

Subbasin Information

Susquehanna River Basin Commission

[What's New](#)
[About Us & Meetings](#)
[Public Information](#)
[Programs & Activities](#)
[Hydrologic Conditions](#)
[Forms & Applications](#)
[Policies, Guidances,
Regulations](#)
[Planning](#)
[Subbasin Information](#)
[Press Releases](#)
[Bay Partners](#)
[Useful Links](#)
[E-mail Us](#)
[Site Map](#)
[Home](#)

Lower Susquehanna Subbasin

Geographic features: The northern portion of the subbasin contains ridges trending southwest to northeast and valleys of moderate width. The Susquehanna River cuts through these series of ridges and widens as it flows south to southeast through rolling hills and broad valleys of the central portion of the subbasin. The southern portion of the subbasin is characterized by metamorphosed sediments that have been intensely folded and faulted. This material caused the river to carve a deep gorge into the bedrock in a narrowing river valley. The Susquehanna River flows into the Chesapeake Bay at Havre de Grace, Maryland, providing over 50 percent of the freshwater inflow to the bay.

Of the six subbasins in the Susquehanna River Basin, the Lower Susquehanna Subbasin is the most developed. The steep river slope and narrow valley of the Lower Susquehanna gorge provide areas for hydropower development. This part of the subbasin is a major production area for electricity. Some of the most productive agricultural lands and largest population centers of the Susquehanna River Basin are located in the Lower Susquehanna Subbasin. Intense agricultural development occurs in many of the fertile limestone-type soils throughout the subbasin. A significant population is employed in government-related activities around Harrisburg, the state capital.

Drainage area:

Total - 5,809 square miles
 In MD - 280 square miles
 In PA - 5,529 square miles

Major tributaries: Conestoga, Conodoguinet, Swatara, Conewago, Penn's

Population:

Total - 1,761,500* (44% of the total basin population)
 In MD - 54,000
 In PA - 1,707,500

*Population estimated from 2000 Census

Major population centers: Harrisburg, Lancaster, York, Lebanon, Carlisle (all in Pa.)

Water Use:

89.0% Power Generation
 4.8% Industrial
 4.2% Municipal
 1.2% Agricultural
 0.8% Domestic

[Return to Subbasin Information main page.](#)

[What's New](#) | [About Us & Meetings](#) | [Public Information](#) | [Programs & Activities](#)
[Hydrologic Conditions](#) | [Forms & Applications](#) | [Subbasin Information](#) | [Policies & Regulations](#)
[Planning](#) | [Press Releases](#) | [Bay Partners](#) | [Useful Links](#)

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