



# 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 We Want

**Institutionalize RFB** as part of Whole Farm planning

- Improve buffer design
- Prioritize conservation of RFBs
- Improve partner access to info
- Better understand partner priorities
- Increase TSPs

**Align timing:** Verification and Re-enrollment

## Elevate Buffer Needs

- Have top WQ person join with tech lead in each state
- Work directly with State Con
- Develop non-CREP options
- Improve TA specifically for RFB (add-on to Boots on the Ground)
- Establish core team at county with “Buffer” in title; Carrol Co example
- Consistent funding
- Encourage maintenance
- Etc. etc. from State Task Force Reports

# 1

## Setting the Stage:

*What are our assumptions?*



## Logic Behind Our Outcome



### Following the Decision Framework:

#### Factors

- Coordination
- Leadership
- Funding

#### Current Efforts and Gaps

- RFB State Leads Need Help
- Local offices can be disfunctional
- Stable, effective staff need consistent funding

#### Management Approaches

- Leadership
- Outreach and TA
- Improve Conservation
- Focus on non-Ag buffers

# Why Is Restoration of Forested Riparian Buffers So Important?



**Before**



**After**

# What Has Been Done to Meet the RFB Outcome Goal?

Partners have been working for 24 years

Of late, efforts to boost incentive payments, agro-forestry, conservation, maintenance, outreach, and TA.

It is not enough— progress is as low as ever.

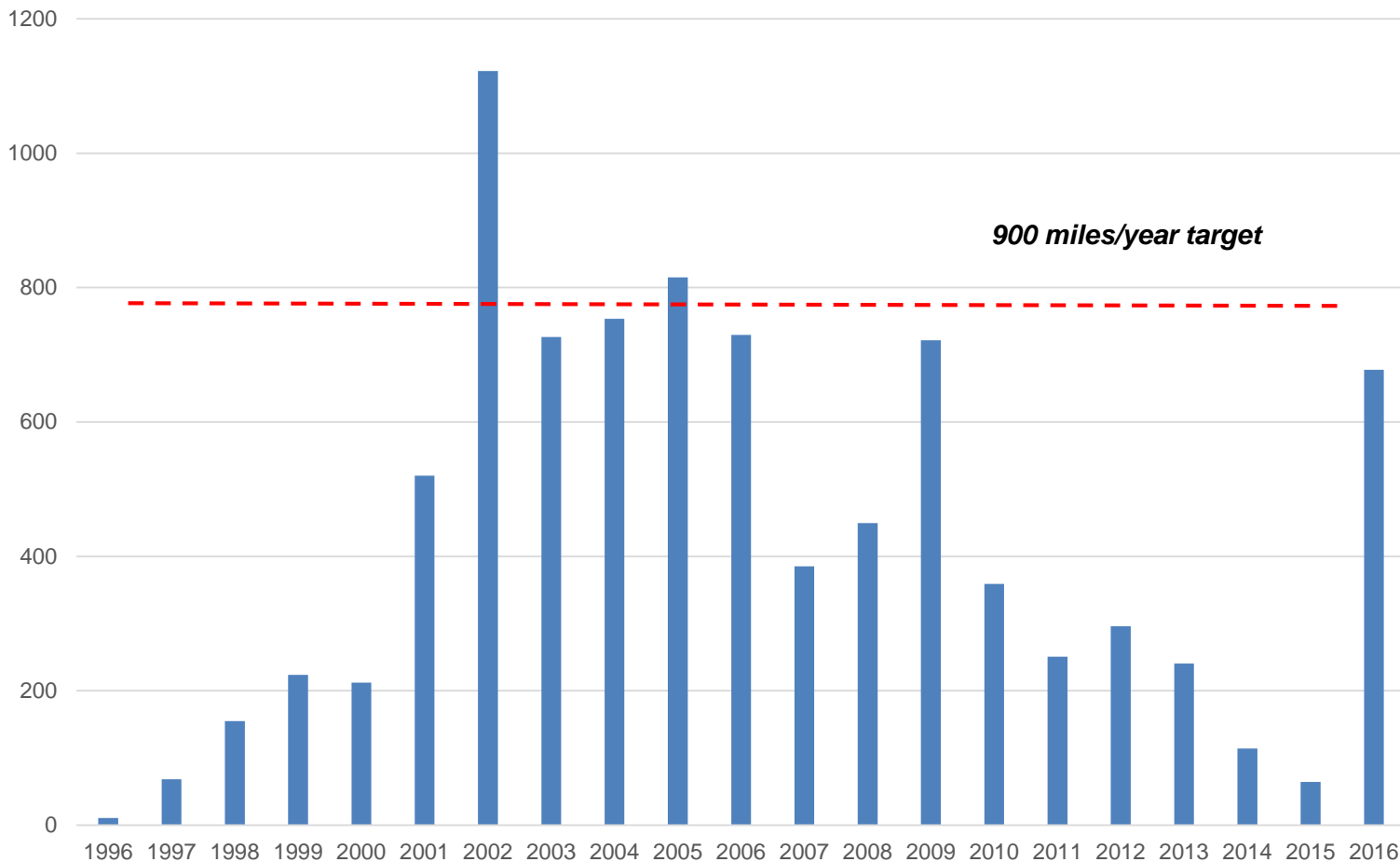
2

# **Progress:**

*Are we doing what we said we would do?*

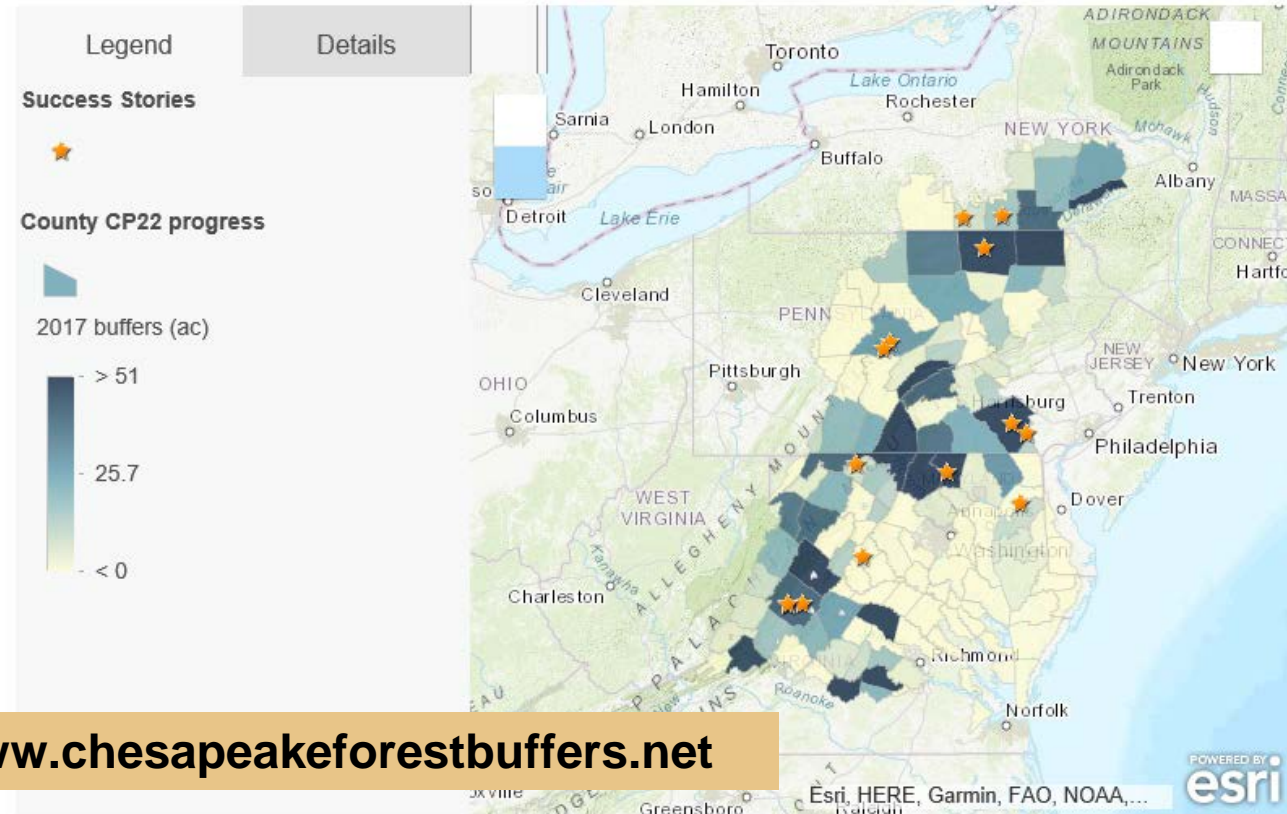


# Miles of Riparian Forest Buffers Planted in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, 1996-2016



# Riparian Forest Buffer Progress in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Find out 2017's new acres of forest buffers in your county to date and learn about forest buffer initiative success stories from across the watershed.





**Are we on track?**

**NO**



## Analysis

Discussion Question 2: Which actions were most critical in progress thus far? Why? [Indicate which influencing factors these actions were meant to manage.]

- Work with FSA and states to Improve CREP - policy
- Get additional funds to states to incentive CREP - funding
- PSC Appointed a Riparian Buffer Leader in each state to work across program areas - Coordination



## Analysis

Discussion Question 3: Which management actions will be the most critical to your progress in the future? Why?

Leadership

Leadership

Leadership

# 3

## Challenges:

*Are our actions having the expected effect?*



## Challenges

4: What scientific, fiscal or policy-related developments or lessons learned (if any) have changed your logic or assumptions about your Outcome?

- Multiple management approaches need to move together in unison; thus, the emphasis on Leadership and Coordination

Did an unforeseen factor influence your ability to move forward with an approach?

- The intractable nature of bureaucracy and reluctance to change and commit to a practice/process

# 4

## **Adaptations:**

*How should we adapt?*





**Based on what we've  
learned, we plan to...**

- 5: What management approach change at this time? Will this change content in your work plan?
- Some approaches will sunset...

# Agreement Goals and Outcomes

## Optional Slide



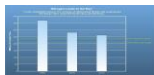
### Sustainable Fisheries

- Blue Crab Abundance
- Blue Crab Management
- Oyster
- Forage Fish
- Fish Habitat



### Vital Habitats Goal

- Wetlands
- Black Duck
- Stream Health
- Brook Trout
- Fish Passage
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)
- Forest Buffer
- Tree Canopy



### Water Quality Goal

- 2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP)
- 2025 WIP
- Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring



### Toxic Contaminants Goal

- Toxic Contaminants Research
- Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention



### Healthy Watersheds Goal

- Healthy Waters



### Stewardship Goal

- Citizen Stewardship
- Local Leadership
- Diversity



### Land Conservation Goal

- Protected Lands
- Land Use Methods and Metrics Development
- Land Use Options Evaluation



### Public Access Goal

- Public Access Site Development



### Environmental Literacy Goal

- Student
- Sustainable Schools
- Environmental Literacy Planning



### Climate Resiliency Goal

- Monitoring and Assessment
- Adaptation Outcome



# Cross-Outcome Considerations

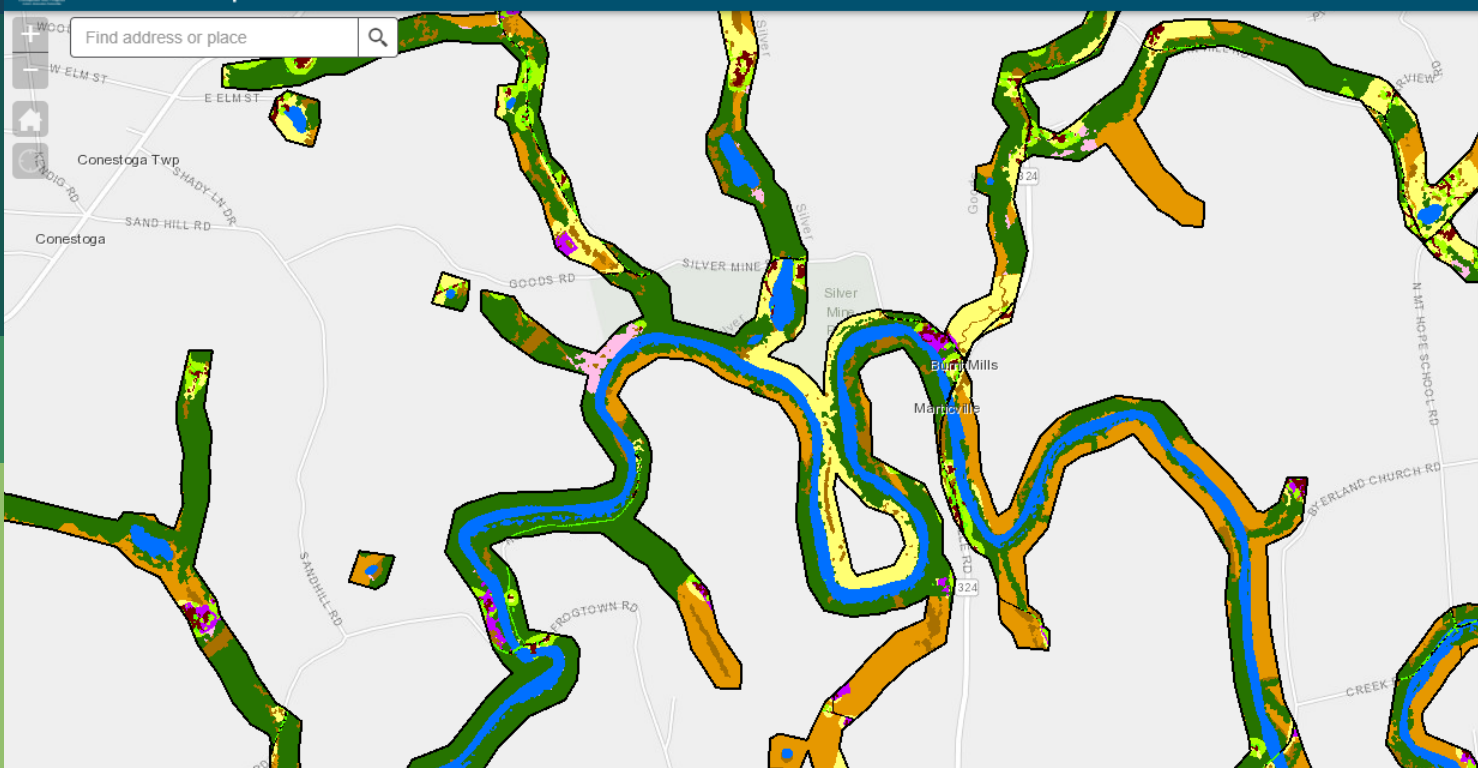


Watershed Implementation Plan Atlas

Chesapeake Bay Program



Find address or place



## Legend

### Riparian Zone

Riparian Zone

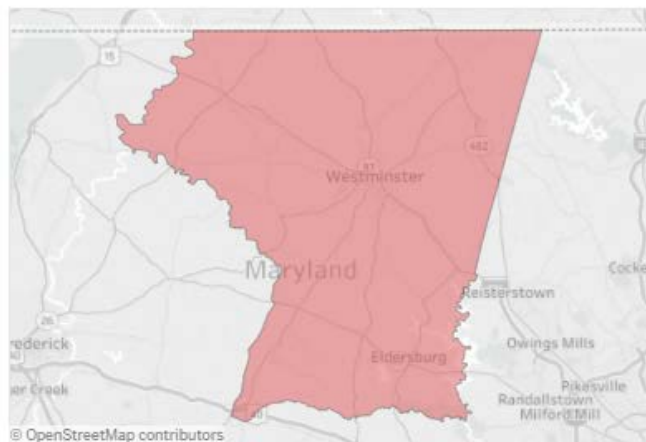


### High Resolution Land Use

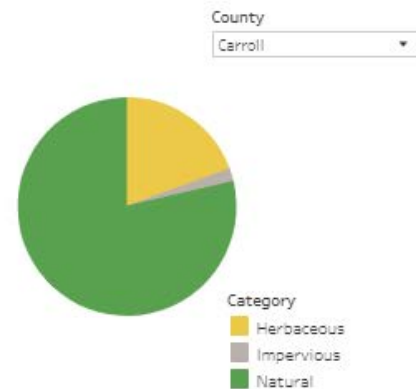
High Resolution (1m) Land Use in 30 m Buffer

- Impervious, Road
- Impervious, Non-Road
- Tree Canopy over Impervious
- Water
- Tidal Wetlands
- Floodplain Wetlands
- Other Wetlands
- Forest
- Tree Canopy over Turf
- Mixed Open
- Fractional Turf (small)
- Fractional Turf (med)
- Fractional Turf (large)
- Fractional Impervious
- Turf Grass
- Agriculture

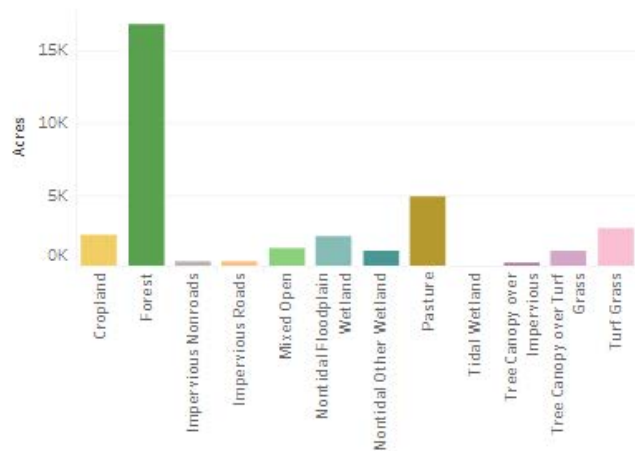
County Map



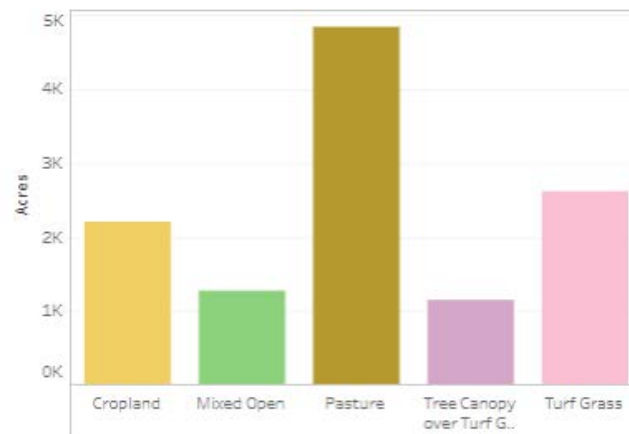
Land Use Categories in 30 m Buffer



Land Use in 30m Buffer



Land Use in Herbaceous Categories (Restoration Opportunities)





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# Discussion