

K10 Catalyst Initiative: Advancing Bufer Implementation in Lancaster County project

DEP Growing Greener

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Project Description & Goals: The project was created to accelerate the implementation of riparian forest buffers and other conservation practices on agriculture lands throughout Lancaster County. We developed incentive program called “Buffer Bonus” (distributed at \$4K/ new acre of riparian forest buffer) as well as a Tree Care Establishment program to be utilized for three years by any newly planted riparian buffer in Lancaster County. Our goal was to incentivize and motivate landowners to go above and beyond traditional land management practices all in pursuit of cleaner local streams and rivers.

Project Accomplishments: The project resulted in the implementation of over 130 acres of riparian forest buffers and provided with establishment care for three years. As well, many agriculture and stormwater practices were installed with the “buffer bonus” funding. These include 5 stream crossings, 5 livestock water facilities, 1 waste transfer system, 4 stormwater runoff controls, 2 rain gardens, 2 waterways, 4 animal trails, 1.25 acres of upland planting, 1 comprehensive nutrient management plan, 2 heavy use area structures, over 3,000 linear ft of livestock exclusion fencing, 2 manure stacking sheds, and .93 acres of critical area planting.

Pollutant Load Reductions: This project resulted in reducing over 28,445 lbs of Nitrogen, 1,871 lbs of Phosphorus, and 843,776 lbs of Sediment to the Chesapeake Bay.



Project Cost: \$460,000

Partners providing match: Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Lessons Learned: The overall project success can be credited to the network of relationships, and a strong collaborative initiative with on-the-ground partners. By listening to landowner concerns and creating streamlined programming, the Alliance has gained respect and quick momentum within the agricultural community, secured resources for projects, and are quickly able to scale this work. “Buffer Bonus” and tree establishment care funding was critical in getting many landowners to adopt conservation practices. On their own, these efforts are extremely costly and time consuming, however, the Alliance has showed that this incentive model works and is easily scalable. This program continues to be a pillar in our agricultural and forestry programming.

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