CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL TREE SPECIES

NORTHERN ALLEGHENY PLATEAU (SUBREGION 3)

This region's forests will be affected by a changing climate and other stressors during this century. A team of managers and researchers created an assessment that describes the vulnerability of forests in the region (*Butler-Leopold et al. 2018*). This report includes information on observed and future climate trends, and also summarizes key vulnerabilities for forested natural communities. The Landscape Change Research Group recently updated the Climate Change Tree Atlas, and this handout summarizes that information. Full Tree Atlas results are available online at *www.fs.fed.us/nrs/atlas/*. Two climate scenarios are presented to "bracket" a range of possible futures. These future climate projections (2070 to 2099) provide information about how individual tree species may respond to a changing climate. Results for "low" and "high" emissions scenarios can be compared on the reverse side of this handout.

The updated Tree Atlas presents additional information helpful to interpret tree species changes:

- Suitable habitat - calculated based on 39 variables that explain where optimum conditions exist for a species, including soils, landforms, and climate variables.
- Adaptability - based on life-history traits that might increase or decrease tolerance of expected changes, such as the ability to withstand different forms of disturbance.
- Capability - a rating of the species' ability to cope or persist with climate change in this region based on suitable habitat change (statistical modeling), adaptability (literature review and expert opinion), and abundance (FIA data). The capability rating is modified by abundance information; ratings are downgraded for rare species and upgraded for abundant species.
- Migration Potential Model - when combined with habitat suitability, an estimate of a species' colonization likelihood for new habitats. This rating can be helpful for assisted migration or focused management (see the table section: "New Habitat with Migration Potential").

Remember that models are just tools, and they're not perfect. Model projections can't account for all factors that influence future species success. If a species is rare or confined to a small area, model results may be less reliable. These factors, and others, could cause a particular species to perform better or worse than a model projects. Human choices will also continue to influence forest distribution, especially for tree species that are projected to increase. Planting programs may assist the movement of future-adapted species, but this will depend on management decisions. Despite these limits, models provide useful information about future expectations. It's perhaps best to think of these projections as indicators of possibility and potential change.

SOURCE: *This handout summarizes the full model results for the Mid-Atlantic region, available at www.fs.fed.us/nrs/atlas/combined/resources/summaries. More information on vulnerability and adaptation in the Mid-Atlantic region can be found at www.forestadaptation.org/mid-atlantic. A full description of the models and variables are provided in Iverson et al. 2019 (www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/57857 and www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/59105) and Peters et al. 2019 (www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/58353).*

CLIMATE CHANGE CAPABILITY

POOR CAPABILITY	
Balsam fir	Paper birch
Black ash	Pin cherry
Black spruce	Pitch pine
Black willow	Quaking aspen
Bur oak	Red pine
Cucumbertree	Red spruce
Eastern cottonwood	Serviceberry
Eastern hemlock	Shingle oak
Eastern white pine	Striped maple
Gray birch	Sweet birch
Green ash	Tamarack (native)
Jack pine	White spruce
Northern pin oak	Yellow birch
Northern white-cedar	
FAIR CAPABILITY	
American beech	Boxelder
Black cherry	White ash
GOOD CAPABILITY	
American basswood	Mockernut hickory
American elm	Northern red oak
Bitternut hickory	Pignut hickory
Black locust	Red maple
Black oak	Sassafras
Black walnut	Scarlet oak
Blackgum	Shagbark hickory
Chestnut oak	Sugar maple
Chinkapin oak	Sycamore
Eastern hophornbeam	Virginia pine
Eastern redcedar	White oak
Hackberry	Yellow-poplar
NEW HABITAT WITH MIGRATION POTENTIAL	
Blackjack oak	Post oak
Cherrybark oak	Shortleaf pine
Common persimmon	Sourwood
Eastern redbud	Southern red oak
Loblolly pine	Sweetgum
Osage-orange	Water oak
Pawpaw	Winged elm

NIACS
Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science

www.forestadaptation.org

ADAPTABILITY: Life-history factors, such as the ability to respond favorably to disturbance, that are not included in the Tree Atlas model and may make a species more or less able to adapt to future stressors.

- \+ **HIGH** *Species may perform better than modeled*
- • **MEDIUM**
- – **LOW** *Species may perform worse than modeled*

HABITAT CHANGE: Projected change in suitable habitat between current and potential future conditions.

- ▲ **INCREASE** *Projected increase of >20% by 2100*
- ● **NO CHANGE** *Projected change of <20% by 2100*
- ▼ **DECREASE** *Projected decrease of >20% by 2100*
- ★ **NEW HABITAT** *Tree Atlas projects new habitat for species not currently present*

ABUNDANCE: Based on Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) summed Importance Value data, calibrated to a standard geographic area.

- \+ **ABUNDANT**
- • **COMMON**
- – **RARE**

CAPABILITY: An overall rating that describes a species' ability to cope or persist with climate change based on suitable habitat change class (statistical modeling), adaptability (literature review and expert opinion), and abundance within this region.

- △ **GOOD** *Increasing suitable habitat, medium or high adaptability, and common or abundant*
- ○ **FAIR** *Mixed combinations, such as a rare species with increasing suitable habitat and medium adaptability*
- ▽ **POOR** *Decreasing suitable habitat, medium or low adaptability, and uncommon or rare*

SPECIES	ADAPT	ABUN	LOW CLIMATE CHANGE (RCP 4.5) HABITAT CHANGE	LOW CLIMATE CHANGE (RCP 4.5) CAPABILITY	HIGH CLIMATE CHANGE (RCP 8.5) HABITAT CHANGE	HIGH CLIMATE CHANGE (RCP 8.5) CAPABILITY
American basswood	•	•	▲	△	▲	△
American beech	•	+	▼	○	▼	○
American elm	•	•	▲	△	▲	△
American hornbeam*	•	–	▼	▽	▲	○
Balsam fir	–	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Bigtooth aspen	•	•	▲	△	▼	▽
Bitternut hickory*	+	–	●	○	▲	△
Black ash	–	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Black cherry	–	+	●	○	●	○
Black locust*	•	•	▲	△	▲	△
Black oak	•	•	▲	△	▲	△
Black spruce	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Black walnut*	•	–	▲	△	▲	△
Black willow*	–	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Blackgum	+	–	▲	△	▲	△
Blackjack oak	+		★		★	
Boxelder*	+	–	●	○	●	○
Bur oak	+	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Cherrybark oak	•		★		★	
Chestnut oak	+	•	▲	△	▲	△
Chinkapin oak	•	–	▲	△	▲	△
Common persimmon*	+		★		★	
Cucumbertree*	•	–	●	▽	●	▽
Eastern cottonwood*	•	–	●	▽	●	▽
Eastern hemlock	–	+	▼	○	▼	▽
Eastern hophornbeam*	+	•	●	△	●	△
Eastern redbud*	•		★		★	
Eastern redcedar	•	–	▲	△	▲	△
Eastern white pine	–	•	●	▽	▼	▽
Flowering dogwood	•	–	●	▽	▲	△
Gray birch*	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Green ash*	•	–	●	▽	●	▽
Hackberry	+	–	▲	△	▲	△
Jack pine	+	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Loblolly pine	•		★		★	
Mockernut hickory	+	–	▲	△	▲	△
Northern pin oak	+	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Northern red oak	+	+	▲	△	▲	△
Northern white-cedar	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Paper birch	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Pawpaw*	•		★		★	
Pignut hickory	•	–	▲	△	▲	△
Pin cherry*	•	•	▼	▽	▼	▽
Pitch pine	•	–	●	▽	●	▽
Post oak	+		★		★	
Quaking aspen	•	•	▼	▽	▼	▽
Red maple	+	+	▼	△	▼	△
Red pine	–	•	▼	▽	▼	▽
Red spruce	–	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Sassafras*	•	–	▲	○	▲	△
Scarlet oak	•	•	●	○	▲	△
Serviceberry*	•	•	▼	▽	▼	▽
Shagbark hickory	•	•	▲	△	▲	△
Shingle oak	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Shortleaf pine	•		★		★	
Silver maple*	+	–	▼	▽	●	○
Sourwood	+		★		★	
Southern red oak	+		★		★	
Striped maple	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Sugar maple	+	+	▼	△	▼	△
Sweet birch	–	•	●	▽	▼	▽
Sweetgum	•		★		★	
Sycamore*	•	–	▲	△	▲	△
Tamarack (native)	–	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Virginia pine	•	–	▲	△	▲	△
Water oak	•				★	
White ash	–	+	●	○	●	○
White oak	+	•	▲	△	▲	△
White spruce	•	–	▼	▽	▼	▽
Winged elm	•		★		★	
Yellow birch	•	•	▼	▽	▼	▽
Yellow-poplar	+	–	▲	△	▲	△

**Species with low model reliability based on five statistical metrics of the habitat models that affect change class.*
See maps and tables for more information (www.fs.fed.us/nrs/atlas/combined/resources/summaries).

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