



## West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Update

[WV Chesapeake Bay Program Website](#)

Summer 2019, Issue 32

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["What's Your BMP?" Residential Stormwater BMP Reporting Tool](#)

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## Eligible landowners may sign up for CREP



This stream buffer area is enrolled in the CREP program.

One of the most important strategies in West Virginia's Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) for the Chesapeake Bay is protecting and adding trees and shrubs along streams. Now, landowners in West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed can once again take advantage of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which is a cost-share program that is designed to promote healthy vegetation and habitat along streams, i.e. riparian buffer areas. Program signup (being conducted under Signup #52 or SU#52) began June 3, 2019 and runs through August 23, 2019 for new offers and re-enrollments. "This means we can begin working again to fulfill our goals for the WV WIP and increasing riparian buffer enrollments and continuation or previous enrollments," says Kevin Hinkle, Supervisory Agricultural Program Specialist with West Virginia's Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Office. For more information and an example payment calculation, please see this [CREP fact sheet](#) or contact your local [Farm Service Agency office](#).

## GET INVOLVED: UPCOMING EVENTS

### Save the Date!

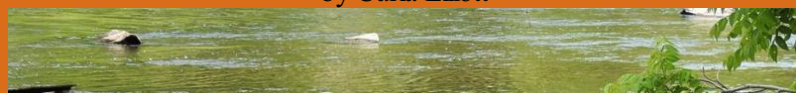
Chesapeake Watershed Forum Nov. 15-17, 2019  
[Sign up begins here, late August!](#)

## Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan update

The public comment period for West Virginia's draft Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) ended June 10, 2019. West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Team partners are now working to address comments received during that time. The final version will be posted

## The River is Their Classroom

by Carla Elliott



received during that time. The final version will be posted at <http://www.wvchesapeakebay.us/WIP/WIP3.cfm> no later than August 23, 2019. This plan will guide our partners' work to reduce nutrients in West Virginia's Potomac tributaries and to achieve other local benefits. Carla Hardy WV Project CommuniTree Fall Planting Application deadline, July 1st!



[Apply here!](#)



Students getting their feet wet in the Cacapon River

The Cacapon River recently became a classroom for these local students when their teacher, Glenn Nelson, introduced them to aspects of healthy water ways. Glenn is the WV Save Our Streams Coordinator for the Dept. of Environmental Protection. This is the second year that Glenn has traveled to Hampshire County for this learning experience with local homeschoolers. The intent of this training is to teach students about elements of healthy waterways - oxygen supply, pH, macroinvertebrate populations and stages, and plant life. All of these can be affected and influenced by human impact. This training is essential in making future generations aware of their impact upon our water resources and the lives dependent upon this water. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

## Most Sustainable Facility

by Alana Hartman, WVDEP



Robert Moore accepted the 2019 BUBBA (Best Urban BMP in the Bay Award) for "Most Sustainable Facility" at the Chesapeake Bay Stormwater Partners Retreat in Shepherdstown in May, on behalf of the Martinsburg VA Medical Center (VAMC). The [BUBBAs award program](#), coordinated by the Chesapeake Stormwater Network, recognizes exemplary urban best management practices (BMPs) that have been installed in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Martinsburg VAMC now has the honor of being "the best industrial, federal, municipal or institutional facility in the watershed that takes practical steps to prevent stormwater pollutants from washing off their site and into local streams." Click here to read the [full article](#).

## WV Rivers Coalition expands capacity with two new hires! by Tanner and Rhea, WV Rivers Coalition



Tanner Haid

## Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week returned in early June by Davin White, WVCA





Rhea Mitchell

The first full week of June was Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week, a celebration of the nation's largest estuary, and events were held across the Bay watershed states.

Kate Fritz, the executive director for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, told the Chesapeake Bay Program's Joan Smedinghoff: "Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is an annual reminder for every one of us to re-commit to doing our part, every day, for a cleaner Chesapeake Bay.

"We can all do something; pick up trash in our neighborhood, clean up after our dogs, utilize reusable grocery bags, not fertilize our lawns before it rains and much more," Fritz said.

In addition to Fritz's tips for a cleaner Chesapeake Bay, volunteers also are encouraged to: Plant trees to improve air quality, trap water pollution, and provide habitat; support wildlife by supporting refuges or organizations that assist with wildlife rehabilitation; become a citizen scientist by helping professional scientists gather data about water quality and wildlife; and educate others about the importance of protecting the Bay and the environment, according to the Chesapeake Bay Program. For more, see <https://www.chesapeakebay.net> More information on how you can protect the Bay!!

WV Rivers Coalition is excited to announce that we are expanding our capacity to protect and conserve West Virginia's exceptional rivers by hiring two new staff - Tanner Haid and Rhea Mitchell.

In May we were excited to bring on Tanner Haid to the WV Rivers team as our Eastern Panhandle Field Coordinator. Tanner is a lifelong resident of the eastern panhandle and values the opportunity to protect the lands and waters of the area that he proudly calls home.

He graduated from Shepherd University with a BS in Environmental Studies in 2010. His education, paired with years of experience as a raft guide on the Shenandoah River, installed a passion for environmental protection and outdoor recreation. In order to conserve West Virginia's exceptional rivers, he believes people must first have positive experiences enjoying our state's waterways.

Later in May, we hired Rhea Mitchell, a long-time WV Rivers volunteer and dedicated public lands advocate, to serve as our Public Lands Coordinator.

Rhea grew up exploring the woods and streams of the Appalachian Mountains. After three years of travel, her Appalachian roots drew her to settle down in the beautiful mountains of West Virginia. She is proud to live in West Virginia, and not only calls the forests, streams, cliffs, and rivers of the New River Gorge her home, but also her little slice of heaven.

[Sign up now](#)

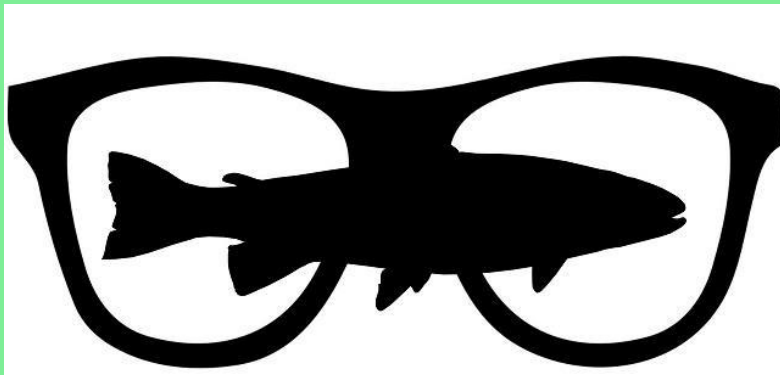
to receive our special announcements and water policy updates to learn more about what Tanner & Rhea will be working on across the state. You can reach Tanner at

[thaid@wvrivers.org](mailto:thaid@wvrivers.org)

and Rhea at [rmitchell@wvrivers.org](mailto:rmitchell@wvrivers.org).

[Read more about Tanner and Rhea!](#)

### Linking research and education with virtual reality by Than Hitt, USGS



Project eTrout

Virtual reality (VR) provides exciting opportunities for environmental education and research. **We invite your participation in a new program** to engage students.

### Three of the top five placing teams in the

### West Virginia Envirothon were from Chesapeake Bay watershed counties, including the winning Moorefield High School team

by Davin White, WVCA



anglers, and citizen scientists in fish ecology and climate change research using new VR methods. Participants will learn about fish ecology first-hand by exploring streams in VR and will be members of a research team lead by US Geological Survey (USGS) scientists. This program is free and designed for students, anglers, and citizen scientists of all ages.

### Here's how it works:

1. Go to the project homepage: [www.usgs.gov/eTrout](http://www.usgs.gov/eTrout)
2. Click the "Welcome to Project eTrout" link for an instructional video.
3. Click the next link to access the video website.
4. Watch 5-minute video samples using standard computer monitors or VR headsets (e.g., Google cardboard), and count the adult trout you see.
5. Record your counts in the website.
6. USGS will analyze the combined data and report findings in a recorded webinar to participants.

### For more information:

Nathaniel (Than) Hitt, PhD US Geological Survey, Leetown Science Center [nhitt@usgs.gov](mailto:nhitt@usgs.gov); 304-724-4463  
[www.tiny.cc/ThanHitt](http://www.tiny.cc/ThanHitt)

About West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Team  
Fourteen percent (14%) of West Virginia drains into the Potomac River and on to the Chesapeake Bay. In June of 2002, Governor Bob Wise signed the Chesapeake Bay Program Water Quality Initiative Memorandum of Understanding. By signing this memo, West Virginia agreed to develop goals and objectives to reduce nutrient and sediment loading to the Chesapeake Bay.

To help WV accomplish these goals, Project Teams began working in targeted watersheds. These groups build partnerships, gather funding, and identify priority projects that are most important to their local communities. Reducing nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment in local creeks and rivers will mean healthier water resources that are better able to sustain tourism, fishing, drinking water supplies, wildlife habitat, and other uses. Each one of us can act locally to help achieve these goals.

West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Team

## Newsletter Contributions Welcome!

Have a story or event you would like to share in the next edition of the WV Chesapeake Bay Newsletter?  
Submit your feature or idea to [amongold@wvca.us](mailto:amongold@wvca.us).



West Virginia Envirothon Finance Committee Chairwoman Shirley Hyre (left) poses with members of the winning team from Moorefield High School. The students from left to right are: Matthew Wright, Thomas Williams, Tayla Ours, Ean Carr and Isabelle Nesbit.

The Moorefield team, led by adviser Gretchen Cremann, features students Ean Carr, Matthew Wright, Tayla Ours, Isabelle Nesbit and Thomas Williams. Matthew Weatherholt is an alternate team member. The team will share a \$5,000 scholarship and plans to compete at the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, N.C., from July 28 to Aug. 2.

The Moorefield team is training with subject-area experts this summer ahead of the NCF-Envirothon.

The third-place team was Jefferson Agriscience, with team members Cassie Hargis, Zach Kelly, Jenna Daniel, Brian Long and Travis Dzienis.

The fifth-place team was "Water Pennies," a team from Berkeley Springs, with team members Lillie Gill-Newton, Sydney Ailor, Phoebe Hogbin, Garrett Oursler, Katie Caperton, and alternate Jaymie Adkins.

Also, Ravenswood FFA won second place and Braxton County FFA won fourth place at the Envirothon. Each of the three Chesapeake Bay-area teams also won station awards during the Envirothon, which was held at Canaan Valley Resort State Park April 17-18. Moorefield High School won the fifth topic award, Jefferson Agriscience FFA won the wildlife station award and Water Pennies won the aquatics station award.

Overall, the Mineral County FFA team also finished in seventh place.

Congratulations to each of these teams, and best of luck to Moorefield High's team at the NCF-Envirothon!



Students consider a water sample at the Aquatics station during the West Virginia Envirothon April 18 at Canaan Valley Resort State Park.

# Report your Environmental Practices

## What's your watershed BMP?

How are you protecting our lands and waters? People like you, who install stormwater best management practices (BMPs) on your property and in the community, help West Virginians achieve our goal of safe, swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waterways. By reporting your BMPs, you help us understand the beneficial impact you have made. Please share your experience. You will help us help others improve their practices.

Report your BMP online:

Go to [cacaponinstitute.org](http://cacaponinstitute.org), then click the "**What's Your BMP**" logo.

Report your:

- \* Tree plantings
- \* Rain barrels/cisterns
- \* Rain gardens
- \* Permeable pavers
- \* Septic pumping
- \* Green roofs
- \* Downspout disconnections

Together, we are making our lands & rivers cleaner and healthier!

If you have questions or comments on, or suggestions for, our BMP reporting tool contact Cacapon Institute's Watershed BMP Specialist, at [bmp@cacaponinstitute.org](mailto:bmp@cacaponinstitute.org).

