



Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

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Shenandoah Valley Clean Streams Initiative

Managing Organization: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Project Partners: Virginia Tech, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Environmental Defense Fund, Headwaters, Shenandoah, and Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation Districts Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River

Project Description.

The *Shenandoah Valley Clean Streams Initiative* will harness the collaborative efforts of the Virginia Waste Solutions Forum (WSF), the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), Virginia Tech, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), and Shenandoah Valley community organizations and local governments to support the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in delivering targeted Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill funding to high-density animal production watersheds in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. This project has two main strategies: 1) leveraging the opportunity of targeted Farm Bill funding to deliver more comprehensive adoption of critical, highly cost-effective water quality conservation and nutrient management practices in a region of significant high-density animal and related crop production (Rockingham, Augusta, Page, and Shenandoah counties), and 2) **a highly-targeted “clean stream” initiative to help remove the Smith Creek watershed from the TMDL list by encouraging both agricultural and urban landowners to implement practices that reduce sediment, bacteria, and nutrient loading to this watershed.**

The 2008 Farm Bill will deliver a significant increase in funding for targeted use in high priority subwatersheds within the Chesapeake Bay. The Virginia NRCS anticipates receiving \$5.6 million in 2009, \$10 million in 2010, and \$17 million in 2011. This funding is in addition to the regular state allocation. Delivering on the potential of these funds will require a partnership effort to provide increased outreach, farmer recruitment, technical assistance, and implementation follow up. The NRCS currently does not have additional funds available for these activities, which are critical to reach beyond the early adopters and deliver more comprehensive conservation practice implementation in this area of high nutrient and sediment loading to the Bay. The Smith Creek watershed offers an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the partnership activities and innovative outreach and marketing strategies needed to remove a stream from the TMDL list. Smith Creek watershed, which has a TMDL for bacteria and sediment, has been targeted for native brook trout habitat restoration and has just begun the TMDL implementation process. The outcome of this project will ensure that targeted Farm Bill funding achieves real on-the-ground results in Rockingham, Augusta, Page, and Shenandoah counties and put Smith Creek watershed on a clear path to being removed from the TMDL list.

Goals and Outcomes.

This project will result in significant sediment, nutrient and pathogen loading reductions. Specifically, we anticipate this project will:

- Result in livestock stream exclusion for 15 miles of streams in the project area;
- Enroll 100 farmers in programs that help them use tools to provide field specific information that enables better targeting of commercial and manure nutrients to crop needs, a practice which has been shown to reduce nitrogen application by approximately 20 lb/acre. Assuming an average of

100 acres per farmer, this would reduce nitrogen application by 200,000 lbs (reducing nitrogen delivered to the edge of stream by approximately 40,000 lbs) and result in a net savings to farmers of approximately \$150,000 dollars; and

- Enroll at least 10 dairies in programs to convert from corn-based feed production to perennial forage resulting in an average reduction of 22.8 lbs of N and 2.5 lbs of P per acre per year delivered to edge of stream (for a project total of 10,269 lbs of N and 1,132 lbs of P).

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