

Rocky Fork-Blacklick 2011-2021 Tree Canopy Summary

Community & City Overview

The Rocky Fork-Blacklick community has an estimated population of 46,707 residents and encompasses an area of 12.5 square miles. In the Rocky Fork-Blacklick community, 29.0% of land is covered by tree canopy compared to 22.0% of land in the City of Columbus.

Trees provide essential ecosystem services. Franklin County's trees save \$10 million by absorbing stormwater, \$8 million by storing carbon, and \$15 million of avoided healthcare costs from air pollution¹.

Rocky Fork-Blacklick

379,800

Estimated total trees

+214 Acres

Area change in tree canopy from new plantings & incremental growth
(497.7 acres of gain - 284.2 acres of loss).

+2.7%

Change in tree canopy area

Columbus

4.8 Million

Estimated total trees

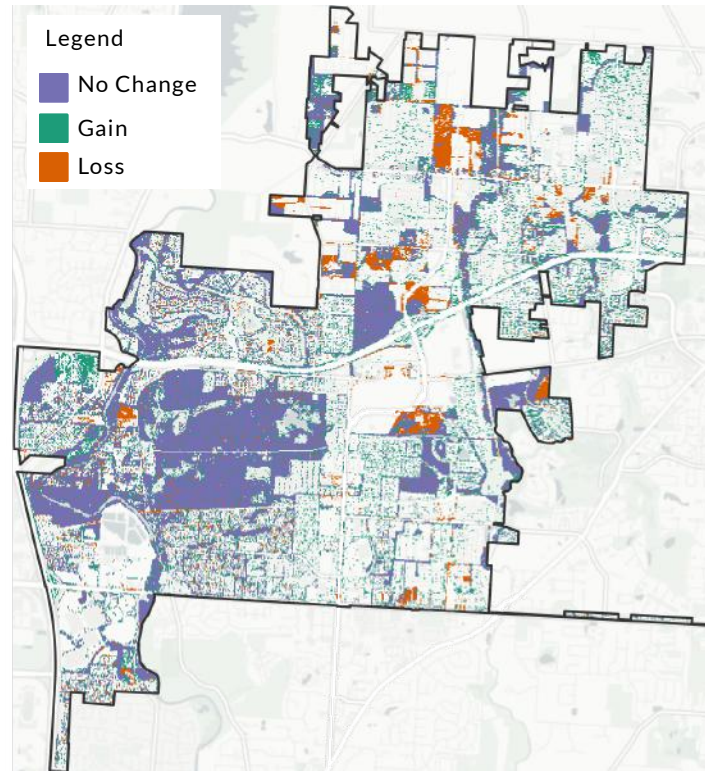
+3,353 Acres

Area change in tree canopy from new plantings & incremental growth
(7,871 acres of gain - 4,518 acres of loss).

+2.4%

Change in tree canopy area

2011-2021 Tree Canopy Change Map



Key Terms

Tree canopy is defined as the layer of leaves, branches, and stems that provide tree coverage of the ground when viewed from above.



Existing Tree Canopy - The amount of tree canopy present when viewed from above using aerial or satellite imagery.

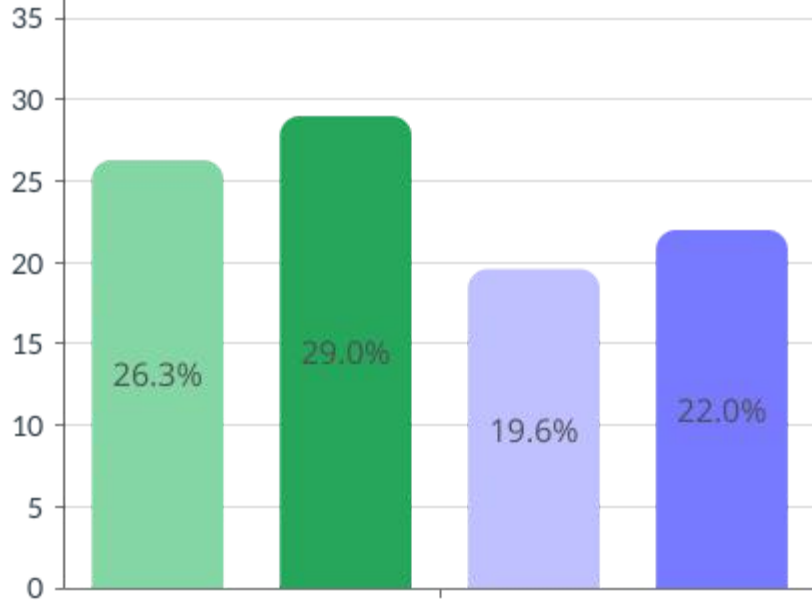


Possible Tree Canopy - Vegetated: Grass or shrub area that is theoretically available for the establishment of tree canopy.



Change in Tree Canopy - the percentage point change between the two time periods.

Tree Canopy (%)



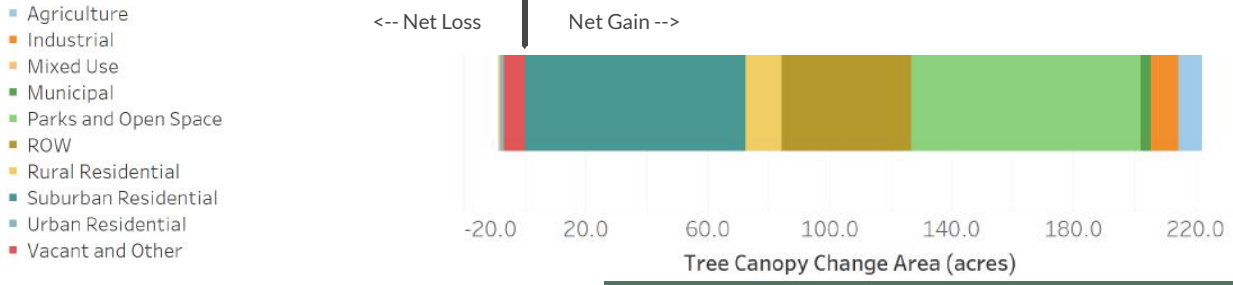
■ Rocky Fork-Blacklick 2011
 ■ Rocky Fork-Blacklick 2021
■ City of Columbus 2011
 ■ City of Columbus 2021

¹Ecosystem services calculations are based on the iTree Eco methodology and values for Franklin County. Nowak, D.J., 2021. Understanding i-Tree: 2021 summary of programs and methods. US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station.

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Canopy Change by Land Use

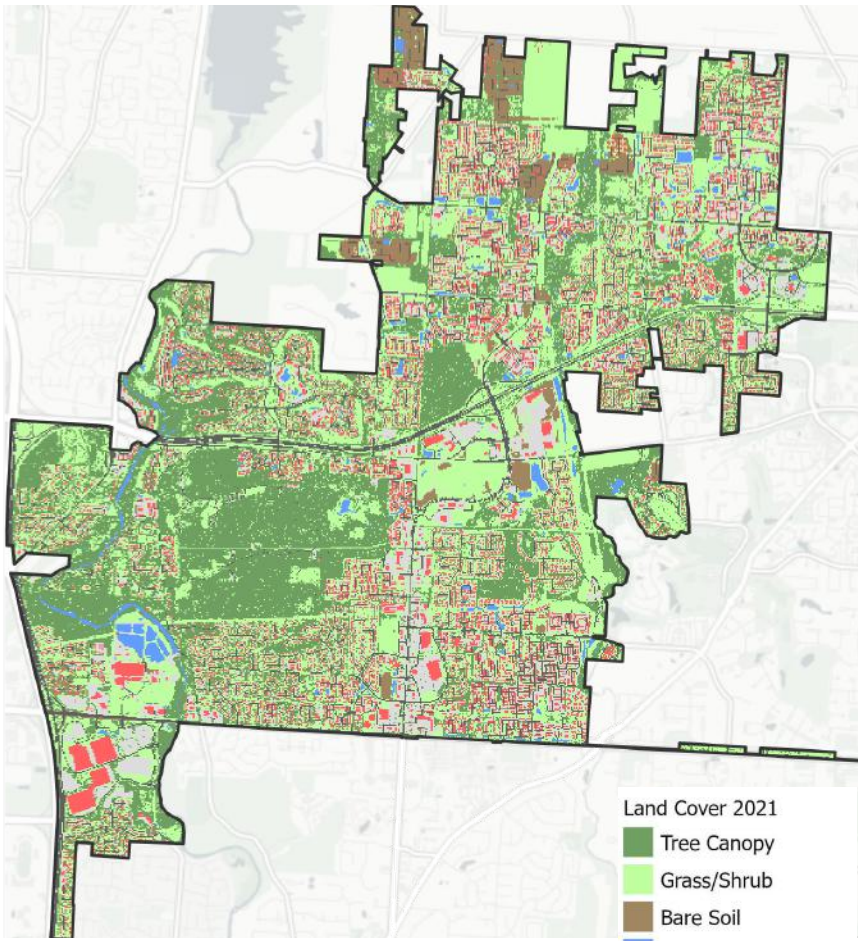
Rocky Fork-Blacklick gained the most canopy on Parks and Open Space land use and had the greatest net loss in canopy on Vacant and Other land use.



Possible Tree Canopy

In Rocky Fork-Blacklick, 36% of land could be planted with additional trees, compared to 37% in the City of Columbus. Tree canopy is one of seven classifications from the the high-resolution land cover map (right) that forms the foundation of this project. In this assessment, any areas with no trees, buildings, roads, or bodies of water are considered Possible Tree Canopy and represent locations in which trees could theoretically be established without having to remove paved surfaces.

2021 Land Cover Map



Environmental Equity

- 1. Tree Canopy:** The extent of canopy cover in Rocky Fork-Blacklick is 29.0% of its total land area while it is 22.0% for the City of Columbus.
 - 2. Temperature:** The average high in °F for Rocky Fork-Blacklick is 92 (max. 100), and 96 (max. 107) for the City of Columbus. Combining this information with tree canopy values allows us to understand the role trees could play in reducing heat islands.
 - 3. Asthma Rate:** Average asthma rates per 1,000 residents in Rocky Fork-Blacklick are 9.09 while this value is 10.48 for the City of Columbus. Combining this information with tree canopy values allows us to understand the role trees could play in removing pollutants from the air.
- Income:** Rocky Fork-Blacklick has a median household income of \$63,780 , while the City of Columbus has one of \$45,675. Combining this information with tree canopy values allows us to understand the role trees could play in promoting equity for socio-economically vulnerable groups.

Recommendations



Preserving existing tree canopy is the most effective means for securing future tree canopy, as loss is an event but gain is a process.



Plant new trees in areas where tree canopy is low or in locations where there has been tree canopy removed to help grow canopy.



Refer to the full Tree Canopy Assessment and corresponding geographic data available by the City of Columbus and its communities to help manage trees.