

Barkingfield Riparian Buffer Enhancement

Kathryn Pearlstine Freilich, Land Stewardship Coordinator

In October 2018, Kennett Township partnered with The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County (TLC) to plant 255 trees and 105 shrubs with the help of volunteers from across the community. These plantings were used to expand the vegetative buffer width in narrow areas on both sides of the small stream in Barkingfield Park.



A riparian buffer is an area of trees, shrubs, or grasslands located adjacent to streams, lakes, ponds or wetlands. These vegetative areas are very important to the health of waterways and to the reduction of flooding. The buffers absorb rain water and storm run-off to reduce flooding and contamination of the streams. The stream-side plantings also keep the water cool which supports stream health and the overall ecological habitat. Riparian forests using native, diverse tree and shrub vegetation are the most beneficial type of buffer. The minimum recommended buffer width is 35' from the top of the stream bank, with 100' preferred.

The Barkingfield Park tree planting was funded by a PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Riparian Forest Buffer grant obtained by TLC along with matching support from the Township in the form of work and equipment. The work was planned and coordinated by TLC staff.

33 volunteers came out on Saturday, October 20, 2018 to help with the planting. Volunteers included the Kennett High School Earth Club, an ERM corporate group, Township Community Based Land Stewardship (CBLS) volunteers and other residents.

The list below shows the native species used to enhance the riparian buffer at Barkingfield Park.

Trees		Quantity
Red Maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	40
Sugar Maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	50
Red Oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	20
Tulip poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	40
Pawpaw	<i>Asimina triloba</i>	25
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	20
Flowering dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>	15
Persimmon	<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	25
Pussy willow	<i>Salix discolor</i>	20
Shrubs		
Highbush blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	25
Arrowwood	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	25
Nannyberry	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	30
Blackhaw	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	25

Each tree and shrub was installed with a protective wire cage to prevent deer browse and rubbing. These type of wire cages as shown in the photos below are preferred over 'tree tubes' for easier weeding and to prevent tree damage from foraging voles.

We encourage you to visit Barkingfield to check on how these plantings are doing and to consider similar plantings along your own stream banks!



Helpful guidance and advice on Riparian Buffer Restoration can be found in the 'Pennsylvania Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual', BMP 6.7.1 (pg. 191-210).

<http://www.stormwaterpa.org/from-the-foreword.html>