Early Successional Habitat:
The Overlooked and Underappreciated Landscape Feature

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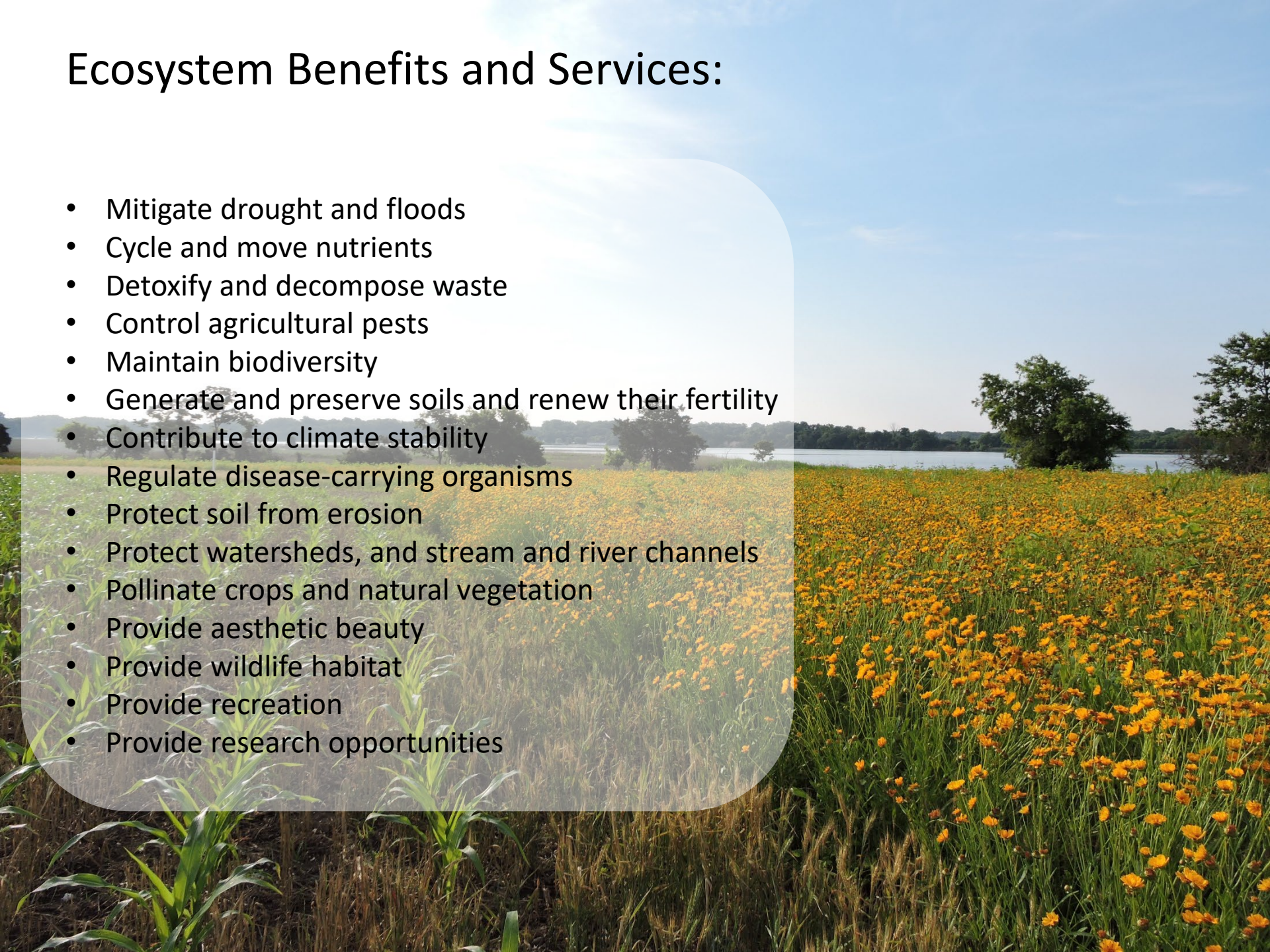
Early Successional Habitat:

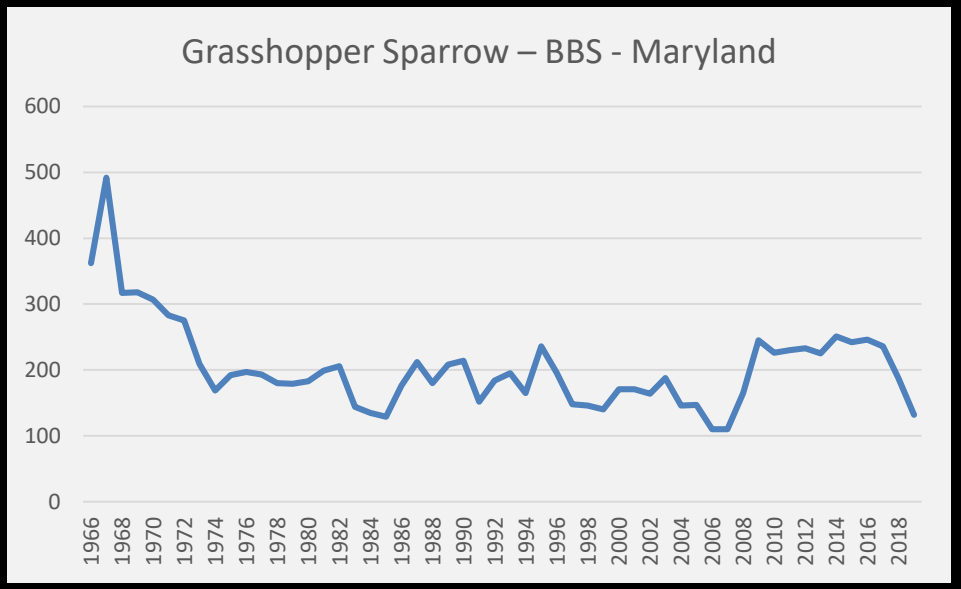
- Grasslands ~ Meadows
- Shrub-scrub ~ Old Field Habitat

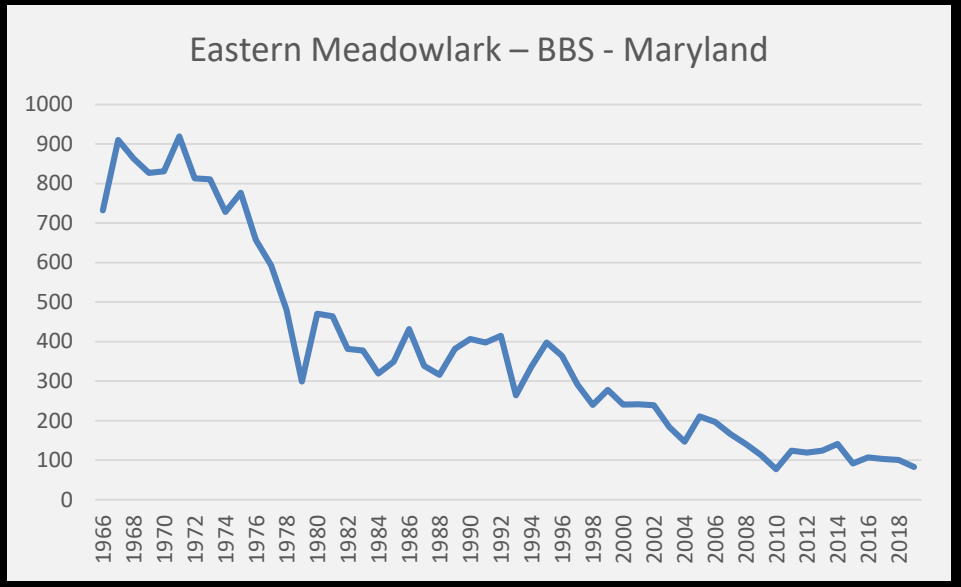
Ecosystem Benefits and Services:



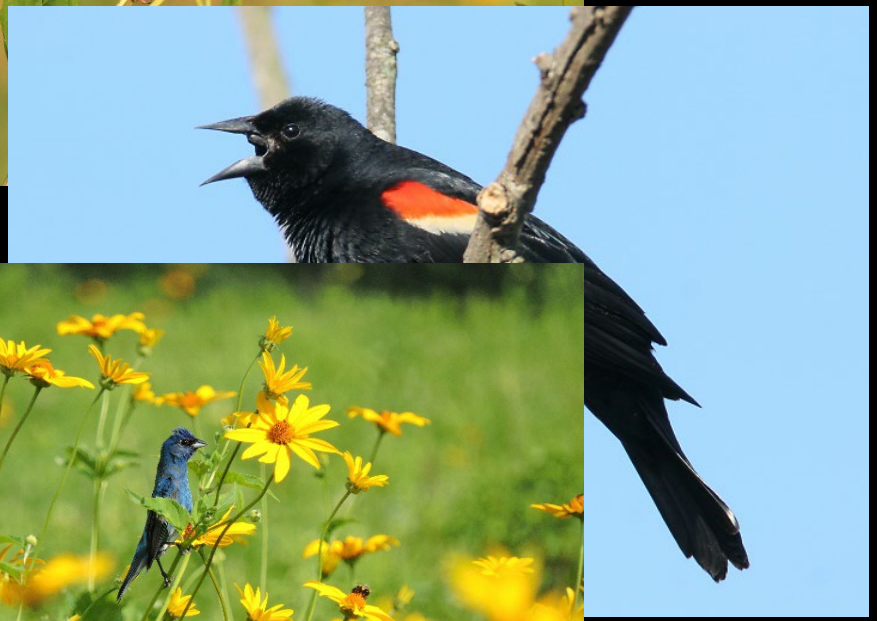
- Mitigate drought and floods
- Cycle and move nutrients
- Detoxify and decompose waste
- Control agricultural pests
- Maintain biodiversity
- Generate and preserve soils and renew their fertility
- Contribute to climate stability
- Regulate disease-carrying organisms
- Protect soil from erosion
- Protect watersheds, and stream and river channels
- Pollinate crops and natural vegetation
- Provide aesthetic beauty
- Provide wildlife habitat
- Provide recreation
- Provide research opportunities

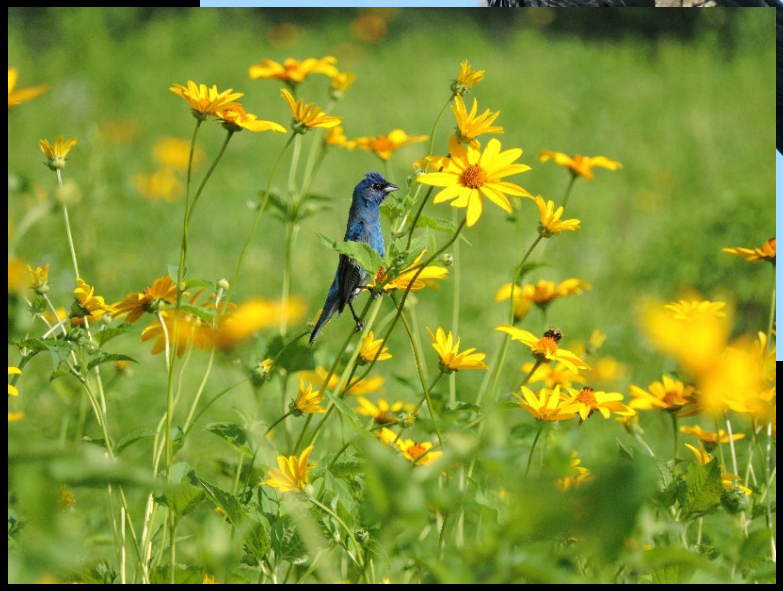
Grassland Obligate Species

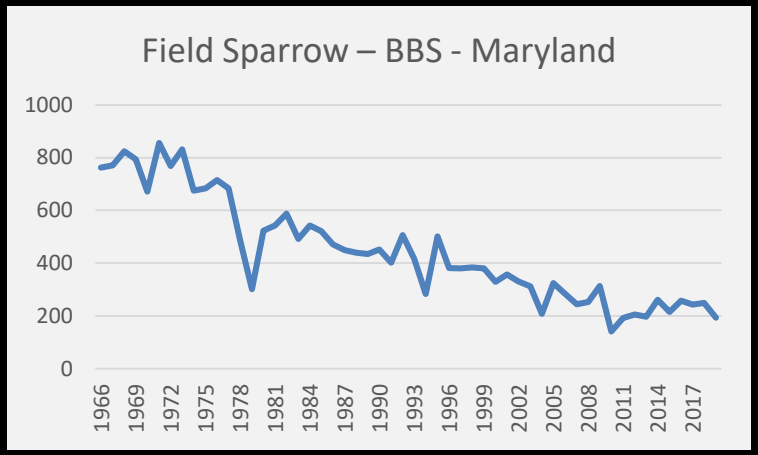


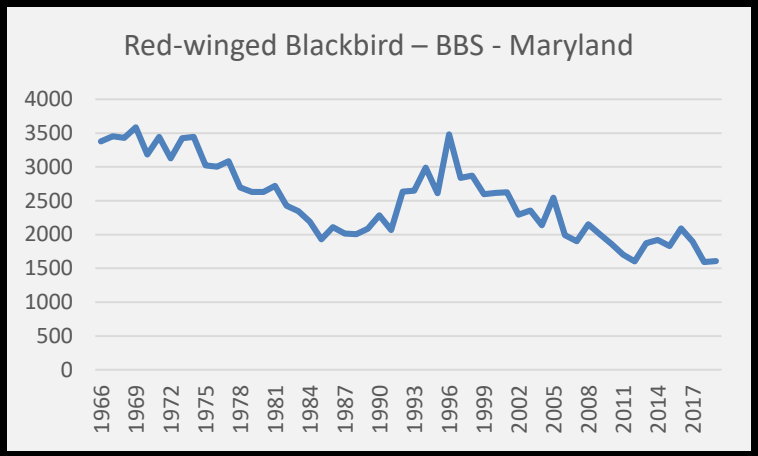


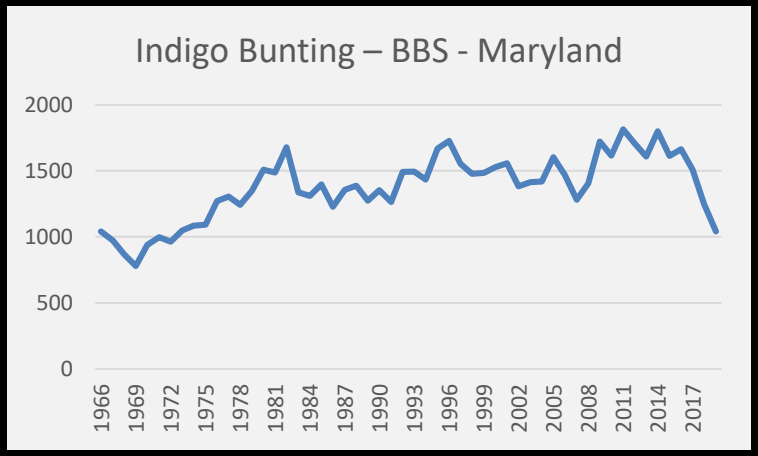
Grassland → Oldfield Species



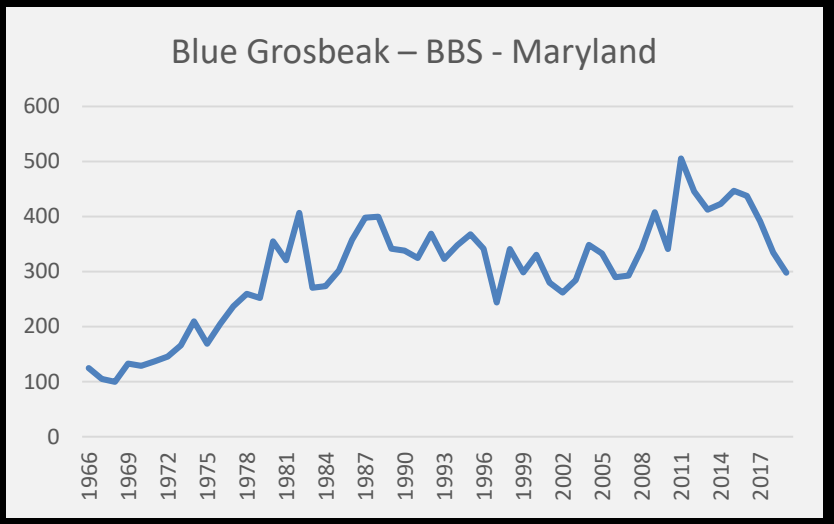


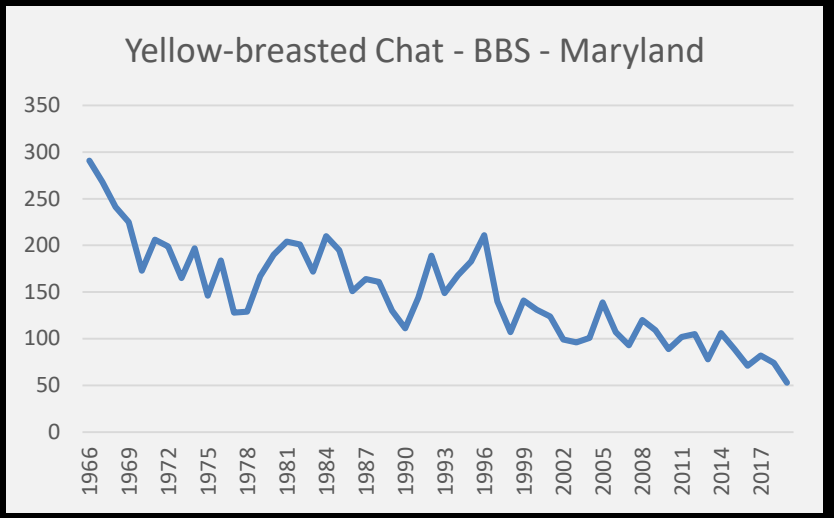


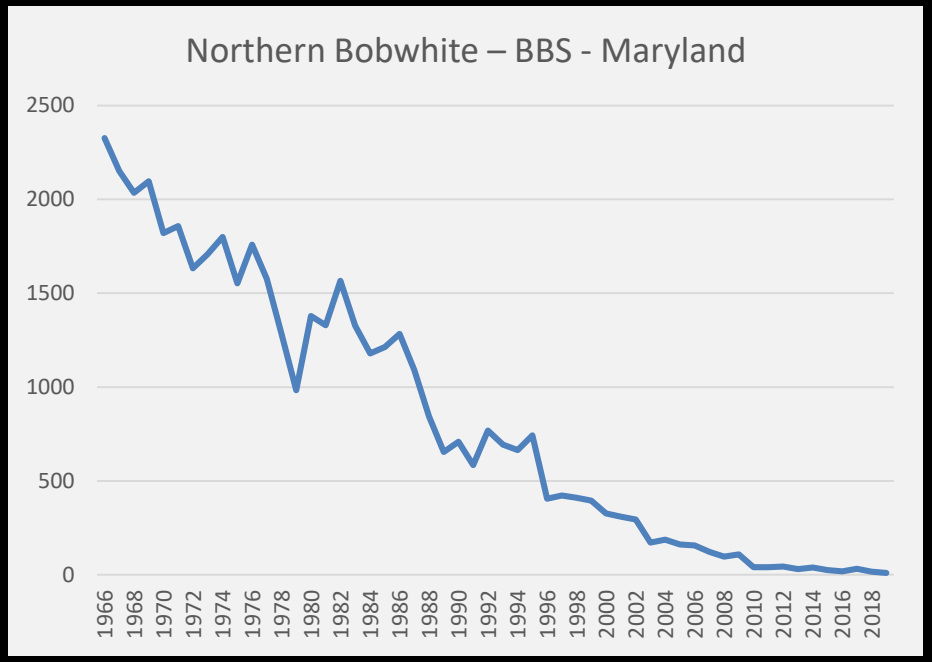




Shrub/scrub → Oldfield Species






Northern Bobwhite – BBS - Maryland
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
1966
1968
1970
1972
1974
1976
1978
1980
1982
1984
1986
1988
1990
1992
1994
1996
1998
2000
2002
2004
2006
2008
2010
2012
2014
2016
2018

Natural Lands Project

Balancing Natural Lands on Working Farms for Wildlife and Cleaner Water

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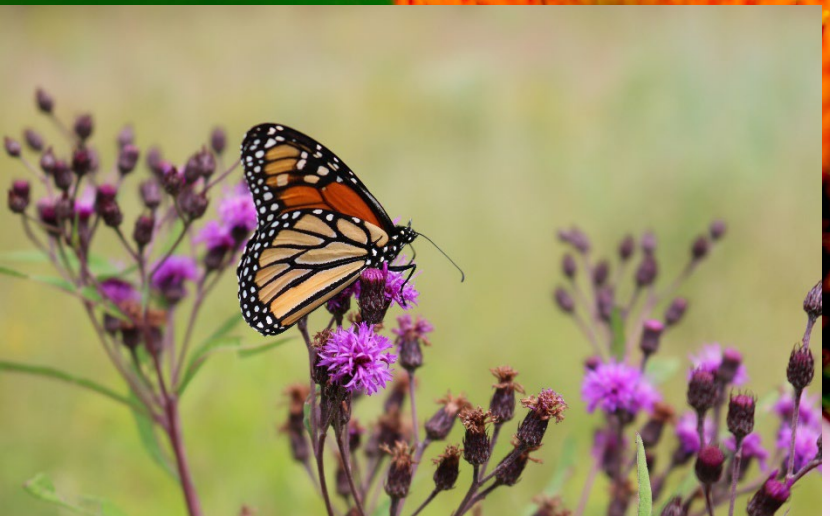

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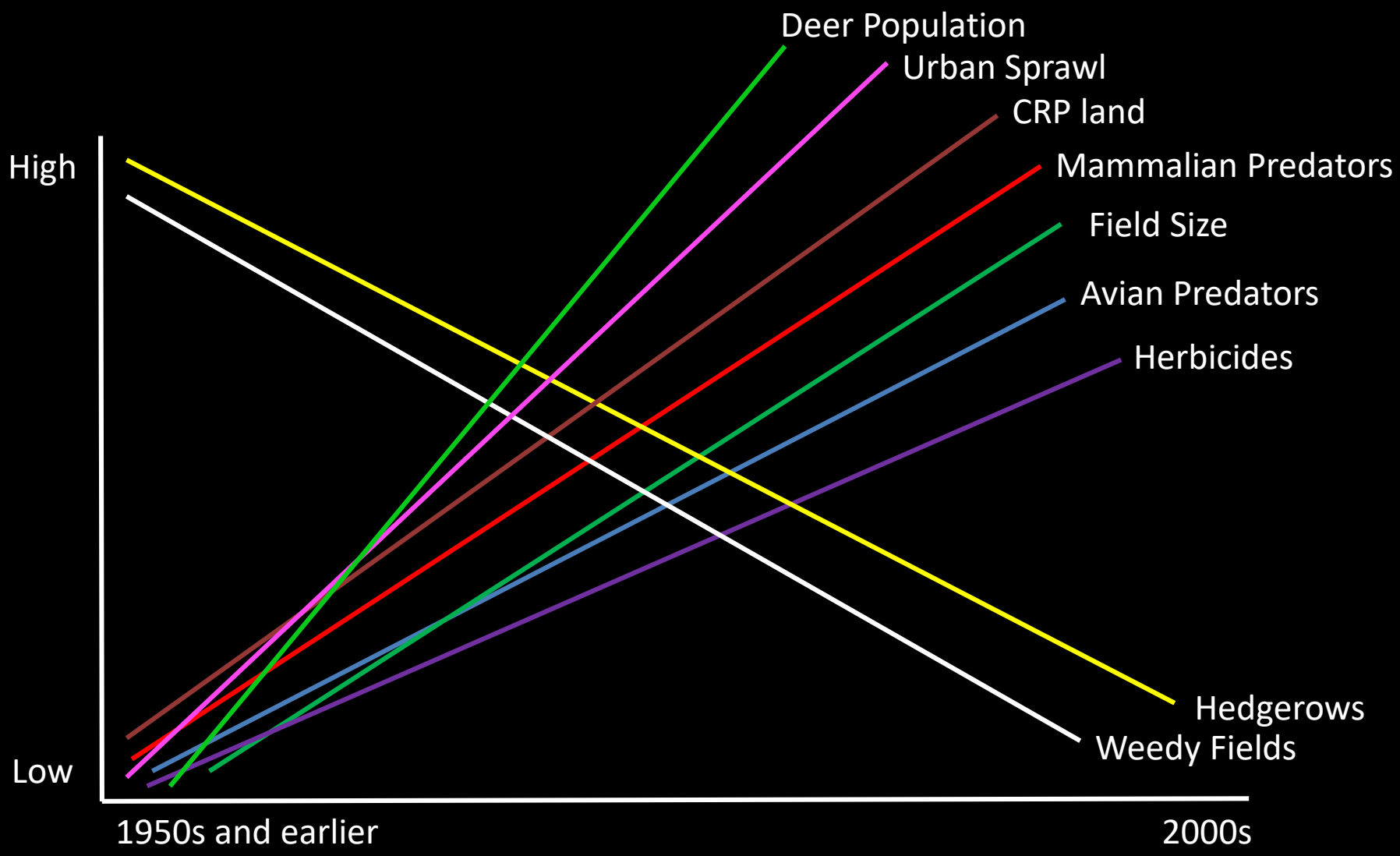
River and Field Campus


Deer Population
Urban Sprawl
CRP land
Mammalian Predators
Field Size
Avian Predators
Herbicides
Hedgerows
Weedy Fields
High
Low
1950s and earlier
2000s

7 - 2 - 37
AHW-9 -55
Round Top Rd
Kibler Rd

4-17-64
AHW-4DD-63

5-3-78
USDA 20 240 35 978 171

RAFC Northern Bobwhite Survey Data

Natural Lands Project: Wildlife for Water Quality

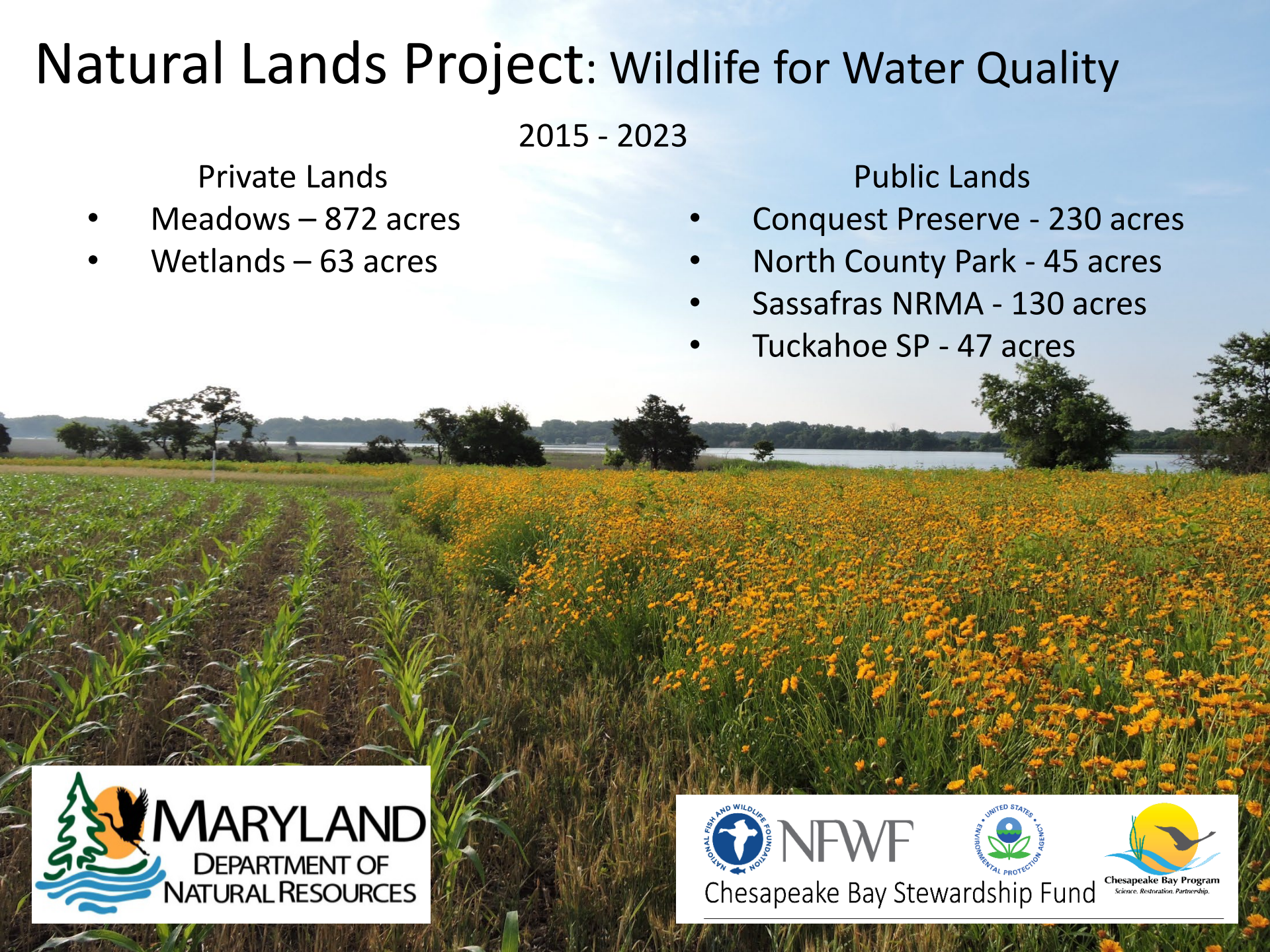
2015 - 2023

Private Lands

- Meadows – 872 acres
- Wetlands – 63 acres

Public Lands

- Conquest Preserve - 230 acres
- North County Park - 45 acres
- Sassafras NRMA - 130 acres
- Tuckahoe SP - 47 acres

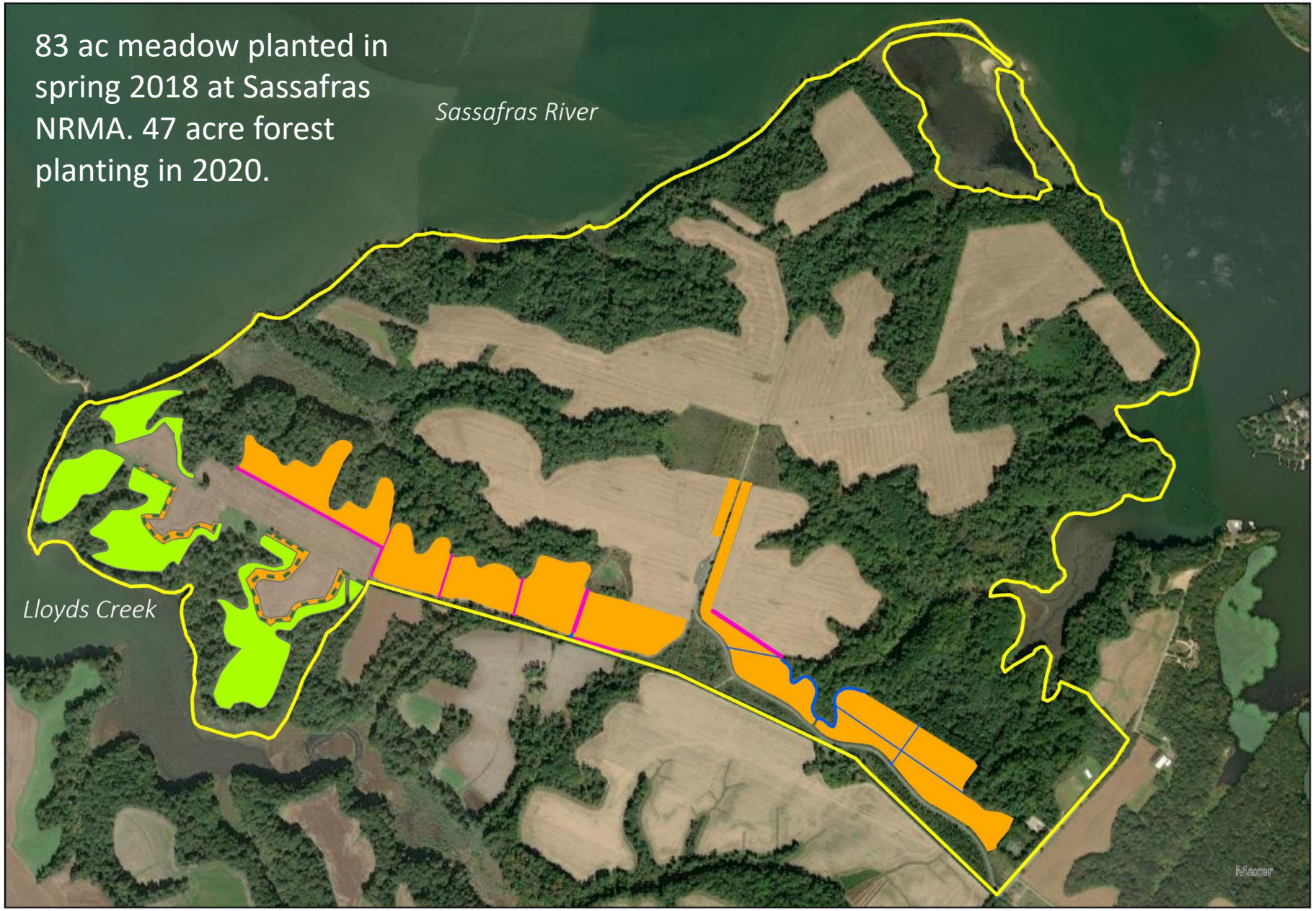


MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NFWF Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Upper Spaniards Point
Chester River
Conquest Beach
To Spaniards Neck Rd & Rt 213
Parking
Conquest Beach Rd
Conquest Rd
Wetland 1
Wetland 2
Wetland 3
Wetland 4
Wetland 5
Wetland 6
Wetland 7
Wetland 8
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
11
12
Corsica River
Ship Point
N
W
E
S
0
0.13
0.25
0.5 Miles
Conquest Preserve
Private Residence
Conquest Trails
Meadow Areas
Afforestation Areas
Conquest Preserve Boundary


83 ac meadow planted in spring 2018 at Sassafras NRMA. 47 acre forest planting in 2020.
Sassafras River
Lloyds Creek
Maxar
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MARYLAND PARK SERVICE
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N
W
E
S
2020
0 55110 220 330 440 Meters
Sassafras NRMA
Sassafras_NRMA_FIDS_plan
Habitat Type
Afforestation Area
Shrubs
Grass Border
Sassafras_NRMA_Boundary

What can done in Calvert County?

- Convert cropland – create new habitat
- Convert non-native csg to wsg
- Promote management of open spaces and prevent maturation
- ROWs
- Pollinator plantings

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