

Goal: Restore 30 Agriculturally Impaired Streams by 2030



Chesapeake Conservancy and local restoration partners gather around a Precision Conservation map to plan their outreach strategy for the Halfmoon Valley Farm Tour in 2019. PHOTO BY ADRIENNE GEMBERLING

On Earth Day, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf joined with Chesapeake Conservancy and local conservation partners to announce a new collaborative environmental initiative for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to restore the health of 30 agriculturally impaired streams by 2030.

“The Pennsylvania rivers and streams that drain into the Chesapeake Bay are the backbone of many communities across the commonwealth. Restoring those rivers and streams brings back recreation opportunities like fishing and boating, and improves water quality, which helps communities downstream.

This ‘30 x 30’ stream restoration effort will build on the type of work that my administration, the Chesapeake Conservancy and many others are doing every day to help Pennsylvania farmers restore streambanks, install best management practices and continue to be stewards of the land,” Gov. Wolf said. “Restoring Pennsylvania’s waters pays dividends here in our communities and downstream, and I am proud to join this effort.”

“On behalf of Chesapeake Conservancy and our partners, we thank Gov. Wolf for his commitment to this exciting effort to restore 30 streams by 2030,” said Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn.

“Partners working from Lycoming to Lancaster County have identified 30 streams where collaborative restoration can restore stream health the quickest and remove the stream from the impaired waters list.

“While more resources are still needed, we are already seeing tangible results in Pennsylvania’s local streams from public and private investments. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been a valuable partner in helping to shape this initiative and ensuring monitoring is in place to evaluate success at key milestones.”

The “30 x 30” stream restoration initiative will support community-based efforts that are already underway to reduce pollution and sediment in Pennsylvania streams and provide healthy habitats for fish and wildlife, outdoor recreation and better water quality for local communities.

The effort directly supports agricultural landowners seeking to restore local streams near their land.

Many community partners have engaged in this effort, including the Pennsylvania departments of Environmental Protection and Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), seven county conservation districts, as well as the dozens of nonprofits, research institutions and local, federal and state agencies involved with the Central Pennsylvania Precision Conservation Partnership, Lancaster Clean Water Partners and the Live Stake Collaborative.

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“Through this remarkable investment, this partnership has been able to sustain local, historical, agricultural and fishing traditions; protect critical forest habitats; improve community resilience to climate change and strengthen military readiness at one of the Navy’s most important aircraft testing locations in the country.”

Funding from REPI helps support the Middle Chesapeake Sentinel Landscape Partnership’s efforts to preserve agriculture in the area, maintain natural habitats and keep Navy aircraft flying, Hicks said.

“That’s why programs like REPI are so important for how we think about maintaining the quality of our training environment, the longevity of our assets and also the relationships with the communities that we work so closely with that surround our installations,” she said. Use of the airspace that makes up the Atlantic Test Range is at the heart of the mission at NAS Patuxent River, where airborne research and development testing help bring aircraft – including the F-35 Lightning II – into the Navy.

Navy Capt. John Brabazon, the commander of NAS Patuxent River, said REPI and the partnership keep his installation’s mission viable. “To date, REPI funding has been used to preserve 63 separate parcels – that’s 63 willing land owners, 63 conservation partners doing the very time-consuming work to preserve more than 12,000 acres, so far, beneath the range air space,” he said.