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## **DCNR Holds First Meeting of Forest Buffer Advisory Committee**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn today announced the launch of the Riparian Forest Buffer Advisory Committee that will provide advice and expertise as the commonwealth works toward a goal of planting 95,000 acres of buffers along waterways by 2025.

“DCNR’s Bureau of Forestry is leading an effort to work with numerous agencies, partners and landowners to expand forest buffers along waterways in the commonwealth,” Dunn said. “We are convening a group of experts that will share their ideas about what’s working on the ground and lessons they have learned planting buffers, as well as brainstorm around new ideas and provide advice about outreach to citizens and stakeholders.”

Dunn said Pennsylvania is in the process of developing a comprehensive approach to provide funding, training, and outreach to farmers and landowners to increase forest buffers. Planting trees and shrubs along streams is one of the best management practices that will help Pennsylvania meet its obligations to improving water quality in the commonwealth and the Chesapeake Bay.

The 44-member advisory committee includes representation from agriculture; non-profits and conservancies; educational institutions; and federal, state and local governments.

Planting forest buffers along stream banks provides critical barriers between polluting landscapes and receiving waterways. Properly planted and maintained, streamside tree and shrub plantings reduce nutrient runoff and sediment deposits; control erosion; improve water quality; reduce flooding; cool stream temperatures; and improve fish habitat.

The first meeting was held Monday. It’s anticipated the committee will meet quarterly.

“Our current work will build on on past success in establishing buffers—many partners at local levels using federal, state, and private funding have already installed tens of thousands of acres in the past 15 years which are providing significant water quality benefits,” Dunn said.

One of the original purposes for establishing the state forest system and the various bureaus that today make up DCNR was to protect forested watersheds. DCNR lands serve as the headwaters and the living filter for municipal drinking water supplies and thousands of miles of high-quality coldwater streams. Sound management keeps these important waters clean.

DCNR’s service foresters provide private landowners, including farmers and woodland owners, and communities, with advice on forest buffers and how to manage their forested lands and metropolitan trees.

Go [here](#) for more information about service foresters.

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