



Landmarks

2022 STEWARDSHIP EDITION

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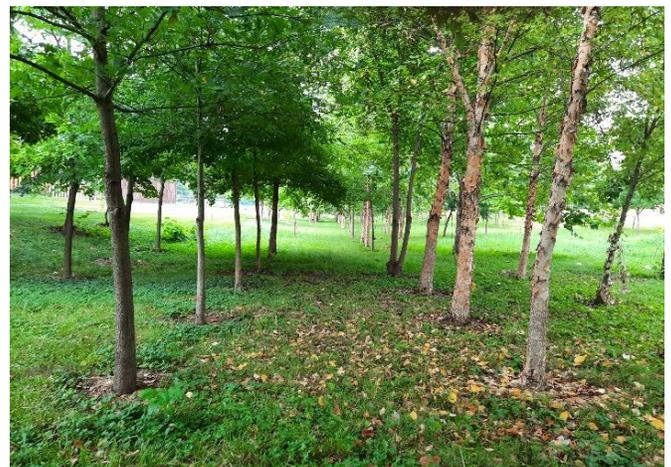


Planting 5 Million Trees in Maryland

The Maryland Forest Service of the State's Department of Natural Resources has always been in the business of planting trees, but for the next nine planting seasons there will be a whole new impetus for getting trees in the ground.

The Tree Solutions Now Act, passed by the Maryland Legislature in the spring of 2021, dedicates \$15 million per year in state government funding for tree planting until 2031. A multi-state agency partnership including the Departments of Environment, Agriculture, and Natural Resources, will coordinate resources as part of this endeavor. The Maryland Forest Service is hiring 13 new employees to further encourage and direct planting efforts. Another major partner in this initiative is the nonprofit Chesapeake Bay Trust, which will administer \$10 million of the funds to help direct planting efforts to urban areas in Maryland as part of the Trust's urban forestry programming. State funding will also be directed to meet costs for site preparation, planting labor and materials, long-term tree maintenance, and landowner incentives/signup bonuses. Trees intended for timber harvest are not covered by this initiative. Instead, planting to create increased tree cover in underserved areas, in public open spaces, and adjacent to streams and shorelines is prioritized. Any private landowners who participate must agree to a binding contract to leave the planting site in tree cover for 15 years, which is really the blink of an eye in a tree's lifespan.

With this legislative push and an already wide range of planting programs and incentives available, the Forest Service... *(story continues on page 3)*



Our Forests and Climate Change

There is little doubt that Maryland's woodlands provide a multitude of public benefits like clean water and air, wildlife habitat, flood mitigation, forest products, recreational opportunities, and more. So it should be of little surprise that healthy thriving woodlands are one of our best tools to buffer against the deleterious impacts of climate change. Our forests have always endured natural stresses and disturbances like fires, storms, drought, insects and pathogens and human caused disturbances like deforestation, fragmentation, and invasive species introductions. The impacts of climate change will certainly exacerbate these stresses. Unlike the western United States where drought is predicted to worsen, the east will likely see an increase in annual overall rainfall. The pattern of this precipitation, however, is likely to change. A study by the US Forest Service (USFS) titled Mid-Atlantic forest ecosystem vulnerability assessment and synthesis, (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/treearch/pubs/57325>) indicates that our region is likely to see more intense rain periods in the spring and potential longer periods of drought in the summer and fall. Climate change is already lengthening our growing seasons while shortening the period of cold winter temperatures. Although forest trees might respond positively to the increase in CO₂, a wetter spring and longer growing seasons, these conditions also favor growth of noxious plants and insects. Many invasive plants establish successfully because they already break bud earlier and senesce later than our native vegetation, while many forest insect pests survive shorter periods of below freezing temperatures in the winter.

The species composition of our forests has consistently changed over the millennia and will likely continue under the stresses of new climatic conditions. According to the USFS assessment, species that can tolerate warmer and periodically drier summers and falls like oak, hickory, and yellow pines, will succeed. While species that favor moist soil conditions like white pine, sugar maple, American beech, eastern hemlock, and red spruce will likely disappear from our region as temperatures increase and summers and falls get drier.

Managing the health and vitality of your woodland is necessary to help it adapt to and temper a rapidly changing climate. Management can be guided by a forest management plan developed by a professional forester. Controlling invasive plants helps existing trees grow and sequester carbon while also allowing for new trees to regenerate. Thinning a crowded stand of trees in your forest allows the remaining trees to vigorously grow in response to the additional light. Periodic harvests can also generate renewable forest products while regenerating new growth.

Reforestation of open land on your property is an essential strategy to sequester carbon while also helping landowners attain other management goals. Successful reforestation requires planting the most suitable tree species for the specific site conditions of the parcel and providing maintenance care for the new forest until they are established. There are several Maryland programs available to support reforestation endeavors.

Forests provide all Marylanders essential benefits. We just need to help them help us.

This article was written by Craig Highfield, Forests Program Director for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay



Planting 5 Million Trees in Maryland

(continued from page 1)... and its many partners will be offering an expanded array of planting programs and incentives for local governments, landowners, schools, parks, and community/nonprofit organizations to be a part of the statewide 5 million tree movement.

Visit the Maryland Forest Service website for a complete list of programs for both urban/community forestry and rural landowners! <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/default.aspx>

Own more than an acre? Forestry partners at Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay or the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can get you planting under the Healthy Forests Healthy Waters program or the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). To get more information on these and other programs and learn about the enhanced sign-up bonus payments available through CREP, visit: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/tree-planting.aspx>

This article was written by Francis Smith, Natural Resources Technician for the Maryland Forest Service

MEET THE STEWARDSHIP TEAM



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Stewardship Planner

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MET's website (dnr.maryland.gov/met) contains general information, but please feel free to contact Jon and Josette with specific stewardship questions or concerns. They are available to answer questions from landowners, their agents and the public regarding any aspect of conservation easement restrictions and permissible activities.



Wendy Foster
Easement Monitoring Specialist

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Questions about volunteer monitors? Contact Wendy with specific questions or concerns.

Stewardship Corner: You Asked, We Answered

Q: My contact information has changed. How do I update my contact information?



A: Scan the QR code to visit the landowner survey to update your contact details, visit this link www.metdnrlandownersurvey.gov, or contact MET's stewardship staff.

Q: Who do I contact if I have a Forest Conservation Easement Area on my property?

A: For more information about Forest Conservation easements contact your town or county's planning and zoning ("P&Z") office and ask for the staff member who manages FCA and Critical Area easement areas. The Maryland Manual Online lists each county's P&Z office here: <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/planloc.html>



Maryland Environmental Trust
100 Community Place, 3rd Floor
Crownsville, MD 21032

You are receiving this newsletter because your property is protected by a conservation easement with Maryland Environmental Trust.



2023 BOARD MEETING DATES:

- February 6
- May 1
- June 5
- September 11
- November 6

2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETINGS

All matters requiring Board approval are reviewed during the Board Meetings held at 4:00 pm at 100 Community Place, MHT Board Room 3.218, Crownsville, MD unless noted otherwise. These are public meetings. Please contact MET if you plan to attend at (410) 697-9515 or met.info@maryland.gov.

The Maryland Environmental Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees responsible for reviewing and voting on matters such as landowner requests that result in a significant change or impact to conservation attributes of an easement property. Activities that might require approval or notification include: constructing any new buildings or structures; renovating or enlarging existing structures; conveying property (provide contact information on new owner); subdividing property; recording any other encumbrances on property; entering wetlands mitigation or restoration programs; changing use of property; making a boundary line adjustment; harvesting timber or construction of a new house.

If you plan to make changes to your property and are unsure whether notification or approval is required, contact MET's stewardship staff to help make that determination. It may take a minimum of 30 days for MET to review and approve the proposed activities. Please contact MET's stewardship program staff, Jon Chapman or Josette Markline, to discuss your plans. All requests should be made in writing at least three weeks prior to the scheduled board meeting. Thank you!