

ChesapeakeView: Everything you need to know about the bay

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Crabs, fishing, land use and pollution sources are frequently hot topics for researchers in the Chesapeake Bay area, but finding all the available information, especially remote sensing data, is frequently a chore. Now, ChesapeakeView, a project of the AmericaView consortium, brings together a variety of datasets and makes them available to anyone who needs them for research, planning or other studies.

"No simple place existed to find remote sensing information about land use, habitat changes and biodiversity," said Maurie Caitlin Kelly, director of informatics, Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment. "Researchers could spend days searching to find whatever data might be available."

AmericaView is a nationwide partnership of remote sensing scientists who support applied remote sensing research, workforce development, technology transfer, and kindergarten through 12th grade and higher science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. ChesapeakeView is the first regional consortium of AmericaView that consolidates information about the Chesapeake Bay and watershed.

"AmericaView is a consortium of [remote sensing](#) scientists and researchers who gather, analyze and information, usually on a state-by-state basis," said Kelly, who also co-chairs PennsylvaniaView. "We thought, why not do this on a regional basis especially as the Chesapeake Bay is its own physiographic area."

The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the United States. The bay, situated in Virginia and Maryland, is fed by the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania and New York, but people from across the country study aspects of the area's environment, wildlife, geology and geography.

"The University of Vermont is now a partner through their work with the Baltimore Ecosystem study," said Kelly. "We are receiving data from them from part of a large National Science Foundation project. They had all this data they were collecting and no where to put it."

New partners are welcome to share their data through ChesapeakeView as well.

ChesapeakeView collects base maps and imagery of all types, land cover, wildlife distribution, historical aerial photos, agricultural imagery, digital coastline images and any other digital datasets applicable to the region. The data and metadata are all available free to the public via the ChesapeakeView website at www.chesapeakeview.psu.edu.

The existing datasets and information will be reviewed today (Mar. 8) and tomorrow during the AmericaView meeting in Reston, Va.

"ChesapeakeView is not only for researchers," said Kelly. "We also want to provide access for people who just want to look at information, so some of the datasets can be viewed immediately on Google Earth or in our own mapping interface."

The Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment houses this project, which is funded by the U.S. Geological Survey through AmericaView.

"I think, because we are part of AmericaView, and that is a big component of the program, we will build more things for the

kindergarten through grade 16 levels," said Kelly. "The groups using the type of data available in ChesapeakeView are getting younger and younger and they have high expectations."

Provided by Pennsylvania State University

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