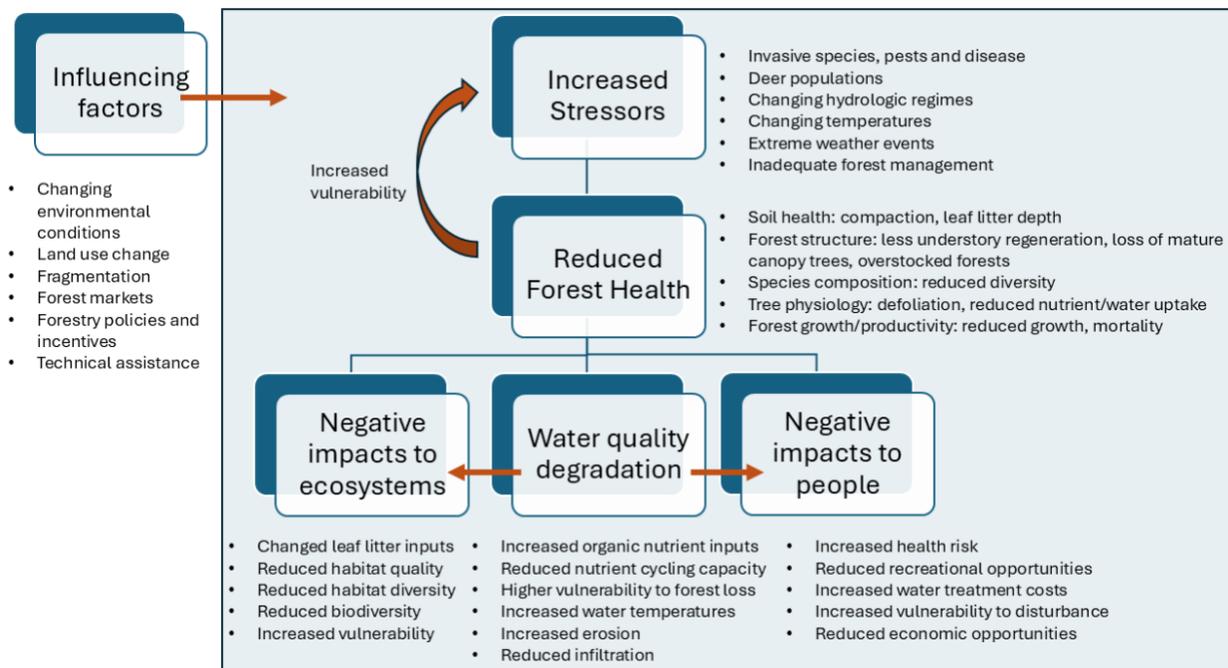


## Strengthening the Forest Health and Water Quality Connection

To lay the foundation for discussions at the workshop, the Steering Committee developed an initial conceptual model to more clearly outline the ways in which forest health can impact water quality, people and ecosystems; the stressors that impact forest health; and influencing factors that mediate various impact pathways. The model was designed to be clear and flexible for multiple uses and audiences, communicating both high-level connections and more detailed ecological mechanisms. While the model focuses in on water quality degradation as a key priority of the Chesapeake Bay Program, it acknowledges the impacts of reduced forest health on ecosystems and communities, recognizing these may be higher priorities for other stakeholder groups.



This initial conceptual model will be a starting point for discussions at the workshop. As we build out our understanding of the factors and stressors impacting forest health and water quality in the watershed, we invite workshop participants to help refine the conceptual model as appropriate. As final recommendations emerge from the workshop, the Steering Committee anticipates the final conceptual model could be used to help explain how the strategies we have developed will benefit forest health and water quality.

