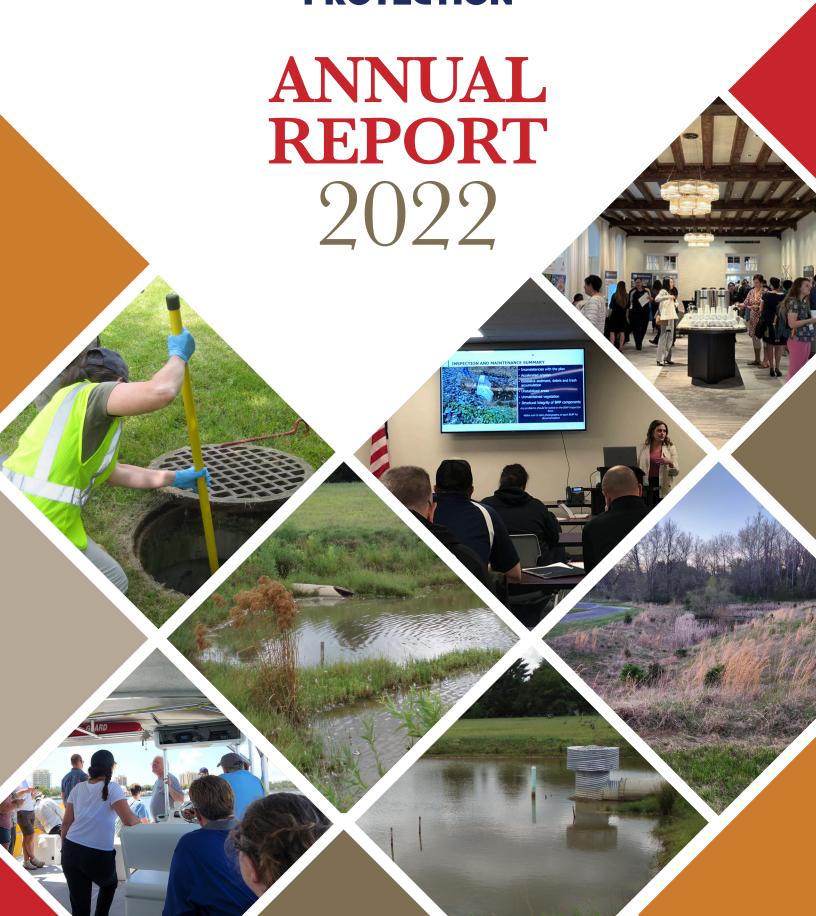
CENTER FOR

## WATERSHED PROTECTION



2,000 members

# Mission & Impact

A 501(c)3 non-profit
organization, the Center for
Watershed Protection, advances
clean water resources and healthy
ecosystems through responsible land
and water management.

15 watershedsmanagement plans Over
300
attendees
at the 2022 National
Watershed and
Stormwater
Conference

2,370 total viewing hours for webcasts

131
people
completed
CWP's Clean
Water
Certificate

people informed through our newsletter, social media and website

332,396

published

42

groups
provided customized

technical assistance

research

reports

## Dear Friends,

With the growing investments in infrastructure in 2022, the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) continued its efforts to position itself as an organization leading the nation advocating and supporting the advancement of watershed-based approaches. CWP experienced growth in virtually all aspects of its operations.

Maintaining a clear focus on the needs and interests of its partners and members, CWP returned to more face-to-face interactions, increased its contributions to the science and practice of watershed-based management, and enhanced its ability to provide access to our work and services. CWP's recently established independent National Watershed Research Network began its first research project on Stormwater and Climate Resiliency while continuing to look collectively at other areas of applied research together with local governments, state organizations, regional groups, and federal agencies.

During 2022, we began partnerships with East Carolina University, Greater Salisbury Committee, Mid-America Regional Council, and Southeast Michigan Council of Governments. In addition, ongoing work with many others, such as regional and local organizations, grew through engagement with groups such as the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission; the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin; Delaware Center for the Inland Bays; Audubon Naturalist Society; Department of Energy & Environment in the District of Columbia; Maryland Department of Natural Resources; Town of Bluffton, South Carolina; James River Association in Virginia; and EPA Chesapeake Bay Program.

Moreover, funding from long-term partners such as the William Penn Foundation, Keith Campbell Foundation, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, and Chesapeake Bay Trust continued to help us execute important research and projects.

We made steady progress on our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan that reemphasizes our four program areas: Watershed and Stormwater Services, Training, Membership, and Research anticipating a resurgence of both federal and local sector work and growth in the Midwest and Pennsylvania. In 2023, we expect more of the same with growing demand particularly in the training sector.

The future continues to be bright for CWP. As we grow, we invite you all to engage with us in the coming year. We extend a heartfelt thanks to all who have continued to support this organization.

Hye Yeong Kwon
Executive Director/CEO

Alan H. Vicory, Jr. Board President

Alan Vivor

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### Research

#### Advancing Research Through the Launch of the **National Watershed Research Network**

Communities across the country are working hard to meet clean water goals. Municipalities, nonprofits, and other organizations need answers to a growing set of research questions about the causes of watershed impacts and effective solutions to address them. Lack of information, funding, time, and staff resources often contribute to delayed or no progress on advancing the translation of research to measurable action within these communities.

In 2022, CWP launched the National Watershed Research Network, a collaborative that helps communities achieve clean water and healthy watersheds by funding applied research on topics determined by its members. Together, the Network aims to provide insights into the impacts of land use activities on water resources, and identify regulations, programs, and practices that can best prevent or mitigate these impacts and address community needs.

The goals of the Network are to:

- Influence a national agenda on applied watershed research priorities and information needs
- Provide a forum for watershed practitioners, regulators, and researchers to collaborate on and refine research priorities and learn from each other
- Use a pooled funding approach to implement defined watershed research priorities

• Regularly synthesize existing watershed research, information, and practitioner knowledge to provide a national perspective that informs the creation of practical guidance and tools

• Make the results **nationally accessible** online and through training opportunities

> Guided by a Steering Committee comprised of individuals representing a mix of local, regional, and Federal government agencies from across the U.S., the Network selected and scoped out its first research project called "Accounting for Climate Change in

**Post-Construction Stormwater** Management Standards." Through this project, CWP will conduct a targeted literature review and an evaluation of each state's stormwater management standards for new development to address the following questions:

- What are the potential effects of climate change on stormwater BMP performance in different regions of the country?
- To what extent are states evaluating and adapting stormwater design standards and specifications to account for climate change?
- How can stormwater standards be modified to compensate for these projected changes and increase resiliency?

The first product includes a white paper that discusses key considerations and provides actionable recommendations for adapting stormwater standards to climate change. CWP is working to continue to grow the Network and connect communities with the resources, tools, and training to meet clean water goals.

#### Helping Chesapeake Bay Communities Calculate the Benefits of Stormwater and Greening Projects

With funding partners the Chesapeake Bay Trust, EPA Region 3, and Maryland Department of Natural Resources, CWP developed a new, simple tool to help communities in the Chesapeake Bay more easily and consistently estimate the water quality benefits of proposed stormwater retrofit and greening projects. The Green Stormwater Infrastructure siMple Pollutant Load reduction Estimator (Green SIMPLE) tool was specifically developed for use by organizations conducting planning and implementation of stormwater retrofits and community greening projects in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with a specific focus on lower-capacity entities such as neighborhood associations, non-profits, and small local governments.

The Green SIMPLE tool is an easy-to-use spreadsheet that is consistent with the pollutant loading rates and load reduction efficiencies used in the Chesapeake Bay Program's suite of modeling tools. Its primary uses are to 1) estimate pollutant load reductions from individual stormwater retrofit, community greening, and/or rainwater harvesting projects, and 2) compare a suite of candidate projects based on factors such as cost-effectiveness, pollutant load reduction, maintenance burden, and constructability. The tool also helps users better understand how to get required inputs such as drainage area to the proposed project. The Chesapeake Bay Trust has made the Green SIMPLE tool available for use by applicants and grantees of their funding programs and it can also be applied to support many other restoration planning efforts across the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Over the

on existing riparian

forest buffers...

## Research

**Mitigating Adverse Impacts of Stream Restoration Projects on Riparian Forests in** the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

A recent, rapid increase in the implementation of stream restoration projects in the Chesapeake Bay watershed has led to growing controversy over the shortterm adverse impacts of these projects on streamside forest buffers. Stream restoration may also contribute to long-term impacts on the riparian community as delayed tree loss occurs due to altered water levels, soil compaction, and other effects from the adjacent construction activity. Both stream restoration and forest buffers are a significant component of state plans to restore the Chesapeake Bay by 2025; therefore, the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program has a vested interest in promoting synergy between efforts to restore streams and efforts to restore forest buffers so that negative impacts to riparian forests from stream restoration projects are minimized.

Over the past year, CWP worked collaboratively with the Chesapeake Bay Program and watershed stakeholders to identify methods to reduce the impacts of stream restoration projects on existing riparian forest buffers and create greater synergy between these two restoration initiatives. The project had a specific focus on Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia and included the following major research tasks:

• A policy and literature review to better understand the specific requirements in each state for protecting and mitigating impacts to stream buffers from stream restoration projects

• Interviews with stream restoration and forestry experts to better understand how the above requirements are (or are not) being implemented and identify best practices to minimize adverse impacts to riparian forests/ ecosystems

A case study analysis of ten constructed stream restoration projects to evaluate resulting changes in riparian vegetation and changes in nutrient and sediment loads.

One key finding of this study

was that stream restoration project goals and objectives are a big determinant of whether and how much tree loss will occur. There was also consensus that stream restoration projects aren't always targeted to the areas in most need. Additionally, funding for maintenance and monitoring was identified as a huge limitation to ensuring the health of the riparian ecosystem over the long-term following restoration. Some resulting past year, CWP worked recommendations were to avoid collaboratively with the stream restoration projects in Chesapeake Bay Program and existing "high-quality" areas to watershed stakeholders to identify minimize tree loss; involve

stakeholders in setting goals methods to reduce the impacts and objectives for stream of stream restoration projects restoration projects; provide clear expectations of what the project will look like before/during/after construction; and for funding agencies to extend project timelines and allow funds to be used for maintenance and monitoring.

> This project resulted in a series of recommendations for state agencies to integrate best practices for riparian forest protection into all phases of stream restoration projects and to identify opportunities for coupling these practices to improve water quality and habitat. CWP summarized the project results in a "best practices" guide for local governments, a final project report, and a series of state-specific webcasts.

## Watershed & Stormwater Services

**Green Infrastructure Feasibility Assessment to Build Coastal Resilience in Southeast Michigan** 

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and CWP were awarded a Michigan Coastal Management Grant to assess locations to build coastal resilience in Southeast Michigan. Through this grant, the project team coordinated with communities to identify highpriority, publicly-owned properties and assess feasibility for green infrastructure implementation.

Southeast Michigan has an extensive coast, spanning 400 miles of Great Lakes shoreline from Lake Huron to Lake Erie connected by the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River. It is shared by four coastal counties (St Clair, Macomb, Wayne, and Monroe) and 37 coastal communities. These coastal areas must be resilient to fluctuating water levels in the Great Lakes, changing rainfall patterns, stormwater runoff, and other shoreline challenges. The implementation of nature-based solutions like green infrastructure is key to enhancing coastal resilience.

> After field assessments of nearly 80 sites, CWP identified 48 feasible green infrastructure projects within Southeast Michigan's coastal communities, representing over \$20 million in projects treating runoff from 60 acres, and including two miles of shoreline restoration.

The primary solutions for the sites identified in this project include shoreline softening, bioretention, permeable pavement, and rain gardens. Collectively, these projects should have a significant impact on regional stormwater management, in addition to providing a variety of ecosystem services. CWP and project partners are working to secure investments at the local, state, and federal level to make these projects a reality.

#### **Envisioning Collaborative Solutions to Restore the Choptank River**

Maryland's Choptank River is a treasured part of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, with critical habitats, lucrative fisheries, and a rich natural and cultural heritage. Unfortunately, the Choptank's water quality has been steadily declining due to runoff from agriculture, wastewater, and land development. CWP is working with nine local governments in the Choptank River watershed to identify and assess potential water quality projects, procure funds for the design and installation of restoration practices, and manage project delivery to accelerate implementation rates. A major goal of the "Envision the Choptank" program is to focus on projects that improve water quality and address community needs, such as flooding and impacts from climate change. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation provides oversight and management of the Envision the Choptank program, which is funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

CWP's role includes assessing potential projects and carrying out field prep work, applying for grants, assisting with contractor procurement, and performing grant and project management. CWP acts as support for the jurisdictions, providing technical resources to communities that are understaffed and do not have the technical expertise to accomplish these types of projects.

In 2022, CWP developed a stormwater grant CWP's role includes assessing potential projects and carrying out field prep work, applying for grants, assisting with contractor procurement, and performing grant and project

management.

spreadsheet to track grant solicitations used by the jurisdictions to develop funding strategies, provided progress reports and leadership for a steering committee comprised of county and municipal staff, nonprofit partners, state agencies and other interested parties; and assisted Jonestown, a disenfranchised community in Caroline County, in applying for a grant for stormwater improvements. As part of the work associated with the application, the Envision team met with residents of Jonestown to educate them on the grant administration process to help build their capacity to manage future grants.

With additional state funding, CWP will continue to serve as a technical assistance provider in the Choptank over the next five years.

## Watershed & Stormwater Services

Targeted Outfall Screening for Illicit Discharges Based on Pollution Risk in Baltimore County

CWP, through an on-call engineering agreement for watershed planning services, assisted the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability with developing an outfall screening plan for the County's more than 12,000 stormwater outfalls. Baltimore County's stormwater permit requires that the County develop a plan to prioritize outfall field screening efforts in areas with the greatest potential for illicit discharges—defined as discharges that are not composed entirely of stormwater—which are prohibited by the County's regulations.

CWP conducted a series of geospatial analyses that began with an Outfall Inventory to ensure the data associated with stormwater outfalls in the County's geodatabase were as up to date as possible.

Next, CWP conducted a Risk Factor Analysis that assigned a score indicating the potential for illicit discharges to each of the County's subwatersheds. Ten risk factors were selected that represent increased potential for illicit discharges, based on CWP's 2004 Illicit Discharge and Detection Elimination Guidance Manual as well as more recent research. Individual

risk factor scores and weights were used to calculate an average subwatershed Illicit Discharge Potential score. Ranges of these scores correspond to priority levels that indicate the risk for illicit discharges within each subwatershed.

The most highly urbanized areas of Baltimore County were found to have an increased potential for illicit discharges. The subwatersheds with the highest risk were located in urbanized areas adjacent to Baltimore City.

Using the results of the Risk Factor
Analysis as well as the County's
previous outfall screening results,
CWP developed a Prioritization
Scheme that assigned a screening priority
to each individual outfall. Lastly, CWP
created an Outfall Screening Scenario Tool
for evaluating the schedule and staffing needs
for various outfall screening scenarios. This Excelbased tool can be continuously updated based on field
screenings and investigations.

The final Outfall Screening Plan describes the analyses and outlines how Baltimore County can use the products to: 1) screen at least 150 outfalls per year, 2) ensure screening efforts reflect priorities based on outfall-specific pollution potential, and 3) adaptively manage the prioritization of outfalls based on completed screenings/investigations or changed conditions.

## Plans to Reduce Polluted Runoff in Pennsylvania Watersheds

CWP worked on three watershed planning efforts in Eastern Pennsylvania in 2022 through grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. These watersheds are the Upper Little Swatara and Crosskill Creek watersheds in Berks County, the Upper Big Cove watershed in Fulton County and the Spring Creek Watershed in Dauphin and Lebanon Counties. Each watershed has a predominantly agricultural landscape, with the majority of streams listed as impaired for aquatic life use and/or recreational uses.

To make these watershed plans successful, CWP collaborated with key local partners that include the county conservation districts, Penn State Extension and the Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited. These local partnerships are critical and, in these projects, provide access to the local agricultural community. For the Upper Little Swatara

and Crosskill Creek watersheds, the plan will lay out strategies to achieve the pollutant reduction targets established through Total Maximum Daily Loads. For the Spring Creek and Upper Big

Cove watersheds, the pollutant load reduction goals were determined using a reference watershed approach,

where pollutant loading rates in both the impaired watershed as well as a similar watershed

estimated. Then, the pollutant loading rate of the reference watershed was scaled to the area of the impaired watershed and used as a target to

eliminate the stream impairments.
CWP and partners conducted field
work to identify stormwater restoration
practices, agricultural conservation practices,
and stream restoration projects to meet the
established target pollutant loading rate. The data

were then entered into the Model My Watershed BMP Spreadsheet Tool to calculate progress towards the goal. These watershed plans are in various stages of development

and are expected to be finished in 2024.

**Training** 

## Green Infrastructure Training Plan for Contractors in the Kansas City Metro Area

Green infrastructure (GI) is seen as a critical tool for urban stormwater management in the bistate Kansas City region, as it can help reduce stormwater runoff pollution, mitigate nuisance flooding, and help to reduce the frequency of combined sewer overflows. As the use of GI has grown in the region, the lack of trained GI contractors has become a barrier to scaling up. With CWP's experience in GI construction and maintenance workforce development training, the Mid-America Regional Council hired the organization to develop a GI contractor training plan. This plan will be the framework to further develop the training program and curriculum.

CWP evaluated existing GI training programs nationwide, engaged local stakeholders throughout the process, developed contractor surveys, and

developed a training plan and five alternatives to consider different options and pathways forward for the Kansas City Metro Area. Stakeholders engaged include GI consultants and design firms, GI construction and maintenance contractors, local government, community members,

higher education organizations, non-profit

organizations, and workforce development organizations. The training plan and alternatives are comprised of adaptive

elements or "building blocks" that can be added, swapped, or removed, to pick the best fit for the Kansas City Metro Area. Adaptive elements such as the training program owner, training platform, program rigor, target audience, and curriculum development vary in the alternatives

presented, and can also vary dependent on the level of acceptance amongst the municipalities in the region. An option to create an entry-level workforce development element was also included, as a recent area survey found economic valuement and ich creation was one of the tonic.

development and job creation was one of the topic priorities to residents.

#### Advancing the State of Watershed Planning Through Improved Training and Tools

Watershed professionals require a solid understanding of the science behind this multi-disciplinary field and a diverse array of skills to successfully apply the watershed approach in their unique watersheds. However, the existing national guidance and training on watershed planning is more than a decade old. There is a need to update national watershed planning training and tools to improve and enhance the work of watershed professionals and reflect recent advances in technology, emerging issues in watershed planning, lessons learned over the past decade, and address region-specific needs.

To address this need, CWP is leading the project Advancing the State of Watershed Planning Through Improved Training and Tools, through a Federal award from the U.S. EPA. The project objectives are to evaluate the needs of watershed professionals and the gaps in existing watershed planning trainings; convene a workgroup of experts to define and help develop the foundational elements of a national curricula; and disseminate the results nationally.

Over the past year, CWP conducted a series of listening sessions with watershed planning professionals to gather

additional perspectives on watershed planning training needs. To characterize the current state of watershed planning training in the U.S., CWP sought to compile as many existing trainings as possible through a comprehensive inventory and conduct in-depth reviews of the most relevant training materials.

Of the 157 individual training programs included in the initial matrix, 42 had a national focus, while the rest were spread across EPA regions as shown in the figure here. Ultimately, CWP reviewed materials from 36 training programs. Key findings were synthesized around the following categories:
1) important content to include in watershed planning training, 2) important skills for watershed professionals, 3) effective training strategies or best practices, 4) training needs and gaps, and 5) other input.

In the coming year, CWP plans to host a one-day Watershed Forum and assemble a workgroup of watershed planning experts to help define and develop the foundational elements of a national curricula. The CWP will disseminate the results, expected in 2026, on a national scale so that organizations around the country can integrate the content and recommendations into their watershed planning training programs.

## **Training**

#### **Preparing People for Jobs in the Stormwater Sector**

CWP's Clean Water Certificate training program is 35-hours of classroom, hands-on, and field-based learning that provides high-quality, entry-level green infrastructure knowledge and skills training. This program helps to create a clear pathway for graduates to jobs in the stormwater industry and youth with the opportunity to explore a potential green career path. In 2022, 131 job seekers and green team youth earned Clean Water Certificates.

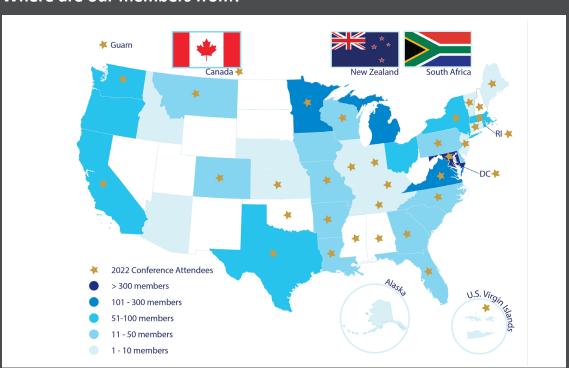
## Membership

A forum for sharing ideas, resources, expertise, and information, the Center for Watershed Protection Association (CWPA) provides training, education and professional development and fosters collaboration among its members. CWPA offers a variety of memberships for local governments, state agencies, corporations, universities, and individuals. In 2022, virtual learning initiatives were added to webcasts, lunch & learns, and training opportunities further expanding access to resources and enabling members from diverse locations to engage actively.

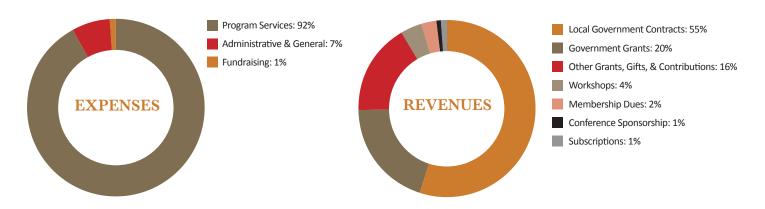
The benefits of membership include:

- Savings on all CWP conferences, symposiums, webcasts, and events
- Free access to all archived webcasts
- Opportunity to earn and track your Professional Development Hours (PDHs)
- Free subscription to bi-monthly Runoff Rundown newsletter including current CWP projects, member projects, and latest news
- Free access to the online watershed library (OWL)— an online collection of educational resources
- Free registration to CWP lunch & learns where you will hear from our members about current projects, services and products. Members are invited to present at lunch & learns
- Access to reduced rates at career center for those seeking employment or posting available positions in the organization

#### Where are our members from?



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