

Growing Greener Plus Program

Pennsylvania's Growing Greener Plus Program is part of DEP's Grant and Loan Program, which provides grants to assist individuals, groups, and businesses in addressing a host of environmental issues. The Growing Greener Plus Program remains the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address Pennsylvania's critical environmental concerns of the 21st century. The program encourages partnerships between counties, municipalities, county conservation districts, watershed organizations, and other groups to restore and protect the environment.

The Growing Greener Plus Program is supported by the Environmental Stewardship Fund, which receives funding from landfill tipping fees. Signed into law on December 15, 1999, and reauthorized in June 2002, this legislation doubled the funding from \$645 million to just over \$1 billion for the Growing Greener Plus Program. This increased DEP's portion of funding for the program to \$547.7 million from the original \$241.5 million of the original five-year program. Since 1999, the Growing Greener Plus Program has given out more than \$296 million of state funds for farmland-preservation projects statewide; protect open space; maintenance in state parks; clean up abandoned mines and restore watersheds; provide funds for recreational trails and local parks; provide new and upgraded water and sewer systems; and provide for installation of best management practices to reduce nonpoint source water pollution. The funds are distributed among four state agencies: Department of Environmental Protection; Department of Agriculture to administer farmland preservation projects; Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park renovations and improvements; and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for water and sewer system upgrades. DEP is authorized to allocate these funds in grants for: watershed restoration and protection, abandoned mine reclamation; and abandoned oil and gas well plugging projects. Between 10/1/17-9/30/19 numerous projects were completed by recipients to address various nonpoint source pollution impacts to waters (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of BMP types for the 10/1/17-9/30/19 period

BMP Type	Number Installed	Units of Measure
Passive Treatment Systems	9.0	Units
Land Reclamation	33,235	Feet
Riparian Buffers	234,848	Feet
Various BMP's	94	Units
Stormwater Runoff Control	383	Units
Stream Channel Stabilization	69,894	Feet

Since 2016, there has been an added emphasis on agriculture and stormwater projects that located in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (Bay). This was part of a commitment, by Pennsylvania to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment in the Bay watershed, in

accordance with the Bay TMDL. A current list of projects for the protection and enhancement of Pennsylvania Water Resources is available from January 2019 at www.dep.pa.gov, Search: Growing Greener.

Through the Growing Greener Plus Program grant application, eligible entities can also apply for two other sources of grants: Abandoned Mine Drainage Set-Aside Program, and Surface Mining of Conservation and Reclamation Act Bond Forfeiture grants. More information on these programs is provided in their respective sections in this Integrated Report.