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# CREP Forested Buffers

Information for  
DEP's Ag Advisory Board

By David Wise, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

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# CBF's Role in CREP

Solely on  
Forested Buffers



# CBF role in CREP buffers:



- Six full time field staff do technical assistance solely on buffers
- Work closely with NRCS, FSA

# CBF role in CREP buffers:

- CBF does significant outreach to landowners



(above: alternative water source via CREP for dairy operation)

# CBF also helps with:



- Training professionals
- Research on methods and stream response
- Program guidance

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## Reasons for CBF's focus on forested buffers

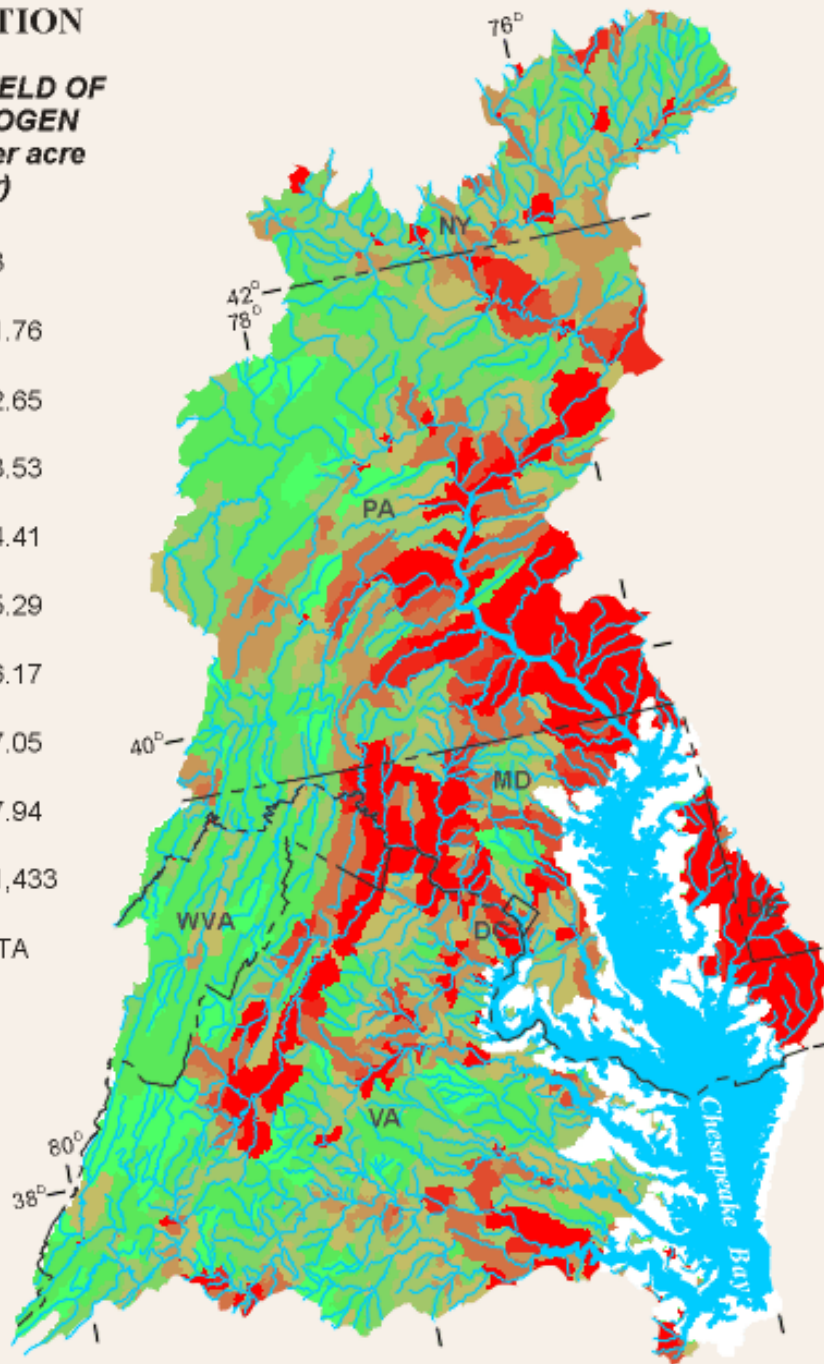
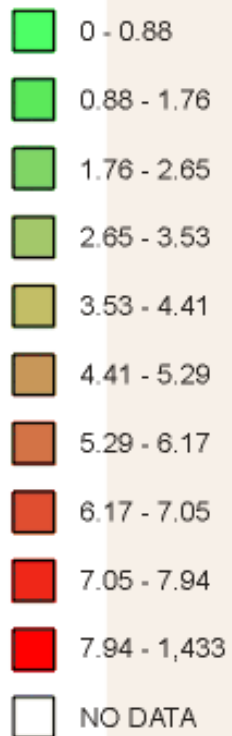
- CBF sees sustainable ag as key to a clean bay
- CREP buffers are voluntary, profitable
- Buffers help producers meet society's goals for clean water

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## Reasons for CBF's focus on forested buffers (cont'd)

- Streams with forested buffers remove 2-8x more nitrogen than grass buffers
- EPA finds \$1 on prevention avoids \$29 in drinking water cleanup costs
- Buffers are only 10% of CREP acres
- \$1 spent on field staff leverages \$25-35 in state and federal funds

**EXPLANATION**  
**DELIVERED YIELD OF**  
**TOTAL NITROGEN**  
*(in pounds per acre*  
*per year)*



# Sources of Delivered Nitrogen (lb/ac/yr)

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# Success Stories

- Before and 12 years after restoration



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## CREP to date

- Over 3500 landowners
- Over 1500 miles of buffers



# Restoration Activities of Chesapeake Bay Foundation's PA Watershed Restoration Program

## Partners\*



## Legend

- Forested stream buffer and wetland restoration projects (most with livestock exclusion fencing) via CBF's Farm Stewardship Program and related programs 1997 - 2007
- ▲ CREP and CCRP forested stream buffer projects 2000 - 2007
- Forested stream buffer projects (mostly unfenced) via CBF's Trees for Streams Program and related programs 2001 - 2007
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed in Pennsylvania

10 0 10 Miles

December 2007  
Version



## Project Totals:

- > 4,400 Landowners Assisted
- > 2,000 Miles of Forested Stream Buffers Restored
- > 6,600 Acres of Wetlands Restored or Enhanced

\* PA CREP Partners Include: USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection, PA Game Commission, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Center for Rural Pennsylvania, Ducks Unlimited, PA Assoc. of Conservation Districts, PA Dept. of Agriculture, PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, PA Fish and Boat Commission, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, State Conservation Commission.



# CREP buffers: key to Ches. Bay commitments:

- CREP has produced a strong majority of PA's buffers to help meet bay commitments



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# CREP buffers: solutions at a profit

- ex. dairy farm just upstream of intake for a university's water supply
- ex. Mt. Pisgah State Park's fix



Before and after buffering

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# forested buffers work for streams

- trout born on a restoration site
  - 3x and 10x increases in pollution-intolerant stream insects (CBF/Stroud research)



Landowner's kids with fish

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# Buffers work for herd health

- clean, dry animals
- alternative water
- stabilized crossings
  - stream bank fencing



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# CREP buffers work for grazing

CREP buffers often pay majority of costs to convert to rotational grazing

CBF has helped dozens of graziers to use CREP



a grazier moving fence

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• **Buffers work  
for landowners:**

CREP forested buffer  
contracts to date:

- have paid about \$40 million in cost share
- will pay about \$30 million in rent

Ex. alternative water system



## The Future of CREP Buffers

- Buffers might be on short list of options for producers to meet revised E&S regulations
  - CREP is a voluntary, profitable option
- Buffers might produce income
  - carbon credits or nutrient credits
  - or at least get landowners to baseline

## Future of CREP Buffers and CBF

- CREP buffers likely be available in future
- CBF hopes to continue providing technical assistance to landowners
  - Will require resources for field staff
  - \$1 for field staff leverages \$25-35 state & federal funds via CREP

## Recent changes improve CREP buffers

- FSA: forested buffers may be re-enrolled at end of contract
- Adds another \$100+ per acre, per year
  - Typically adds \$1500/acre

## Recent changes improve CREP buffers

- Early projects had some survival issues
- Research has ID'd practical solutions
  - See landowner guide
- FSA and DEP have agreed to provide 100% cost share on critical post-planting care
- Key: yearly herbicide for 4 years
  - Stroud: survival increased 6x, growth increased 2x
- CBF hopes to help get word out & help landowners use these resources

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