



PHASE 3 WIP NEWS

Pennsylvania. Partnership. Progress



October 2020

Hello partners for water quality!

We have much news on the state Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) and Countywide Action Plans for Pennsylvania's share of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Please consider how you might help support and get the word out on this great work to improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment runoff pollution. And share this newsletter (or the [subscribe page](#)) with your networks to help spread the word on the progress we're making in Pennsylvania. Thank you for your dedicated work for healthy waters and healthy communities.

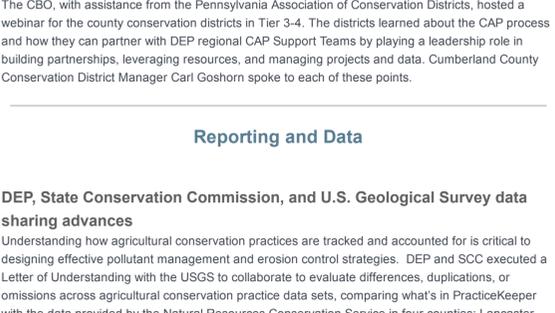
For more information on plan development and implementation, visit the [Phase 3 WIP website](#). For a broader look at the challenge of reducing runoff pollution in the watershed, visit [Healthy Waters. Healthy Communities.](#) — *DEP Chesapeake Bay Office*

State Action Leaders

[State action leaders](#) guide Phase 3 WIP implementation, review and revise milestones as needed, and support countywide implementation efforts. They're champions for clean water choices and best management practice (BMP) education and installation in their areas of influence.

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn joined City of Reading citizens and officials on September 24 to release the new Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, [Recreation for All](#). The plan presents 20 recommendations and 70 action steps to meet the outdoor recreation needs of all Pennsylvanians. Secretary Dunn also announced DCNR 2020 grants for community parks, small communities, and partnerships. The core of DCNR's municipal investment program, these grants will support planning and development or rehabilitation of local community parks and recreation facilities, including parks that will have BMPs and help municipalities in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed manage urban stormwater to reduce pollution.



DEP Chesapeake Bay Office

Partnering with Tier 1-2 counties on progress reports, budget requests
The DEP Chesapeake Bay Office (CBO) is currently supporting the Phase 3 WIP Tier 1 and 2 counties in compiling their annual Countywide Action Plan (CAP) progress reports. The reports are due to the CBO by mid-October. We're also working with the counties on budget requests for their 2021 CAP coordinators and CAP Implementation Grants to get projects on the ground. This support comes from the Environmental Stewardship Fund.

Helping to lay the foundation of outreach and engagement in Tier 3-4 counties
The DEP regional CAP Support Teams are proving to be invaluable in outreach to the Tier 3-4 counties. Through their outreach to counties about the Phase 3 WIP and CAP process, most counties have agreed to create a CAP. Discussion with the counties focuses on identifying who'll take the lead in the county and whether/how the counties will collaborate with one another to maximize coordination efforts. Because Tier 3-4 counties have smaller nutrient loads, they're encouraged to collaborate regionally to make their nutrient reduction effort more efficient.

The CBO, with assistance from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, hosted a webinar for the county conservation districts in Tier 3-4. The districts learned about the CAP process and how they can partner with DEP regional CAP Support Teams by playing a leadership role in building partnerships, leveraging resources, and managing projects and data. Cumberland County Conservation District Manager Carl Goshorn spoke to each of these points.

Reporting and Data

DEP, State Conservation Commission, and U.S. Geological Survey data sharing advances

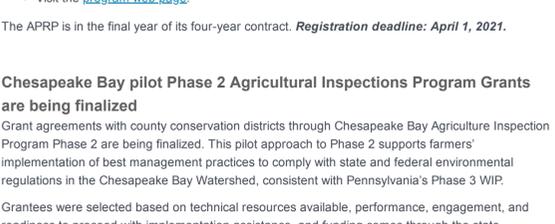
Understanding how agricultural conservation practices are tracked and accounted for is critical to designing effective pollutant management and erosion control strategies. DEP and SCC executed a Letter of Understanding with the USGS to collaborate to evaluate differences, duplications, or omissions across agricultural conservation practice data sets, comparing what's in PracticeKeeper with the data provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in four counties: Lancaster, York, Juniata, and Franklin.

A further goal of this project is to analyze agricultural practices recorded and reported across state and federal data sets.

Funding Assistance

Twenty-three projects are awarded 2020 Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Grants

Congratulations to 23 projects that have just received [\\$4.9 million in DEP 2020 Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Grants](#). These projects will improve watershed health by reducing nutrient, sediment, iron, and aluminum runoff and acidity in local waters. Section 319 grant funding helps put boots on the ground to carry out best management practices specified in Watershed Implementation Plans for [36 watersheds around the state](#). It also funds development of new plans for additional watersheds. Priority consideration is given to Pennsylvania's share of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.



The Section 319 program tackles the broad challenge of nonpoint source pollution watershed by watershed, supporting partnerships and projects that adhere to data-grounded plans identifying which best practices will reduce the most pollution where, and monitoring outcomes to ensure success.

DEP SECRETARY PATRICK MCDONNELL



Applications for 2021 Section 319 Grants are being accepted

Incorporated watershed associations, counties, municipalities, schools, and many other types of organizations can [apply now for 2021 DEP Section 319 Grants to develop or carry out Watershed Implementation Plans](#). These grants support projects that improve and protect Pennsylvania's waters from nonpoint source pollution associated with agriculture, abandoned mine drainage, stormwater runoff, energy resource extraction, and streambank and shoreline degradation. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals for multiple WIP project sites and/or multiple proposals, particularly if the projects may significantly improve water quality. **Application deadline: 5:00 pm, October 23.**

Applications for DEP Environmental Education Grants are being accepted

Formal and nonformal educators can apply now for 2021 DEP Environmental Education Grants. Water quality, environmental justice, and climate projects are top priorities for funding. Applicants who aren't sure where to start can [view the webinar on how to apply](#). **Application deadline: 11:59 pm, December 11.**

Agriculture Plan Reimbursement Program is open

Farmers can be reimbursed for the cost of getting assistance in writing their agricultural plans through the DEP Agriculture Plan Reimbursement Program. There's almost \$900,000 available to reimburse farmers for privately developed Agriculture Erosion & Sedimentation, Conservation, Nutrient Management, and Manure Management Plans

For information:

- Contact Joshua Glace, Larson Design Group, at jglace@larsondesigngroup.com or 570-374-5700 ext. 4011;
- Contact Amy Zerbe, TeamAg Inc., at amyz@teamaginc.com or 570-888-0538;
- Visit the [program web page](#).

The APRP is in the final year of its four-year contract. **Registration deadline: April 1, 2021.**

Chesapeake Bay pilot Phase 2 Agricultural Inspections Program Grants are being finalized

Grant agreements with county conservation districts through Chesapeake Bay Agriculture Inspection Program Phase 2 are being finalized. This pilot approach to Phase 2 supports farmers' implementation of best management practices to comply with state and federal environmental regulations in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, consistent with Pennsylvania's Phase 3 WIP.

Grantees were selected based on technical resources available, performance, engagement, and readiness to proceed with implementation assistance, and funding comes through the state Environmental Stewardship Fund. Awards are as follows:

- Adams County Conservation District: \$236,250
- Chester County Conservation District: \$472,500
- Lancaster County Conservation District: \$1,717,500 (includes an additional \$300,000 of federal monies that must go to the most effective basins in Lancaster County)

These are multi-year agreements, with the potential to add funding each year or as needed.

Funding for lawn conversion is available from DCNR

DCNR will have a small amount of funding available in 2021 for lawn conversion practices, including conservation landscaping (converting lawn to native managed meadow) and forest planting (converting lawn areas to trees/forests). Lawns must be at least a quarter-acre. For information, contact Kelsey Miller at kemille@pa.gov. And visit the new [DCNR Lawn Conversion website](#) to learn more and sign up for the newsletter.

Annual free workshops on how to apply for DCNR Community Conservation Grants will be online in November, with the Central Pennsylvania workshop scheduled for November 12. [Register here](#), and spread the word!

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service funding programs: First cut-off dates approaching

The Pennsylvania NRCS encourages agricultural producers and landowners to apply for financial assistance to improve natural resources on their farm and forest land.

Funding is available through many programs: Conservation Stewardship, Environmental Quality Incentives, Agricultural Management Assistance, Agricultural Land Easements, Wetland Reserve Easements, and the Regional Conservation Partnership. These programs support a range of best management practices to improve water quality and soil health. Learn more about them at the [NRCS Pennsylvania website](#).

NRCS accepts applications year-round, but reviews applications and makes funding selections in a series of cut-off deadlines. Applications submitted by the first cut-off date have a higher chance of application approval in 2021, as funding is limited. **Cut-off dates: December 18, 2020 and February 19, 2021.**

County Progress

Adams (Pilot - Implementation)

Adams County is seeking members from around the county for their three CAP advisory teams: agriculture, urban, and legislature. The CAP coordination team is working with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership and 19 landowners to install 1,150 trees and shrubs this fall. This will yield approximately 6 acres of riparian buffers. Landowners are installing their own trees and shrubs and reporting progress and photos. All plantings will be completed by October 31.

The county is also working with DCNR to use a C2P2 Multifunctional Riparian Forest Buffer Grant to plant 2.31 acres at a private landowner and 2.75 acres at the county Agriculture Center. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has provided a Stream ReLeaf Grant for a 1.1-acre native tree and shrub installation. These projects will be included in the CAP.

The Adams County Conservation District submitted an article to the Gettysburg Times and introducing the new CAP coordinator, the program itself, and the advisory team structure. It's also sending press releases locally describing the CAP activities and seeking participation.

Bedford (Tier 2 - Planning)

Bedford County anticipates a completed CAP in October. The CAP Steering Committee has identified the county's priority initiatives and areas of focus. Action teams are forming around them and outlining the who, what, where, when, and how to accomplish their goals. The county's CAP Management Team applied for, and received, a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant to get boots on the ground to identify opportunities and projects in select watersheds in support of the CAP.

The county is working on getting an accurate count of the total number of farms. In recent years, the number of dairy farms and agriculture operations has decreased, and the county wants to choose BMP options that align with what is on the ground now. This ties in with work the Preservation of Natural Areas Action Team is doing to identify the number of farms that are essentially natural open fields and identifying opportunities there.

Centre (Tier 2 - Planning)

Centre County has completed its list of county programmatic initiatives and reporting and tracking initiatives and is cross-referencing it with an initial outreach partner schedule based on leader outreach feedback, to ensure they support each other. The county anticipates having its draft CAP completed in October.

Data collection on existing BMPs remains a priority, using a mix of field work and remote sensing technology options, currently being explored. Centre County is also exploring abandoned mine drainage options for Bay model crediting.

The CAP coordinator spoke at a Chesapeake Conservancy workshop, where she identified several high-impact projects in the county that the CAP will help to advance. Centre County continues to build CAP-supporting partnerships with local academic institutions. Penn State landscape professors are seeking opportunities for grad students to do online data analysis and mapping, since they can't be in the field this fall due to COVID. The county is also reaching out to Dickinson College's ALLARM program for assistance in ensuring the county data sets can be included in the Bay model.

The county has expanded its agriculture outreach to an agriculture financing organization, the county Farm Bureau, and Penn State Extension, and has dedicated staff to conduct farm visits and meetings to talk about the CAP and explore how best to get information on existing BMPs in order to credit farmers for work they've done.

Cumberland (Tier 2 - Planning)

Cumberland County is finalizing its list of county programmatic initiatives and reporting and tracking initiatives, and is conducting extensive partner outreach. The county is organizing its CAP with a corridor of opportunity analysis. We presented this approach to the other Tier 2 and Pilot counties and DEP CBO staff in a county spotlight on September 9. Cumberland County anticipates having its draft CAP completed in October.

The county is focusing on getting data on existing BMPs through field work, existing GIS data layers, and remote sensing technology options. We've met with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Chesapeake Conservancy to discuss using lidar and aerial imagery data in future verification processes.

The county is also looking at financing strategies and assisting farmers in choosing agriculture financing. Discussions are ongoing with agriculture-sourced farm credit and Penn State Extension. The county has also applied for National Fish and Wildlife funding to further its initiatives.

Coalition-building efforts are focusing on agriculture, MS4, municipalities, land conservation, and watershed organizations. Lancaster Farmland Trust is conducting farm visits and meetings to talk about the CAP and explore how best to get information on existing BMPs in order to credit farmers for work they've done.

Franklin (Pilot - Implementation)

The CAP steering committee is prioritizing projects and funding and determining where to focus CAP efforts by creating an opportunity and needs map. The CAP coordinator has reached out to the Council of Governments to discuss how the CAP can align with its efforts. In preparation for next year's construction season, the county is developing a spreadsheet identifying projects and needed funds and ranking them.

The county is developing content for the county conservation district's Winter Ag Industry meeting. The CAP coordinator will encourage attendees to raise awareness of the CAP among farmers and ask for their help in incorporating CAP goals into their work. The CAP coordinator is developing an informational one-pager that will identify types of BMPs farmers can put on their land, the benefits that can be achieved, possible repercussions of what will happen if they don't participate, a call to action, and conservation district contacts.

The Conservation District met with the Capital Resource Conservation and Development Area Council about its roadside cropland transect survey, to assure that the survey is accurately capturing the county's agriculture lands.

The Conservation Farmer of the Year spoke about how BMPs improved his farm at the conservation district's Summer Conservation Luncheon in August, which was attended by about 40 people. Due to COVID19, the district cancelled the farm tour and instead hired a photographer to take pictures of farm BMPs for the luncheon.

Lancaster (Pilot - Implementation)

The CAP coordination team is developing a stream delisting strategy based on catchment and Index of Biological Integrity scores. [Lancaster Clean Water Partners](#), a diverse partnership that works with the CAP coordination team on water quality, hosted their full partners meeting, titled "Looking at the Big Picture," on September 11 to provide updates and further the collective effort for clean and clear streams by 2025 and 2040. (See the [meeting video](#).) The eight awardees for Lancaster County's share of DEP CAP Implementation Grant funding were announced:

- **Fishing Creek Stream Tributary Restoration and Buffer Installation** – This project will be this farm's last needed BMP and will complete its conservation plan. The tributary will quickly go from producing sediment and nutrient to filtering these pollutants. This is located in the Fishing Creek Watershed.
- **Murry Ridge Park Green Infrastructure Improvements** – West Hempfield Township will redirect stormwater into a vegetated swale, construct a bioretention basin, plant a riparian buffer, install landscaping to attract pollinators and songbirds, retrofit the dry detention basin to a dry extended detention basin, add a nature trail, and incorporate educational signage. These improvements will reduce stormwater rates and volumes, increase groundwater supplies, filter stormwater pollutants, increase biodiversity and habitat for native wildlife species, and educate the public on these benefits. The project is in West Branch Little Conestoga Creek Watershed.
- **Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Turkey Hill Clean Water Partnership** – This project will enable two farmers in this partnership to install many conservation practices that will decrease pollutants entering local streams and rivers. The Turkey Hill Clean Water Partnership promotes the importance of supporting farmers in protecting water quality and of taking action as individuals.
- **Paradise Township Vegetated Swale** – The township will partner with the landowner to retrofit a concrete-lined swale to a vegetated swale. The swale will include amended soils and be planted with a variety of native perennial flowers and grasses. These improvements will reduce stormwater rates and volumes, increase groundwater supplies, filter stormwater pollutants, and increase biodiversity and habitat for native wildlife species. This is a 13-acre property in the urbanized area of the township in the Pequea Creek Watershed.
- **Lancaster City Green Infrastructure Retrofit** – The City of Lancaster is working with James Street Mennonite Church to implement a green infrastructure retrofit project on their parking lot to manage stormwater. The project will include five subsurface infiltration beds, capturing a total of 5,026 cubic feet of stormwater from a drainage area of 59,109 square feet of impervious area. The parking lot will be standard asphalt, with the stormwater directed to the five infiltration beds via surface inlets.
- **Lancaster City Street Tree Planting** – Lancaster City Commercial and Lancaster Tree Tenders are installing 20 street trees at strategic locations along commercial hubs in the city. City staff will do project prep and planting. Tree Tenders will provide tree care details (in English and Spanish) plus species information to the property owners.
- **Woerth Hollow Farm Streambank Restoration** – This farm is implementing a streambank restoration project that will make it the fourth planted riparian buffer along Coopers Run and the third farm along the stream to complete stream bank restoration and fish habitat improvements. Additional funding is coming from EQUIP, CREP, and the Keystone 10 Million Trees partnership.
- **Maximum Impact BMP Implementation on Strategic Farms** – Lancaster Farmland Trust has identified strategic farms in East Lampeter Township with significant needs related to stream corridors and livestock management. Along with project partner TeamAg, Inc., LFT has developed a list of site-specific BMPs for the farms that will result in significant nutrient and sediment reductions in the Lower Conestoga Watershed. The project will address 15 Lancaster CAP priorities including a round manure storage area, stream bank fencing, buffer planting, and a roofed stacking structure. The project is expected to reduce 5,625 lbs. of nitrogen per year, 2,562 lbs. of phosphorus per year, and 2.9 tons of sediment per year.

Lebanon (Tier 2 - Planning)

Lebanon County is focusing on the details of the priority initiatives and focus areas for inclusion in its CAP document. The steering committee and action teams that are forming around these priority initiatives are tasked with outlining the details for each area of focus – the who, what, where, when, and how to accomplish their goals. The Coordinating Action Team is identifying how to bring the extensive efforts going on across the county into a centralized collaboration place.

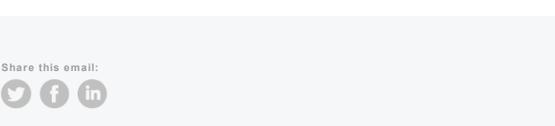
York (Pilot - Implementation)

York County's CAP education and outreach progresses apace. Thanks to a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant, the county received six proposals for a marketing and outreach campaign and is reviewing them.

The CAP coordinator presented the CAP and York County's water quality journey to a rotary club and participated in York County's 18th annual Watershed Week, September 18-27. The county partnered with York County Master Watershed Stewards to create [an engaging virtual tour of 16 BMPs in the county](#). The coordinator presented the CAP and county updates to the York County Stormwater Consortium, with the aim of encouraging more municipal support from this group.

In agriculture outreach, York County is working with Tom Earp, a farmer and member of the York County Planning Commission Board, to organize farm visits and survey farmers: What do they think will help develop agriculture support for the CAP? Who do they think would be a champion for the agriculture community?

A group of Master Watershed Stewards planted 275 trees along a recently restored stream on October 3, as part of the ongoing Little Creek Community Park Project in Jackson Township. Not only will the trees reduce runoff pollution and provide habitat, but they'll provide nuts and berries for the community. Learn more about the project at [Healthy Waters. Healthy Communities](#).



York County Master Watershed Stewards stand in front of the many trees they planted at the Little Creek Community Park project site.

Now more than ever, we have experienced the impact of outdoor recreation on our mental and physical wellbeing.

– DCNR Secretary Cindy Dunn, *announcing the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and its first round of funding for community parks at 3rd and Spruce Recreation Center, Reading, September 24*

Clean water: Great for PA Good for the Bay

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

Share this email:

