



## Forestry Workgroup Meeting

July 6, 2022

9:00am-11:00am

[Meeting Materials](#)

Terry Lasher, VDOF  
Julie Mawhorter, USFS  
Iris Allen, MD DNR  
Katie Ombalski, Woods and Water Consulting  
Caitlin Verdu, VDOF  
Frank Rodgers, Cacapon Inst.  
Rick Turcotte, USFS  
Anne Hairston-Strang, MD DNR  
Sally Claggett, USFS  
Rob Schnabel, CBF  
Jenna Talbot, DNREC  
Peter Hoagland, NRCS

Ned Brockmeyer, PA BOF  
Kalaia Tripeaux, PA BOF  
Petty stark, PA BOF  
Brenda Sieglitz, CBF  
Ryan Davis, ACB  
Rebecca Lauver, ACB  
Cassandra Davis, NYS DEC  
Bryan Ellis, NYSDEC  
Molly Hassett, NYSDEC  
Rebecca Hanmer, Chair  
Judy Okay, J&J Consulting

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Sophie opened the conversation with what was talked about from the June meeting:

- Creating resources and communication to help understand that we need to talk about some species shifts in a climate changed world.
- Looking at inventory and answering questions around how to expand state nursery capacity./ Evaluating and improving coordination around regional tree nursery capacity.
- Work with fostering stewardship or enhancing leadership in management to properly communicate the new information we have from the new LU/LC data set.
- Continuing maintenance issue of RFB.
- Addressing the importance of riparian buffer canopies in these urban areas.
- Using the new high-res LU/LUC change data to improve watershed-wide maps of priority riparian habitat to restore.

She noted that the ideas with the most vocal support were **Evaluating and improving coordination around regional tree nursery capacity** as a tree canopy project and using the **new high-res LU/LUC change data to improve watershed-wide maps of priority riparian habitat to restore** as the buffer project.

### **Evaluating and improving coordination around regional tree nursery capacity.**

This project would seek to address the issue of enough trees to meet all of our tree supply goals, especially as some states and localities are ramping up to plant lots and lots of trees. There are two parts to this project: on one side there is looking into state nurseries who are providing seedings to reforestation efforts. How can we scale up? What is their current capacity? What are the issues with the

nurseries? The other side is looking at private nurseries. They tend to help meet the needs of urban areas. How do we bring them into the conversation and make them a more active part of fulfilling our goals? This project could be done by a contractor who would do some sort of assessment process, where they would do interviews with key partners and try to better understand the state of things in the tree nursery world. After findings are reported there could be an opportunity to meet with stakeholders to bring cross state perspectives together and generate a report on what the key issues, opportunities, and strategies might be for a more coordinated approach going forward. After documenting those needs they could be taken back for action at a state or regional level.

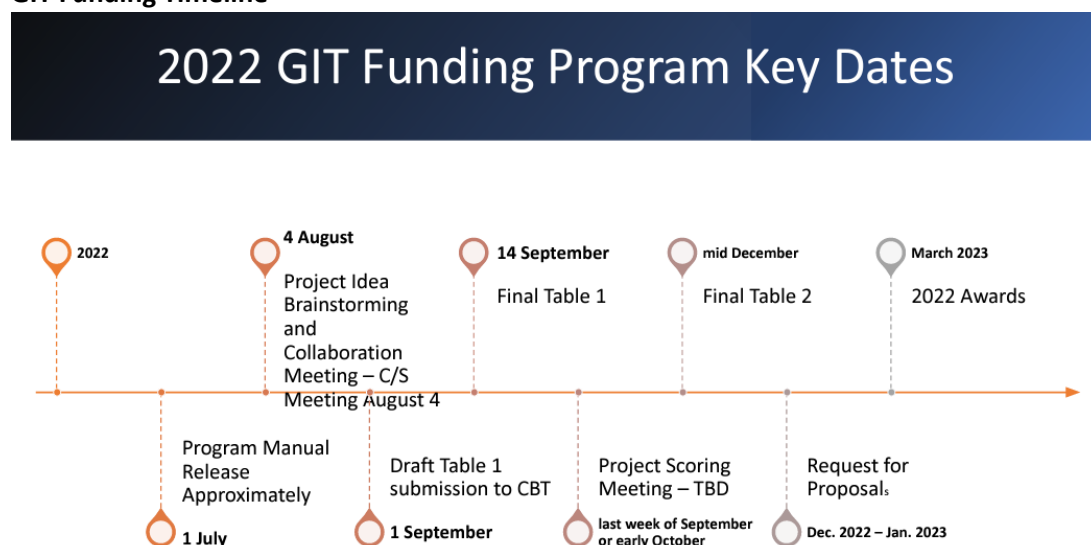
Julie then asked for feedback on this potential project.

Anne Hairston-Strang noted that this project touches on a regional priority and is very timely. Having better information out there and expanding potential demand for underutilized species could be a real opportunity.

Brenda Sieglitz noted that in PA addressing capacity and staffing in nurseries is something that they have started thinking about. They want to make sure that their demand can be met. Brenda said she is looking forward to continuing the conversation on this topic.

Terry Lasher of Virginia shared the good news that they will be reopening their New Kent Nursery. Through the general assembly they were able to get funding to reopen. Current 5 year average production of hardwood seedlings in VA is about 1.5 million, in the next two to three years VA is looking at an increase in capacity somewhere around 5 to 6 million seedlings annually for hardwood production due to having the nursery re-opened.

#### GIT Funding Timeline



Projects this year will not start until summer of 2023.

Julie then brought up another potential project that could fit under the tree canopy outcome. Later this summer we will have the Tree Canopy Fact sheets available at the county scale. We could use that data and other equity tools to help local governments set tree planning goals through a tree canopy planning guidance document. Back in the early 2000s we had a planning document but have yet to have an updated one with updated guidance and tools. This updated guidance document could help local governments with tree planning and set achievable goals at the local level using planning tools.

Julie then opened the floor to comments on the urban tree canopy planning tools for local governments.

Anne Hairston-Strang noted that the metropolitan Washington Council of governments was working with Maryland and Virginia jurisdictions on something similar to this idea. They had a “cookbook” for what a locality might have in ordinances and framing where reasonable goals might be based on zoning categories. Anne noted that this project got diverted due to the pandemic, but there is a need and some interest. This is something that comes down to scale, who is responsible for the goal. This project has the potential to engage non-traditional partners like public health and safety and that there is a real opportunity there.

This project could be a more holistic approach and work with more community level partners and not just urban forestry folks. In the past we have not addressed plans for the community, just plans for tree canopy. This project would give us an opportunity to address the community as a whole and its relationship to trees.

### **Buffer Project**

There is a need to synthesize and package the various riparian products that are coming out such as the hyper resolution streams data and the riparian mask. On top of synthesizing data there is a need for communication of the science around buffers and their lesser-known benefits such as resiliency. This project would address management approach 4.1 in the buffer logic and action plan. There is always a need for technical assistance, a part of this project (or potentially a separate one) could be on technical assistance and informing networks on buffers and the need for technical assistance. These ideas could be pulled out and be separate or somehow be put together.

Frank noted that there is a lot of information out there and putting it all together might be too much for folks to take into consideration. Sally talked about how OpionWorks created a communication plan for tree canopy and forest buffers. Steve Raabe of OpionWorks will be coming to the FWG to talk more about that plan and how it can be used to our advantage. Communicating the needs for buffers and canopy is crucial and needs to be done well. We have this wonderful information, and we need to use it as a tool to communicate.

Catlin brought up how in the last meeting we talked about using the new LU/LC data to get a better sense of available land that could be buffered within the states and get a better understanding on how to prioritize those areas. It would be helpful to have a Bay wide forest buffer prioritization tool to help jurisdictions identify and buffer areas that have been identified as a priority. Catlin noted that she thinks a tool like this has the added benefit of being immediately actionable by folks in the field.

Sally shared a [targeting tool](#) that has been produced that includes current data on buffers. This tool could be a springboard, and it should be updated with the new buffer products that USGS is developing.

Rebecca shared that we should **dedicate a meeting topic to tools and data that could help with prioritization of buffers to help people see what is out there and what may be helpful.**

If we want to develop a new tool as a GIT funding project, we have time in August to talk about it as we do not officially have to submit Table 1 until September. She asked that members review the targeting tools and see if they would want to go forward with a project to develop or refine tools.

Rebecca then reviewed what projects were presented on:

- The nursery project: examining state and private nurseries and assessing their capacity and ability to keep up with demand
- The urban tree canopy project: help local governments set tree planning goals through a tree canopy planning guidance document.
- Buffer communication project: communicating the data and science around buffers.

Sally noted that we can have a project per outcome, and if we had a project that cuts across multiple outcomes it could potentially be submitted as a third project, it just needs sign on from another workgroup or goal team.

Anne mentioned that there is a nationwide effort to evaluate state nursery capacity being done by the National Association of state foresters.

Judy asked about tree protection, we are losing a lot of trees! While planting is good, protection is better. Is there any way to tack onto both the buffer communication project and the tree canopy project information about the importance of protection?

Julie noted that talking about protection is a huge need. Over the next year the tree canopy policy and funding roundtable that local and state governments will be involved in, and one of the issues that will be discussed is the loss of trees. The roundtable might be able to inform us of a 2023 GIT funding project.

Terry Lasher brought up that in VA they have been doing heat island studies in urban and more populated areas. The results of that study will help direct where VA will put planting projects. Julie noted that the National Urban Forest Connections webinar will be highlighting heat mapping projects in their August webinar. Anne asked if we have a bay wide heat mapping data set. There is not a bay wide data set, but lots of data sets at the community level.

Sally called to attention that she heard support for rolling out more of the buffer data. Rolling out more buffer data would dovetail with the communications project. There could be more synthesizing of data like heat island data.

Teddi Stark spoke up for Pennsylvania. She noted that the PA state forester is interested in expanding the state nursery. There might be some interest in PA regarding the nursery project.

Rebecca added to the conversation saying that we do not have all the answers to change social values and get people to care about trees, but communication tools can help people recognize the importance of preservation. Sally tagged onto that it is hard to just replant and get back to a point of mature trees and that preservation is crucial.

### **Round Robin**

Sophie kicked off the Round Robin by talking about the State Riparian Forest Buffer Strategy Plans. The plans were due on the 27th of June, Delaware got theirs in on time. New York and Maryland had told Sophie that their plans would be in by July 8th. West Virginia sent an email saying they do not have the ability to finish their plans until the fall. Sophie noted that she had not heard anything from Virginia or Pennsylvania. On July 19th the PSC will be taking some time to talk about the RFB strategy plans and will be determining what the next steps are in terms of advancing this work.

Terry Lasher spoke up for Virginia. They have just received their finalized budget and have had an administration change back in January. The Department of Forestry is working on an internal RFB implementation plan, with hopes of that plan to be done by the end of 2022. Next year that internal plan will become a more cross agency plan.

Teddi Stark Spoke up for Pennsylvania and noted that the draft is getting some final internal reviews and the plan should hopefully be in by the 8th.

Cassie Davis from New York gave a Riparian Forest Buffer Plan update. Cassie will be attending the upper Susquehanna coalition task force meeting with Lydia Brinkley, where they will be going over their plan and last-minute feedback.

### **Tree Canopy Indicator**

Last month the Forestry Workgroup heard about the updates, gave feedback, and approved the indicator as there was no push back on the changes. The indicator then went onto the water quality goal team to get approval. At that meeting concerns were brought up counting the change from forest to turf or impervious surface. We include the change in the tree canopy losses because it's now on developed land. Some folks at the WQGIT did not like that it was included because the tree canopy that was lost was not already an urban tree canopy, so they felt like it did not count. Julie noted that she thinks there is a translation issue between the WQGIT folks who focus on the models and model terminology vs the forestry folks and how they count trees.

The WQGIT told Julie that the Land Use Workgroup, the Forestry Workgroup, and some of the folks who raised concerns should meet to discuss the concerns and how the indicator should progress. Julie noted that the indicator justification will need to be better explained. The terms need to be defined more clearly so that the folks familiar with the model can move past the model terminology and understand the forestry terms. This indicator is not impacting the model, but rather just cutting up the data in a way to communicate tree canopy.

Anne brought up landowner motivations and how this data can encourage homeowners to plant trees. Terry asked about rural forests and if they are included. Julie noted that are not a part of the outcome, while important to communicate they are not something we are “responsible” for.

Sally announced the arrival of the new Director of the Bay Program Dr. Kandis Boyd.

### **State Round Robin**

Terry Lasher from VA spoke up and noted that throughout the conversation they had given all of their updates.

Rosie Santerre of WV spoke up and noted that there was nothing additional to add for WV. The summary about the current state of WV RFB Action plan is accurate.

Anne listed off a bunch of things happening in Maryland

- MD is getting ready for 5 million trees.
- Interviews will be happening later this month for 13 new positions.
- MD had a pretty robust planting year thanks Virginia for helping coordinate some with seedlings.
- Pursuing wood energy projects
- MD is working on an LSR Grant focused on Delmarva woodland steward’s work. MD, VA, and DE are working to identify areas for restorations/ management on the Delmarva peninsula. The GIS work should hopefully be done by the end of the year. This project will hopefully engage landowners and increase a broader understanding of forest management. Building a connection between habitat and forestry is important.

Rob Schnabel of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation talked about how CBF is pushing ahead with working with landowners, they keep getting grant funds to incentivize riparian forest buffers, and they are trying to leverage CREP wherever possible.

Jen Talbot of DNREC spoke up for Delaware. They are trying to form a committee that will help to get their RFB plan implemented and help with outreach. DNEC has applied for funding through the Tree for Every Delawarean Initiative, with the hope that those funds will go towards a community outreach conservation planning specialist.

Teddi Stark spoke up for PA and that they are currently in the middle of interviewing for new Regional Watershed Forestry Specialist Positions. PA will be receiving 3 million dollars from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, that money will be going towards buffers and other watershed forestry practice implementation. PA is also looking into the possibility of applying for America the Beautiful funding. PA’s urban forestry program was awarded \$498,000. PA’s Invitation to qualify contract has prequalified a couple contractors. PA has an active NFWF INSR grant that will be utilized to push about \$500,000 to buffer planting in the watershed.

Peter Hoagland of NRCS spoke up about an agroforestry/alley cropping field day in Philadelphia. It is sponsored by NRCS and PASA. More information can be found here:

<https://pasafarming.org/event/alley-cropping-boosting-productivity-on-an-urban-orchard/>

NRCS is adding additional \$10 million to EQUIP and \$2.5 million to the conservation stewardship program. The money will be used for practices that address reduction in nitrogen settlements, improved livestock management, and conserving wetlands all aligning with the Chesapeake Bay program goals.

Brenda Sieglitz spoke about Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership and how they have just launch their landowner matching software, Where all of the 10 million trees partners are able to put in their information on the county level, some information included is types of plantings, whether plantings are riparian, urban, or upland. They can also include if they have any funding, if they are a government, or if they work with livestock. When a landowner puts in an inquiry, they will be matched to a partner in their region automatically. Partners will get an email and will be able to decide if they have the capacity to take the landowner on, if they don't have capacity, they can send them to the next best partner. This will get landowners connected much faster to people who are funding tree projects. In terms of marketing and getting this information out there, Keystone 10 Million Trees has been working with a marketing firm to build up social media, they have also been relying on print media at the local scale.