

A MESSAGE FROM
**YOUR BALTIMORE HARBOR
WATERKEEPER**

Over the past fifteen years, our water quality monitoring program has grown from a handful of bacteria samples in the Baltimore Harbor to a full suite of water-health parameters at 51 stations in the waterways throughout the Baltimore region. In that time, our staff and volunteers have collected over 193,000 individual data points that paint a very clear picture: Baltimore's streams and rivers need your help.

As we face the impacts of climate change and the political and economic landscape continues to shift around us, our rigorous long-term monitoring program remains consistent. It is the scientific backbone of our work, and the data we collect is the driving force behind our enforcement, advocacy, and restoration work that will lead to cleaner waterways and healthier communities in the Baltimore region.

Blue Water Baltimore's monitoring program is more important than ever before. In a time when our bedrock environmental laws are under assault and state and federal funding for the environment is on the chopping block, understanding the health of our waterways is critical to protecting them. Join us as we continue the fight and celebrate fifteen years of science-based advocacy, community partnership, and meaningful progress towards clean water and strong communities.

Alice Volpitta

Alice Volpitta, Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper



WHAT DO THE SCORES MEAN?

- 80–100%** All water health indicators meet desired levels. Water quality in these locations tends to be very good, most often leading to very good habitat conditions for fish and shellfish.
- 60–79%** Most water health indicators meet desired levels. Water quality in these locations tends to be good, often leading to good habitat conditions for fish and shellfish.
- 40–59%** There is a mix of good and poor levels of water health indicators. Water quality in these locations tends to be fair, often leading to fair habitat conditions for fish and shellfish.
- 20–39%** Some or few water health indicators meet desired levels. Water quality in these locations tends to be poor, often leading to poor habitat conditions for fish and shellfish.
- 0–19%** Very few or no water health indicators meet desired levels. Water quality in these locations tends to be very poor, most often leading to very poor habitat conditions for fish and shellfish.



OUR MISSION

Blue Water Baltimore is home to the Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper and a proud member of the international Waterkeeper Alliance. Our mission is to protect and restore the quality of Baltimore's rivers, streams, and Harbor to foster a healthy environment, a strong economy, and thriving communities. As a donor-supported 501(c)(3) organization, we take a community-first approach to our work and we want to hear from you. Join us for an upcoming event, visit us at our Herring Run Nursery, sign up for our newsletter, or report pollution to us any time you see it.



**BLUE
WATER
BALTIMORE**



FOR MORE INFORMATION

about Blue Water Baltimore and your Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, visit www.BlueWaterBaltimore.org.



DATA DEEP DIVE

Tens of thousands of data points are tough to show on paper! That's why we built www.BaltimoreWaterWatch.org to showcase our digital report card of waterway health. Find scores for all the metrics that get rolled up into the overall eco-scores you see here and learn more about the strengths and challenges at each site. Need help making a decision about water recreation today? Check out our online "Current Conditions" map to see recent trends in bacteria and other water quality data at each of our 51 locations.



To see more information about the health of Baltimore's waterways and to download the 2024 data, visit www.BaltimoreWaterWatch.org.

Photo Credits

Cover: Alice Volpitta, Blue Water Baltimore
Inside Panel: Mike Morgan, @mikemorganphoto
Back Left: Sarah Holter, Blue Water Baltimore
Back Middle: Jacob Jackson, @therealherphero
Back Right: Sarah Holter, Blue Water Baltimore

**BLUE
WATER
BALTIMORE**

2025
BALTIMORE WATER WATCH

Blue Water Baltimore, home of the Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, measures and maps the health of our waterways. Find out more at www.BaltimoreWaterWatch.org

The map below displays overall ecosystem health scores calculated from Blue Water Baltimore’s 2024 water quality data using the Mid-Atlantic Tributary Assessment Coalition (MTAC) protocol. The first five parameters below are weighted equally and each station is scored from 0-100%.

CHLOROPHYLL
measures how much algae is in the water, and is a symptom of excessive nutrients. Some algae blooms are toxic to fish and harmful to human health.

DISSOLVED OXYGEN
is important for all aquatic animals. Fish, shellfish, and other life need oxygen to breathe. Algae blooms can cause dissolved oxygen levels to quickly rise and fall, which can lead to fish kills.

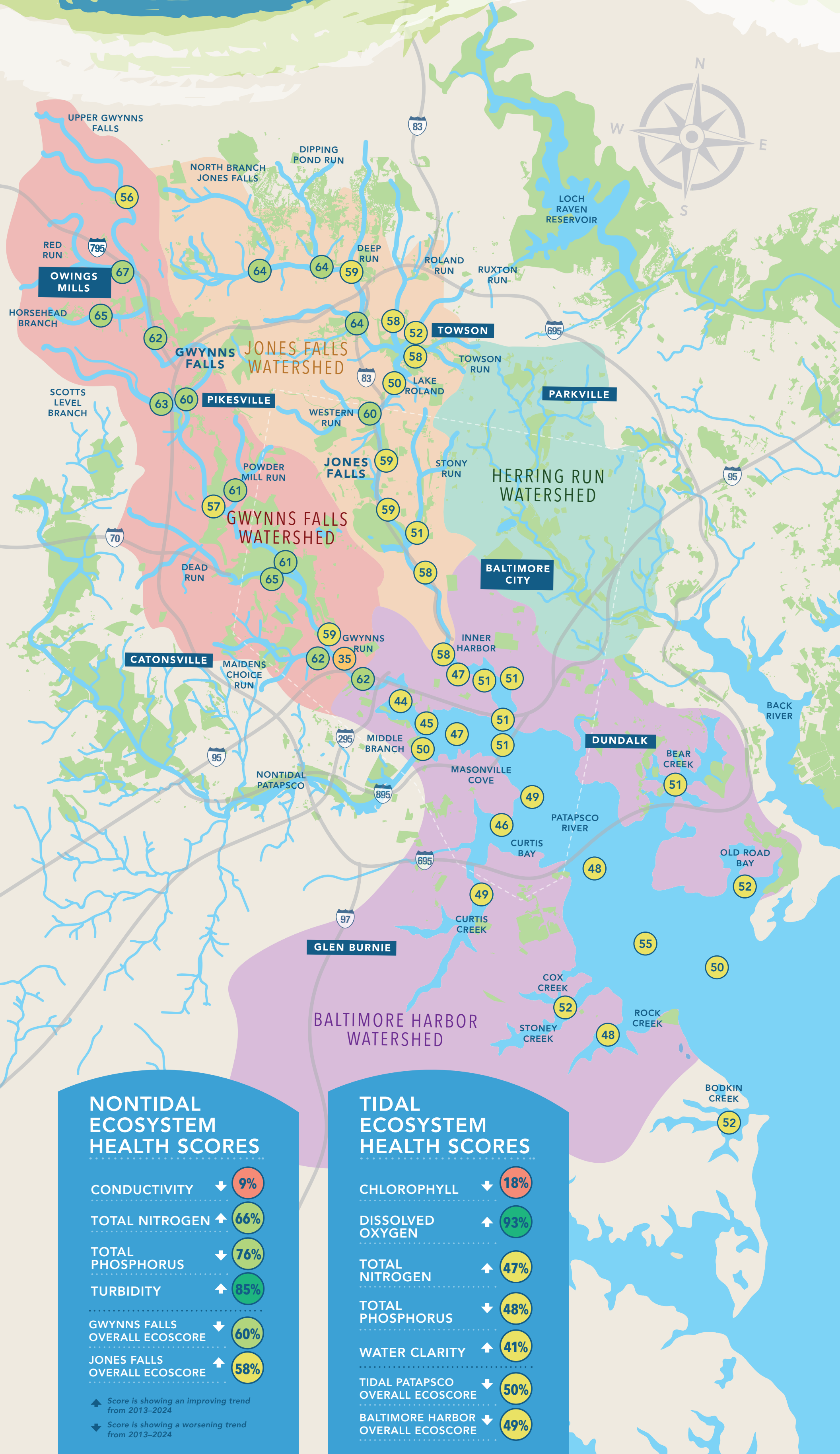
CONDUCTIVITY
measures salts and chemicals in our streams that could harm fish and other organisms. Over-application of road salts, polluted stormwater runoff, and sewage overflows contribute to high conductivity levels.

TURBIDITY & WATER CLARITY
are important for fish to thrive and for plants to have enough sunlight to grow in the water. Too much sediment from stormwater runoff makes the water cloudy.

TOTAL NITROGEN & TOTAL PHOSPHORUS
are nutrients that feed microscopic plants in the water, which can lead to algae blooms. Common sources of nutrient pollution are untreated sewage, urban stormwater runoff, pet waste, and fertilizers.

FECAL BACTERIA
is not part of the MTAC score shown on this map, but we monitor bacteria because it is a human health concern. Results are online at: BaltimoreWaterWatch.org.

2025 BALTIMORE WATER WATCH



Blue Water Baltimore monitors water quality at 51 stations in the rivers, streams and harbor of the Patapsco River watershed. Ecological health parameters are all weighted equally and scored according to the MTAC protocols. Visit www.BaltimoreWaterWatch.org to view annual scores for individual parameters, the latest results at each station, and the bacteria scores not shown on this map.