We sent the survey to 63 and present grantees representing 81 projects, and received 29 responses (this is in line with expected internal survey response rate of 30 - 40%). The results are summarized below.

I. **Demographics of Responders.**
Summary: The survey decently represented the organization type of typical NFWF grant recipients, with mostly non profits, followed by local governments. The state of Maryland was slightly under-represented in this survey relative to the likely percentage of grantees in that State. There were no respondents in Delaware or New York. There was a good range of counties and years of project award represented in the survey.

II.

1. Types of Organization:
    - State Government - 3.45% (1 respondent)
    - Local Government - 27.59% (8 respondent)
    - Non Profit Organization - 65.52% (19 respondents)
    - Educational Institution - 3.45% (1 respondent)

2. Primary State of project activity:
    - Delaware – 0
    - District of Columbia – 6.9% (2 respondents)
    - Maryland – 10.34% (3 respondents)
    - New York – 0
    - Pennsylvania –31.03% (9 respondents)
    - Virginia – 37.93% (11 respondents)
    - West Virginia – 13.79 (4 respondents)

3. Primary County of Project Activity: Respondents were from a wide range of counties within the above States including:
    - Lancaster(three respondents)
    - Blair (two respondents)
    - Loudoun (two respondents)
    - Centre (two respondents)
    - Hardy, Hampshire (two respondents)
    - Norfolk(two respondents) and Chesapeake
    - Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Perry, York (one response).
    - Rockingham
    - Berkeley
    - Potter
    - Caroline
    - Pendleton, Hardy, Hampshire, Grant (one response).
    - All Northern Virginia
    - All DC
    - Hanover
    - Albemarle, Fluvanna and Greene (one response).
    - Mifflin
    - Frederick
    - Culpeper
    - Accomack and Northampton
    - Rockingham, Shenandoah, Page, Augusta

- Grant, Mineral, Pendleton, Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan (one response).
- Talbot

4. Year of Grant Award (note, some respondents indicated more than one year):
    - Pre-2012: - 6 respondents
    - 2012: - 4 respondents
    - 2013: - 10 respondents
    - 2014: - 7 respondents
    - 2015: - 5 respondents

III. Buffer Activities.

Summary: Most applicants were focused on riparian buffers and were at least as successful, if not more successful, at implementing these buffers than they'd intended. Respondents indicated a variety of barriers to implementation and had a range of preferred solutions.

1. Question: Select which of the following riparian conservation practices you planned to establish, maintain, and/or permanently protect based on your initial grant application for the project (select one):
    - Riparian forest buffers - 53.57% (15 respondents)
    - Riparian grass buffers - 10.71% (3 respondents)
    - Both 35.71% - (10 respondents)

2. Indicate your relative success in achieving riparian forest buffer establishment, maintenance, and/or protection goals for the project (select one):
    - More than planned - 46.43% (13 respondents)
    - As planned - 32.14% (9 respondents)
    - Less than planned - 7.14% (2 respondents)
    - N/A (no riparian forest buffer goals for the project) - 14.29% (4 respondents)

3. Indicate your relative success in achieving riparian grass buffer establishment, maintenance, and/or protection goals for the project:
    - More than planned - 10.71% (3 respondents)
    - As planned- 35.71% (10 respondents)
    - Less than planned - 14.29% (4 respondents)
    - N/A (no riparian grass buffer goals for the project) 39.29% (11 respondents)

4. For any specific landowners or the project as a whole, was it necessary to implement riparian grass buffers instead of planned riparian forest buffers for any reason?
    - Yes 29.63% - (8 respondents)
    - No 70.37% - (19 respondents)

5. If you answered "yes" to question #10 above, please provide information on why riparian forest buffers could not be implemented:
    - other structure (i.e., Zip Line) in riparian area limited extent of tree planting
    - In many cases we get strong negative feedback from adjacent property owners on planting of dense forested habitats. They feel these plantings block their view, increase threat of crime and invite undesired (in their view) wildlife.
    - Utilities

- Adjacent to row crop production to reduce shading of crops
- The area in question is a golf course, so a forest buffer would have interfered with the play and the landowner would have not approved/permitted the project.
- Worry of dead trees blocking water flow
- Landowners being reluctant to convert cropland or losing pastureland
- Small lots in urban areas mean little room for large plantings

6. Besides NFWF, please indicate which other funding sources you utilized for installing buffers during the term of your project (respondents were able to check all that apply).
    - CREP - 57.14% (12 respondents)
    - EQIP - 33.33% (7 respondents)
    - State-administered program - 52.38% (11 respondents)
    - No other funding source - 14.29% (3 respondents)
    - Other:
        1. Fairfax Water grant
        2. USFS Chesapeake Bay Program funds
        3. VDOT
        4. Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG)
        5. Private Foundation
        6. Partner NGO grant funds (VA ches Bay Liscense Plate Fund), NGO donations from fundraising, City operating funds, City in-kind funds, Local business material donations and in-kind services (one respondent)
        7. Prince William County Tidal Wetland Mitigation Fund
        8. CBF Buffer Bonus Program
        9. Chesapeake Bay Trust
        10. Private funding
        11. Member donations of time and money
        12. City of Norfolk and Chesapeake

7. Please identify any issues that negatively impacted your ability to achieve planned riparian forested buffer implementation, maintenance, and/or protection goals for the project (select all that apply):
    - Lack of leadership and support for riparian forest buffers from Federal, state, and local agency staff - 22.22% (4 respondents)
    - Insufficient funding and resources for technical assistance - 50.00% (9 respondents)
    - Insufficient funding and resources for landowner outreach - 22.22% (4 respondents)
    - Lack of interagency coordination and staff training - 11.11% (2 respondents)
    - Insufficient incentives to induce landowner adoption - 61.11% (11 respondents)
    - Lack of matching resources for Federal or state cost-share programs - 16.67% (3 respondents)
    - Complicated and/or inflexible Federal or state program rules - 61.11% (11 respondents)
    - Lack of landowner interest - 22.22% (4 respondents)
    - Insufficient maintenance on existing buffers - 55.56% (10 respondents)
    - Other:

- Site conditions (extremely rocky) caused us to add another area in order to achieve our intended goals. In addition, there may be another problem specific in Loudoun regarding riparian plantings in major floodplain due to the possible need to do a floodplain alteration study.
- Our biggest challenge comes from deer eating our plant materials. We have initiated a plan that includes taller plant species, tall enough to avoid the deer.
- Location of the stream didn't lend itself to a forested buffer
- We could have used more $ for native plants for the initial buffer and long term replanting
- We commonly overcome shortcomings of CREP & other programs by compensating with our resources. Ideally, the basic programs would not require fixes by partner groups and would function as intended.
- Completed stated goals but checked above that are ongoing issue
- All goals have been or will be met, but listed are the obstacles.
- We exceeded our goals for the project, but the checkmarks above represent obstacles.
- We had no problems in doing what we wanted to do
- As referenced above, lack of landowner willingness to convert cropland and concerns of losing pastureland

8. In your view, what additional tools or resources would best improve your ability to increase riparian forested buffer implementation, maintenance, and/or protection efforts? Please rank the options from 1 (the most important) to 8 (the least important).
    1. Funding and resources for technical assistance
    2. More flexible Federal or state program rules
    3. Tied with below: New or innovative incentives to induce landowner adoption
    4. Tied with above: Funding and resources for landowner outreach
    5. Improved maintenance on existing buffers
    6. Leadership and support for riparian forest buffers from Federal, state, and local agency staff – *interestingly, this response was very polarizing. 5 people listed it as "most important" and 6 people listed it as "least important."*
    7. Improved interagency coordination and staff training
    8. Tools for targeting future outreach and implementation efforts

9. If you had a different answer for this question, please provide it here and indicate how important you found it:
- Maintenance of existing buffers is very important, but we haven't found it to be an obstacle to increasing uptake of new buffers. Also, with respect to targeting, there are already a lot of tools available to do this, but there hasn't been incentive for using them. Lack of outreach to landowners and lack of options to present to landowners has been the obstacle we have encountered most often.
- Funding for materials and planting is the most critical element.
- One major hurdle we often face (though not yet on this grant effort) is inability to properly water in new plantings. If we have an unseasonably warm spring/summer we need resources to manually water. The ability to apply for funds to purchase equipment towards this goal and/or to fund staff/contractors for the work would be useful.

- Our Charlottesville partners - Center for Watershed Protection and the Rivanna Master Naturalists - help us assure program success. This worked perfectly for our community.
- The largest hurdles are inflexible/complicated programs and lack of maintenance on existing buffers. Programs can become too complex and drawn out for some landowners. The lack of maintenance on buffers not only hurts buffer success but the un-maintained appearance (tree tubes laying over, presence of invasives, trees/shrubs growing through fences, etc.) gives perspective landowners a negative connotation.
- The inherent structure of NRCS delivering FSA's CREP and FSA having no option but to pay NRCS for TA that might or might not happen is a central flaw. Securing an ability for FSA to pay third parties to do the TA and see it actually done at a level commensurate to costs paid would really help. Not sure how far this goes to solve FSA's (some states only) lack of enthusiasm for CREP, but lots of failed buffers are a real headache for FSA on contract compliance, and they've often failed for lack of TA by NRCS to help assure success.
- Make buffers mandatory to receive EQIP and / or State funds, include buffers as part of the ranking process for EQIP contracts. Not "buffer bonus", throwing additional money at landowners.
- Need in Virginia for a buffer easement option/incentive with significant financial benefits to landowner. Added benefit programmatically - reducing the need to "resell" CREP contracts when they expire.
- We have farmer landowners who will not create forest buffers because they will lose pasture and for philosophical reasons...i.e. they want nothing to do with government or quasi government programs.
- There must be consideration given to the landscape and whether riparian forested buffers is the best BMP. It seems to have become the "band aid solution" for every landscape and is failing in some locations. More consideration needs to be provided to alternative BMPs that may yield a better overall return on investment from a holistic watershed approach. We need to be looking at “terrain specific” BMPs and not assuming riparian forested buffers is the solution in every location. This is probably the most important aspect...decide which is the appropriate and best BMP due to site conditions before assuming it is a riparian forested buffer.