



CBF STAFF

News & Notes From the Pennsylvania Office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation

FALL 2020

# Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership Plantings Going Strong Amid Pandemic

As saving the Chesapeake Bay hinges on first saving rivers and streams in Pennsylvania, CBF believes the work of many hands planting many trees can make a difference in getting the Commonwealth back on track.

Success of the partnership's important work is rooted in the determination of its 149 partner groups and individuals. Their commitment and dedication to clean water has continued quietly and effectively during COVID-19 restrictions.

Of 95,000 trees distributed for spring planting in 2020, about 84,000 went into the ground. The remaining 11,000 trees are being kept in partner greenhouses and will grow into larger stock for future plantings.

"Without volunteers, most partners went out and planted by themselves," says CBF's Brenda Sieglitz, who manages the partnership. "Most of their volunteers became people in their households, their spouses and children who they could safely have contact with. They went out during work hours and on their own time to ensure that they could get as many trees planted as possible this past spring."

CBF launched the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership in 2018, focused on Pennsylvania's Clean Water Blueprint goal of planting 95,000 acres of forested buffers by the end of 2025.

Since 2018, cumulative efforts by CBF, the partnership and others across Pennsylvania have planted roughly 1.74 million trees.

Trees are among the most cost-effective tools for cleaning and protecting waterways by filtering and absorbing polluted runoff, stabilizing streambanks, and improving soil.



COURTESY PHOTO

John Levitsky and wife Judy were happy to plant trees at Espy Run in Luzerne County.

Placed in parks, municipal properties, and other urban and suburban settings, trees absorb and clean stormwater, reduce flooding, and restore abandoned mine lands.

The partnership is placing special emphasis on planting trees in Lancaster County and four other counties in southcentral Pennsylvania, where a substantial amount of nitrogen pollution is being generated.

As focus shifted to fall plantings, about 47,000 trees were delivered to pick-up points. Because of spring cancellations, the fall 2020 number of trees is more than double what was planted in fall of 2019.

To learn more about the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership and how you can help, visit [TenMillionTrees.org](http://TenMillionTrees.org).

From the Desk of  
**Shannon Gority**  
PENNSYLVANIA  
DIRECTOR



As I write this message, I'm celebrating six months with CBF; and what a unique time it has been. Despite the office being closed during that time, the dedicated staff in Pennsylvania have accomplished a remarkable number of achievements.

While volunteer events were halted in their tracks, our K10 partners were still able to plant about 84,000 trees and 47,000 are scheduled to be planted this fall. Can you believe that we're multiplying this output to 710,000 trees through 2022! That's a lot of demand for supplies that are not currently readily available, but will be.

So, we're investing in the supply side of the equation. Forward contracting for supplies, and training landscape professionals in buffer installation and maintenance will ensure our Bay-saving programs will provide benefits rippling into other sectors.

Pennsylvania faces huge challenges in getting back on track toward meeting its goals under the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint. I believe that, by working together, we can be successful. We all have a stake in creating a legacy of clean water for future generations.

To say that I'm thankful for colleagues and partners is an understatement. I'm proud to be a part of this team of incredibly passionate and competent professionals as we work for clean water in Pennsylvania and the rest of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

**Partnership Virtual Meeting February 16-18, 2021—Stay Tuned!**

# CBF Suing EPA Will Benefit Pennsylvanians and All Others Who Value Clean Water

By SHANNON GORITY

CBF is suing the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enforce the Clean Water Act and restore water quality in Pennsylvania's rivers and streams, as well as the Chesapeake Bay.

If we are to have the clean rivers and streams that is our right, it will take renewed and sincere efforts by state and federal legislators to provide the resources, continued determination by boots on the ground to make it happen, and oversight to guide and take corrective action when required.

The number of miles of Commonwealth rivers and streams that do not meet water-quality standards has reached more than 25,000 miles. That is 5,500 more than four years ago.

As the source of half of the freshwater that flows into the Bay, Pennsylvania can do better.

Our state has missed many pollution-reduction milestones along the way and the newest plan comes up short in reaching its 2025 Clean Water Blueprint goal.

The Keystone State's Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) will achieve just 73 percent of its 31 million-pound nitrogen-reduction commitment and is underfunded by more than \$300 million a year.

With the 2025 deadline fast approaching, EPA is refusing to use its Clean Water Act authorities to ensure Bay states design and implement plans to meet their clean-water goals. Pennsylvania and New York have not lived up to their clean-water commitments and EPA needs to hold them accountable.

Litigation filed by CBF and partners, and a separate filing by the Attorneys General in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and the District of Columbia are efforts to get EPA to force Pennsylvania and New York to change course.

How might we Pennsylvanians benefit if legal action successfully moves EPA to hold our Commonwealth accountable?

- **Resources.** Securing technical and financial resources is vital to support thousands of farmers who want their legacies to include taking care of the land but who cannot afford to do it on their own. It is about communities, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts working diligently day in and day out to restore and protect the land and water resources they cherish and need for survival.
- **Economy.** Investments in clean water support a myriad of engineers/scientists/planners, suppliers, and others that can sustain and generate local jobs for local



CBF's lawsuit against EPA could benefit Pennsylvania's clean water resources, economy, heritage, health, and well-being.

economies. By helping to design and implement conservation practices that keep soils and nutrients on the ground instead of in the water, farmers can expect to have healthier, even more productive, soils and livestock.

- **Heritage.** Pennsylvania has a rich and robust outdoor culture. By restoring and protecting the places wildlife call home, in our rivers and streams and on the land, we are helping to ensure future generations can enjoy time-honored traditions.
- **Health and well-being.** Clean-water investments will help reduce nuisance flooding, which plagues many of our communities. They improve and protect the sources of drinking water residents rely on and help beautify communities. All of this has a positive impact on the health and well-being of our families and communities.

The goal of these lawsuits is to compel EPA to do its job, so our state and federal legislators will be better at doing theirs.

Regardless of the litigation's outcome, as Pennsylvanians we have our own responsibilities to make this watershed moment matter. We need to do our part to reduce our own pollution footprint and hold accountable those who make big decisions.

Our leaders in Harrisburg are entering a challenging budget season with the unenviable task of closing a budget gap that has climbed into the billions of dollars.

In this season and going forward, we should remind those elected to serve us and who may have forgotten, that clean water counts in Pennsylvania.



Shannon GORITY  
Pennsylvania Executive Director

## Meet Shannon GORITY, CBF's New Executive Director in Pennsylvania

Shannon GORITY brings years of experience working for clean water in the Commonwealth to the role of CBF Executive Director.

She most recently was a consultant to both government and private industry. She was also the first Chief Executive Officer of Capital Region Water, the mission-driven water utility that came from the failing City-controlled Harrisburg Authority where she served as Engineering Director.

Under GORITY's leadership, CBF staff in Pennsylvania is working to improve water quality in the Keystone State by collaborating with a broad range of stakeholders, and implementing projects, policies, and programs that address pollution in the Commonwealth's rivers and streams, and ultimately the Bay.

The new executive director is a graduate of Juniata College and Penn State University with degrees in Civil and Environmental Engineering. She hails from the Altoona area on the western edge of the Pennsylvania portion the Bay watershed and resides only a few steps away from the Susquehanna River in Harrisburg where she enjoys boating with her daughter.

GORITY succeeds Harry Campbell, who was named Science Policy and Advocacy Director for CBF in Pennsylvania.

For almost 35 years, CBF has been working in Pennsylvania to clean and protect the Keystone State's many rivers and streams.

Founded in 1967, CBF is the largest independent conservation organization dedicated to reducing pollution and restoring waterways to benefit the health and well-being of local communities and the Chesapeake Bay.

# CBF Applauds Senate Cost-share Bill That Invests in Clean Water-Efforts by Farmers

CBF is applauding new legislation in the state Senate that will offer financial support that farmers in Pennsylvania want and need so they can keep soil on the land, reduce polluted runoff into local streams, and protect their long-term viability.

“Farmers are willing to do the right thing and conservation districts are standing by to help. But both lack the resources,” said Shannon Gority, CBF Executive Director in Pennsylvania. “Everyone wants agriculture to succeed and it is long past time that it gets the resources and technical assistance to finish the job. Our economy, health, heritage, and quality of life depend on it.”

State Senator Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming) introduced Senate Bill 1272, that establishes the Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) and targets funding for local farms through their county conservation districts. ACAP will be administered by the State Conservation Commission.

“Agricultural practices are some of the most cost-effective ways to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution, and they have the double-benefit of improving soil health, nutrient efficiency, and the long-term viability of farm operations,” Senator Yaw said.

CBF, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, and Penn State Agriculture and Environmental Center worked jointly to propose the program that would direct funding to conservation districts, and provide the needed technical assistance to farms and the flexibility to determine conservation practices specific to local watershed needs.

Pennsylvania came up short in meeting its 2018-19 milestones for the necessary pollution reductions. It also lags significantly behind in implementing 100 percent of practices by 2025 that would restore local water quality in the Commonwealth and meet its Clean Water Blueprint goals.

## CBF Education Continues With Lessons Online

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, CBF educators have been transforming educational materials they typically deliver to students on boats, canoes, and hiking trails into lessons students are learning remotely.

CBF's Online Watershed Learning (OWL) is providing schools with online and interactive lessons about subjects such as Bay ecosystems, connections between land and water, forests, and oysters.

“Learn Outside, Learn at Home,” a library of videos and investigations at [cbf.org/LOLAH](http://cbf.org/LOLAH), urges students to examine environmental issues in the watershed.



A new cost-share bill would support efforts by farmers in Pennsylvania to reduce pollution.

In ACAP, funding would be prioritized for counties based on factors like the amount of crop acres and livestock near streams impaired by agriculture.

Conservation districts would be required to invest in and approve pollution-reduction measures that might include cover crops and streamside trees, and devise criteria for which ones will have the most immediate impact on local water quality. Districts would work with farmers and landowners to ensure that conservation practices are installed properly and functioning as designed.

ACAP would authorize a broad spectrum of funding sources to support the program, including state dollars, federal allocations, grants, and private enterprise investments.

Senate Bill 1272 has been referred to the Senate Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee for consideration.



Virtual classroom sessions with CBF educators keep environmental education rolling during COVID-19 remote learning.



## NFWF Grant to CBF Will Lead to 360 Acres of New Trees in Eight Pennsylvania Counties

A grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will provide CBF with nearly \$2 million in investments to plant and maintain 360 acres of new trees and boost efforts in eight Pennsylvania counties toward achieving local plans for cleaner water.

NFWF grants are made through the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, funded primarily by the Environmental Protection Agency and through the Chesapeake Bay Program.

CBF will administer the three-year NFWF grant of \$975,000 and a matching amount of \$977,880.

The grant will be used to engage, train, and certify 15-20 private sector landscape professionals in buffer installation and maintenance, doubling and potentially tripling the workforce on the ground.

The grant will provide nine trained technicians to assist priority counties in outreach and education to 2,400 landowners within Adams, Bedford, Centre, Cumberland, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, and York Counties.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Riparian Forest Buffer Advisory Committee will help coordinate the NFWF grant to CBF.

Investments by the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership will be in the form of technical assistance, trees, supplies, and forward contracting of maintenance activities on the 360 acres.

This grant project will also test a new buffer incentive program with simulated property tax relief for each acre of buffer that is installed.

Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professionals will create a certification program and a one-day workshop on buffer maintenance for 17-20 contractors. CBF will contract with those who go through the training.

# CBF's Investments in Trees Extends to 2022; Will Benefit Buffers and Local Businesses

CBF is making sure that there will be enough trees to plant millions in the coming years with investments in the future that are paying off for local businesses and streamside buffers in Pennsylvania.

CBF, which coordinates the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership, is spending about \$2.6 million for 710,000 trees, shelters, and stakes to supply plantings through 2022.

Growers and related businesses in Pennsylvania and Maryland that provide trees, shrubs, and materials get guaranteed revenue through this forward contracting.

"A 30 percent down payment to growers gives them the economic assurance that we are invested in these trees, and in them as growers," says CBF's Brenda Sieglitz, who manages the partnership. "It allows growers to go into this uncertain time with a really



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## Get Creative With Your Giving—Think CBF

More and more CBF members are including CBF in their charitable or estate plan. Why? Because the greatest story of environmental recovery ever cannot be told in one generation, and the Bay's restoration is a story that must go on.

To make your very best gift, consider all your assets—cash, stock, real estate, retirement accounts, life insurance policies, etc. Then give us a call or speak with your personal advisors about creative gift options like gifts in your will, living trusts, beneficiary

strong guarantee to deliver trees for the next few years. It also allows them to expand their operations for the future and be able to make new investments that might otherwise be more risky."

CBF issued requests for proposals and awarded bids to seven companies for a total of 210,000 trees, stakes, and shelters for next year. Contracting two years ahead to 2022 is unique for CBF.

Four companies were awarded future contracts for a total of 500,000 trees for 2022. Those companies are Aquatic Resource Restoration Company in York County, Musser Forests of Indiana County, Octoraro Native Plant Nursery in Lancaster County, and American Native Plants in Middle River, Baltimore County, Maryland.

"It helps with structure and provides some certainty outside of acts of God and crop failure," Octoraro President and Co-owner Jim Mackenzie says of the contract for 2022.

The new contracts will also increase the diversity of native trees for planting. "We like to see our plantings have a mix of a minimum of 10 species per acre," Sieglitz adds. "That 10 species spread out among 200 trees gives us a great ecological wildlife benefit."

"The diverse tree selection is able to siphon off nutrients and hold back sediment," says Bill Chain, CBF Senior Agriculture Program Manager in Pennsylvania. "But trees are also pollinators that contribute to wildlife habitat."

designations, or even gifts that pay you income. Charitable trusts or gift annuities are good examples.

Even those who can't make a large cash gift now can have a significant impact on CBF's mission and the future health of Pennsylvania's rivers and streams.

To request a booklet or learn more about planned gifts, visit [cbf.org/planned-giving](http://cbf.org/planned-giving) or contact Lane Whigham at 717-204-4040 or [LWhigham@cbf.org](mailto:LWhigham@cbf.org).



AUSTIN UNRUH

## Silvopasture Study Exploring How Trees and Livestock Can Co-exist in Pastures

CBF is conducting a three-year study on five farms in Pennsylvania of how best to incorporate and protect trees in pastures, without disrupting livestock, farming operations, and profitability.

The study of silvopasture is supported by a grant from the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program Research under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"You are putting more factors into your pasture, but there could be some serious benefits, long-term, especially economic," says Molly Cheatum, CBF Restoration Program Manager in Pennsylvania and the study leader.

When planted and mature in a pasture, trees can enhance herd health by offering shade, shelter, better quality grazing, and reduced stress on livestock, especially during summer's relentless heat.

Livestock can return the favor. "If you have trees and healthy grasses, and you have cattle roaming through that pasture, they are providing manure that feeds and makes the soil healthy and feeds the trees," Cheatum says.

For the study, silvopasture research plots of 120 trees have been planted on three farms in Lancaster County and two in Lebanon County.

The study is monitoring tree-planting techniques with and without mulch, plastic and metal shelters, and live stake trees in combinations with electric fence, barbed wire, and no shelters.

"We want to be able to integrate trees thoughtfully onto a farm, but we want the farm not to have to drastically change the way that they practice their grazing," says project partner Austin Unruh. He owns Crow & Berry Land Management in Lancaster County.

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation—Pennsylvania



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