

Fishing Bay (FSBMH)

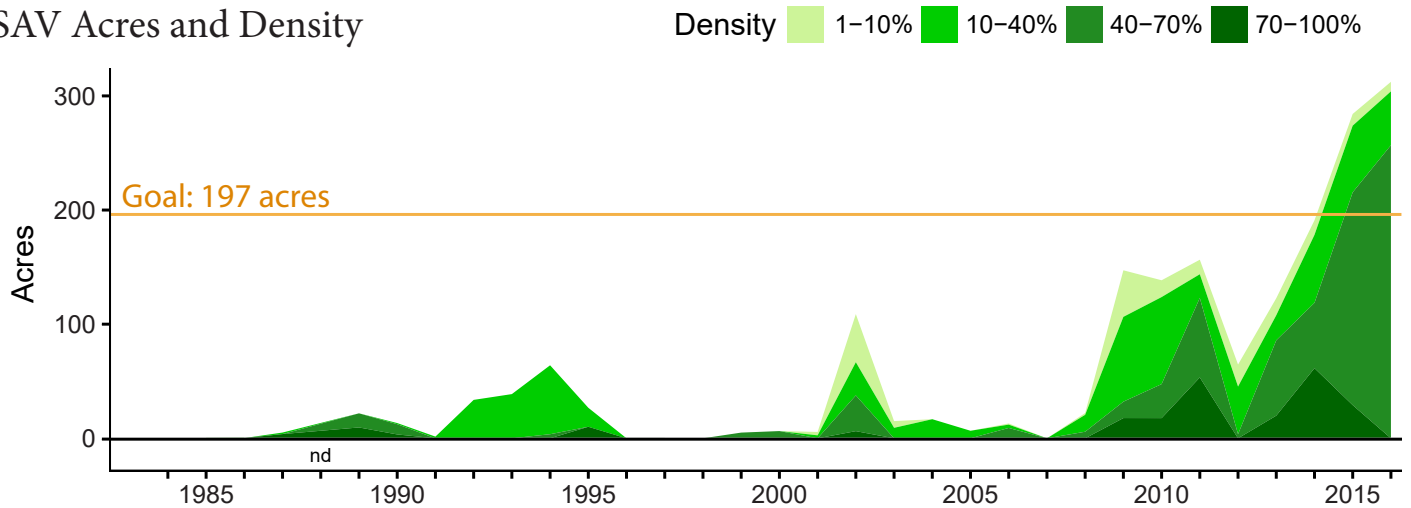
Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) beds consisting mostly of widgeongrass have been mapped here during the annual Chesapeake Bay-wide aerial survey, with large increases in distribution observed in 2015 and 2016.



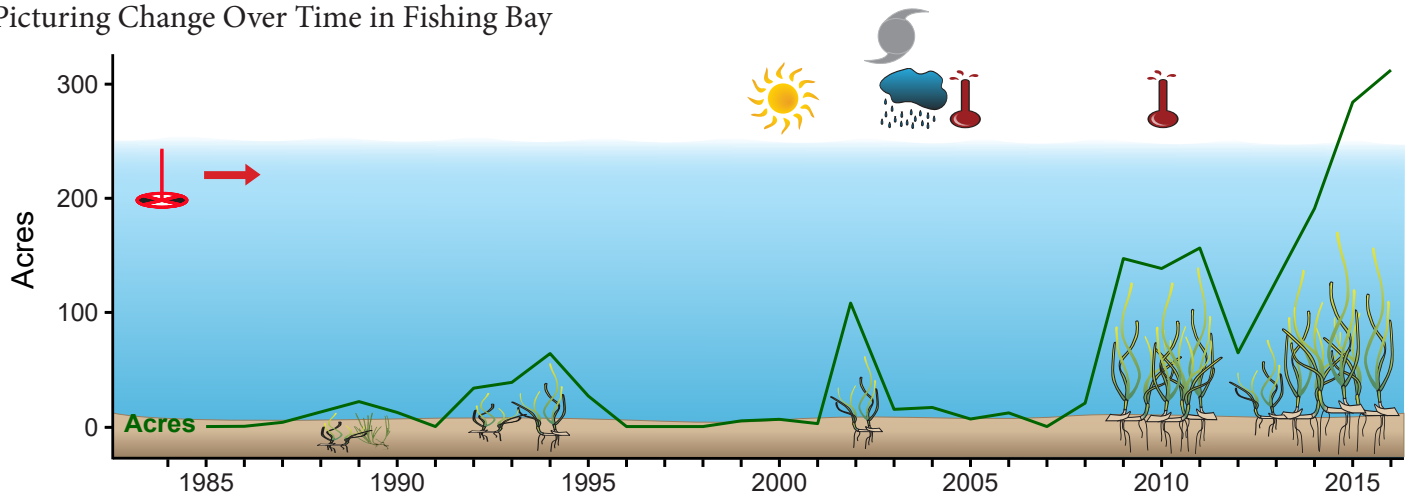
Executive Summary

SAV beds consisting primarily of widgeongrass have been reported from the Bay-wide aerial survey. The restoration goal of 197 acres of SAV for this segment was attained in 2015 and 2016 and can continue to be attained if water clarity is maintained and improved.

SAV Acres and Density



Picturing Change Over Time in Fishing Bay



Key

	Drought 1998-2002		Heat Events 2005, 2010		Eelgrass
	Wet Period 2003-2004		Poor Water Clarity		Widgeongrass
	Hurricane Isabel 2003		Ongoing Event		

Goal - Attainable

The goal of 197 acres was achieved and surpassed in 2015 and 2016 and can continue to be attained if water clarity is maintained and improved.

Historical Coverage

Historical and recent distribution not well known

There is minimal historical SAV data for Fishing Bay, but the 1971-1976 SAV surveys did document the presence of both widgeongrass and eelgrass. The most recent species data available, from 2002, reports widgeongrass and based on more recent species data from the areas around Fishing Bay, the recent resurgence of SAV here is likely widgeongrass as well. The last known observation of eelgrass was made by a citizen scientist in 1991.

Key Events

Tropical Storm Agnes

In June 1972, Tropical Storm Agnes contributed to the loss of any remaining eelgrass and widgeongrass in this segment.

Vulnerability/Resilience

Heat events

Heat events may influence the potential for eelgrass to recolonize this area, but may allow widgeongrass to persist because of its tolerance of higher water temperatures.

Water clarity

It may be possible for eelgrass to recolonize some of the area if water clarity improves, but it is more likely that widgeongrass will continue to expand in the region.

Management Implications

Nutrient and sediment reductions

Managers will need to focus on improving water clarity by reducing both sediment and nutrient pollution.

References

Stevenson and Confer 1978; Orth and Moore 1983, 1984; Moore et al. 2000, 2004; Orth et al. 2010a, 2010b, 2017; Patrick and Weller 2015; Lefcheck et al. 2017, 2018

www.vims.edu/bio/sav/SegmentAreaChart.htm (abundance data)

www.vims.edu/bio/sav/maps.html (species information)

www.eyesonthebay.org (Maryland water quality data)