

Federal Resources for Supporting Urban Forestry

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Urban forestry is a critical tool for building ecologically and economically sustainable communities. As more people move to urban areas and as cities expand ever further, restoring and maintaining ecological health has become a critical aspect of addressing socio-economic issues. A metropolitan area is ultimately only as healthy as its urban and surrounding ecology.

Federal funding has long been a significant source of support for local building projects such as highway and bridge construction, public transportation and other improvements. Just as this "gray infrastructure" can be improved, cities are now searching for ways to build and restore the "green infrastructure" of forests, rivers, wetlands and other resources. By restoring green infrastructure and in the process employing current residents, it's possible for businesses, government, and communities to improve the environment while becoming more competitive in the global marketplace. By enhancing quality of life and catering to the demand for green space, cities are better able to attract the new economy businesses that offer high wage jobs and lure educated workers.

This Quick Guide is designed to help landowners, urban forestry practitioners, businesses, policymakers, and community groups access federal funding and technical assistance in support of urban and community forestry projects. While few dedicated sources of support exist for urban forestry, there are a variety of programs that will support projects that address a wide array of social, economic and ecological issues. Urban forestry can access such resources by being the centerpiece of neighborhood redevelopment, job training, business incubation, brownfield remediation and vacant lot reclamation as open space.

This Quick Guide is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, it provides key points of access into possible sources of support. In addition, this document has evolved from conversations, experiences, and research from pilot projects in the Baltimore and Seattle areas that are creating models to engage underserved communities in restoring ecological health across metropolitan landscapes. This guide therefore includes regional resources for the Chesapeake Bay watershed that demonstrate various levels of local support that each region across the country should also have in some form.

GETTING STARTED

Define your most critical forestry needs:

Are you a community group trying to address a mix of vacant lots, brownfields, and barren streets? Or maybe you own a property in which inexpensive investments in vegetation could become an asset to your company, mitigation against regulation, a boon to relations with your community, or a marketable property for sale as open space? Prioritize the on-the-ground outcomes that you want to achieve.

Identify social and economic issues addressed by your project:

Urban forestry is more of a social discipline than an environmental one. Every project has direct impacts on people – it may create jobs, raise property values, reduce potential liability on contaminated sites, reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate the urban heat island effect, or even become part of an industrial process to reuse stormwater for industrial purposes. Knowing all the public impacts will be critical to reaching beyond traditional forestry dollars.

Find as many private and in-kind resources as possible to subsidize public investments:

The federal government can be an effective stimulus but is not a reliable source to sustain any endeavor. Companies have self-interest in investing in projects on their own properties or in their cities, while residents often volunteer when they can see a direct benefit from their efforts. Such matches will prove a vested interest from the community in a project's long-term maintenance. Your ability to match more than the minimum required by the grant will make your request for funding more competitive. Document all the free assistance you receive whether it is cash, loaned materials, technical advice or any other support.

Make contacts with staff in any of the following agencies or foundations that might take an interest in your project:

Government employees usually will discuss potential projects with implementers. Having someone in an agency support your project can mean the difference between getting resources and getting lost in a pile of proposals.

FEDERAL RESOURCES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U.S. Forest Service

The Forest Service manages public lands in national forests and grasslands. It is also the largest forestry research organization in the world, and provides technical and financial assistance to state and private forestry agencies.

Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF)

U&CF program helps state forestry agencies, local and tribal governments, nonprofits, and the private sector improve natural resource management of trees and forests in urban areas and community settings. The program does this by encouraging and facilitating the active involvement of volunteers in managing and protecting their community's natural resources. It also ana-



lyzes, develops, disseminates, and demonstrates scientific information about protecting, managing, and maintaining community forest resources.

Cost Share Grants for local projects are administered by the state forestry agencies. These funds should be your first stop in searching for federal assistance for local projects. Funds support tree planting projects, urban forest management plans, education and outreach programs and a variety of other local projects. **Contact:** www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/ucf_contact_state.htm/

National funds are also available for urban ecosystem restoration projects, education and outreach, and research on a competitive basis through the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council. **Contact:** NUCFAC at www.treelink.org/nuccfac/

On a very limited basis, the U&CF program makes national and regional investment grants. To apply, you should develop a short pre-proposal to present and discuss with your regional urban forestry representative from the US Forest Service. Your project must have regional and/or national significance to be competitive. Your best strategy is to collaborate with the federal coordinator assigned to your region. **Contact:** www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/ucf_contact_fed.htm/

Forest Legacy

Development of the nation's forested areas poses an increasing threat to maintaining the integrity of the timber products, wildlife habitat, soil and watershed protection, aesthetics, and recreational opportunities that intact forestlands provide. The Forest Legacy Program supports state efforts to protect environmentally sensitive forestlands through acquisition of partial interests in private forests, such as conservation easements. **Contact:** Cooperative Forestry, 202-205-1469. www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/

Private Landowner Assistance

A number of programs offer non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowners (primarily rural) an incentive to plant and maintain forests. By providing landowners the opportunity to defray the costs of making such long-term investments, these programs can overcome a historical reluctance to replant or maintain private forests. Such programs include the Forestry Incentives Program, the Forest Stewardship Program, and in the new Farm Bill, the Forest Land Enhancement Program. **Contact:** your State Forester or the Cooperative Forestry staff at www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. The following programs are primarily applicable to rural landowners but can benefit urban fringe landowners or be used for urban watershed management on rural lands.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

This voluntary program helps private landowners address natural resource problems that threaten environmental quality. First, EQIP compensates landowners for the lack of market incentive to invest in public goods, such as watershed and wildlife protection. Second, it encourages landowners to make long-term investments in maintaining the natural resource base. The program targets watersheds, regions, and areas of special environmental sensitivity or other areas facing significant soil, water, or related natural resources concerns. **Contact:** National EQIP Program Manager, 202-720-1840, or www.nrcs.gov/programs/eqip/

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program that offers financial support to landowners' wetlands restoration and protection projects. WRP authorizes the federal government to obtain conservation easements from landowners, and provides cost-share payments for wetlands rehabilitation practices. WRP allows and encourages tree plantings that are primarily focused upon wetland rehabilitation. Cost share of up to 50% of project cost is available to landowners transferring 30-year easements to the government; rates of between 75 and 100% may be available in support of projects undertaken on permanent easements. Even after enactment of easements, the landowner controls access to the property.

Sale or donation of WRP easements may provide landowners with a variety of tax benefits, including reduction in and velorum tax liability and capitol gains/losses. **Contact:** the Conservation and Environmental Protection Division of NRCS (www.nrcs.gov), or your local NRCS Conservationist http://offices.usda.gov/scripts/ndISAPI.dll/oi_public/USA_map

Small Watershed Program (or Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program)

This program provides technical and financial assistance to address resource and related economic problems on a watershed basis. Projects related to watershed protection, flood prevention, water supply, water quality, erosion and sediment control, wetland creation and restoration, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, and public recreation are eligible for assistance. Technical and financial assistance is also available for planning and installation of works of improvement to protect, develop, and use land and water resources in small watersheds. **Contact:** your state Natural Resources Conservation Service office, or www.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/programs.html or aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/p10904.htm

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)

CSREES provides fiscal resources that allow land-grant universities to more fully engage in urban ecosystem issues through research and educational outreach. They support base programs and national initiatives that help provide direction for educational programming and dissemination of research across the country. There are seven major areas in which the Cooperative Extension Service provides educational programming: 4-H and youth development, agriculture, community resources and economic development, family development and resource management, leadership and volunteer development, natural resources and environmental management, nutrition, diet, and health. Contact: Cooperative Extension is located in every state and housed at land-grant universities (i.e. University of Maryland, Cornell University, Michigan State University).

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

EDA's mission is to enhance community success in attracting private capital investment and lucrative job opportunities. EDA is guided by the basic principle that distressed communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development and revitalization strategies.

The Public Works Development Facilities Program

This program empowers distressed communities in economic decline to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain

long-term, private sector jobs and investment. These investments support a variety of specific economic development strategies including natural disaster mitigation and redevelopment of brownfield sites. **Contact:** www.osec.doc.gov/eda/html/pwprog.htm

Economic Adjustment Program

The Economic Adjustment Program assists state and local interests in designing and implementing strategies to adjust or bring about change to an economy. This program could be of special interest to businesses or city agencies trying to redevelop an impoverished area through development of an ecological industrial park, seeking to incorporate such design into a landscape, or developing/attracting urban forestry businesses in a disadvantaged community.

Contact: www.osec.doc.gov/eda/html/econadj.htm

University Center Program

This is a federal/academic partnership that makes resources at institutions of higher education available to the economic development community. Resources include faculty, staff, students, laboratories, and computer systems. University Centers generally work with units of local government and nonprofit organizations. Some University Centers target their efforts on technology transfer assistance to small- and medium-sized firms. For example, a Center might help a firm redesign a product to meet a specific standard, to identify energy savings improvements, or to solve a technical or engineering problem in a manufacturing process.

National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

NOAA's mission is to describe and predict changes in the Earth's environment, and conserve and wisely manage the nation's coastal and marine resources. NOAA has to balance both economic and ecological uses.

Coastal Services Center Cooperative Agreements (CSC)

The goal of CSC is to build capabilities throughout the nation to address pressing issues of coastal health and change by conserving coastal environments and promoting efficient and sustainable commercial and residential development. This program focuses beyond site-specific projects, so may not be applicable unless your site falls within a larger planning area. CSC focuses on landscape characterization and restoration, integration and development, coastal change analysis, coastal technology services, and special projects.

Contact: www.csc.noaa.gov or aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/p11473.htm

Community-Based Restoration Program (CRP)

CRP emphasizes the use of a grassroots, bottom-up approach to restoring fishery habitat across coastal America. The program's objective is to bring together citizen groups, public and nonprofit organizations, industry, businesses, students, landowners, and government agencies to implement habitat restoration projects that benefit living marine resources. Projects might include restoring wetlands and other coastal habitats and improving fish passage and habitat quality for anadromous species (those that travel between fresh and salt water). **Contact:** www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration or aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/p11463.htm

Small Business Administration (SBA)

The SBA provides America's small business with technical and financial support from the federal government.

Pollution Control Loans

Pollution Control Loans are intended to provide loan guarantees to eligible small businesses for financing the planning, design, or installation of a pollution control facility. This facility must prevent, reduce, abate, or control any form of pollution, including recycling. Bioremediation technologies, including wetlands, are means of doing just that. SBA can guarantee up to \$1,000,000 for Pollution Control Loans to eligible businesses. **Contact:** www.sba.gov/financing/frpollute.html#general

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Army Corps of Engineers

The Army Corp of Engineers' mission is to provide quality, responsive engineering services to the nation. This includes planning, designing, building, and operating water resources and other civil works projects for navigation, flood control, environmental protection, etc. and provide construction and management operations for the Department of Defense and other federal agencies.

Flood Plain Management Services (FPMS)

This program supports comprehensive flood plain management planning with technical services and planning guidance at appropriate government levels, thereby encouraging and guiding agencies toward prudent use of the nation's flood plains for the benefit of the national economy, the environment, and welfare. Upon request, the FPMS program provides a full range of technical services and planning guidance on floods and flood plain issues within the broad umbrella of flood plain management. With the exception of requests from the private sector and other Federal agencies, services are funded by the Corps of Engineers. **Contact:** www.usace.army.mil/index.htm

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment — air, water, and land — upon which life depends.

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

Brownfield Site Assessment Pilots

A site assessment is EPA's means of evaluating a hazardous waste site's level of contamination and potential for cleanup. From these results, a hazardous ranking is established. This ranking will determine whether the site is included on the National Priorities List and made eligible for Superfund cleanup. States are granted pilot funding. **Contact:** your State environmental agency for more information, or www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/community

Superfund Technical Assistance Grants for Citizen Groups at Priority Sites

This grant program provides funds to community groups to permit them to hire technical advisors who can assist the groups in interpreting technical information concerning the assessment of potential hazards and selection and design of appropriate remedies at sites eligible for cleanup under the Superfund Program. Funds can be used at sites listed or proposed for the National Priorities List (NPL) where cleanup is under way. The recipient group must be incorporated to receive funds. **Contact:** EPA's Office of Emergency and Remedial Response, <http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/CFDA/p66806.htm>.



Brownfield Clean Up Revolving Loan Fund Pilots

The objective of the loan fund is to facilitate cleanup of brownfield sites contaminated with hazardous substances by directing special efforts toward coordinating public and private brownfields cleanup efforts at the federal, state, and local levels. Brownfield revolving loan fund grants enable states, counties, municipalities, and tribes to make low-interest funds available to facilitate the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield properties. **Contact:** U.S. EPA-OSWER, Outreach and Special Projects staff (202) 260-4039 or the RCRA/Superfund Hotline at: (800) 424-9346 or visit the EPA Brownfields website at: www.epa.gov/brownfields

Brownfield Job Training and Development Pilot Projects

When dealing with contamination and derelict lands, a workforce with special skills and certifications is required. These pilot projects provide \$200,000 to help brownfield communities train and certify underserved residents for brownfield remediation and restoration jobs. **Contact:** your regional EPA office at www.epa.gov/epahome/whereyoulive.htm.

Environmental Justice Grants to Small Community Groups

This grant program provides financial assistance to community-based organizations and tribal governments to support projects that design, demonstrate, or disseminate practices, methods, or techniques related to environmental justice on the local level. Grants may be used for (1) education and awareness programs, (2) environmental justice programs (e.g., river monitoring and pollution prevention), (3) technical assistance in accessing available public information, and (4) technical assistance with gathering and interpreting existing environmental justice data. **Contact:** EPA's Office of Environmental Justice 800-962-6215, environmental-justice-epa@epa.gov; es.epa.gov/cfda/p66604.htm

Capitalization Grants for Clean Water State Revolving Loan Funds

This program provides capitalization grants from EPA to states to capitalize a revolving loan fund for wastewater infrastructure projects including publicly owned treatment works, non-point source water quality projects, and estuary projects. While traditionally used to build wastewater treatment facilities, loans are used increasingly for other water quality management activities such as agriculture, silviculture, rural and urban runoff control; estuary improvement projects, wet weather flow control including stormwater and sewer overflows; alternative wastewater treatment technologies; and nontraditional projects such as landfills and riparian buffers. **Contact:** your state environmental agency to see if your state has received such funding or www.epa.gov/region4/water/pgtab/cleanwatersrf.html

Water Quality Cooperative Agreement

Grants are provided to support the creation of unique and new approaches to meeting stormwater, sanitary sewer, and combined sewer outflows, biosolids, and pretreatment requirements. Eligible projects include research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies related to the causes, effects, extent, and prevention of pollution. State water pollution control agencies, interstate agencies, local public agencies, Indian tribes, non-profit institutions, organizations, and individuals are eligible. **Contact:** www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/wacademy/fund/wqagree.html

Watershed Assistance Grants

EPA establishes a cooperative agreement with one or more nonprofit organizations or other eligible entities to support watershed partnership organizational

development and long-term effectiveness. Funding supports organizational development and capacity building for watershed partnerships with diverse membership. Nonprofits, tribes, and local governments are eligible. Maximum funds for individual watershed partnership: \$30,000. **Contact:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (202) 260-4538 or www.rivernet.org/howwecanhelp/howwag.cfm#wag.

Wetlands Program Development Grants

These provide financial assistance to support development of new, or augmentation and enhancement of existing, wetland programs. Projects must clearly demonstrate a direct link to an increase in the state's, tribe's, or local government's ability to protect its wetland resources. States, federally recognized Indian tribes, local governments, and intergovernmental organizations are eligible. **Contact:** EPA's regional wetland coordinator Hotline (800) 832-7828 wetlands_hotline@epa.gov or www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/2002grant/or_aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/p66461.htm

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

HUD's mission is to create a decent, safe, and sanitary home and suitable living environment for every American by creating opportunities for homeownership, providing housing assistance for low-income persons, improving affordable housing, enforcing fair housing laws, helping the homeless, spurring economic growth in distressed neighborhoods, and helping communities meet their development needs. For an application kit and/or guidebook to all HUD programs, please contact the SuperNOFA Information Center at 1-800-HUD-8929.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

CDBGs are given to cities, towns, and states to meet local community development priorities and objectives. They are routinely used to rehabilitate housing, improve infrastructure, acquire property, finance the creation of parks and other public space improvements, remove blighted buildings, provide job training and business incubation funding, assemble land to attract businesses, provide public services for youth and seniors, fund planning and administrative expenses, and finance revolving loan funds. Funds are only funneled through government agencies, so partnerships with the city must be developed in order for community organizations to utilize CDBG grants. **Contact:** Community Connections at (800) 998-9999, or www.hud.gov/progdesc/cdbgent.cfm

Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

This program allows state and local governments participating in the CDBG program to obtain federally guaranteed loans to help fuel large economic development projects and other revitalization activities. It allows them to transform a small portion of their CDBG funds into federally guaranteed loans large enough to pursue physical and economic revitalization projects that can help renew entire neighborhoods.

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)

BEDI provides funds and loan guarantees to clean up and redevelop environmentally contaminated industrial and commercial sites, commonly known as "brownfields." This funding must be combined with Section 108 loan guarantees. It provides vital assistance for local efforts to begin reclaiming brownfields. HUD is working closely with the Environmental Protection Agency, Economic Development Administration, and the U.S.



Army Corps of Engineers in Brownfields Showcase Communities to develop models for returning brownfields to productive uses for housing, job creation, and open space. **Contact:** (800) HUD-8929; www.hud.gov/progdesc/brownf.cfm

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (DOI)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's mission is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 93 million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System and thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also has several mechanisms for assisting voluntary habitat development on private lands and fostering aquatic conservation.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants Program

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989 provides matching grants to carry out wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Both the Standard and Small Grants programs help deliver funding to on-the-ground projects through the protection, restoration, or enhancement of wetland habitats.

Public or private, profit or nonprofit entities or individuals establishing public-private sector partnerships are eligible. Average grants range from a standard of \$50,000 to \$1 million; cost-share partners must match grant funds 1:1 with U.S. nonfederal dollars. **Contact:** Wetlands Office at (703) 358-1784. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's North American Waterfowl and Wetlands Office at (703) 358-1784. www.fws.gov/r9nawwo/granpro.html

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act Program

The Fish and Wildlife Service provides matching grants for acquisition, restoration, management, or enhancement of coastal wetlands. Funding for the program comes from excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat and small engine fuels. States that border the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, Pacific, and Great Lakes are eligible. The one exception is Louisiana, which has its own coastal wetlands program under the Act. Also eligible are the Trust Territories and Commonwealths of the United States. **Contact:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Chief, Division of Federal Aid at (703) 358-2156 or Chief, Division of Fish and Wildlife Management and Habitat Restoration at (703) 358-1718. http://fa.r9.fws.gov/cw/cw_jul97.html

National Park Service

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program is an outreach program of the National Park Service. It can lend skills in planning, design, and organizing to your community, and help your group create such assets as greenways, parks, trails, accessible and clean rivers, and access to historical sites. The program works in partnership with landowners, local business owners, agencies, and private groups in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Nine other offices provide services

nationwide. **Contact:** www.nps.gov/chal/rta/intro.htm.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF)

Through profits derived from offshore oil drilling, the L&WCF program provides matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate nonfederal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States. **Contact:** your local division of recreation and parks, or www.ncrc.nps.gov/programs/lwcf/

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) Program

UPARR provides matching grants and technical assistance directly to economically distressed urban communities for rehabilitation of critically needed recreation facilities. Grants range from about \$40,000 to \$1,000,000 and are available in three ways: rehabilitation, innovation, and planning. Rehabilitation grants are used to renovate existing recreation facilities. Innovative grants are usually smaller and used for specific activities that increase recreation programs or improve government efficiency. Planning grants provide funds for developing a National Park Service-approved Recovery Action Program plan, which is a prerequisite for a jurisdiction to receive the other two grant types. **Contact:** www.nps.gov/PROGRAMS/UPRR/program_inbrief.html

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT)

This department serves the United States by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

TEA-21 funds numerous transportation programs to improve the nation's transportation infrastructure, enhance economic growth, and protect the environment. States may now spend up to 20% of their Surface Transportation Fund (STP) dollars for environmental restoration and pollution abatement projects, including the construction of storm water treatment systems. Additionally, each state sets aside about 10% of STP funds for transportation enhancement projects, which can include acquisition of conservation and scenic easements, wetland mitigation, and pollution abatement, as well as scenic beautification, pedestrian and bicycle trails, archaeological planning, and historic preservation. These transportation enhancement funds are available for public or private, profit or nonprofit entities or individuals, local government agencies, universities, colleges, technical schools, and institutes. **Contact:** your local or state Department of Transportation office.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATION (FEMA)

FEMA is an independent agency reporting to the President and tasked with responding to, planning for, recovering from, and mitigating against man-made and natural disasters.

According to FEMA, a sustainable community is one that makes more efficient use of its land. Such land-use decisions tend to emphasize open space planning such as greenways, parks, and landscaping. Sustainable communities also take advantage of underutilized urban areas and encourage infill and brownfield development. Preserving the integrity of biological and physical sys-



tems is the most important environmental indicator of sustainability. This involves limiting degradation of the environment and preserving natural systems such as wetlands and floodplains. The following programs are available to communities to help prevent disasters and to recover from disasters. **Contact:** www.fema.gov

Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA)

This is a state-run program. Although individuals cannot apply directly for FMA funds, their local government may submit an application on their behalf.

Community Assistance Program (CAP)

The CAP is intended to identify, prevent, and resolve floodplain management issues in participating communities before they develop into problems requiring enforcement action.

Mitigation Technical Assistance Programs

These programs provide the technical support that is necessary to mitigate against potential loss of lives and minimize the amount of damage as a result of a natural disaster.

The Hazard Mitigation Technical Assistance Program

The Wind and Water Technical Assistance Program

JOINT CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

An initiative by the United States Conference of Mayors and the National Association of Counties, the overall goal of the Joint Center is to provide local elected officials with assistance in using the policies and tools necessary for creating sustainable communities.

In particular, local elected officials who are interested in finding more cost-effective and comprehensive ways to address such issues as transportation management, brownfields revitalization, environmental protection, energy conservation, job training and public safety. To this end, the Joint Center, which is funded by six federal agencies—DOT, USDA, DOC, DOE, EPA, and HUD, is providing technical assistance, training, sustainable development literature and materials, and funding toward community visioning (or collaborative planning). **Contact:** Joint Center at the National Association of Counties, phone (202) 661-8805; www.naco.org.

AN EXAMPLE OF REGIONAL RESOURCES

CHESAPEAKE BAY (MARYLAND)

Each region of the country has numerous local, state, and federal programs contributing to ecological management. Sometimes these regions are identified by natural boundaries, such as the Great Lakes watershed, Galveston Bay, or the Puget Sound, other times by state boundaries. Unique partnerships in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have driven innovative federal, state, local, and private partnerships protecting the ecology of the Bay. Programs contributing to this effort include:

Maryland's Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Program

This program is a collection of initiatives that aim to direct state resources to revitalize older developed areas, preserve Maryland's most valuable resource and

open space lands, and discourage the continuation of sprawling development into our rural areas. It is divided into

- Priority Funding Areas – funnels funding into existing or planned communities
- Rural Legacy – purchases conservation easements for open space and agricultural protection.
- Brownfields – limits liability for redevelopers and includes the programs described below
- Live Near Your Work
- Job Creation Tax Credit

Contact: www.op.state.md.us/smartgrowth/

Program Open Space (POS)

POS is a nationally recognized program providing dedicated funds for Maryland's state and local parks and conservation areas. **Almost all of the land** purchased by the DNR in Maryland in the last 32 years was funded at least in part through POS. Today there are more than 4,000 individual county and municipal parks and conservation areas that exist because of the program.

Local jurisdictions interested in obtaining financial assistance through this partnership program should contact the office that is responsible for administering this program at the state level. In Maryland, **Contact:** Program Open Space, Department of Natural Resources, Tawes State Office Building, Annapolis, MD 21401, (410) 974-3581; www.dnr.state.md.us/pos.html

Maryland's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP)

Maryland's VCP has proven to be one of the country's most successful proactive means of cleaning brownfields and getting them back into productive use. Administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the VCP streamlines the environmental cleanup process for sites, usually industrial or commercial properties, which are contaminated or perceived to be contaminated. The VCP offers a liability release for businesses that "volunteer" to clean up hazardous waste to MDE's specifications. Any site that is contaminated or perceived to be contaminated, though not on the national priority list, is eligible. The liability release is particularly strong for innocent purchasers of brownfields and gives lenders broad exemption from liability as well. Cleanup standards are adjusted to be appropriate to the planned use of the property. **Contact:** www.mde.state.md.us/environment/was/brownfields/

Brownfields Site Assessment Initiative

No matter the end use, the first step necessary to redeveloping a site that is definitely or potentially contaminated is to have a Phase I and Phase II assessment done of it. Phase I assessments look at the history of a site's uses and identifies contaminants that could be on-site. Phase II assessments are more in-depth on site analyses that include soil sampling to identify exactly what contaminants, if any, exist and where they are.

Through the assessments, MDE will assess the contamination levels of a property *at no cost* to the landowner or prospective buyer. This free assessment also reduces the costs associated with an application to the Voluntary Cleanup Program. **Contact:** (410) 631-3493 or visit: <http://www.mde.state.md.us/environment/was/brownfields>

Brownfields Revitalization Incentive Program (BRIP)

BRIP, managed by the Department of Business and Economic Development, provides economic incentives such as loans, grants, and property tax credits to



clean up and develop certain properties. An applicant must submit a completed VCP application to the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (if there is oil contamination, the applicant must submit an MDE Oil Control Program approved plan) and a general financing application. **Contact:** www.mde.state.md.us/environment/was/brownfields/

Brownfields Tax Credits

A site that qualifies for incentives from the Department of Business and Economic Development's BRIP automatically qualifies for real property tax credits as well. The site must be located in a jurisdiction that has elected to participate in BRIP and must be owned by an inculcable person or an innocent purchaser. For 5 years after cleanup of the site (could be 10 years in Enterprise Zones) the site will qualify for a real property tax credit between 50 and 70% of the increased value for the site. This credit combined with other real property tax credits, may not exceed 100% of the tax on the increased value of the site. **Contact:** www.mde.state.md.us/environment/was/brownfields/

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation conserves healthy populations of fish, wildlife and plants, on land and in the sea, through creative and respectful partnerships, sustainable solutions, and better education. The Foundation meets these goals by awarding challenge grants to projects benefiting conservation education, habitat protection and restoration, and natural resource management. They are one example of a national entity with regional programs. Contact: www.nfwf.org for information about the following programs:

Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program

The Small Watershed Grants Program provides grants to organizations working on a local level to protect and improve watersheds in the Chesapeake Bay basin, while building citizen-based resource stewardship. The purpose of the grants program is to address the water quality and living resource needs of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Under the 2002 Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program, grants of up to \$50,000 were awarded on a competitive basis.

Community Legacy Grants initiative

A new extension of the previous grant program, Community Legacy is intended to encourage the establishment of partnerships that will create a conservation legacy in communities throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. As envisioned under the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, this legacy includes abundant, diverse populations of fish, wildlife, and plants, fed by healthy streams and rivers, sustaining strong local and regional economies, and the area's unique quality of life. Five grants of up to \$100,000 will be awarded to truly innovative projects that restore vital fish and wildlife habitats, develop locally-supported watershed management plans, or promote environmentally-sensitive development.

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

The Chesapeake Bay Program is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. Since its inception, the Bay Program's highest priority has been the restoration of the Bay's living resources. Improvements include fisheries and habitat restoration, recovery of Bay grasses, nutrient and toxic reductions, and significant advances in estu-

arine science.

Grants are awarded for implementing projects, as well as for research, monitoring, and other related activities. EPA awarded 23 grants in FY99, ranging from \$5,000 to \$2,739,000 with a median of \$300,000. **Contact:** www.chesapeakebay.net.

Businesses for the Bay (B4B)

B4B is a voluntary team of forward-looking businesses, industries, government facilities and other organizations within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. They are committed to implementing pollution prevention in daily operations and reducing releases of chemical contaminants and other wastes to the Chesapeake Bay. Benefits of joining the Businesses for the Bay Team are:

- Cost savings through pollution prevention.
- Positive publicity and recognition.
- Access to the business-to-business Mentor Program and free, technical assistance.
- Use of Businesses for the Bay logo on your correspondence
- Standing out among your competitors.
- Eligibility for the prestigious Businesses for the Bay Excellence Awards.
- Networking at the Businesses for the Bay Annual Meeting.
- A cleaner, healthier Bay for all.

Contact: www.chesapeakebay.net/b4bay.htm

THE PARKS & PEOPLE FOUNDATION

Parks & People Foundation has worked since 1984 to improve the quality of life in Baltimore's neighborhoods. They have worked with partners in the community to develop innovative solutions to issues facing Baltimore including the restoration of neighborhoods and their natural resources as well as the academic enrichment and motivation of children. This Baltimore nonprofit provides grants and assistance to neighborhood and community groups for community forestry projects in the city. **Contact:** www.parksandpeople.org

CHESAPEAKE RELEAF

American Forests, the nation's oldest citizen's conservation organization, and the Forest Service have partnered to provide grants to forest practitioners in urban and rural communities that are implementing on-the-ground forest restoration or education projects in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This publication in conjunction with workshops is one example. **Contact:** www.americanforests.org

Acknowledgments and Credits

Written by: Ian Leahy

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QUICK GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY FORESTRY ACTIVISTS

Urban / Rural Task Group Members:

Eleanor Torres Chair Urban/Rural Task Group Integrated Infrastructures, Inc. ethnodiver@aol.com	Zu Hua Ning Southern University zning@su.jags.subr.edu
Jim Beil New York D.E.C. jabeil@gw.dec.state.ny.us	Bryant Smith Baltimore Ecosystem Study urbanartsins@aol.com
Gerry Gray American Forests ggray@amfor.org	Rodney Stone USDA Forest Service Southern University Rstone03@fs.fed.us
Ian Leahy American Forests ileahy@amfor.org	Alice-Ewen Walker National Alliance for Community Trees alice@actrees.org

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To request additional copies, please contact:

Ian Leahy, Urban/Rural Program Manager or
Gerry Gray, Vice President for Forest Policy
American Forests
P.O. Box 2000
Washington, DC 20013

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Communities Committee of the
Seventh American Forest Congress
919 Elk Park Road
Columbia Falls, MT 59912