



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DCNR, Western Pa. Conservancy Planting Two Acres of Trees Along Lake at Yellow Creek State Park, Indiana County

Event marks Earth Day, Arbor Day in April

Harrisburg, PA – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn today joined the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) and volunteers in planting two acres of trees along the lake at Yellow Creek State Park in Indiana County to improve water quality.

“April, which hosts Earth Day and Arbor Day, is a good time to take action for our environment, and volunteer, tree-planting and clean up opportunities are scheduled,” Dunn said. “Through the remainder of the month, DCNR staff will be working alongside our Friends groups and volunteers to encourage everyone to give back by planting trees, volunteering or trying some conservation practices at home.”

The secretary joined more than 50 people planting 400 seedlings at Yellow Creek, as part of an effort coordinated by WPC and the Friends of Yellow Creek State Park.

“This planting is a great and tangible education tool on the importance of riparian trees, partnerships and restoring places that the public can immediately see and experience,” said Alysha Trexler, a watershed project manager who coordinates riparian tree plantings for WPC.

Since 2013, WPC’s watershed conservation riparian restoration project has planted 140 acres with more than 30,000 trees to reforest and restore areas along streams, creeks and rivers in western Pennsylvania to help protect water quality.

Other partners in the Yellow Creek project include Evergreen Conservancy, Bobcat of Indiana and the Indiana Rotary Club.

Cindy Rogers, a volunteer with the Friends group, said “it’s wonderful that all these groups and volunteers came together to do this much-needed tree planting.”

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.

“Just as people depend on water, rivers depend on woodlands. Trees and shrubs along stream banks help control stormwater and runoff, provide shade to cool the water and provide habitat and food for life in the streams,” Dunn said. “Planting trees – anywhere – is something that anyone can do to make a difference.”

Forest buffers along stream banks provide critical barriers between polluting landscapes and receiving waterways. Properly planted and maintained, streamside tree and shrub plantings filter the runoff of sediments and the fertilizers that are applied to lawns and crops; control erosion; improve water quality; reduce flooding; cool stream temperatures; and improve fish habitat.

Dunn noted during the past 15 years tens of thousands of acres of buffers have been planted in Pennsylvania. The rejuvenated initiative will look to complement existing programs and provide greater flexibility in landowner eligibility, buffer designs, widths, plant species and innovative maintenance practices.

Yellow Creek State Park has implemented many green and sustainable practices as part of its operations, and educated visitors about them. They include:

- Using more energy efficient watercraft and lawn mowers;
- Planting native wildflower meadows, significantly reducing the need for mowing;
- Using programmable thermostats and more efficient lights bulbs;
- Installation of a wind turbine, which is also used to educate visitors about this alternative form of energy;
- Cleaning with biodegradable soaps; and
- Retrofitting buildings for efficiency.

There are dozens of volunteer opportunities listed in the [DCNR Calendar of Events](#) throughout the remainder of the month.

Some highlights include:

- Jennings Environmental Education Center Take Back the Woods invasive species battle, Saturday, April 16;
- Earth Day cleanup with Friends of MK Goddard State Park, Thursday, April 21;
- Earth Day tree planting event at Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center, Saturday, April 23;
- Delaware Canal State Park paddle and clean up, Sunday, April 24; and
- Friends of Cook Forest spring work day, Saturday, April 28.

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