

# Level III and IV Ecoregions of EPA Region 3

Ecoregions denote areas of general similarity in ecosystems and in the type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources; they are designed to serve as a spatial framework for the research, assessment, management, and monitoring of ecosystems and ecosystem components. Ecoregions are directly applicable to the immediate needs of state agencies, including the development of biological criteria and water quality standards and the establishment of management goals for nonpoint-source pollution. They are also relevant to integrated ecosystem management, an ultimate goal of most federal and state resource management agencies.

The approach used to compile this map is based on the premise that ecological regions can be identified through the analysis of the spatial patterns and the composition of biotic and abiotic phenomena that affect or reflect differences in ecosystem quality and integrity (Wilken 1986; Omernik 1987, 1995). These phenomena include geology, physiography, vegetation, climate, soils, land use, wildlife, and hydrology. The relative importance of each characteristic varies from one ecological region to another regardless of the hierarchical level. A Roman numeral hierarchical scheme has been adopted for different levels of ecological regions. Level I is the coarsest level, dividing North America into 15 ecological regions. Level II divides the continent into 52 regions (Commission for Environmental Cooperation Working Group 1997). At level III, the continental United States contains 104 regions (United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA], 1998). Level IV is a further subdivision of level III ecoregions. Explanations of the methods used to define the USEPA's ecoregions are given in Omernik (1995), Griffith and others (1994), and Gallant and others (1989).

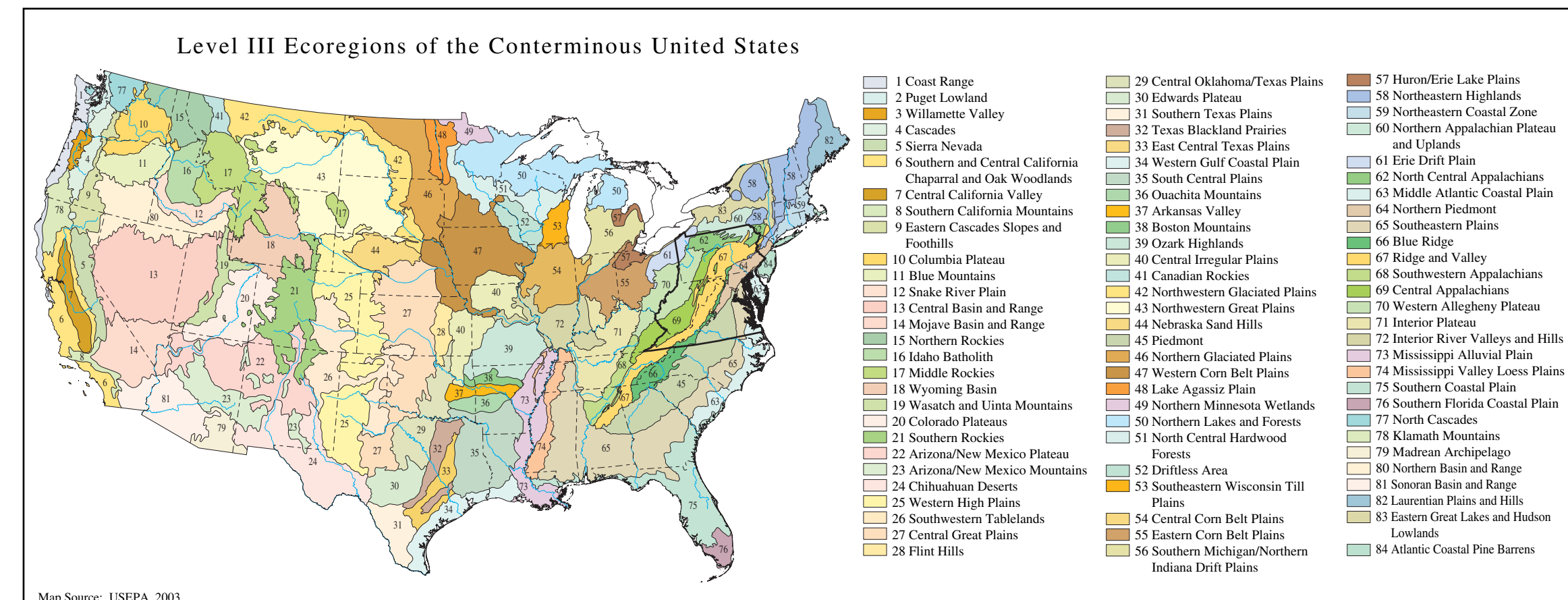
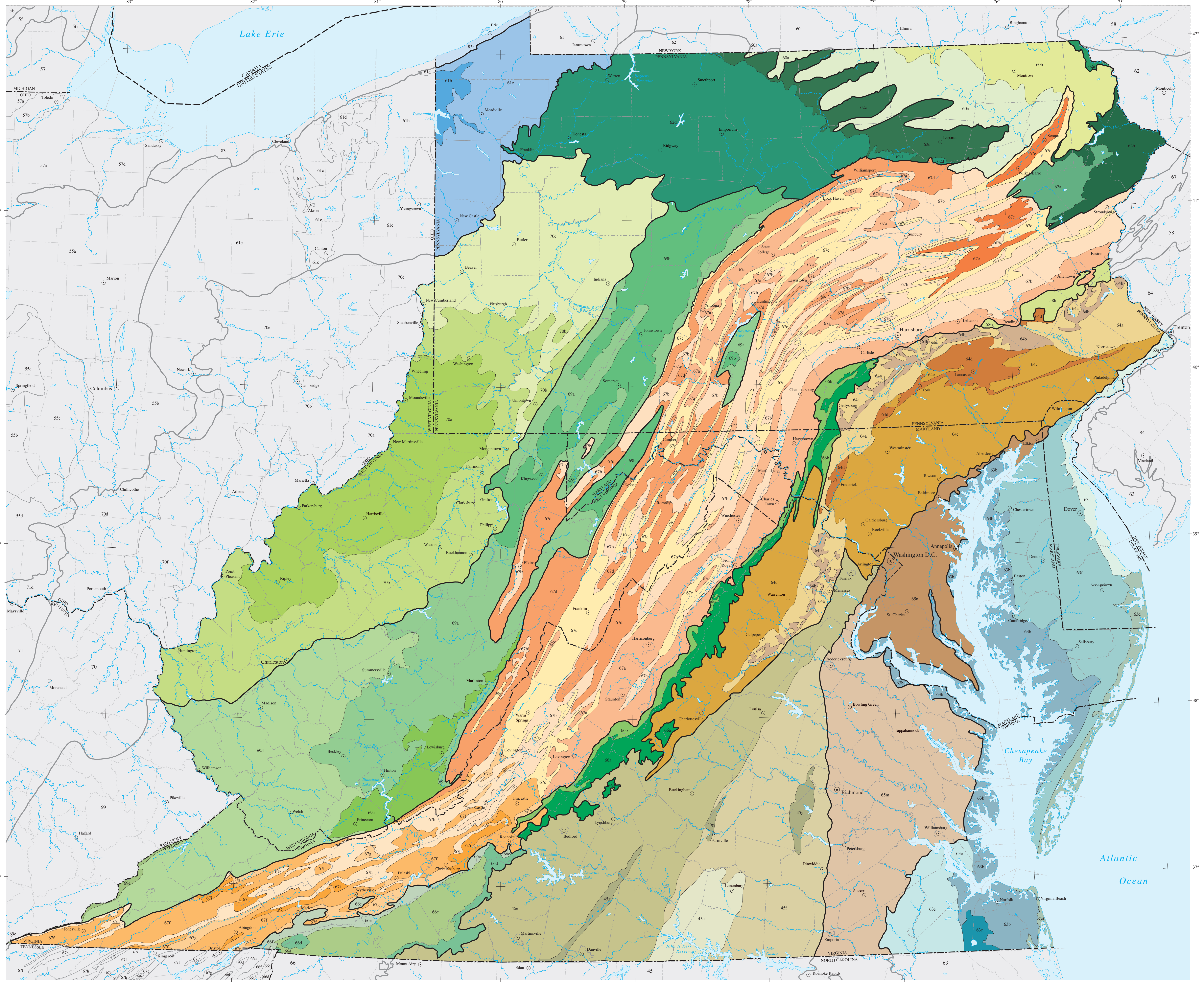
The level III and IV ecoregion map on this map was compiled at a scale of 1:250,000 and depicts revisions. It revises and subdivides earlier level III ecoregions that were compiled at a smaller scale (USEPA 1998; Omernik 1987). It includes previously published level IV ecoregions (Woods and Omernik, 1996; Woods and others, 1996). It expands level IV coverage to include, for the first time, western West Virginia and the Coastal Plain and Piedmont of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Compilation of this map was part of a collaborative project with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III Environmental Services Division, the EPA National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory (NHEERL), and state environmental resource management agencies from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and West Virginia.

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| <p><b>45 Piedmont</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45c Carolina Slate Belt</li> <li>45e Northern Inner Piedmont</li> <li>45f Northern Outer Piedmont</li> <li>45g Triassic Basins</li> </ul> <p><b>58 Northeastern Highlands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>58f Reading Prong</li> </ul> <p><b>60 Northern Appalachian Plateau</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60a Glaciated Low Plateau</li> <li>60b Northeastern Uplands</li> <li>61 Erie/Ontario Drift And Lake Plains</li> <li>61b Mosquito Creek/Pymatung Lowlands</li> <li>61c Low Lime Drift Plain</li> </ul> | <p><b>62 North Central Appalachians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>62a Poccono High Plateau</li> <li>62b Low Pocomos</li> <li>62c Glaciated Allegheny High Plateau</li> <li>62d Unglaciated Allegheny High Plateau</li> <li>62e Low Catskills</li> </ul> <p><b>63 Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63a Delaware River Terraces and Uplands</li> <li>63b Chesapeake-Pamlico Lowlands and Tidal Marshes</li> <li>63c Swamps and Peatlands</li> <li>63d Virginian Barrier Islands and Coastal Marshes</li> <li>63e Mid-Atlantic Flatwoods</li> <li>63f Delmarva Uplands</li> </ul> | <p><b>64 Northern Piedmont</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>64a Triassic Lowlands</li> <li>64b Diabase and Conglomerate Uplands</li> <li>64c Glaciated Allegheny High Plateau</li> <li>64d Piedmont Limestone/Dolomite Lowlands</li> </ul> <p><b>65 Southeastern Plains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65m Rolling Coastal Plain</li> <li>65n Chesapeake Rolling Coastal Plain</li> </ul> <p><b>66 Blue Ridge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>66a Northern Igneous Ridges</li> <li>66b Northern Sedimentary and Metasedimentary Ridges</li> <li>66c New River Upland</li> <li>66d Southern Crystalline Ridges and Mountains</li> <li>66e Southern Sedimentary Ridges</li> <li>66f Limestone Valleys and Coves</li> </ul> | <p><b>67 Ridge and Valley</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>67a Northern Limestone/Dolomite Valleys</li> <li>67b Northern Shale Valleys</li> <li>67c Piedmont Uplands</li> <li>67d Northern Dissected Ridges</li> <li>67e Anthracite Subregion</li> <li>67f Southern Limestone/Dolomite Valleys and Low Rolling Hills</li> <li>67g Southern Shale Valleys</li> <li>67h Southern Sandstone Ridges</li> <li>67i Southern Dissected Ridges and Knobs</li> </ul> <p><b>69 Central Appalachians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>69a Forested Hills and Mountains</li> <li>69b Uplands and Valleys of Mixed Land Use</li> <li>69c Greenbriar Karst</li> <li>69d Dissected Appalachian Ridges</li> <li>69e Cumberland Mountain Thrust Block</li> </ul> <p><b>70 Western Allegheny Plateau</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70a Pennian Hills</li> <li>70b Monongahela Transition Zone</li> <li>70c Pittsburgh Low Plateau</li> </ul> <p><b>83 Eastern Great Lakes and Hudson Lowlands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>83a Erie Lake Plain</li> </ul> |
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