

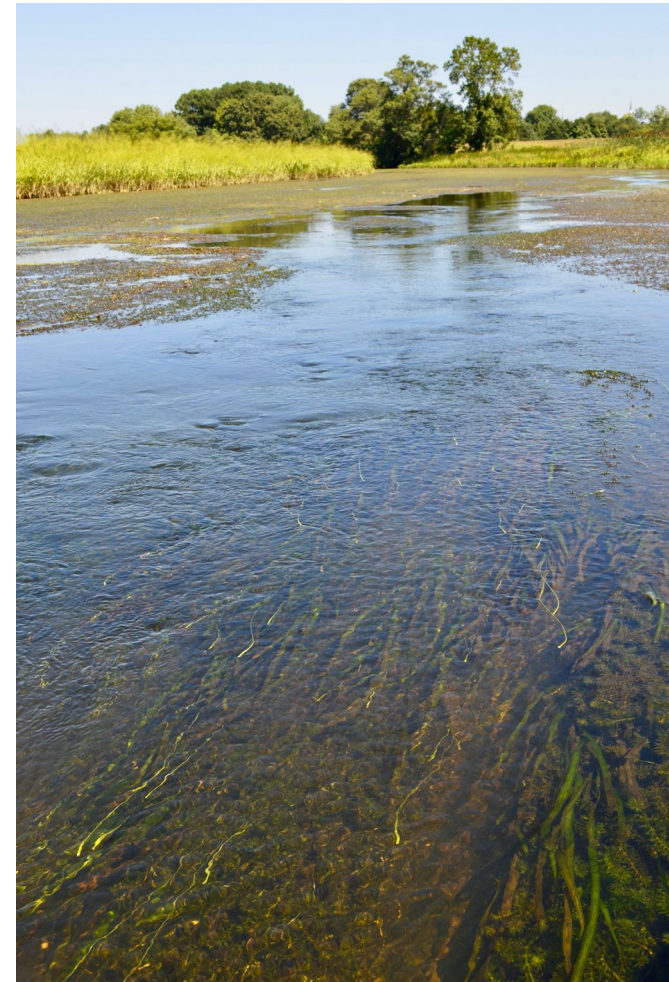
SAV Acreage in the Chesapeake Bay

Submerged weed beds and sea grass meadows are important habitats found in the Chesapeake Bay. These rooted plants are found in shallow water where sunlight can reach the bottom. Scientists refer to these plants as submerged aquatic vegetation, or SAVs. When many SAVs are present, it is a sign of good water quality.

SAVs provide a rich source of food for a wide variety of animals. Small fish prey upon insect larvae which hide amongst the grasses. Larger fish prey on the smaller fish, while eagles and osprey soar over the grass beds to hunt for fish of all sizes. Other birds, such as ducks and geese, feed directly on rooted plants and rely on them as a food source. Grass beds are also an excellent place for blue crabs to hide after they have shed their shells and are waiting for their new shell to harden.

On the next page, the amount of SAV acreage in the Chesapeake Bay has been put into the form of a bar graph. On the bottom of the graph are the years ranging from 1984 to 2018, while on the left-hand side of the graph is the total acreage of submerged grass beds recorded each year.

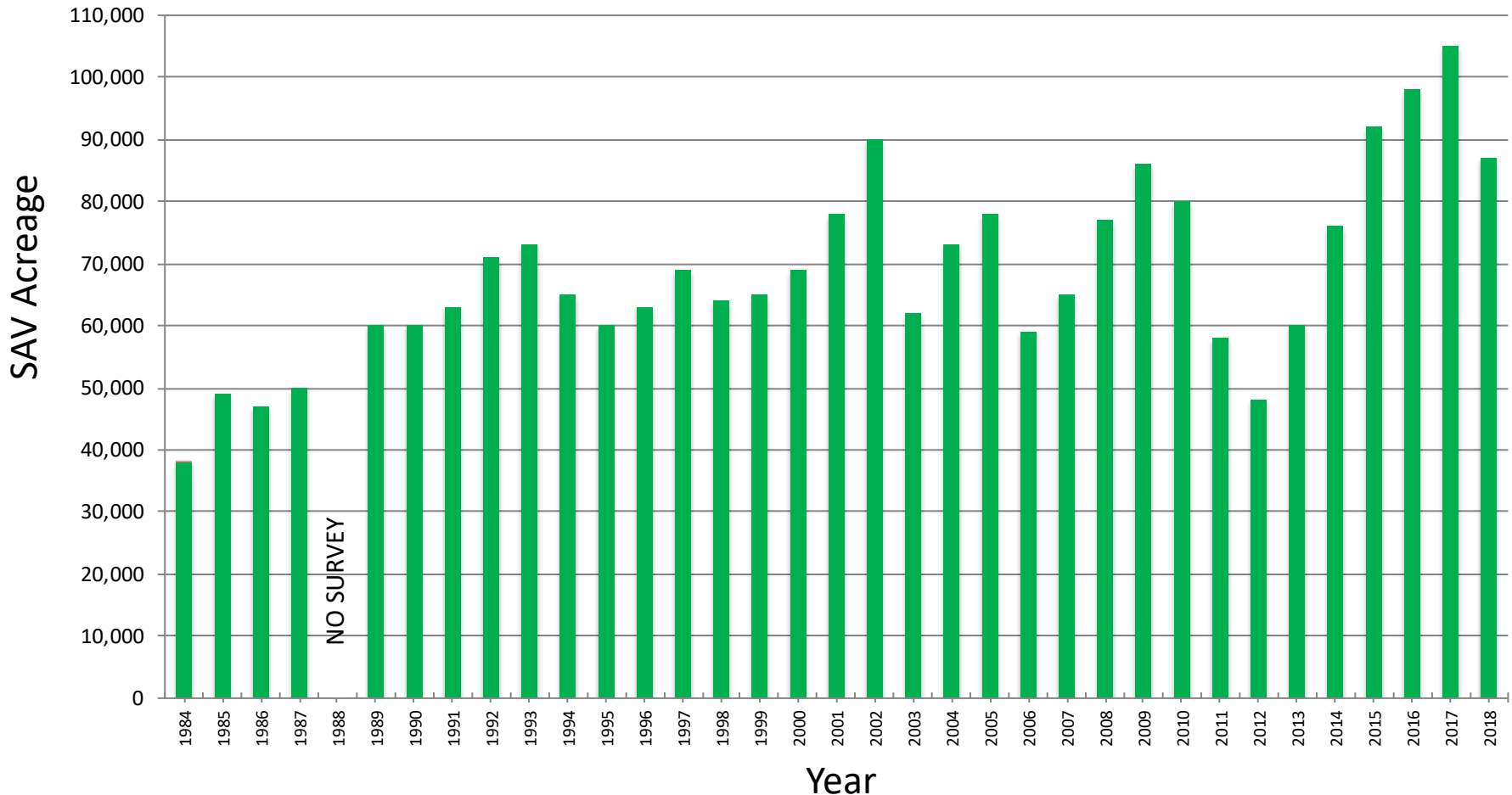
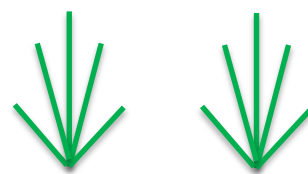
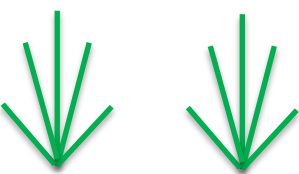
Examine the graph to see if you can detect any trends in the data, then answer the questions on the third page of this exercise to assess the health of SAVs in the Chesapeake.



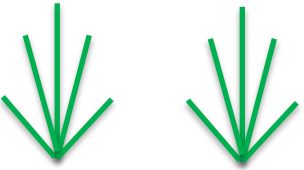


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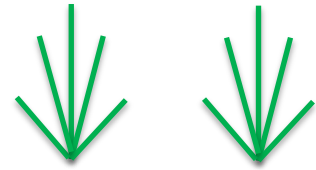
1984 - 2018



NOTES ON 2018: While 87,000 acres of SAVs were mapped in 2018, representing a decrease from 2017, the survey was incomplete due to heavy rainfall starting in July. As a result, it's possible that up to 108,000 acres of SAV may have been present Bay-wide that year.



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1. In what year was the least amount of SAV acreage observed?

2. In what year was the highest amount of SAV acreage observed?

3. How much more SAV acreage was present in the Chesapeake Bay in 2017 compared to 1984?

4. What is the trend in the SAV acreage data from 2012 to 2017?

5. What are some possible reasons that the amount of SAV acreage increased in the Chesapeake Bay between 2012 and 2017?

