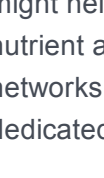




## PHASE 3 WIP NEWS

*Pennsylvania. Partnership. Progress.*



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, SECRETARY

January 2021

### 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, and the State Team and Action Leaders, visit the [Phase 3 WIP website](#). For a broader look at reducing runoff pollution in Pennsylvania's share of the watershed, visit [Healthy Waters](#), [Healthy Communities](#). — DEP Chesapeake Bay Office

## State Action Leaders and Partners

### Pennsylvania State Agriculture and Environment Center: New Regional Partnership

The Penn State Agriculture and Environment Center recently launched the Chiques-Conoy-Conewago Regional Partnership (C3RP) to offer sampling, data collection, and technical and funding assistance to interested farmers in priority adjacent watersheds in western Lancaster and southern Lebanon and Dauphin Counties.

A "muddy boots" team is conducting outreach, inviting farmers to take advantage of tools developed by Penn State researchers and Penn State Extension to improve soil health, water quality, and farm productivity. C3RP also offers technical assistance and funding administered by the Lancaster County Conservation District to implement priority conservation practices highlighted in the Phase 3 WIP. Examples include riparian buffers, manure storage, cover crops, no-till transition, stream and wetland restoration, grazing management, barnyard improvements, and 4Rs nutrient management.

The first farm conservation project was signed on in December. C3RP is funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. For more information, contact Lauren Shaffer at [las6435@psu.edu](mailto:las6435@psu.edu).

### Pennsylvania Farm Bureau: Connecting County Farm Bureaus to Countywide Action Planning

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau recently sent a memo to presidents of all of the county farm bureaus in Pennsylvania's share of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed regarding Phase 3 WIP county action planning.

The memo noted that the Countywide Action Plan each county develops will likely affect the types of conservation programs and measures each county will focus on, as well as influence where future funding for conservation programs and activities will be directed.

Local farm leaders, and more specifically county farm bureau leaders, were encouraged to be actively engaged in the CAP process, to ensure that agriculture has a strong voice in local decision making and is given high priority in plan outcomes and future commitment of funding for conservation. County farm bureau members are encouraged to contact county officials now to secure meaningful representation in upcoming CAP meetings.

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau also offered assistance to each county farm bureau in its effort to ensure a CAP that's beneficial to local agriculture. It also pledged to continue to monitor the progress of CAP development in the counties in the watershed. For more information or further assistance, please contact John Bell at [jbelle@pfb.com](mailto:jbelle@pfb.com) or (717) 731-3547.

### Pennsylvania Department of Transportation: Now Reporting Best Management Practices

The DEP Chesapeake Bay Office technical team and PennDOT Maintenance Technical Leadership Division, Stormwater Section, partnered to report PennDOT's stormwater best management practices in Pennsylvania's share of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

PennDOT provided DEP with a list of 997 implemented and maintained stormwater BMPs from 1984 through 2019, including bioretention, dry detention ponds, infiltration practices, streambank stabilization, storm drain cleaning, tree planting and vegetative open channels. These BMPs have been submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as part of Pennsylvania's 2020 Progress Run and applied to Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay 2025 nutrient and sediment reduction goals.

PennDOT also created an accompanying Quality Assurance/Quality Control narrative that has been submitted to EPA. The DEP-PennDOT partnership will continue to report future BMPs.

## DEP Chesapeake Bay Office

### First Phase 3 WIP Progress Report

The first round of [progress reporting on the Phase 3 WIP](#) was submitted to EPA on January 15. The CBO and its multi-agency team of partners are pulling together all the progress made in 2020. More details will be available in the February edition of the newsletter.

### New Guide to Permitting for Watershed Improvement Projects

The CBO developed a new publication to help applicants understand DEP's permitting process and regulations most relevant to watershed improvement efforts, and to help applicants efficiently obtain permits for projects that support such efforts. The [Pennsylvanian's Guide to Permitting for Watershed Improvement Projects](#) was created in response to feedback the four Phase 3 WIP pilot county partners—Lancaster, York, Franklin, and Adams counties—provided related to permitting for project implementation during the Countywide Action Planning process.

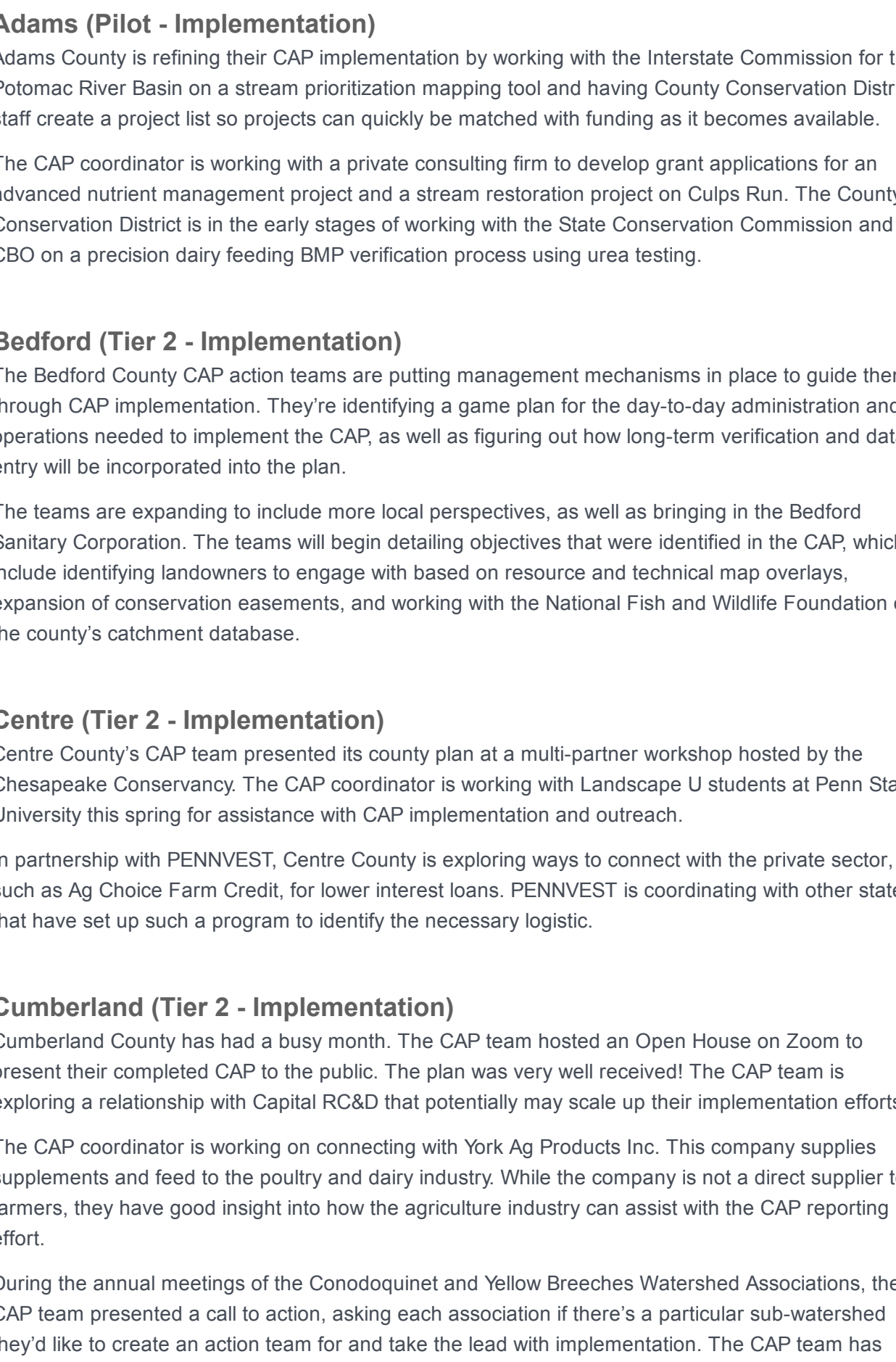
### Tier 1-2 Counties: Cross-County Workshop

As the four pilot counties roll into their second year of Countywide Action Plan implementation and the four Tier 2 counties finalize their plans, the CBO hosted its first virtual CAP Implementation Workshop for all eight counties on January 13. The workshop focused on actions county partners will be taking and was designed to leverage partnerships, tools, and resources across the counties and state and federal partners to best position everyone for success in 2021.

### Tier 3-4 Counties: Ten Groups Formed

The Tier 3 and 4 counties have made great progress kicking off their CAP development processes. All 26 counties have agreed to develop a CAP. To make the most of limited funding, the counties were encouraged to group regionally. There are 10 groups, and each has applied for CAP coordinator funding:

- Group 1: Chester, Berks, and Schuylkill
- Group 2: Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Susquehanna
- Group 3: Locoming and Northumberland
- Group 4: Tioga, Potter, and Bradford
- Group 5: Snyder and Union
- Group 6: Montour, Columbia, and Sullivan
- Group 7: Clinton, Clearfield, and Cambria
- Group 8: Blair, Huntingdon, and Fulton
- Group 9: Dauphin and Perry
- Group 10: Juniata and Mifflin



## Reporting and Data

### Nutrient Credit Trading

The 2020 Compliance Year (October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020) was another active nutrient credit trading year in Pennsylvania. Ninety-five credit generators (sellers) and buyers participated in trading during the CY20 trading period (October 1 – November 28, 2020).

Nutrient reductions equivalent to over 581,000 nitrogen and 48,000 phosphorus credits were verified (generated) during the compliance year. More than 90 percent were generated by wastewater treatment facilities. Nonpoint source agricultural best management practices such as cover crops, tillage practices, and export of poultry litter out of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed also contributed to nutrient reductions.

Over 261,000 nitrogen and 28,000 phosphorus credits were registered (traded) during the trading period to help 49 NPDES wastewater facilities meet their permit nutrient cap loads.

The almost 320,000 nitrogen and over 20,000 phosphorus credits that were not traded represent permanent nutrient reductions to the Chesapeake Bay. For more information, visit the [DEP Nutrient Trading Program web page](#).

Compliance year 2020	Verified (generated) credits	Registered (traded) credits	Brokered (resold) credits	Credits used to meet cap load	Excess credits: Nutrient reductions to Chesapeake Bay
Nitrogen	581,709	261,726	0	261,726	319,983
Phosphorus	48,181	28,095	58	28,037	20,144

Note: Due to natural attenuation requiring application of a delivery ratio, a credit is not necessarily equal to a pound of nutrient reduction.

## Funding

### 2020 Growing Greener Grants Announced

DEP announced in December [over \\$34 million in Growing Greener Grants for 149 projects statewide](#) to fund local water quality improvement projects. More than \$16 million was awarded to projects in Pennsylvania's share of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The Growing Greener Grants Program has helped to slash the backlog of farmland-preservation projects statewide, restore watersheds, protect open space, eliminate the maintenance backlog in state parks, clean up abandoned mines, provide funds for recreational trails and local parks, help communities address land use, and provide new and upgraded water and sewer systems.

## County Progress

### Adams (Pilot - Implementation)

Adams County is refining their CAP implementation by working with the Interstate Commission for the Potomac River Basin on a stream prioritization mapping tool and having County Conservation District staff create a project list so projects can quickly be matched with funding as it becomes available.

The CAP coordinator is working with a private consulting firm to develop grant applications for an advanced nutrient management project and a stream restoration project on Culps Run. The County Conservation District is in the early stages of working with the State Conservation Commission and CBO on a precision dairy feeding BMP verification process using urea testing.

### Bedford (Tier 2 - Implementation)

The Bedford County CAP action teams are putting management mechanisms in place to guide them through CAP implementation. They're identifying a game plan for the day-to-day administration and operations needed to implement the CAP, as well as figuring out how long-term verification and data entry will be incorporated into the plan.

The teams are expanding to include more local perspectives, as well as bringing in the Bedford Sanitary Corporation. The teams will begin detailing objectives that were identified in the CAP, which include identifying landowners to engage with based on resource and technical map overlays, expansion of conservation easements, and working with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation on the county's catchment database.

### Centre (Tier 2 - Implementation)

Centre County's CAP team presented its county plan at a multi-partner workshop hosted by the Chesapeake Conservancy. The CAP coordinator is working with Landscape U students at Penn State University this spring for assistance with CAP implementation and outreach.

In partnership with PENNVEST, Centre County is exploring ways to connect with the private sector, such as Ag Choice Farm Credit, for lower interest loans. PENNVEST is coordinating with other states that have set up such a program to identify the necessary logistic.

### Cumberland (Tier 2 - Implementation)

Cumberland County has had a busy month. The CAP team hosted an Open House on Zoom to present their completed CAP to the public. The plan was very well received! The CAP team is exploring a relationship with Capital RC&D that potentially may scale up their implementation efforts.

The CAP coordinator is working on connecting with York Ag Products Inc. This company supplies supplements and feed to the poultry and dairy industry. While the company is not a direct supplier to farmers, they have good insight into how the agriculture industry can assist with the CAP reporting effort.

During the annual meetings of the Conoquoque and Yellow Breeches Watershed Associations, the CAP team presented a call to action, asking each association if there's a particular sub-watershed they'd like to create an action team for and take the lead with implementation. The CAP team has been focused on developing corridors of opportunity to guide the implementation efforts, and is working with the Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards to assist in leading the analysis effort.

Lancaster Farmland Trust has been reaching out to landowners in Cumberland County who have an interest in water quality and conservation easements and asking them if they're ready for implementation or are in the process of developing plans. The goals are to identify low hanging fruit and get a clearer sense of the BMPs on the ground. In 2020, LFT visited 50 farmers; an additional 75 are planned for early 2021. The focus has been on Plain Sect properties where there haven't been as many conservation district visits in the past.

### Franklin (Pilot - Implementation)

The Franklin County CAP coordinator has been partnering with the Planning Commission on aligning the CAP goals with the county comprehensive plan. This includes reviewing draft priority initiatives that are part of the update to the comprehensive plan. The coordinator is also working with the commission on a Franklin County "return on environment" study that could create a monetary accounting for the natural resources and land throughout the county. Expansion of this study to look at the value of land pre- and post-BMP installation would be beneficial in furthering the CAP, but additional funding will be required.

The CAP coordinator, with assistance from a consultant, has been working on several grant applications. The county received two Section 319 grants from DEP, one to develop a WIP for Roe Run, which is a priority watershed, and another for a non-urban stream restoration on the West Branch of Antietam Creek. For the upcoming Conservation Excellence Grant application round, the Conservation District is customizing the ranking sheet to make high nutrient reductions part of the local ranking criteria for grant funding.

### Lancaster (Pilot - Implementation)

Lancaster Clean Water Partners, through the Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County, submitted its [Regional Conservation Partnership Program application](#) to NRCS in November. The proposal outlines how the Lancaster Clean Water Partners can collectively get \$10 million over three years – with additional in-kind or cash contributions of \$13 million – on the ground to support Lancaster's CAP. The work also aligns with Lancaster's Common Agenda goal of clean and clear water by 2040.

The proposal uses the partners' delisting strategy, which aims to delist 350 miles of impaired streams by 2030. Ten partner organizations came together to form a leadership team for the project and countless others in workshops leading up to the proposal.

The CAP team has also applied to the Chesapeake Bay Trust for funding to conduct a public opinion survey this spring.

The LCWP Steering Committee has three new members: Stephen Campbell, City of Lancaster; Justin Evans, Mount Joy Township; and Jenna Mitchell, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. As new members join the steering committee and the larger partnership, the LCWP is looking into how to put rising stars into leadership roles.

The CAP team is finalizing a scope of work for the new year. The plan is to focus on items listed as "yellow" in the CAP progress report. Yellow items are in progress but have encountered minor obstacles.

Lancaster County has had lots of success implementing projects in 2020. Three success stories are:

**Rapho Township streambank stabilization and riparian buffer, funded by the Lancaster Clean Water Fund 2019:** Rapho Township made improvements to a 0.4-acre streamside property along Drager Road in Columbia. The streambanks were eroding, stabilized only by rotting railroad ties. The township saw this vacant, graded lot as an opportunity for a demonstration project. With the assistance of the Penn State Agriculture and Environment Center staff and volunteers from the Chiques Creek Watershed Alliance, the township stabilized 175 linear feet of streambank and planted 50 native trees on the property.



**Donegal Chapter of Trout Unlimited (DTU) streambank restoration and riparian buffer, funded by Lancaster Clean Water Fund 2019:** Donegal Trout Unlimited has been restoring cold water streams in the County since 1987 with a focus on those waterways that empty into the Chesapeake Bay. The stream restoration and riparian buffer planting linked four earlier projects done by DTU on Climb's Run, designated by DEP as an impaired stream. DTU restored 1,530 linear feet along the stream, and planted 2.45 acres of riparian buffer.



**Culliton Park Renovation Project, funded by a DEP 2020 CAP Implementation Grant:** The project included implementation of green infrastructure that will greatly increase the aesthetics and improve water quality. Two rain gardens/bioretenion areas and a subsurface infiltration bed were installed to manage stormwater from 1.48 acres. The green infrastructure as part of the renovation project is expected to capture over 1.3 million gallons of stormwater and remove over 5,200 pounds of sediment, 14.80 pounds of phosphorus, and 5.97 pounds of nitrogen. Culliton Park (formerly Farnum Park) is one of the city's largest public parks. This project has been several years in the making. After extensive input from neighborhood residents, the design was completed, and construction commenced in February and finished in November 2020.



### Lebanon (Tier 2 - Implementation)

Lebanon County Conservation District has hired a new CAP coordinator, Mary Kate Gallagher. Mary Kate has been working to develop contacts throughout the county and getting up to speed by going through the coordinator trainings the DEP Clean Water Academy. As the county shifts from CAP development to implementation, the focus is on identifying where to start with a cohesive goal with all of the county's current projects, and how to build out from there. Additionally, the coordinator team is planning a social media campaign, to raise awareness and participation in the CAP.

### York (Pilot - Implementation)

The Data Management Action Team welcomed Joe Duras from U.S. Geological Survey. The team is focused on creating brochures about the six water quality monitors installed in York County, and how to use the data collected from these monitors. The approved county budget included funding to continue to have the monitoring stations running. Additionally, the team is working to uncover a mechanism for collecting non-reported BMPs in municipalities.

The Programmatic and Legislatives Action Team has identified a potential project to use as a pilot and will be working with DEP regional staff to move it forward.

The Coordination Action Team is applying to the York County Community Foundation to do a farm by farm outreach in the Codorus Watershed. This will involve individual farm visits and support in developing plans and implementing BMPs.



*Growing Greener awardees help keep Pennsylvania clean. It is imperative that communities in Pennsylvania receive the necessary funding to reduce pollutants in area waterways.*

DEP SECRETARY PATRICK MCDONNELL



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