Report from the Riparian Forest Buffer Action Team

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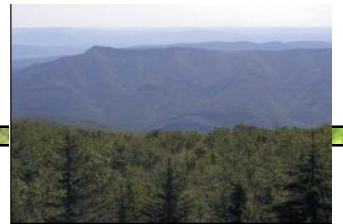
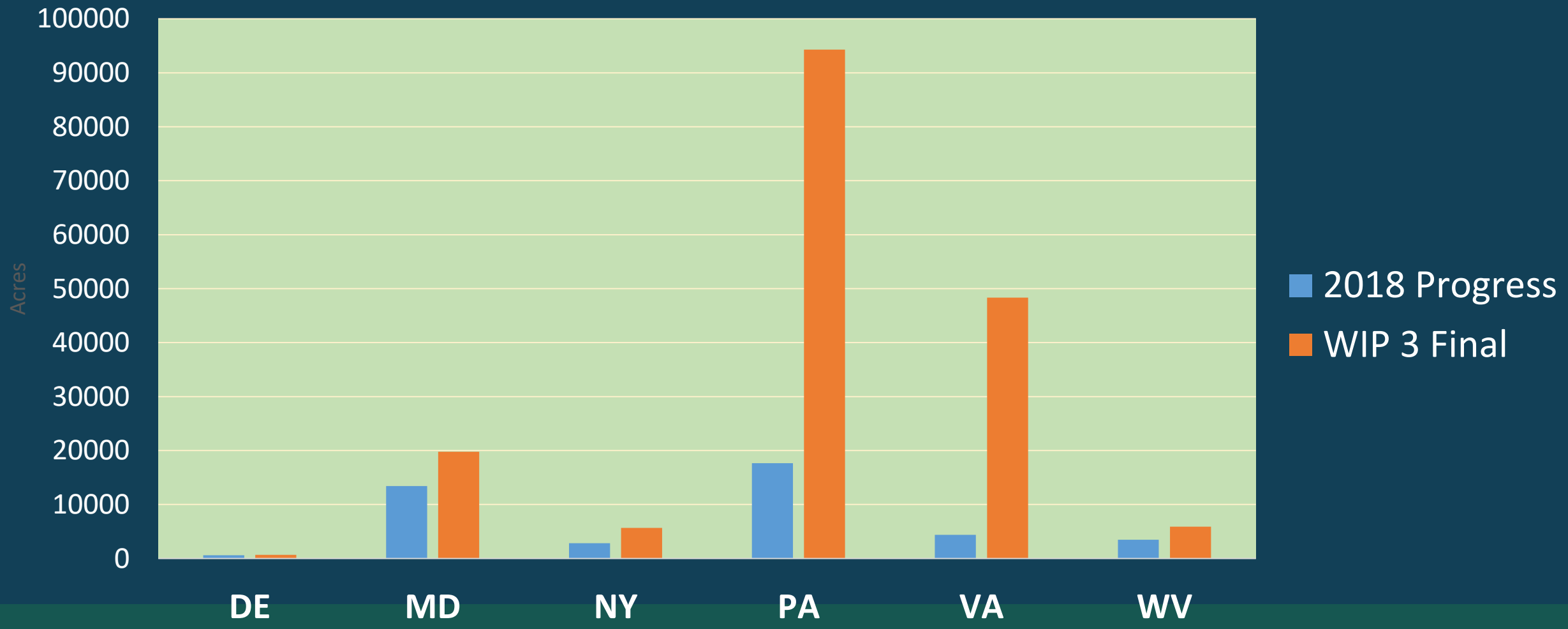



Ag Riparian Forest Buffers



Capital required - **$239 million – $1.5 billion**

The Action Team is sunsetting.

“we” have been up here many times in the last 15 years with different efforts.

Now we have one last big idea for your support.

Does the MB/PSC support taking strong measures designed to increase riparian forest buffers?

If so, what does support look like?

Opportunities and Ideas

- No More Status Quo-- less reliance on CREP, volunteer programs, ad hoc grants
- The concept of on-demand, flexible program is a big step forward that's received a lot of support from jurisdictions…
- Innovation will continue BUT
- We need to **scale up now** to the watershed level to meet WIPs and 2025
- Here's what it could look like…

Turn-Key Program Examples from Jurisdictions

- **NY: USC Buffer Program and DEC's Trees for Tributaries**
  - USC Buffers- Matches State/Fed program, or stand-alone, application involves site-suitability assessment, funds whole systems, or components.
  - Trees-for-Tribs- Buffer gap-filler program- provides materials, plants, and technical assistance. Short, two-page application. Locally-led (CD or Municipality), work w/ landowner to complete tasks such as site prep, etc.
- **PA: Stream ReLeaf**
  - Buffer Gap-filler program for shovel-ready projects.
  - Flat per-acre rate.
  - Requires local-partner lead (NGO, CD, etc.)
  - Very flexible- each buffer designed for landowner by partner, approved by forester.
- **VA: James River Buffer Program**
  - Very low-cost, site-specific, and flexible- allow for natural re-gen, bare-root, etc.
  - Designed based on forester recommendations and landowner desires.
  - Blueprint/framework intended to be replicated beyond James River eventually.
- **MD: Healthy Waters, Healthy Forests**
  - CBT funded (gas tax) Forestry Boards
  - Alliance does recruitment and orders plantings
  - Tree planting and 2 years of maintenance provided free.
  - Targets non ag – properties with extra lawn (not in septic areas)

How to Build a Buffer Program -STEPS

Simplified process and cost structure that is inclusive of the following integral components:

1) Outreach
2) Technical Assistance
3) Site Prep
4) Planting
5) Maintenance (multiple visits)

WHAT and HOW

Need to Build Infrastructure

1) Accountable Buffer Point person * ➡ state leaders*
2) Line up program people doing outreach and TA- an army of partners landowners on-the-ground * ➡ landowners*
3) Contractors doing site prep, tree planting, shelters, and maintenance for 2-4 years * ➡ trees*
4) Business end: payments, reporting * ➡ #$close-out

HOW will it be Funded?

- Need to get networks in place for large-scale Program
- We asked for $5 million to get started
  - *Can the Bay Program come up with this?*
- Could use leverage for private conservation investment
- Feasibility/Scoping Study to learn more details on private$--starting NOW

Scoping/Feasibility for Conservation Finance

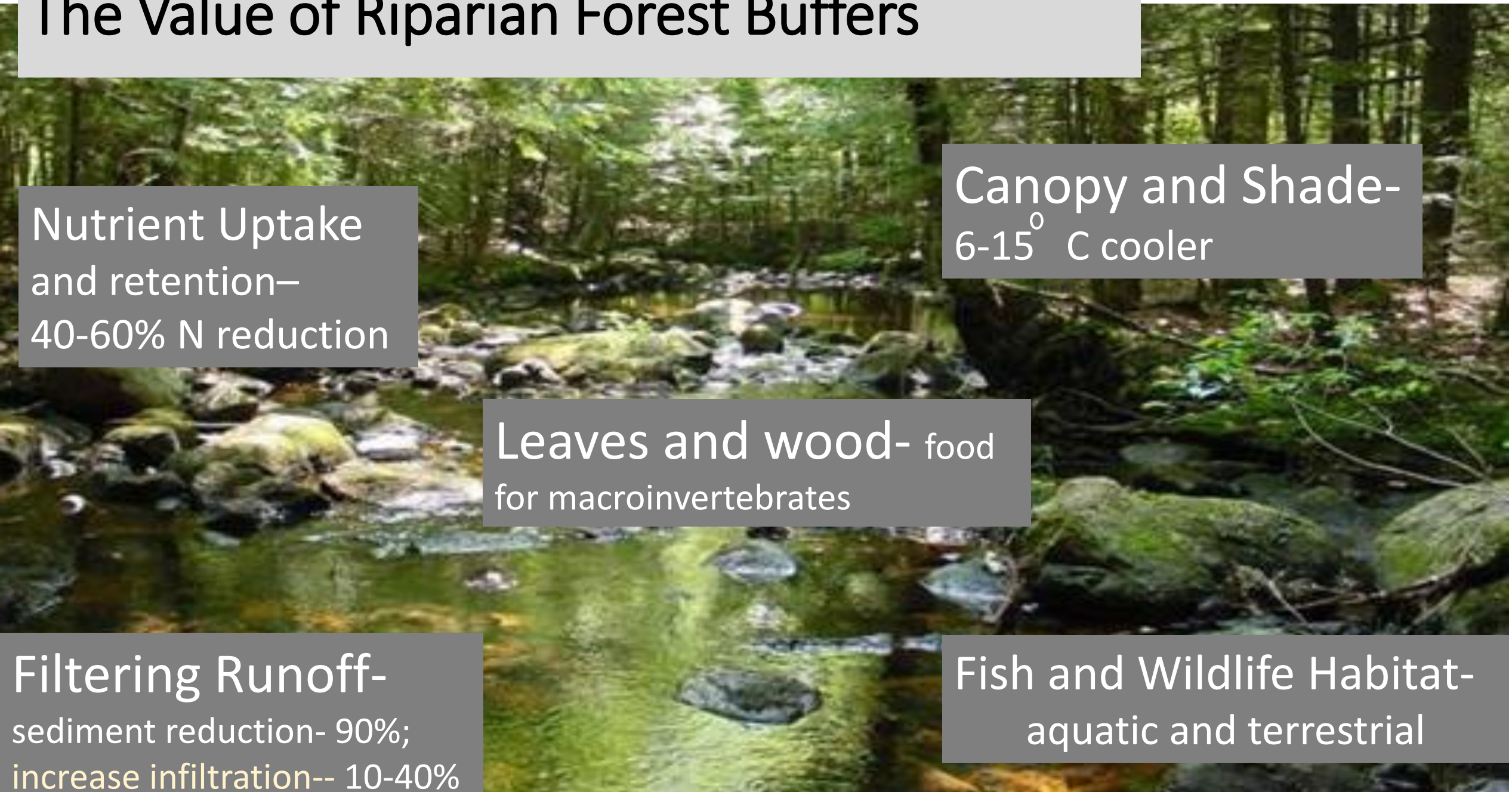
1) What type of credits and markets are available?
2) Which partners are needed and how would the relationship be structured?
3) How can we mitigate or minimize risks to partners?
4) What are the financial needs of the project at various phases? (Can we scale it up or down? What returns can be expected?)
5) What financial models are recommended?

MB ACTION

- Does the MB support developing a Bay Buffer Program?
- Is there funding to begin building it?
- Does the MB approve the Action Team work to be presented to the PSC?

The End

The Value of Riparian Forest Buffers



Nutrient Uptake
and retention–
40-60% N reduction

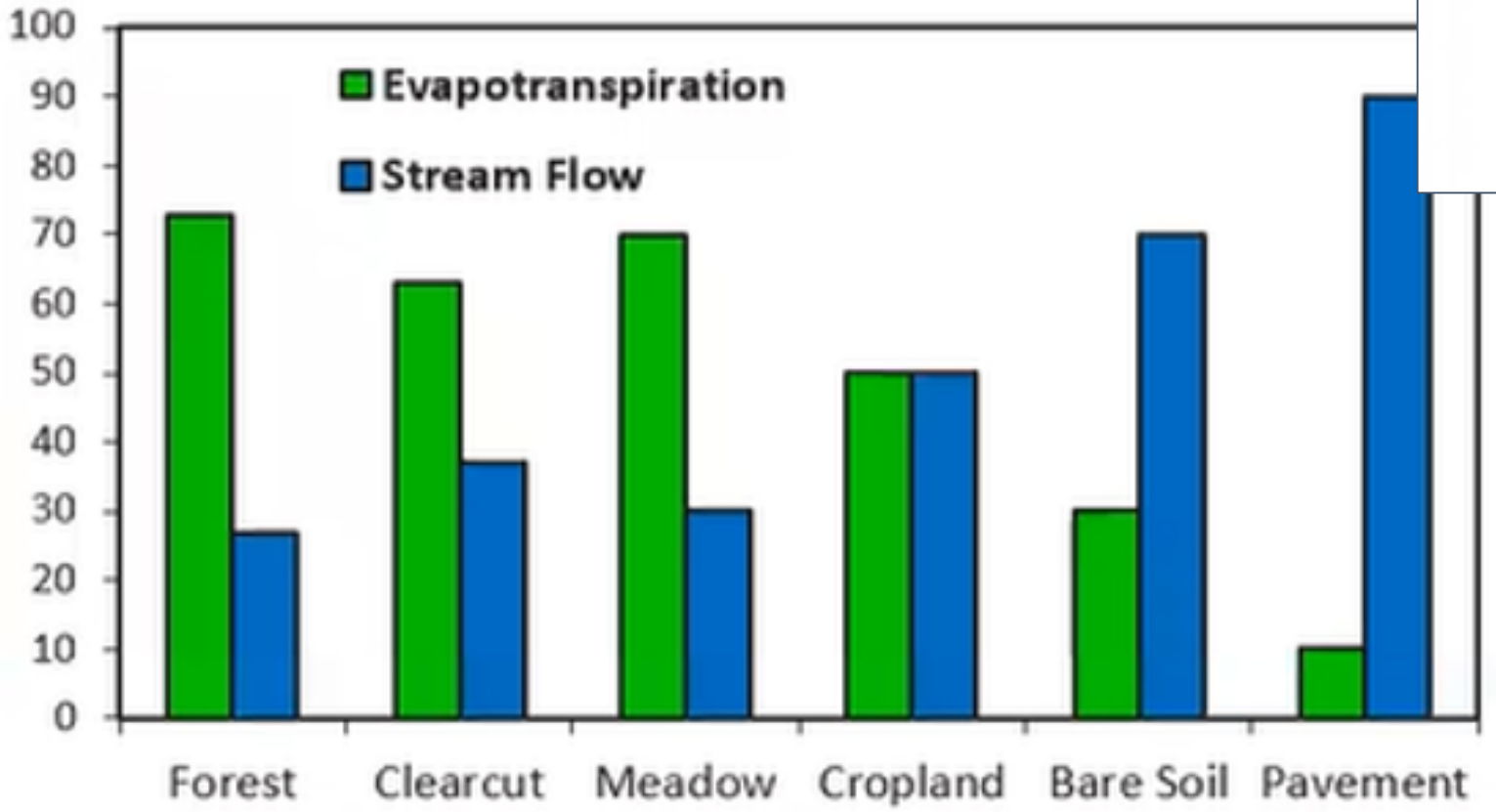
Canopy and Shade-
6-15^{o} C cooler

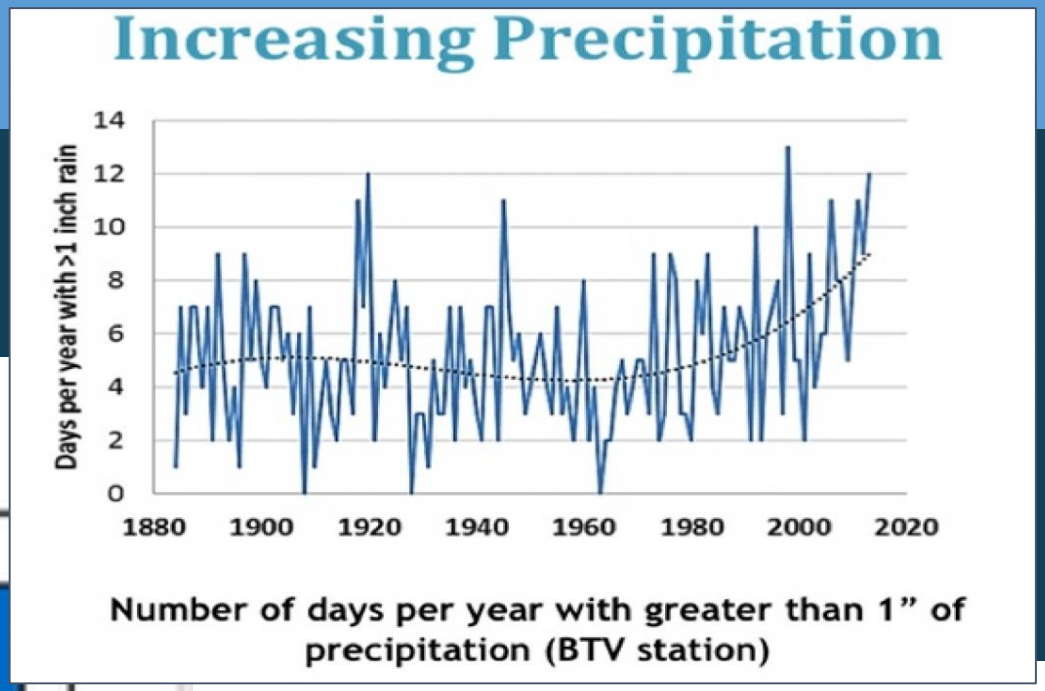
Leaves and wood- food
for macroinvertebrates

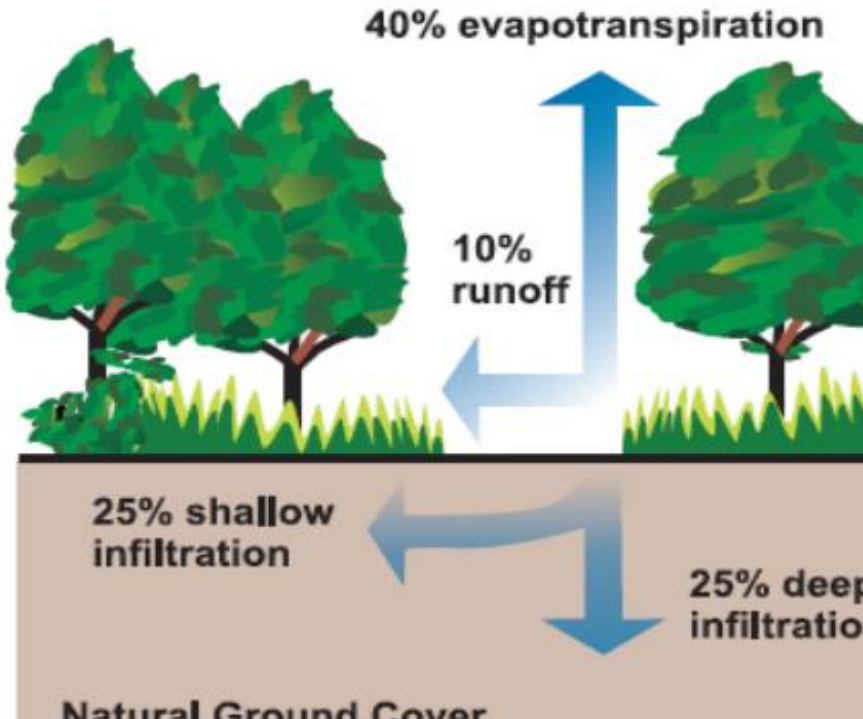
Filtering Runoff-
sediment reduction- 90%;
increase infiltration-- 10-40%

Fish and Wildlife Habitat-
aquatic and terrestrial

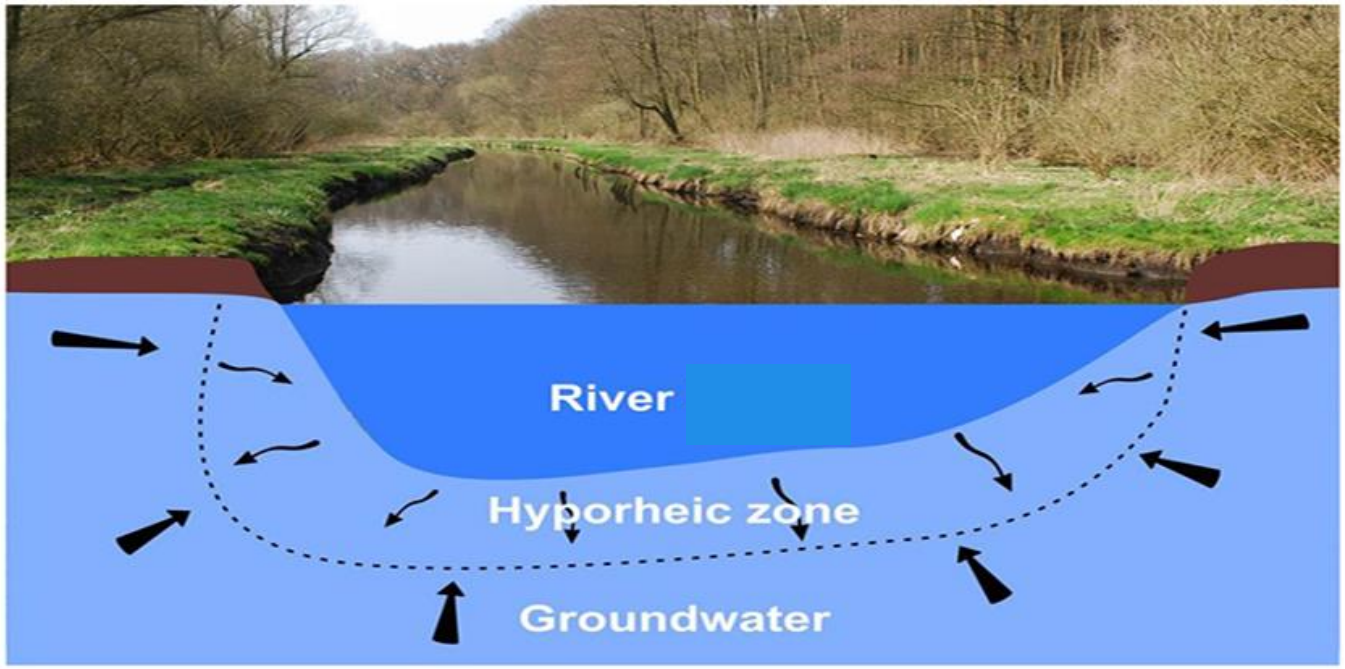
Forest Hydrology Important

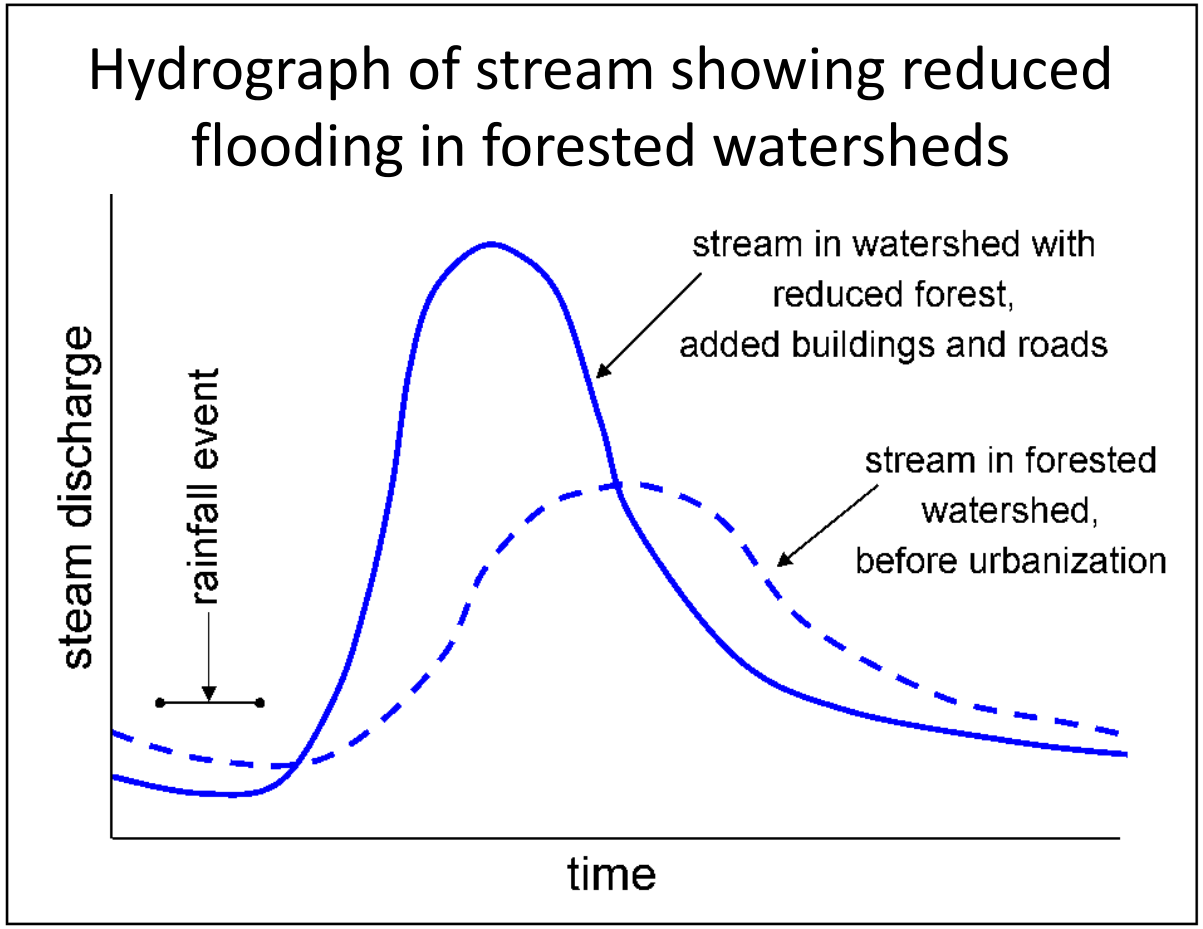




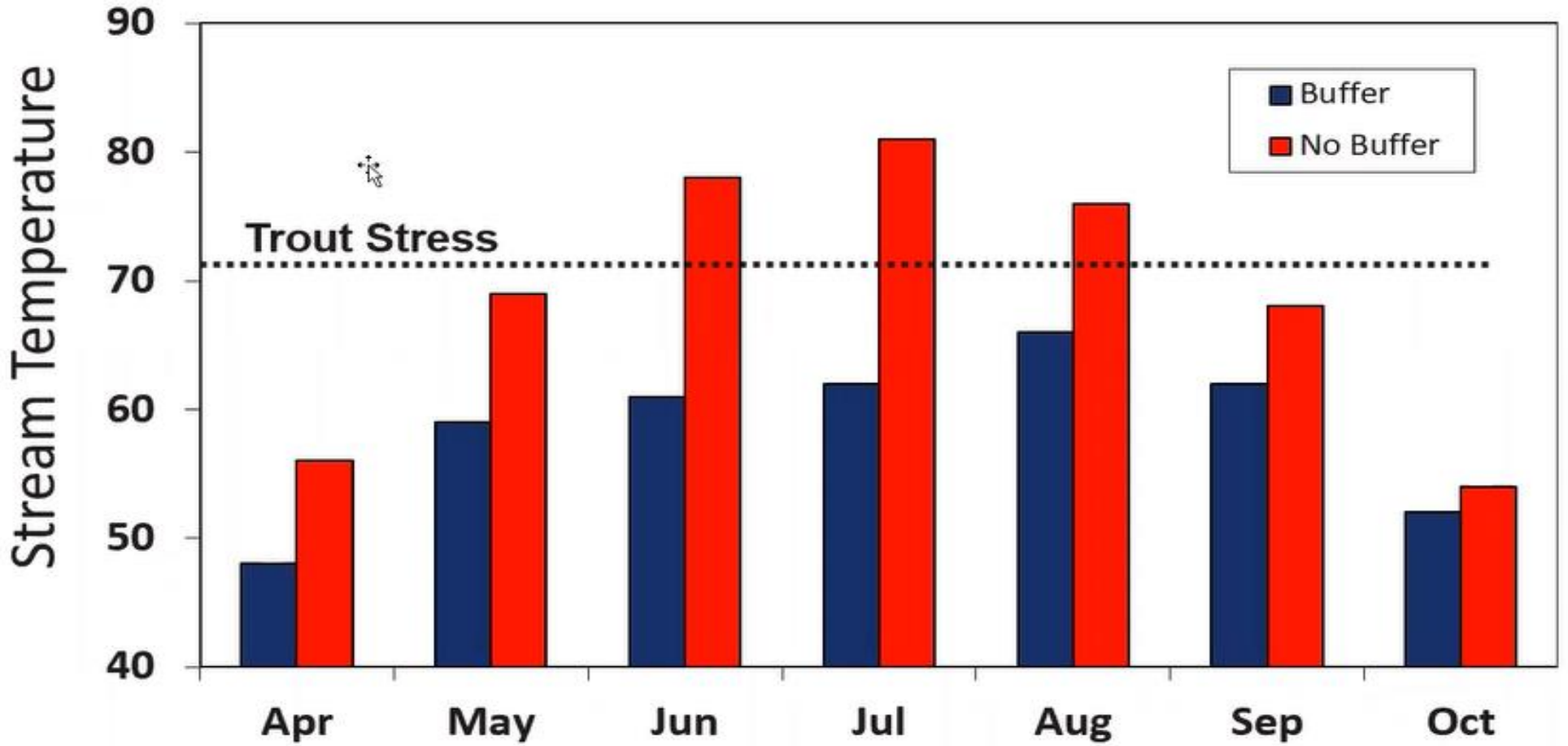


Active Riparian (hyporheic) Zone





Forest Buffers and Stream Temperature



PennState Extension

Build on current innovations:

Healthy Forests; Healthy Waters

Opportunities and Ideas for PSC Action

--What can be done regionally

PSC takes leadership actions, works to improve TA, CREP

Is it time for a Chesapeake Bay Riparian Forest Buffer Program?

a. Simple, cost-share, flexible funding approach
b. Efficient, on-demand-delivery of TA services and funding to municipalities and landowners
c. Consistent funding, restoration economies of scale