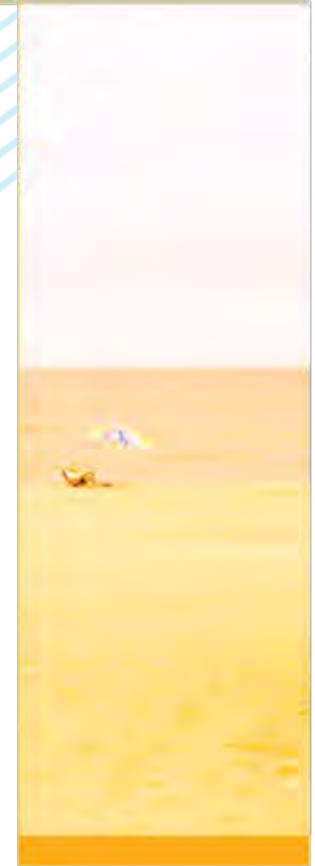




# THE SUSSEX PLAN

## SUSSEX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION WORKSHOP



June 26, 2017

# CONSERVATION



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ **2008 Plan Conservation Element Contents**
  - **Protected Lands**
    - Federal
    - State
    - Private Preserved Land Under Conservation Easements
    - Regulated Wetlands
  - **Major Conservation Initiatives**
  - **Conservation Strategies**

# CONSERVATION



Sussex County  
Comprehensive  
Plan

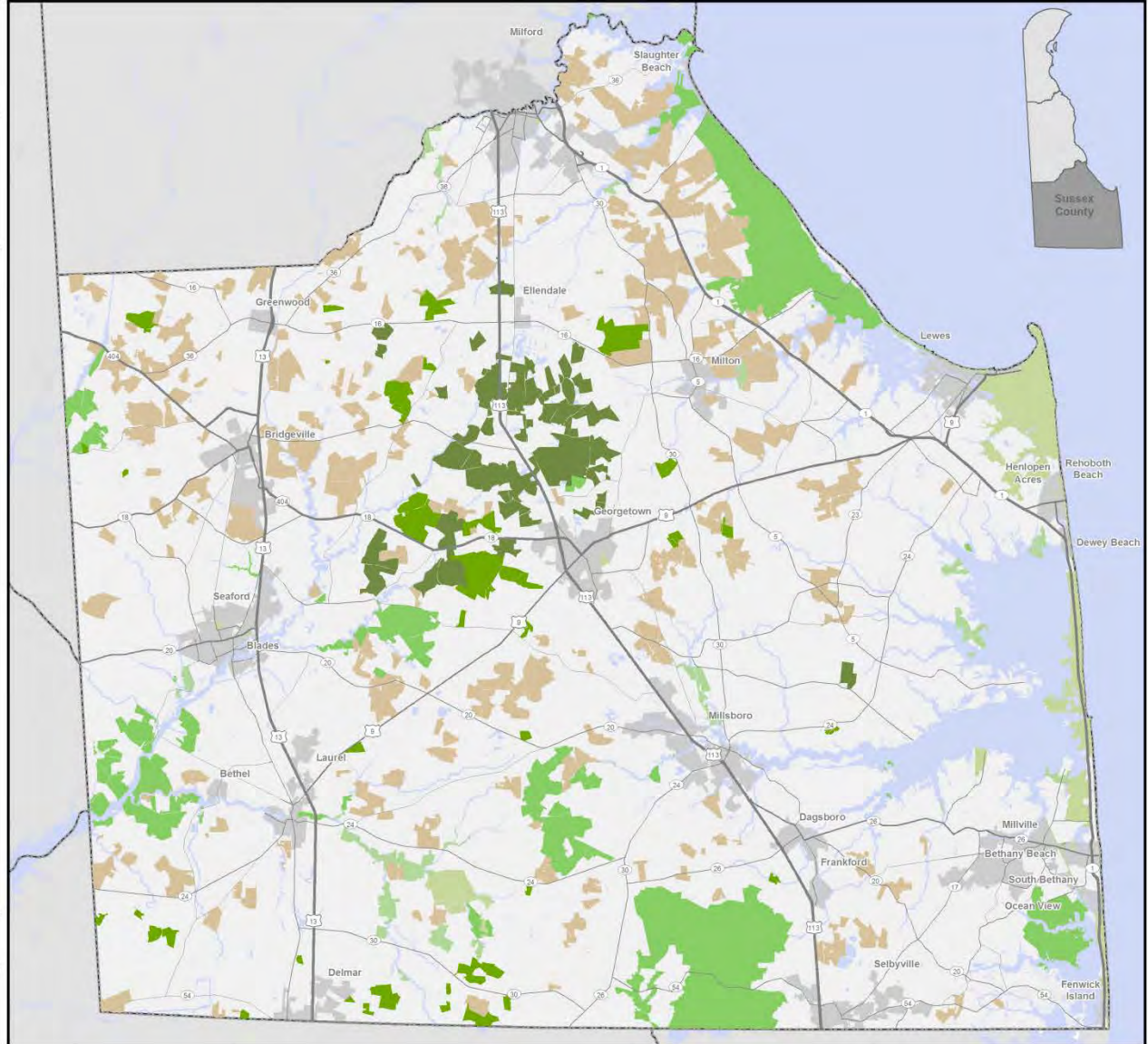
## Protected Land

-  State Forest Lands
-  Park
-  Wildlife Area
-  Forestland Preservation
-  Nature Preserves
-  Agricultural Preservation
-  County
-  MD County Lines
-  Major Rivers
-  Waterbodies
-  Municipalities

Source: DE FirstMap, Sussex County.



0 2.5 5 Miles



# CONSERVATION



## ► Delaware Open Space Program

- Open Space Program coordinates the acquisition of various state lands (parks, fish and wildlife management areas, forests, nature preserves, and cultural sites)
- Established under the 1990 Delaware Land Protection Act
- Open Space Council is a 9 member group that analyzes acquisitions in order to advise the secretary of DNREC

# CONSERVATION



## ▶ Delaware Open Space Program

- Open Space Council has preserved nearly 60,000 acres in over 400 projects in all three Counties between 1990 and 2017
  - **Fee simple:** Property acquired in full title or full possessory interest in property
  - **Conservation easement:** Voluntary agreement whereby landowner limits type or amount of development on property while retaining private ownership

# CONSERVATION



## ► Delaware Open Space Program Projects 7/1/90 to 6/30/16

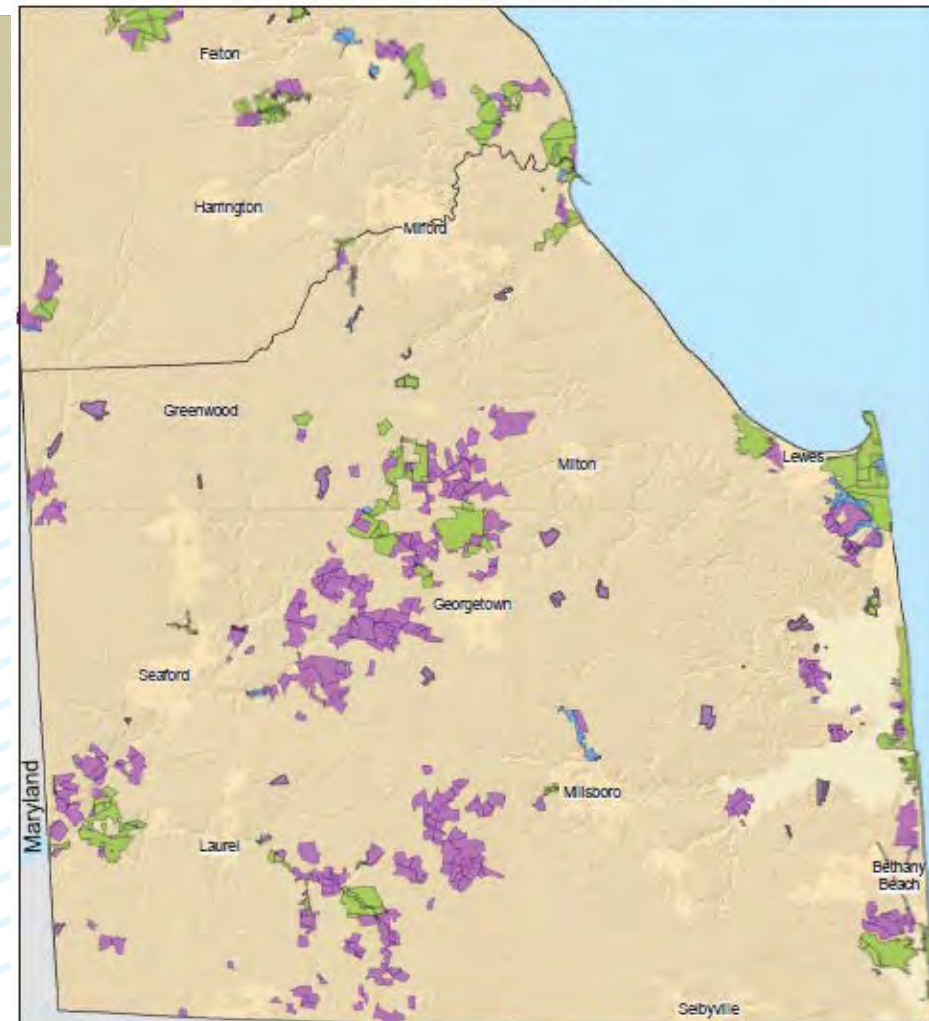
	PROJECTS	OPEN SPACE	NON-OPEN SPACE	TOTAL PRICE	ACRES
<b>NEW CASTLE</b>	166 38%	\$130,907,738 50%	\$27,284,294 28%	\$158,192,032 44%	12,944 22%
<b>KENT</b>	77 18%	\$20,168,005 8%	\$2,913,256 3%	\$23,081,261 6%	9,692 16%
<b>SUSSEX</b>	189 44%	\$111,785,961 42%	\$66,109,230 69%	\$177,895,191 50%	37,283 62%
<b>STATE</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>\$262,861,704</b>	<b>\$96,306,780</b>	<b>\$359,168,484</b>	<b>59,919</b>

Table 2: All projects

Source: DE Open Space Program – 26 Year Report 1990-June 2016

## CONSERVATION

- ▶ **Delaware Open Space Program**
  - Over 37,000 acres of land in Sussex acquired since 1990 under the Delaware Open Space Program either as a fee simple purchase or conservation easement



### Open Space Lands

- Open Space Program 1990-2016
- Pre-1990
- Other Projects 1990-2016

Source: DE Open Space Program  
26 Year Report 1990-June 2016





# CONSERVATION



## ▶ Delaware Agriculture Preservation Program

- **District** – 200 acres or more; preserved from development for 10 years with option to renew
- **Expansion** – less than 200 acres; preserved from development for 10 years with option to renew
- **Easement** – owner sells development rights; permanently preserved

	Total Sussex Acres
Districts	13,122
Expansions	11,567
Easements	41,529
Total	66,218

# CONSERVATION



Sussex County  
Comprehensive  
Plan

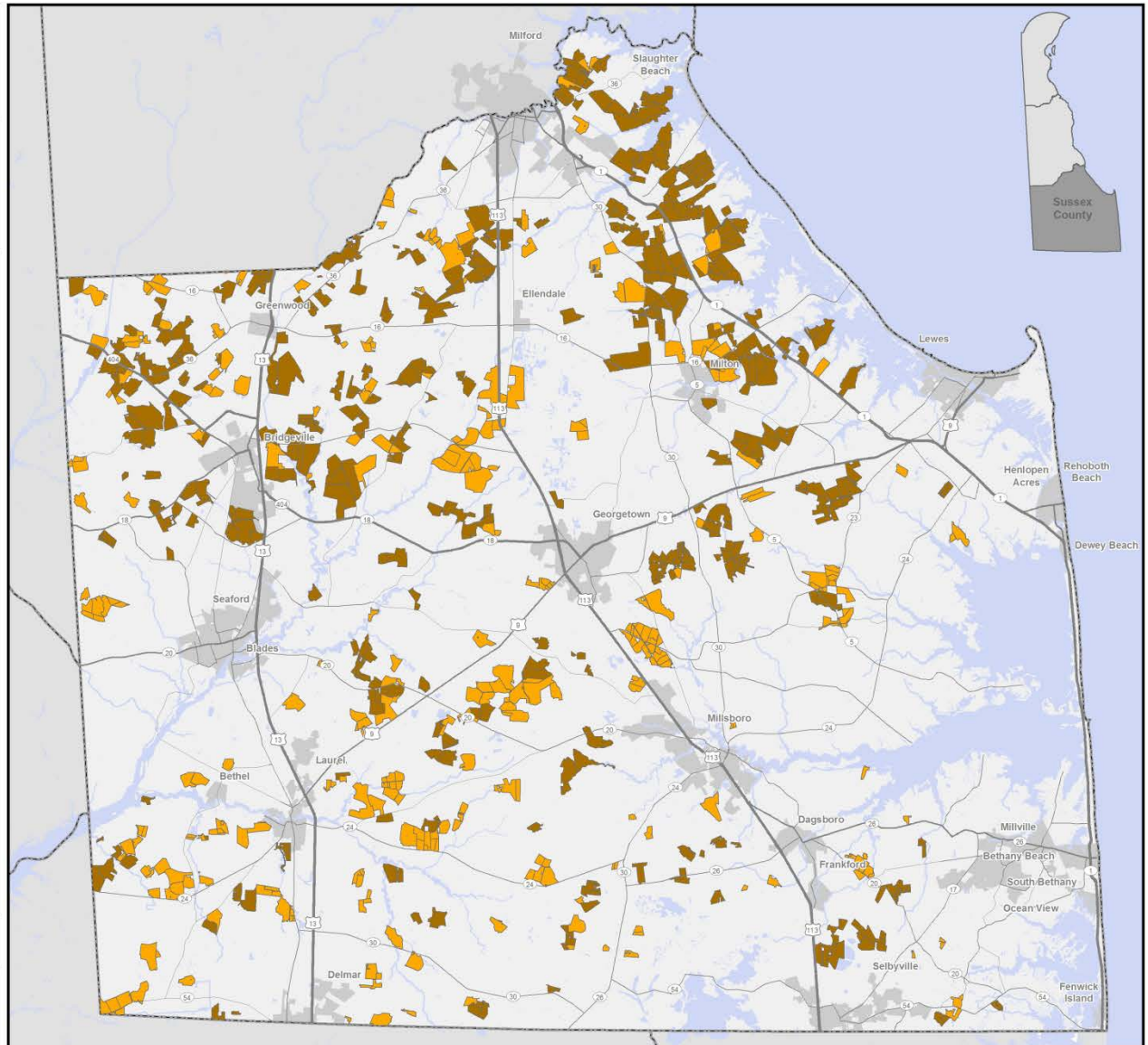
## Agricultural Preservation

- Ag District or Expansion
- Ag Easement
- County
- MD County Lines
- Major Rivers
- Waterbodies
- Municipalities

Source: DE FirstMap, Sussex County.



0 2.5 5 Miles



# CONSERVATION



## ▶ Delaware Forestland Preservation Program

- **Forestland Preservation Area** – 10 acres or more; preserved from development for at least 10 years
- **Easement** – owner sells development rights; permanently preserved

	Total Sussex Acres
Forestland Preservation Areas	1,409
Forestland Preservation Easements	6,759
Total	8,168

# CONSERVATION

- ▶ **Forest Legacy Program**
  - Provides funds to states to protect working forestlands that are threatened by development or other land uses, either through outright (fee simple) purchase or conservation easements



# CONSERVATION



Sussex County  
Comprehensive  
Plan

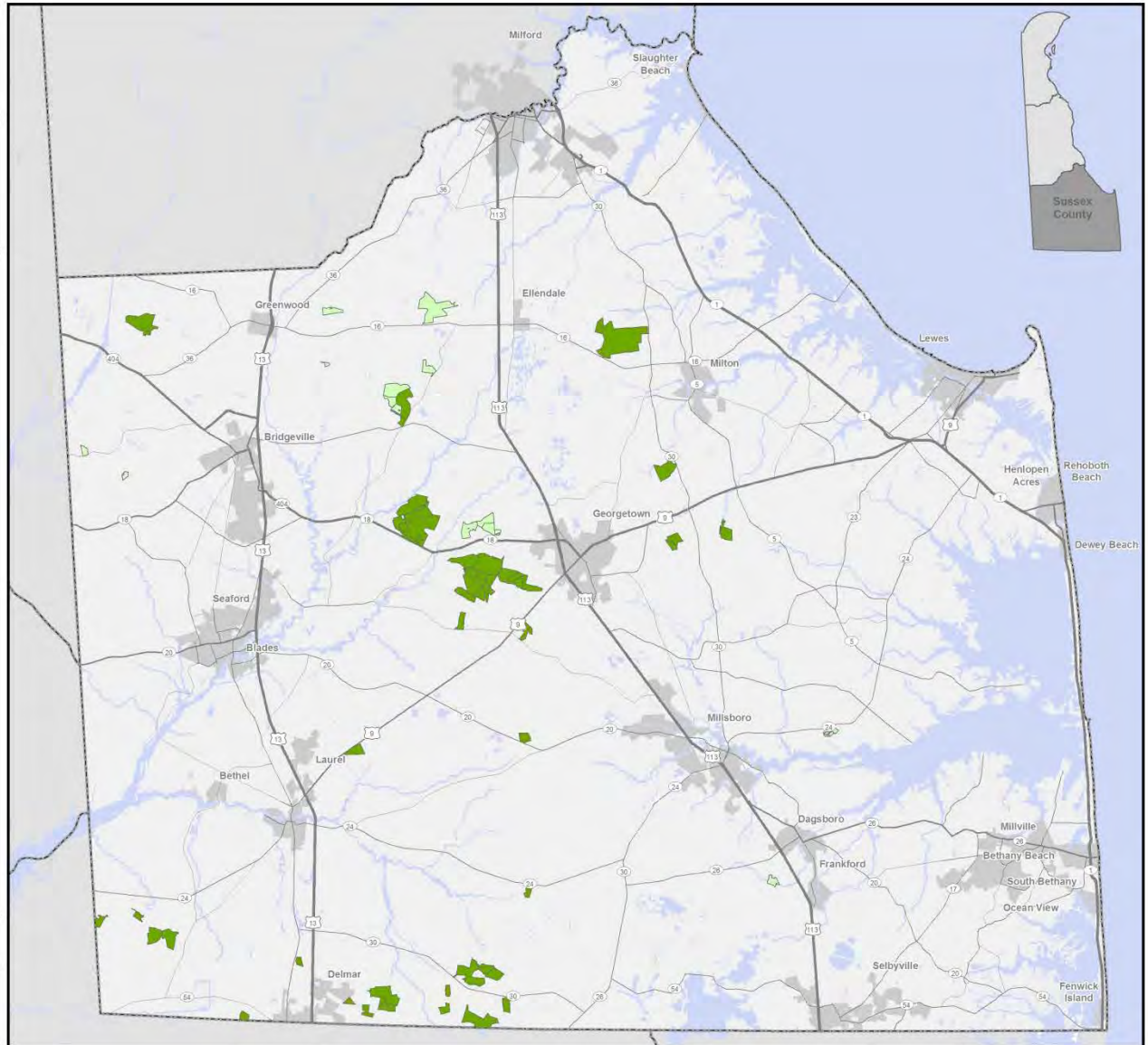
## Forestland Preservation

- Forestland Preservation Areas
- Forestland Easements
- County
- MD County Lines
- Major Rivers
- Waterbodies
- Municipalities

Source: DE FirstMap, Sussex County.



0 2.5 5 Miles



# CONSERVATION



## ► Natural Areas

- In 1978, DE enacted the Natural Areas Preservation System (7 Del. Code, Chapter 73) for the purpose of establishing an inventory of natural areas statewide and a system of nature preserves
- A "natural area" as defined by the law is an "area of land or water, or of both land and water, whether in public or private ownership, which either retains or has reestablished its natural character (although it need not be undisturbed), or has unusual flora or fauna, or has biotic, geological, scenic or archaeological features of scientific or educational value"

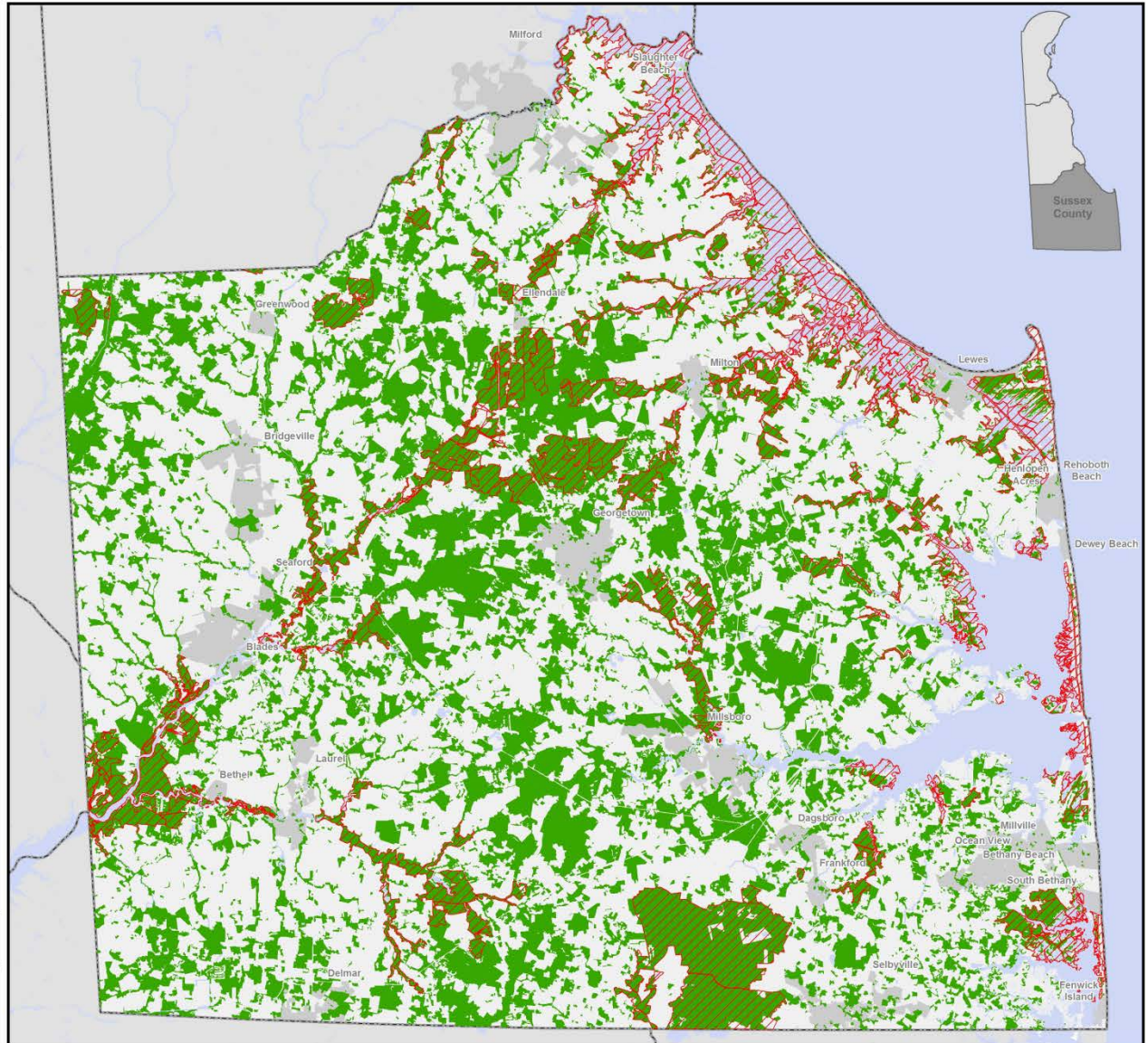
# CONSERVATION



Sussex County  
Comprehensive  
Plan

## Forest Cover & Natural Areas

- Natural Areas
- Forest Cover
- County
- MD County Lines
- Major Rivers
- Waterbodies
- Municipalities



Source: DE FirstMap, Sussex County.  
Forest cover derived from 2012 Existing Land Use / Land Cover.



# CONSERVATION



## ► Wetlands

- Tidal – Regulated by State and Federal law
- Non-tidal – Regulated by federal law












# CONSERVATION



Sussex County  
Comprehensive  
Plan

## DRAFT Floodplains and Wetlands

### Flood Zone

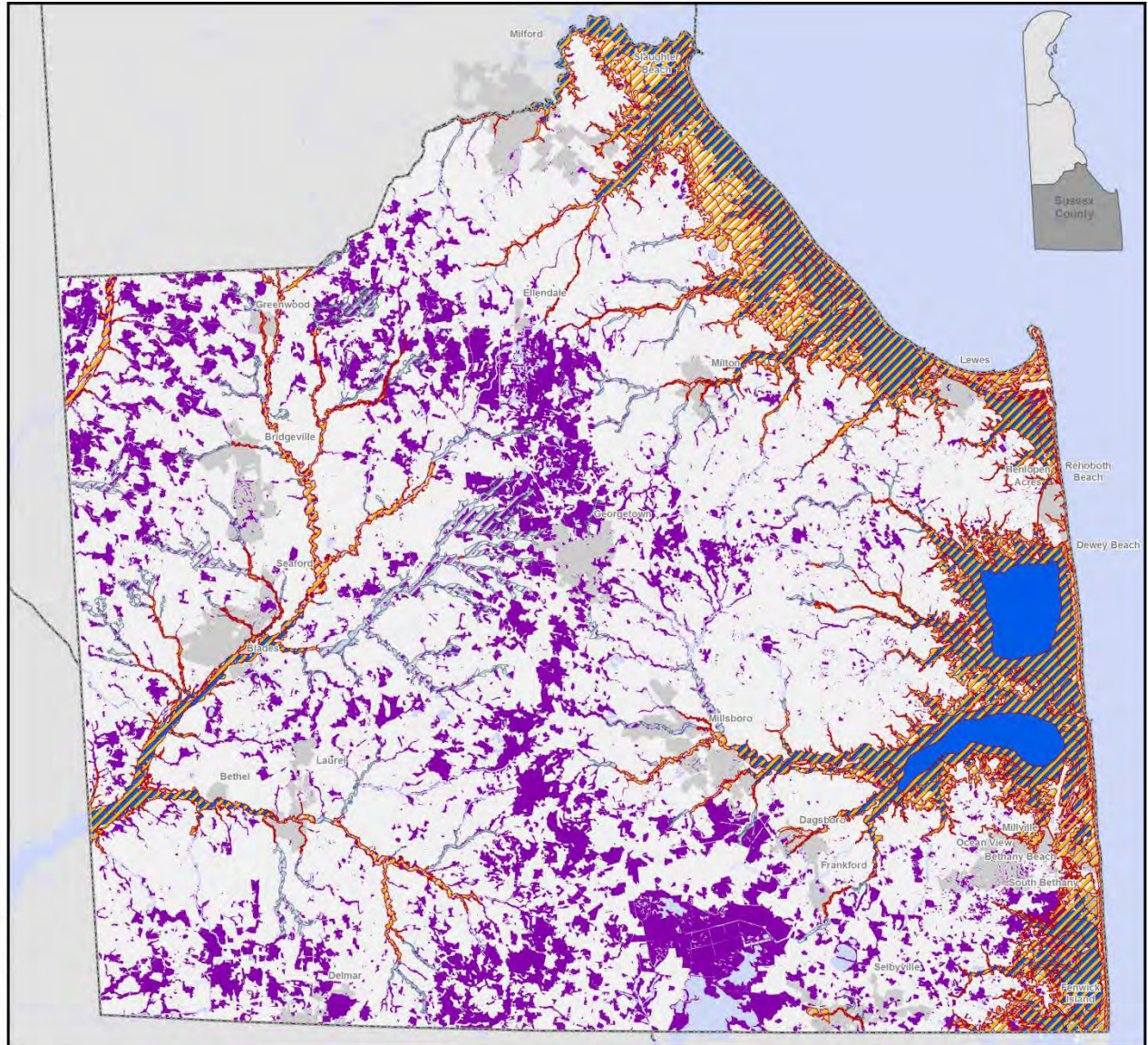
-  Approximate 1% Annual-Chance-Flood
-  Detailed 1% Annual-Chance-Flood
-  Tidal Wetlands
-  Non-Tidal Wetlands
-  Major Rivers
-  Waterbodies
-  Municipalities
-  County

Note: these are not  
the DNREC regulatory  
wetlands

Sources: DE FirstMap, Sussex County Mapping Department



0 2.5 5  
Miles




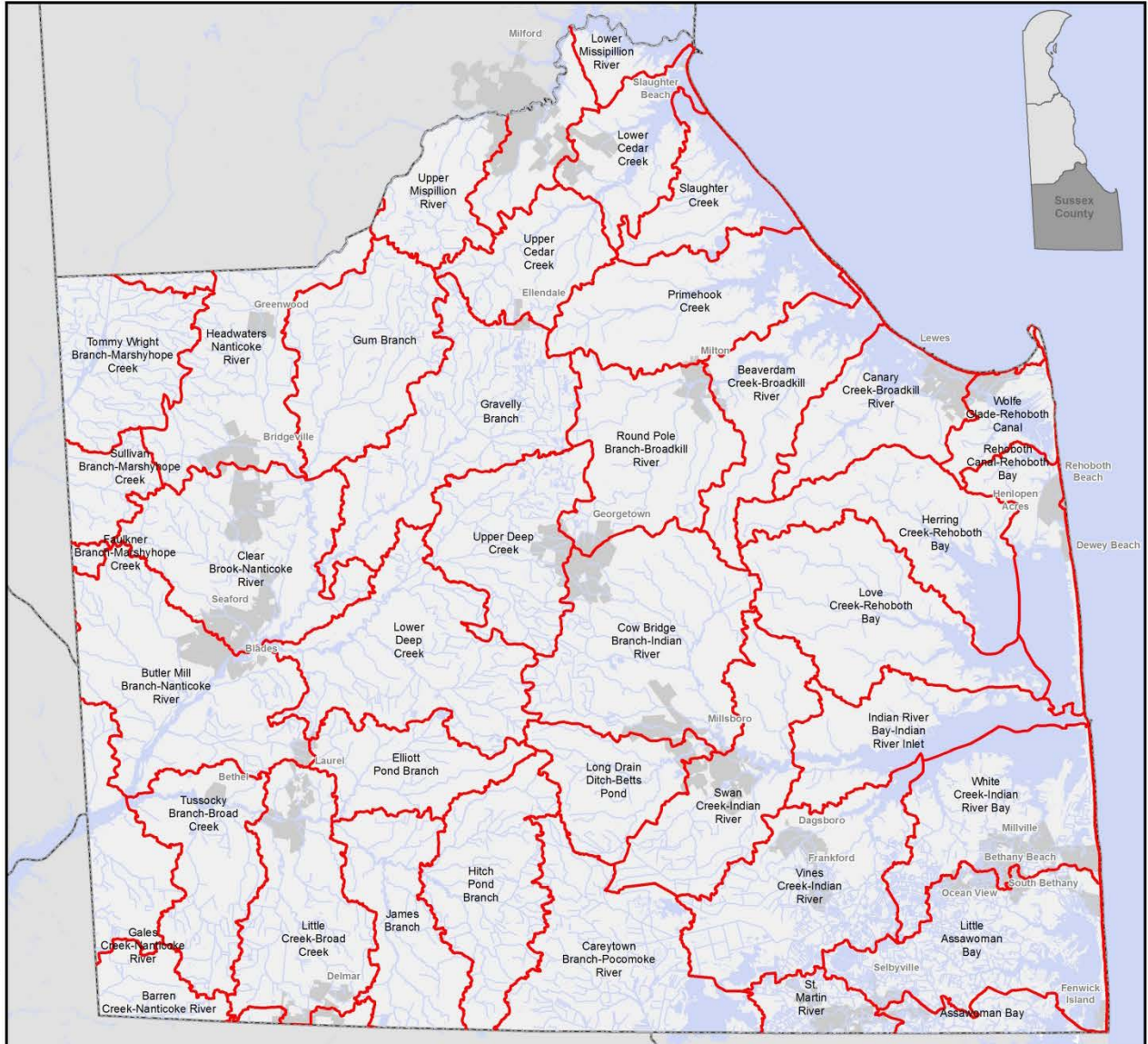
# CONSERVATION



Sussex County  
Comprehensive  
Plan

## DRAFT Watersheds and Waterways

-  Watersheds
-  Rivers and Streams
-  County Boundaries
-  Waterbodies
-  Municipalities



Source: DE FirstMap



# CONSERVATION

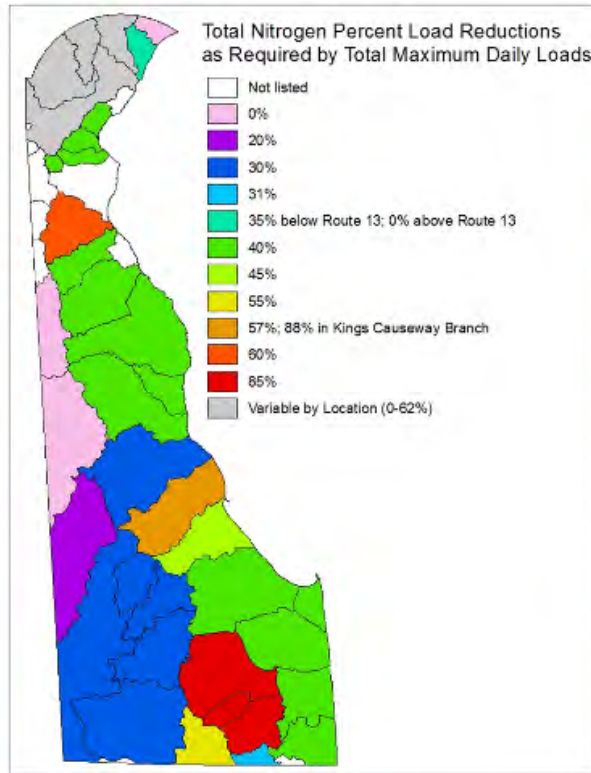
## ► TMDL

- *Waterways that do not meet Delaware's water quality standards are reported on a list of impaired waterways (303(d) List)*
- *Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the pollutants of concern.*
- *Limits the amount of pollution that can be discharged into a waterbody*

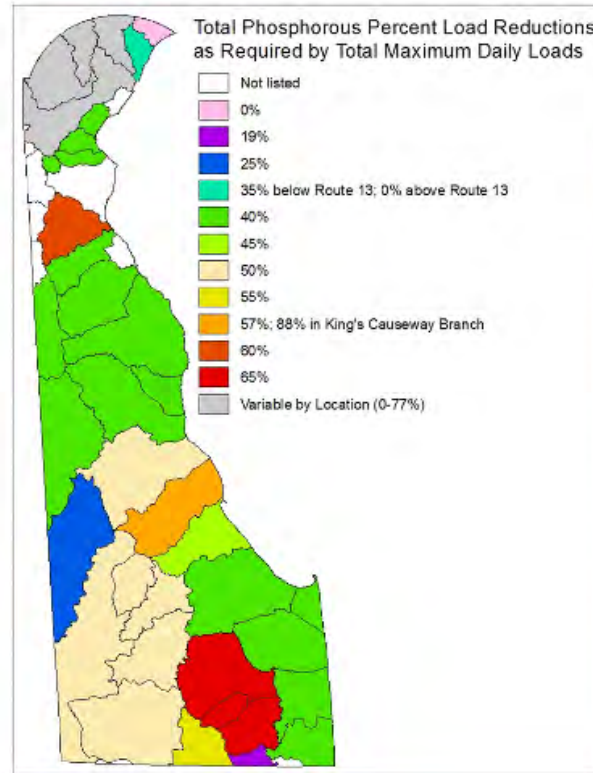
Source: DNREC



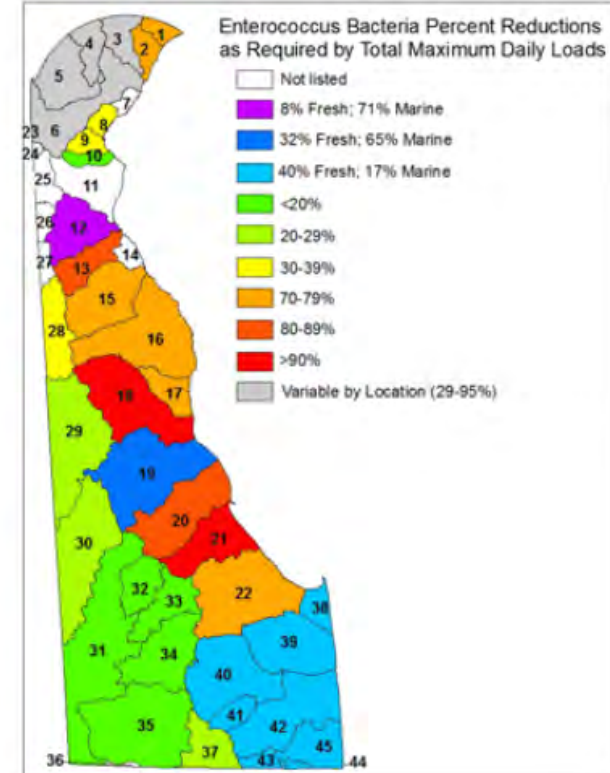
# CONSERVATION



Map 2



Map 3



Map 4

Source: DNREC

# CONSERVATION



## ► Flooding

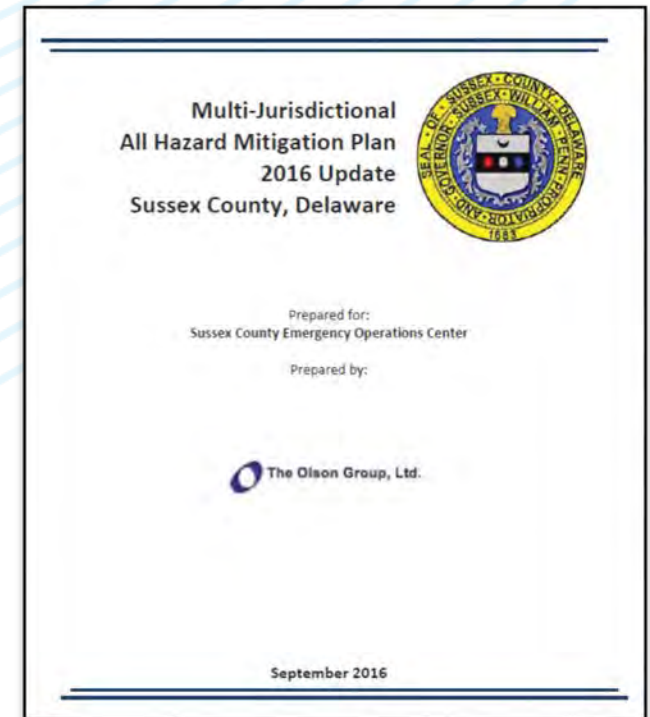
- General floods
  - Riverine
  - Coastal
  - Urban
- Flash flooding



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ **2016 Sussex County Hazard Mitigation Plan**
  - **What is a Hazard Mitigation Plan?**
    - Evaluates risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural and human-made disasters and develops long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events
    - Counties must have a HMP to maintain access to FEMA grants



# CONSERVATION



## ► Hazards in Sussex County

Natural	Human-made
Erosion	Dam/Levee Failure
Drought	Hazardous Materials Incident
Earthquake/Geological	Pipeline Failure
Extreme Heat/Cold	Terrorism
Flood	
Hail	
Hurricane Wind (Straight-Line Winds)	
Thunderstorm	
Tornado	
Tsunami	
Wildfire	
Winter Storm	

# CONSERVATION



## ► Unique Risks for Local Jurisdictions

- Section of HMP that documents responses gathered from local government officials by the Delaware Emergency Management Agency.
- Identified by DNREC

*“One unique hazard affecting all coastal communities in Sussex County is the issue of long term coastal erosion and sea level rise. Generally speaking, this hazard is confined to the distinct geographic boundaries of the Delaware Bay shore, the Atlantic Ocean coast and the inland bays.”*



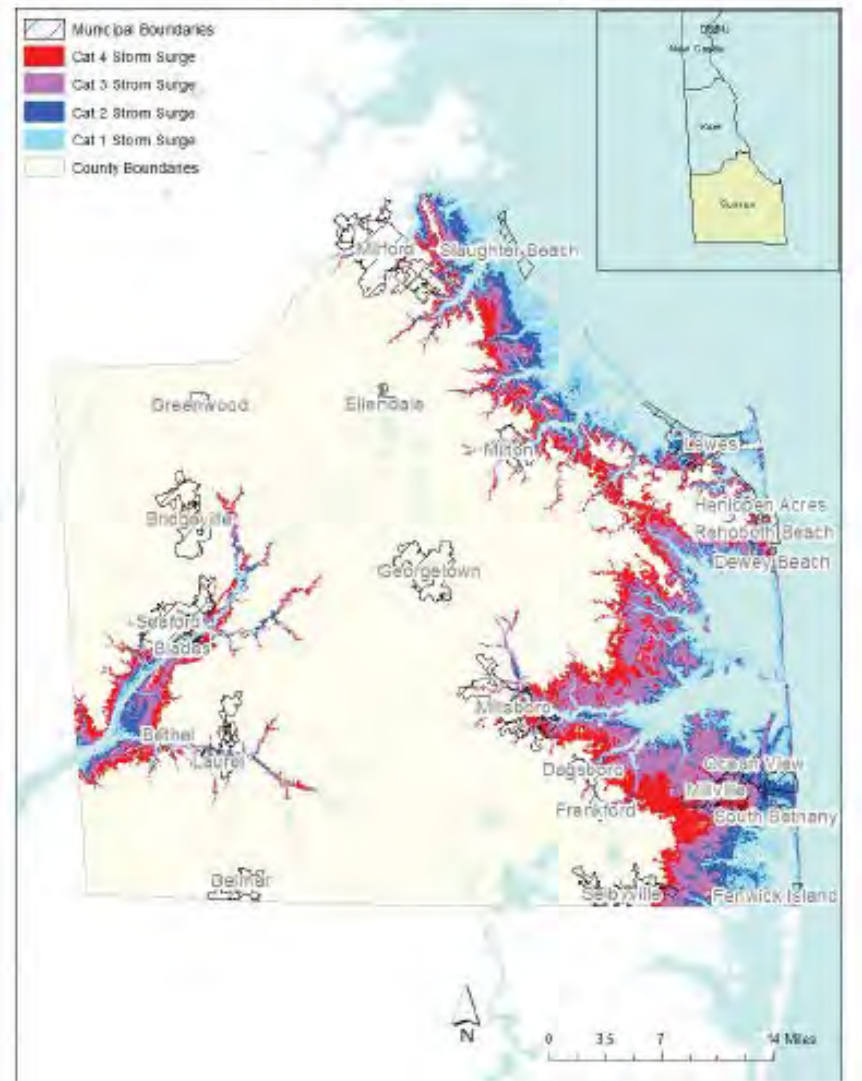
# CONSERVATION



## ► Coastal Flooding

- Modeling shows storm surge areas associated with Category 1 through Category 3 storm events

Figure A-1: County Flood Inundation Map



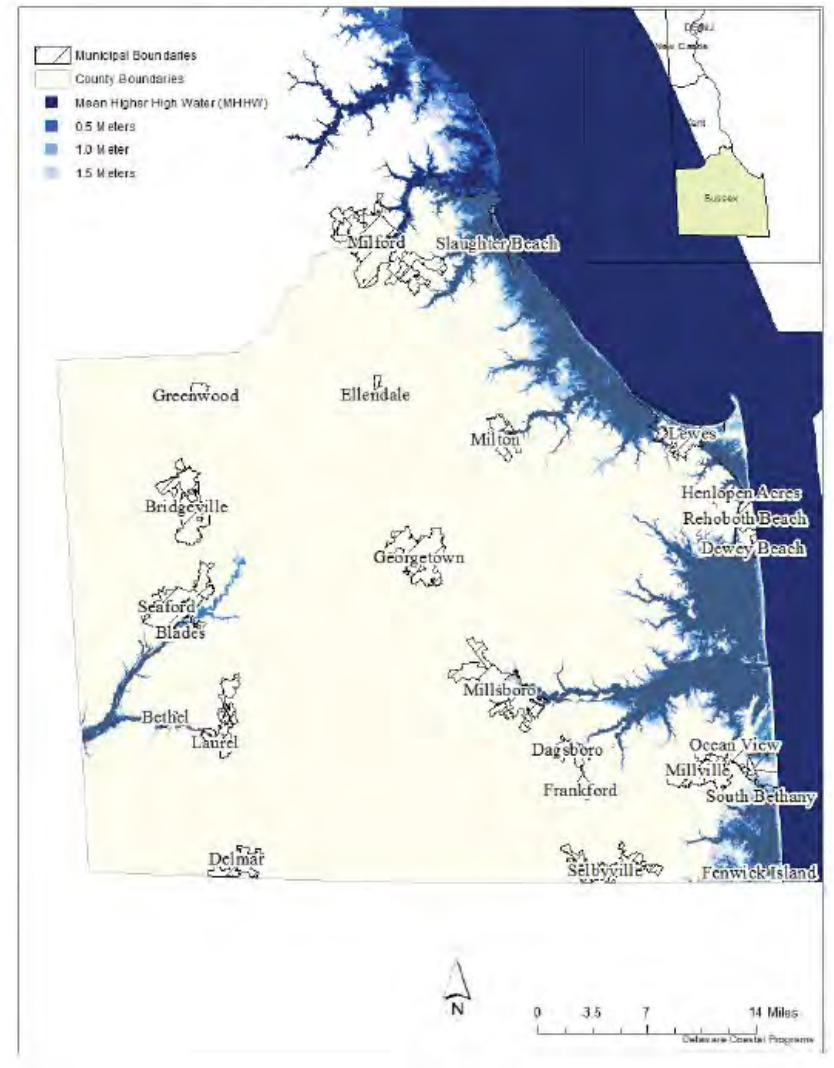
Source: 2016 Sussex HMP

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ **Coastal + Riverine Flooding**
  - Modeling shows depth of flood
  - Total potential annualized losses for Sussex County = \$129m

Figure 4-7: Modeled 100-year Flood Depth



Source: 2016 Sussex HMP

# CONSERVATION



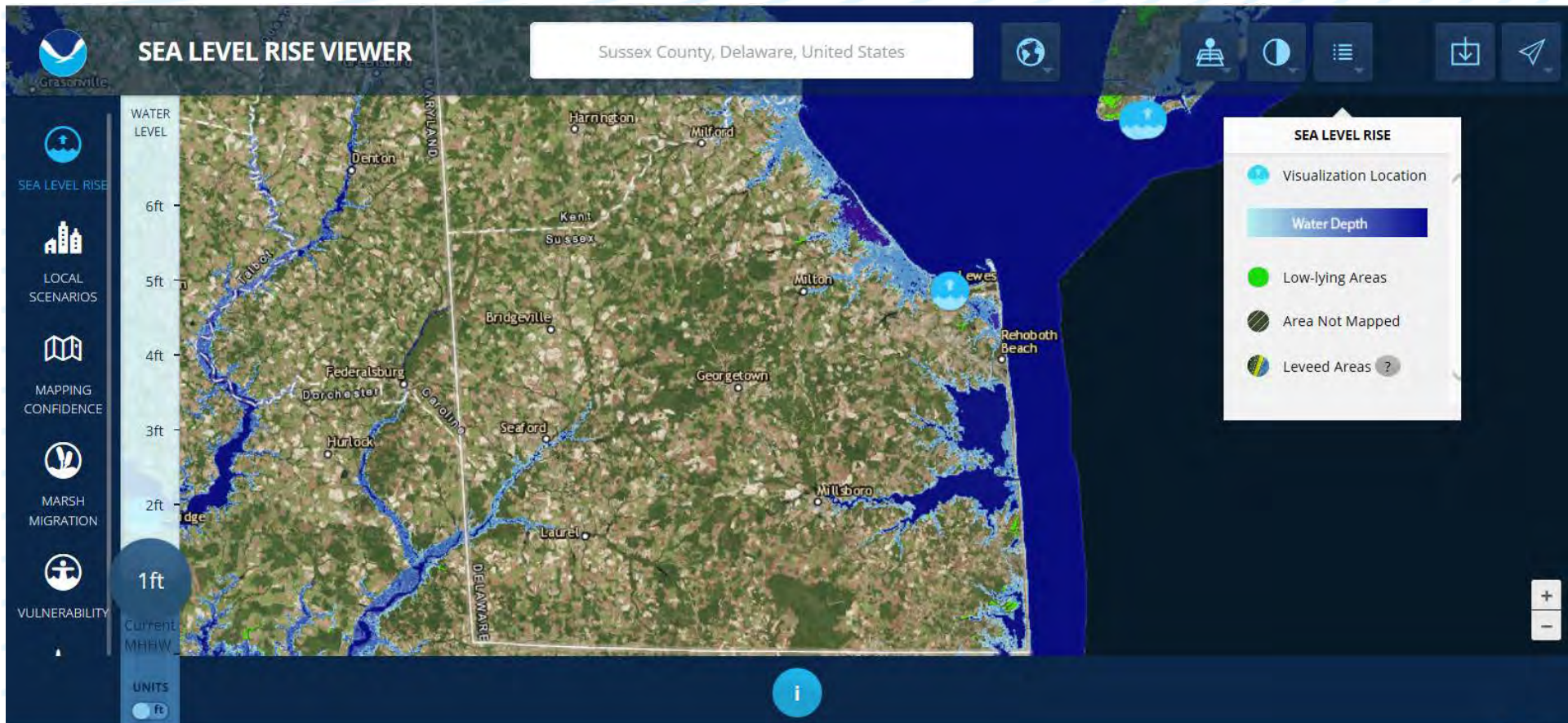
## ► Sussex County HMP Mitigation Actions

Project Description	Adopted	Priority	Timeline	Status	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source
<b>Previous Plan Mitigation Actions Review</b>						
Improve the County's Community Rating System rating. Review and update community plans and ordinances and incorporate updated information into the CRS update.	Yes	High	Short-term	Ongoing		FMA, HMGP, PDM
Assist residents with compliance with building codes requiring residents to elevate manufactured housing located on the coast to above the base flood elevation (BFE).	Yes	High	Ongoing	Ongoing		FMA, HMGP, PDM
Work with homeowners to identify ways to elevate flood-prone structures.	Yes	High	Ongoing	Ongoing		FMA, HMGP, PDM
Improve educational awareness through better notifications, training, and properly marked flood evacuation routes.	Yes	High	Short-term	Ongoing		FMA, HMGP, PDM
Distribute disaster preparedness and hazard mitigation-related information using brochures and website link.	Yes	Moderate	Ongoing	Ongoing	1200	FMA, HMGP, PDM, CDBG
Work with DeIDOT to install storm drain of culvert on 1100 Block of South Bayshore Drive in Broadkill Beach.	Yes	High	Short-term	Not started		FMA, HMGP, PDM
Work with DNREC and DeIDOT to endorse Federally funded restoration projects to restore portions of the Sussex County coastline that are experiencing significant coastal erosion, both from rising sea levels and coastal storms.	No	Moderate	Ongoing	Ongoing		FMA, HMGP, PDM, PS
Conduct a study to identify stormwater management systems that need to be retrofitted and channels that need to be improved in order to reduce flooding throughout the County.	No	Moderate	Short-term	Not started		FMA, HMGP, PDM
Work with DeIDOT to identify possible elevation alternatives for the rebuilding of SR 38 (Prime Hook Road).	No	Moderate	Short-term	Ongoing	1.45 million	HMGP, CDBG, PS
<b>Mitigation Actions Started / Completed since 2010 Plan Update</b>						
3 Repetitive Loss Property elevations	Yes	High	Ongoing	Ongoing	300,000	HMGP
<b>Potential / New Mitigation Actions For Consideration</b>						
Support additional Flood Management Study and/or Potential Elevations in the Mallard Lakes area.	No	High	Short term	Pending grant funding	2 million	FMA, HMGP, PDM

# CONSERVATION



▶ **NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer** <https://coast.noaa.gov/slr/>

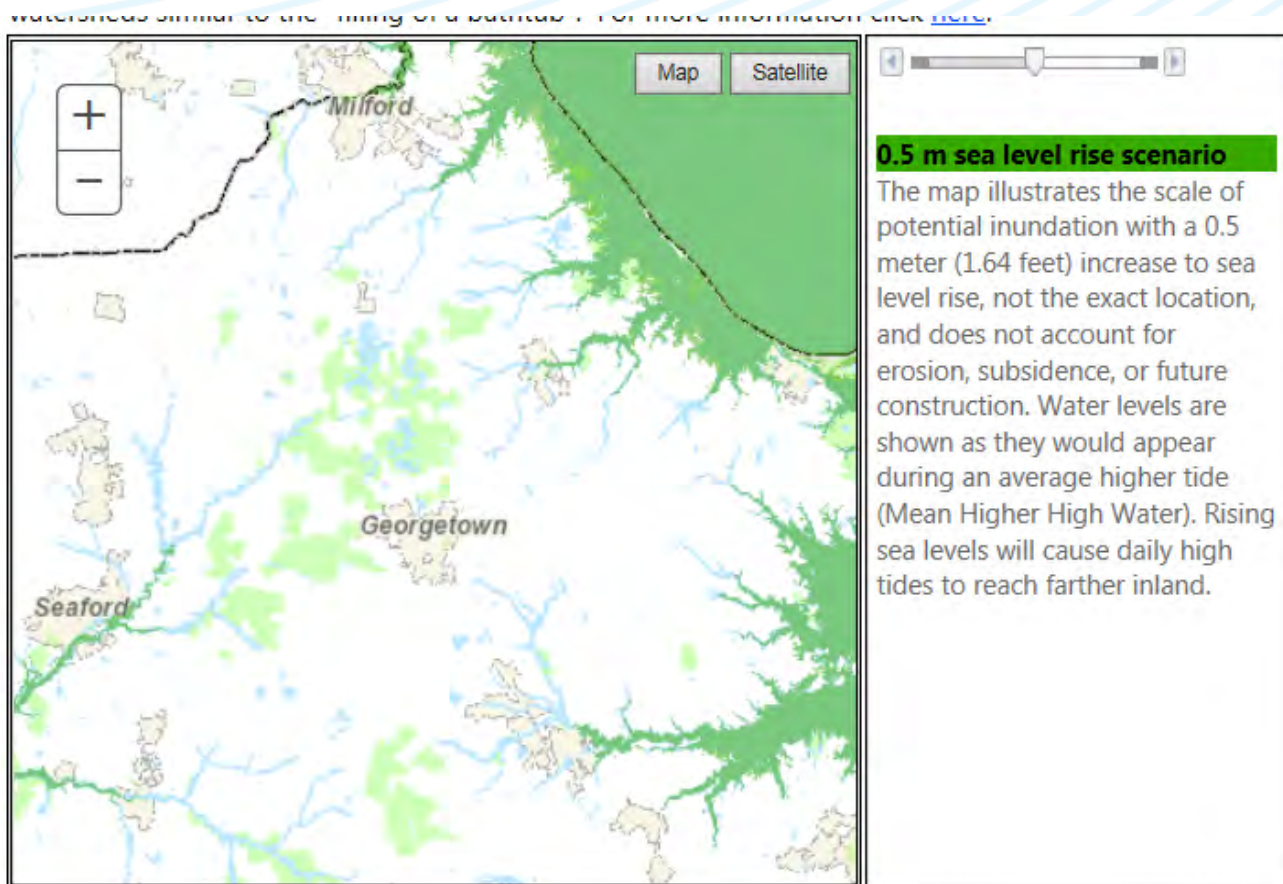


# CONSERVATION



## ► DNREC Sea Level Rise Inundation Maps

<http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/pages/slrmaps.aspx>



# CONSERVATION



## ► Coastal Delaware Resiliency Report (UDel and Sea Grant – 2017)

Resource	Vulnerability	Current quantity	Quantity to be inundated by sea-level rise**	% to be inundated**
State Park lands	High	14,796 acres	6,069–8,316 acres	41–56%
Beaches	High	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Tidal saltwater wetlands	High	21,090 acres	20,949–21,073 acres	99%
Road infrastructure	High	3,556 miles of roads	79–357 miles of roads	2–10%
Evacuation routes	High	519 miles of evacuation routes	2–39 miles	1–7%
National Register and State Historic Sites	Low	2,361 historic sites	57–164 sites	2–7%
Piers and boat ramps	Low	27 piers and ramps	13–17 piers and ramps	48–63%
Tourist attractions and amenities *	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available

Table 1. By the Numbers: Potential Sea-Level Rise Impacts to Sussex County Tourism and Recreation Resources by the Year 2100.  
Data Source: Delaware Coastal Programs, 2012.

\* Includes shops, restaurants, hotels, and other attractions.

\*\* Quantity to be inundated by SLR reflects the range of SLR estimates from 0.5 to 1.5 m by the year 2100.

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ **Sussex County Conservation Regulations:**
  - **Buffer zones for wetlands and tidal and perennial nontidal waters (§ 115–193 of Sussex County Code)**
    - Sussex County code requires a 50-foot buffer zone established landward from the mean high water line of tidal waters, tidal tributary streams and tidal wetlands and from the ordinary high water line of perennial nontidal rivers and nontidal streams.

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ **Sussex County Conservation Regulations**
  - **Coastal Area Protection (§ 115-189 of Sussex County Code)**
    - **Purpose is to assist in the preservation and restoration of the primary coastal dune during construction.**





# CONSERVATION



## ▶ Sussex County Conservation Regulations

- Environmentally Sensitive Development Overlay Zone (§ 115–189 of Sussex County Code)
  - Requires an environmental assessment to be submitted with development applications
- Flood-Prone Districts (Article XVIII of Sussex County Code)
  - Restricts building activity within 100-year floodplain

# CONSERVATION

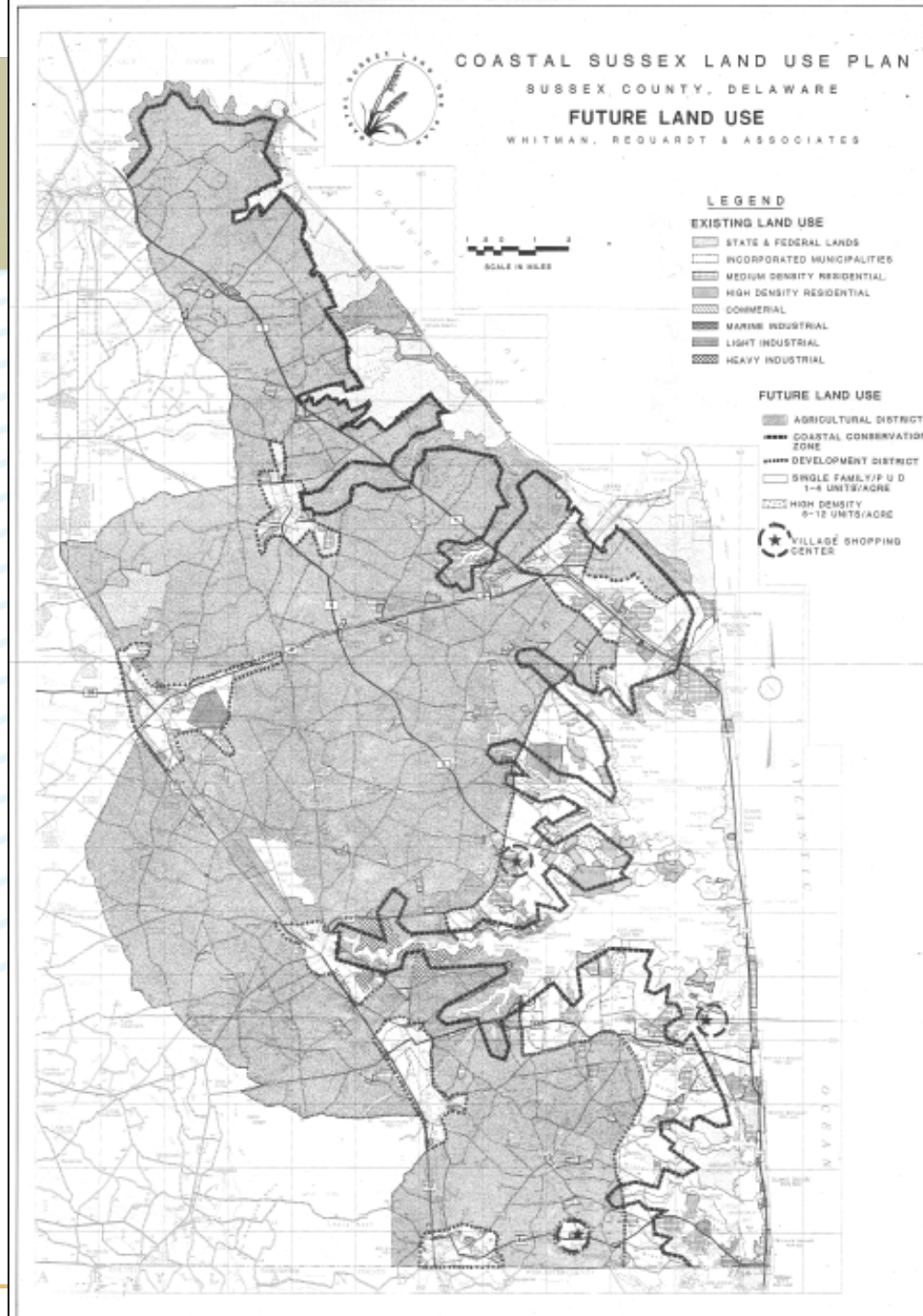


## ▶ Sussex County Conservation Regulations

- Source Water Protection (Chapter 89 of Sussex County Code)
- Sediment Control and Stormwater Management (Chapter 90 of Sussex County Code)
- Water and Sewers (Chapter 110 of Sussex County Code)

# CONSERVATION

- ▶ Conservation Zones (§ 115-194 of Sussex County Code)
  - A 1,000-foot area of land extending landward from the mean high-water line of tidal water bodies
  - Increased lot size requirements for parcels proposing individual on-site sewage (septic) systems and individual on-site wells



# CONSERVATION



## ▶ County conservation-related grants in FY 17:

	DATE OF	TOTAL	
ORGANIZATION	MEETING	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Delaware Ducks Unlimited	4/11/2017	\$1,000	2017 Greenwing Conservation Festival
Additional - FY17 Grants			
Soil Conservation District - Tax Ditches		\$115,000	
Soil Conservation - Drainage Projects		\$80,195	
		\$196,195	

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ **County bonus density open space contributions:**
  - Have had three contributions totaling \$1.4 million (2014, 2016, 2016). Open space contributions have not been spent yet

<b>Bonus Density</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Check Received</b>
Redden Ridge - 15 Bonus Density Lots	\$300,000	9/24/2014
Governors - 50 Bonus Density Lots	\$1,000,000	6/13/2016
Red Clover Walk - 6 Bonus Density Lots	\$120,000	6/24/2016
	<b>\$1,420,000</b>	

# CONSERVATION



## ▶ Work with the Sussex County Land Trust

- Last contribution was in FY 13
- Last purchase was in 2010
  - 235 acres across multiple properties for ag. preservation



*Cannon Maston House  
Image Source: Wikipedia*

# CONSERVATION



<b>Contributions to Sussex Land Trust</b>				
	<b>Sussex County set-aside Contribution</b>	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Acres Acquired</b>	<b>Remaining Funds</b>
FY 2003	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 600,820.50	43	
FY 2004	\$ 625,499.00	-		
FY 2005	\$ 1,253,166.00	\$ 2,168,425.00	105.87	
FY 2006	\$ 1,142,209.00	\$ 339,205.00		
FY 2007	\$ 1,180,371.00	\$ 928,000.00	231.65	
FY 2008	\$ 1,090,381.00	\$ 1,225,000.00	304.05	
FY 2009	-	-		
FY 2010	-	\$ 358,325.00	235.58	
FY 2011	\$ 61,797.70	-		
FY 2012	\$ 348,178.00	-		
FY 2013	\$ 85,403.00	-		
FY 2014	-	-		
FY 2015	-	-		
FY 2016	-	-		
FY 2017	-	-		
	\$ 6,787,004.70	\$ 5,619,775.50	920.15	\$1,167,229.20

# CONSERVATION



## ► Farmland Preservation

- Last contribution to state program was in FY 09





# CONSERVATION



Farmland Preservation				
	Sussex County set-aside Contribution	Expense	Acres Acquired	Remaining Funds
FY 2003	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 290,150.30	810.51	
FY 2004	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 199,431.88	439.87	
FY 2005	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 410,418.00	505.98	
FY 2006	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 290,748.16	494.92	
FY 2007	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 405,705.00	219.55	
FY 2008	\$ 300,000.00	-		
FY 2009	\$ 260,000.00	-		
FY 2010	-	-		
FY 2011	-	-		
FY 2012	-	-		
FY 2013	-	-		
FY 2014	-	-		
FY 2015	-	-		
FY 2016	-	-		
FY 2017	-	-		
	\$ 2,060,000.00	\$ 1,596,453.34	2,470.83	\$ 463,546.66

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ DRAFT 2018 Goals and Objectives
  
- ▶ **Goal 6.1 Preserve, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and natural systems in the County**
  - Objective 6.1.1 Develop and employ land use techniques and regulations that support natural resource protection
  
  - Objective 6.1.2 Protect areas determined to be environmentally sensitive by directing growth away from these areas
  
  - Objective 6.1.3 Preserve and protect critical natural areas that support wildlife habitat
  
  - Objective 6.1.4 Work with farmers to incorporate conservation practices

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ DRAFT 2018 Goals and Objectives
  
- ▶ **Goal 6.1 Preserve, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and natural systems in the County**
  - Objective 6.1.5 Provide support to municipalities to encourage conservation
  - Objective 6.1.6 Identify and prioritize lands for conservation
  - Objective 6.1.7 Explore new funding mechanisms for conservation in the County
  - Objective 6.1.8 Promote education of citizens and elected officials of the County regarding the need to protect and preserve natural resources

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ DRAFT 2018 Goals and Objectives
  
- ▶ **Goal 6.2 Encourage protection of farmland and forestland**
  - Objective 6.2.1 Recognize and promote the conservation benefits of having land in agriculture and forestry
  
  - Objective 6.2.2 Maintain the presence and quality of the agriculture and forestry industries



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ DRAFT 2018 Goals and Objectives
  
- ▶ **Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources**
  - Objective 6.3.1 Protect surface water and drinking water quality
  - Objective 6.3.2 Maximize the effectiveness of wastewater management to protect water quality
  - Objective 6.3.3 Promote responsible water usage to preserve water quantity

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ DRAFT 2018 Goals and Objectives
  
- ▶ **Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources**
  - Objective 6.3.4 Reduce stormwater runoff to preserve water quality
  
  - Objective 6.3.5 Reduce flooding and erosion



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ DRAFT 2018 Goals and Objectives
  
- ▶ **Goal 6.4 Maintain and improve air quality**
  - Objective 6.4.1 Work with federal and state agencies to determine methods to improve air quality in the County



# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ Land Preservation Strategies:

- Continue working with the State to identify opportunities for the State to acquire additional lands in Sussex County designated as Natural Areas.
- Encourage more interested farmers to enroll in Agricultural Preservation Districts as a prerequisite for having the State purchase farmland development rights.
  - *Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.5.3.1 Encourage more farm owners to enroll in a voluntary State Agricultural Preservation District or similar program*



# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ Land Preservation Strategies:

- Continue working with the Sussex County Land Trust to use funds collected from local developers and funds leveraged from other sources to preserve more land through conservation easements and fee simple acquisitions.
- Adopt a locally-formulated Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program so that private sector developers can take a larger role in funding the permanent preservation of open space.
- *Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.1.2.2 Consider development of incentives such as transfer of development rights to direct growth to Growth Areas*

# CONSERVATION



## ▶ 2008 Strategies

### ○ Land Preservation Strategies:

- **Strengthen County development regulations to ensure that open space dedicated by developers contains enough contiguous legitimate open space to facilitate environmental protection and /or passive recreation.**
  - *Draft 2018 Community Design Strategy 13.1.4.1 Consider revisiting code to determine if modifications are needed to open space requirements or if incentives can be developed to promote less fragmentation of open space*
- **Establish future public sewer service areas that will help preserve open space by promoting orderly growth rather than unplanned sprawl.**

# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ Resource Protection Strategies:

- Adopt zoning regulations that mandate an appropriate buffer distance between non-tidal wetlands and development.
  - *Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.3.2.1 and Utilities Strategy 8.4.2.1*  
*Consider working with stakeholders to develop buffer incentives or a program for tidal wetlands, non-tidal wetlands, and waterways*
- Support the Center for the Inland Bays and other conservation groups in their efforts to educate more people about the necessity of protecting wetlands.
- Encourage the State and tributary action teams to finish formulating pollution control strategies for the Inland Bays, the Nanticoke River, and the Broadkill Creek – and to focus on implementing these strategies.

# CONSERVATION



## ▶ 2008 Strategies

### ○ **Resource Protection Strategies:**

- **Raise land owners' awareness about myriad financial incentives the State offers to protect and better manage forest land, wetlands, wildlife habitat and farmland.**
- **Adopt a wellhead protection ordinance with commonly accepted setback standards for protecting groundwater recharge areas.**
- **Prioritize the provision of public sewers to areas with concentration of failed or potentially failing septic systems in order to better protect surface water and groundwater.**

# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ **Resource Protection Strategies:**

- **Continue to assess the potential value of including stream setback regulation in water pollution control plans for the Inland Bays and other local water bodies.**
- **Amend appropriate sections of Sussex County's zoning and subdivision codes to encourage more "green" stormwater management techniques as an alternative to traditional detention basins.**
- **Amend appropriate sections of Sussex County's zoning and subdivision codes to add regulations that will help protect critical wildlife habitat.**

# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ Resource Protection Strategies:

- Provide more public education about how to properly construct and operate on-site septic systems.
- In the Environmentally Sensitive Developing Area, delete all wetland areas from the gross lot size calculation used as the basis for determining allowable site density.
  - *Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.3.3.2 Consider deletion of total wetlands from density calculations in the ESDA*
- Evaluate the County's development regulations to ensure that maximum building coverage regulations reflect appropriate concern for reducing stormwater and promoting on-site recharge.

# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ Resource Protection Strategies:

- Encourage better nutrient management techniques, improved erosion control techniques, the installation of fences to keep livestock out of waterways, and other best management practices on local farms.
- Strengthen County development regulations that mandate forested buffers between new residential uses and contiguous agricultural uses.
- *Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.4.1.1 Reevaluate use of 25 foot landscaped buffers between new developments and adjacent uses to determine if buffer size is adequate/reasonable*

# CONSERVATION



## ► 2008 Strategies

### ○ Resource Protection Strategies:

- Continue working with the State and local land owners to help sustain and protect well managed working forest lands through the Forest Legacy Program and related initiatives. The County understands that working forests have been (or will be) harvested to some degree, and that working forests are not necessarily managed for biodiversity or protection of critical natural habitat. Nonetheless, Sussex County recognizes the value of conserving these areas in accordance with approved wood lot management practices.
- *Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.5.3.2 Support and promote the Forest Legacy Program and other programs that sustain and protect working forests*



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.1 Preserve, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and natural systems in the County*
  - **Consider a mature forest ordinance to maximize areas of contiguous forest and protect wildlife habitat**
  - **Promote the Sussex County Conservation District's Crop Cover Program**
  - **Draft 2018 Community Design Strategy 13.1.4.1** Consider revisiting code to determine if modifications are needed to open space requirements or if incentives can be developed to promote less fragmentation of open space

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.1 Preserve, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and natural systems in the County*
  - **Draft 2018 Recreation and Open Space Strategy 7.2.X.X**  
Evaluate the County density bonus program to determine how to better encourage use of the program, close loop holes, and facilitate the use of funds to obtain and preserve open space and natural resources
  - **Draft 2018 Recreation and Open Space Strategy 7.2.X.X**  
Consider the expansion of the bonus density program into other districts in order to obtain funds for open space and natural resource protection

# CONSERVATION

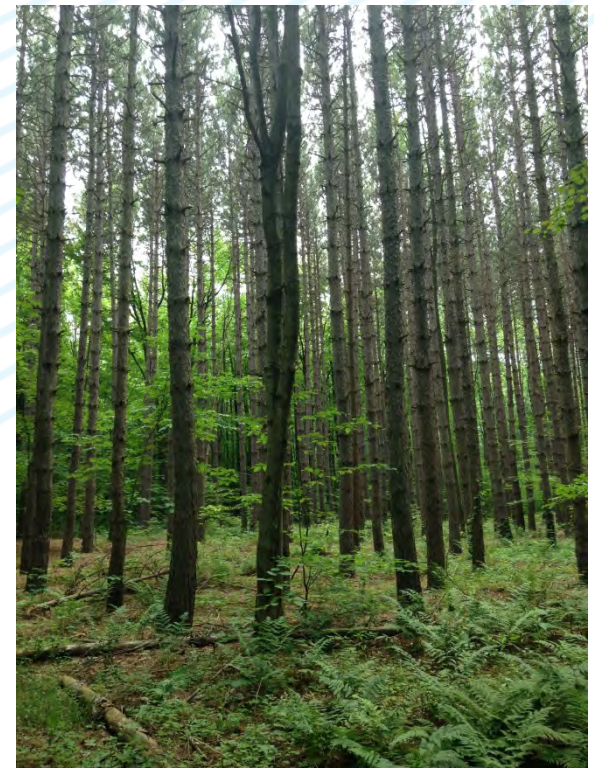


- ▶ [2018 Draft Strategies \(For Discussion Only\)](#)
- ▶ *Goal 6.1 Preserve, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and natural systems in the County*
  - **Draft 2018 Intergovernmental Coordination Strategy 8.X.X.X**  
Cooperate with DNREC and relevant non-profits to formulate stronger, yet locally acceptable, strategies for better protecting groundwater, waterways, sensitive habitat areas and other critical natural lands in Sussex County
  - **Draft 2018 Intergovernmental Coordination Strategy 8.X.X.X**  
Work with DNREC, the Delaware Department of Agriculture, the Sussex County Land Trust, and non-profits to continue adding appropriate properties to the inventory of protected lands in Sussex County, particularly to link together existing State-owned forests and existing open space

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.2 Encourage protection of farmland and forestland*
  - Promote farm easement programs by the State, NRCS, and private land conservancies
  - Promote Delaware's Urban and Community Forestry Program to preserve and enhance Delaware's community forests



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.2 Encourage protection of farmland and forestland*
  - **Draft 2018 Economic Development Strategy 6.3.2.1:** Identify areas that have valuable agricultural land or operations that should be maintained and/or strengthened
  - **Draft 2018 Economic Development Strategy 6.3.3.3:** Work with land owners and Delaware Forest Service to protect high value forest tracts and improve the diversity and quality of forest tracts
  - **Draft 2018 Economic Development Strategy 6.3.3.6:** Explore incentives that the County could offer landowners (e.g. property tax exemption) to encourage long-term forest management
  - **Draft 2018 Economic Development Strategy 6.3.3.7:** The County should work to educate landowners about and connect land owners with the resources available from the State and other sources. This includes technical assistance and financial assistance programs

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ [2018 Draft Strategies \(For Discussion Only\)](#)
- ▶ *Goal 6.2 Encourage protection of farmland and forestland*
  - **Draft 2018 Future Land Use Strategy 5.5.3.2** Support and promote the Forest Legacy Program and other programs that sustain and protect working forests
  - **Draft 2018 Recreation and Open Space Strategy 7.X.X.X** Consider renewal of the County's contribution to the State Farmland Preservation Program and other federal or state programs that require a match
  - **Draft 2018 Intergovernmental Coordination Strategy 7.X.X.X** Work with the Delaware Department of Agriculture to preserve more Sussex County farms through agricultural preservation easements and maximize the value of the compensation paid to the landowners

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources*
  - Set long-term goals for surface and drinking water quality in the future
  - Form an action committee to coordinate treatment of wastewater and TMDLs
  - Evaluate the County's maximum building coverage regulations to determine if there are ways to better reduce stormwater runoff and promote on-site recharge

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)

- ▶ *Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources*

- Support farmers and encourage best management practices on farms in order to control runoff and maintain water quality of waterways
- Promote education to residents about the negative water quality effects of lawn fertilization





# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources*
  - Continue development of County Code revisions, such as the revisions that addressed drainage, through a County Working Group tasked with accommodating State regulatory changes
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of the County's 50-foot buffer requirement for tidal wetlands
  - Develop incentives to encourage the redevelopment of brownfields

# CONSERVATION



## ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)

### ▶ *Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources*

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the County floodplain ordinance to determine if modifications are needed
- Implement mitigation actions of the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to reduce the County's risk to natural and human-made hazards
- Pursue CRS status through FEMA to obtain lower flood insurance rates for homeowners
- Consider development of a Climate Action Plan to evaluate the future impacts of flooding on Sussex County
- Become a partner in the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary's Living Shoreline initiative

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources*
  - **Draft 2018 Utilities Strategy 8.1.3.1** Work with DNREC to refine the onsite inspection and remediation process to work in coordination with County sewer expansion goals
  - **Draft 2018 Utilities Strategy 8.2.1.1** Consider development of a process for mandatory County-wide onsite wastewater inspections upon transfer in watersheds with promulgated TMDLs for nutrient impairment
  - **Draft 2018 Utilities Strategy 8.2.1.2** Protect long-term water supply by encouraging land conservation in water recharge areas
  - **Draft 2018 Utilities Strategy 8.2.1.3** Determine if a review of the existing County wellhead protection ordinance is needed

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
  
- ▶ *Goal 6.3 Ensure the protection of the natural functions and quality of the County's water resources*
  - **Draft 2018 Utilities Strategy 8.4.1.1** Continue participation in the stormwater regulatory advisory process with the State for the development of new stormwater regulations
  
  - **Draft 2018 Utilities Strategy 8.4.1.2** Support the Sussex Conservation District in the management and implementation of the State-wide stormwater regulations
  
  - **Draft 2018 Intergovernmental Coordination Strategy** Research or coordinate with the Conservation District on tax ditch setbacks

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ 2018 Draft Strategies (For Discussion Only)
- ▶ *Goal 6.4 Maintain and improve air quality*
  - Examine the County's obligation under federal air quality regulations that promote air quality credits to offset emissions from new transportation projects
  - Promote clean energy sources
  - Reduce auto emissions by supporting alternative travel modes and/or improved traffic flow

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ Draft Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Strategies Recommended by the Center for Inland Bays at the 6/16/17 Workshop (For Discussion)
  - *Continue and expand partnership with the Center for the Inland Bays and additional conservation organizations to manage preserves.*



# CONSERVATION



- ▶ Draft Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Strategies Recommended by the Center for Inland Bays at the 6/16/17 Workshop (For Discussion)
  - *Create a Conservation and Recreation Planner position within County Offices to secure additional properties and expand partnerships and funding.*
  - *Create County-level financing mechanism and interest bearing fund for open space preservation and management to leverage state and federal dollars (examples: impact fees, additional property tax, real estate transfer tax).*

# CONSERVATION



- ▶ Draft Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Strategies Recommended by the Center for Inland Bays at the 6/16/17 Workshop (For Discussion)
  - *Recognize the Inland Bays, their tributaries and other waterbodies as open space areas of primary importance.*
  - *Partner with the Center for the Inland Bays, DNREC, and ecotourism businesses to produce a water access assessment and improvement plan for low-impact recreation including a water trail system.*
  - *Prioritize for protection both large high-quality natural areas and small natural areas dispersed through the County.*