



# TreeVitalize Watersheds Grant Program 2015

Since 2005, **TreeVitalize Watersheds**, led by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) in the five-county southeastern PA region, has focused on tree planting along stream corridors, adjacent upland areas, headwaters, and “naturalized” stormwater basins. Through this program, dozens of such watershed restoration projects are conducted throughout the region every year, resulting in thousands of trees planted in those sensitive water protection zones. The program receives funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and corporate sponsor Aqua PA, as well as substantial in-kind contributions from various partners.

TreeVitalize Watersheds depends on collaboration with six organizations that funnel, guide, and help implement watershed restoration projects in their service areas: Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, the Conservation District offices in each of the four surrounding SEPA counties, and the Stroud Water Research Center in Chester County. These six organizations provide technical assistance to a variety of smaller organizations and local watershed groups in their areas.

**How to apply:** Contact your County Conservation District watershed specialist (in Bucks, Chester, Delaware or Montgomery county) or, within Philadelphia, the Parks & Recreation Department. (Contact information included below.) This contact will guide you through the steps involved in planning a riparian restoration or related project, including plant material selection, site preparation, landowner agreements, matching funds, and other required documents and grant application materials, as listed below.

**Grant Application Package Submittal:** A complete grant application package must be submitted (for “initial” review) to the local Conservation District, Stroud Research Center; or within Philadelphia, to the Parks & Recreation Department. The grant application package includes: 1) a **Project Bid Sheet** 2) an **Operation, Maintenance and Repair Plan**, 3) a **Site Location map** 4) a **brief Project Description letter** and 5) a **Landowner Agreement form (or letter)**.

**Deadlines:** Submissions of complete grant applications are due to the above entities by **September 18th, 2015**. Once initial reviews have been completed, the Conservation Districts, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation or Stroud will forward all complete grant application packages to PHS for “final” review.

**Target areas and project types:** Riparian (streamside) and sourcewater protection areas, on public lands or private-protected lands. Projects may include riparian buffers, plantings on adjacent uplands (where stormwater “sheet flow” across the land would drain directly into the stream below), and naturalization of stormwater basins.



**Tree stock:** All projects must use native Pennsylvania trees species. Trees are typically acquired as container stock, though bare root and ball-and-burlap trees (B&B should be limited and cost less than \$100 each) are also acceptable. The size of the tree stock varies widely, depending on the site, planting method, and other considerations; but an average per tree cost of \$25 or less is preferred. Note: Consideration for the natural community (<http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/fikebook.aspx>) present in the local area should be taken into consideration when selecting the planting material for the project.

**Other plants:** Trees alone are rarely enough for a watershed restoration project. Shrubs and herbaceous plants may be needed as well. TreeVitalize Watersheds funding can be used to cover the cost of some complementary plant material, provided it is also native to Pennsylvania. However, trees must account for at least 80% of the overall cost of plant materials.

**Eligible and ineligible expenses:** In addition to covering plant costs (including transport), the TreeVitalize grant may be applied toward site preparation and supplies such as mulch and tree shelters. Non-profit staff time is allowed as an expense but it must be justified and under \$1,000. Ineligible expenses include watering bags, shirts, hats, and food for volunteers, although such expenses can generally be counted as in-kind or cash “match” (below). Other expenses may not be covered by TreeVitalize without expressed permission of the PHS grants manager.

**Required match:** TreeVitalize will cover up to 75% of the total project costs. The remainder must be covered by other sources as part of the required minimum 25% match. In-kind contributions, such as volunteer and staff time for planting, site preparation, and maintenance are applicable towards those match requirements. For volunteer effort match, sign-in sheets are required and must be submitted to document the number of volunteers and the hours those volunteers participated.

**Consultant costs:** While the use of paid consultants is discouraged for most TreeVitalize Watersheds projects, it may be necessary in some cases. The maximum allowed amount in such cases is \$1,000 toward consultants’ fees. Additional consultant fees may be counted as match.

**Conservation District fee:** The County Conservation District Office may add a \$200 fee for each project to help offset the staff time spent by the watershed specialist.

**Overall approval considerations:** In order to fund as many projects as possible with limited and increasingly competitive funding, project approval will take into account various factors – including the level of partner match, the price of plant material utilized, and consultant costs, if any. However, individual site and project considerations will also be taken into account.

**Completion and reimbursement:** The grant is on a 100% reimbursement basis after project



completion. The County Conservation District Office, Stroud Water Research Center, or Philadelphia Parks & Recreation will provide reimbursement to grantees for completed projects upon submission of a final report that includes: 1) Updated and complete Project Expense Reimbursement form; 2) an "Operation, Maintenance and Repair Plan;" 3) an invoice and copies of receipts detailing all project related costs; 4) a completed PA Stream Releaf Stream Buffer Tracking form; 5) site location map; and 6) volunteer log sheets (or comparable form). The final deadline for submission for reimbursement is **December 7th, 2015 to the Conservation Districts**. Earlier submission is encouraged, especially for spring planting projects.

**Funding credit:** In all communications, the following statement must be used to attribute credit to each funder and partner: "This restoration project was made possible by the TreeVitalize Watersheds Grant program, and the Plant One Million campaign, managed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, with funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Growing Greener program, as well as Aqua PA for projects located within its source water protection zones."

**Signage:** Each restoration site must display the TreeVitalize informational signage with proper credit for the partnering organizations, including PHS, Plant One Million, TreeVitalize, DEP Growing Greener, Aqua PA, and any other funders. These signs should be displayed a week prior to and a week following the planting.

**Training Requirements:** All grantees need to complete a **PHS Tree Tenders ®** training or equivalent education on proper tree selection, planting and establishment.

**PHS Tree Tenders ®** In support of TreeVitalize and in partnership with Penn State Cooperative Extension, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society offers comprehensive hands-on tree care training for residents of the five-county Philadelphia region. For more information, contact Barley Van Clief, Regional Tree Tenders Program Manager, at 215-988-8793 or [bvanclief@pennhort.org](mailto:bvanclief@pennhort.org). Information about Tree Tenders training opportunities can be found at [www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/phlgreen/tree-training.html](http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/phlgreen/tree-training.html).

**To apply for a TreeVitalize Watersheds grant, contact the watershed specialist in your area:**

**Bucks County Conservation District**

Meghan Rogalus  
215-345-7577 x107  
[meghanrogalus@bucksccd.org](mailto:meghanrogalus@bucksccd.org)

**Montgomery County Conservation District**

Gus Meyer  
610-489-4506 x22  
[gmeyer@montgomeryconservation.org](mailto:gmeyer@montgomeryconservation.org)

**Chester County Conservation District**

Chotty Sprenkle  
610-925-4920  
[csprenkle@chesco.org](mailto:csprenkle@chesco.org)

**Philadelphia County**

Tom Witmer  
215-683-0216  
[tom.witmer@phila.gov](mailto:tom.witmer@phila.gov)

**Delaware County Conservation District**

Brian Vadino  
610-892-9484

[vadinob@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:vadinob@co.delaware.pa.us)

**Stroud Water Research Center**

Bern Sweeney  
610-268-2153

[sweeney@stroudcenter.org](mailto:sweeney@stroudcenter.org)

**For more information about the Southeast PA TreeVitalize Watersheds program**, contact Barley Van Clief, Tree Tenders Project Manager, at [bvanclief@pennhort.org](mailto:bvanclief@pennhort.org) or 215-988-8793.

**Plant One Million** is a regional partnership led by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) to plant one million trees throughout 13 counties in southeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. The initiative will educate and mobilize volunteers throughout the region to “plant, count and tend” trees. For more information, go to [www.plantonemillion.org](http://www.plantonemillion.org).

**PA One Call Notification:** In certain cases, underground utilities (including but not limited to electric, gas and sanitary sewer) and their associated “rights-of-way” exist within areas where riparian buffer restoration and/or enhancement activities are being planned and implemented. For public safety and other reasons, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Underground Utility Line Protection Law PA Act 287 of 1974 (as amended by Act 121 of 2008) requires you to inform the utilities of any type of work involving the movement of earth with powered equipment. Know what’s below. Call 1-800-242-1776 before you dig. For additional information, please visit PA One Call System, Inc. at [www.pa1call.org](http://www.pa1call.org).

*Plant one million is supported in part by Pennsylvania’s TreeVitalize program, a public-private partnership launched by the in 2004 to reverse the loss of tree cover in southeast PA, now statewide effort to restore tree cover managed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). For more information, go to [www.treevitalize.net](http://www.treevitalize.net).*