



Riparian Forest Buffers

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Through the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, the Chesapeake Bay Program has committed to...



Vital Habitats Goal

Riparian Forest Buffer Outcome: Restore 900 miles per year of riparian forest buffer and conserve existing buffers until at least 70 percent of riparian areas throughout the watershed are forested.

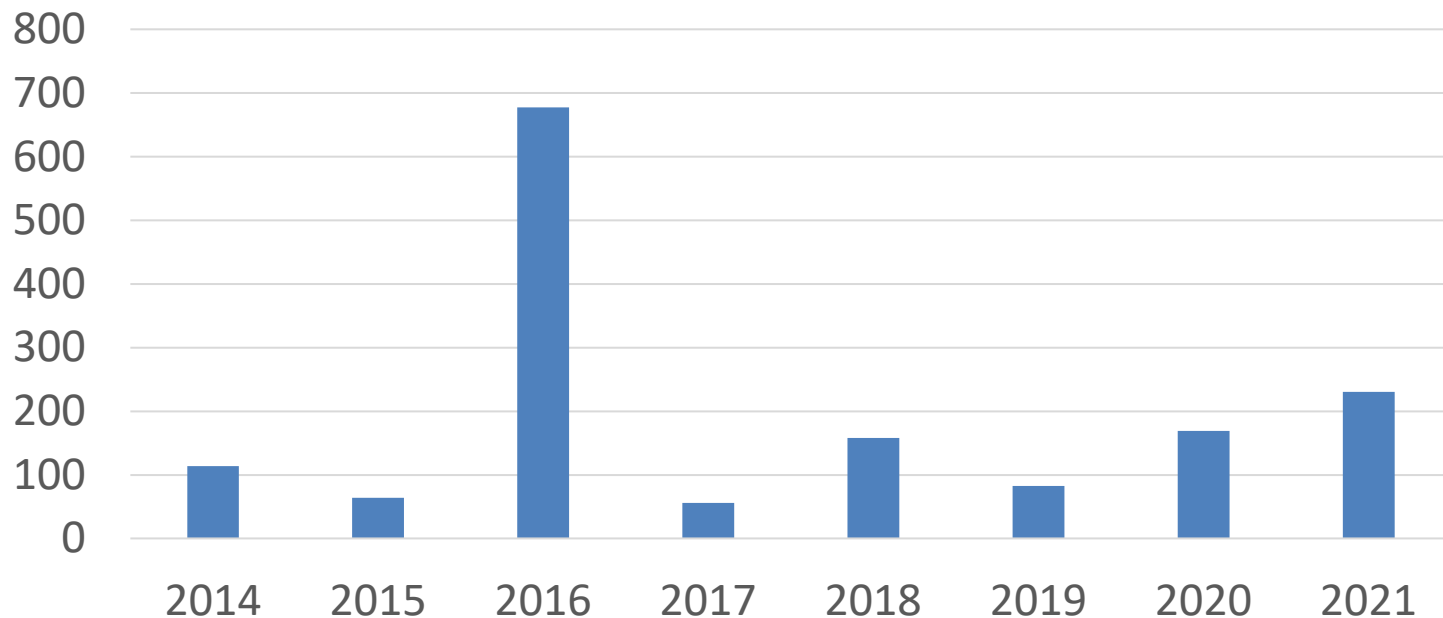


What is our Expected and Actual Progress?



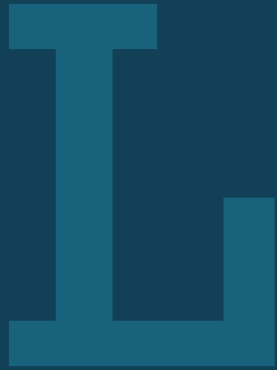
RECENT PROGRESS
INCREASE

Miles of RFB planted since 2014 Agreement



Miles of Riparian Forest Buffers Planted in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, 1996-2021





Learn

What have we learned in the last two years?



Successes

- 2022 Leadership Workshop
- State RFB Action Strategies
- Standalone flexible buffer programs
- Filling information gaps: STAC Rising Temperatures workshop, Maintaining Forests in Stream Restoration project

Challenges

- Maintaining leadership engagement
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- CAPACITY!
- Verification



On the Horizon

- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding
- New Farm Bill
- High-resolution land use and hydrography data
- Climate change



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Adapt

How does all of this impact our work?



Based on what we learned, we plan to ...

- Implement RFB Action Strategies and track progress
- Support flexible buffer programs
- Direct BIL/IRA funds towards buffer planting and maintenance
- Build capacity
- Conserve mature buffers



Equitable and inclusive restoration ...

- Integrating forest buffers into communities
- Improving equity in access to federal funding for buffers
- Implementing new FS Equity Action Plan



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Fill the Gap

*How can the Management Board
help achieve the Outcome?*



Filling the Gap

- BECAUSE of the recent influx in funding for restoration and our recently completed state Action Strategies
- Over the next 2 years, we PLAN to focus on strategically using those funds for buffer planting, maintenance and conservation
- BUT – to fill the gap –



Filling the Gap

We need help with...

- Supporting implementation of RFB Action Strategies (and associated tracking)
- Prioritizing investments in standalone buffer programs (existing and new programs)
- Using grants and other funds to support capacity building



Discussion

Questions for the FWG

- Do we want to ask the MB/CBP leaders to support a Bay-wide buffer program?
- Are there other “asks” we should make of the MB?
- Other suggestions?