



Maryland County Plants One Millionth Tree to Celebrate Earth Day

By Dann Stuart, Public Affairs Specialist, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast Regions

Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Lewis Riley, 4-H students and partners in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) joined Elizabeth Anderson, state executive director for USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Maryland, to celebrate Earth Day by planting the one millionth CREP tree in Frederick County, Md.

"Since the start of CREP in 1997, Maryland has planted nearly eight million trees throughout the state," said Anderson. "This tree represents the one-millionth tree that has been planted in Frederick County as part of the Maryland CREP."

The tree is part of a new riparian buffer at Carl Miller's Family Farm, a beef and crop farm in Mount Airy, which borders a tributary that flows into the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay

According to Anderson, the buffer will provide trees for bank stabilization, wildlife habitat and nutrient uptake. CREP will also provide fencing around the entire buffer to keep the cow/calf herd out of the stream and the buffer area.

The planting showcased the positive value that agricultural conservation partnerships and tree buffers have on protecting water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.



With shovels in hand, farmer Carl Miller (left), Maryland SED Elizabeth Anderson (center) and Maryland Soil Conservationist Ginger Murphy plant the one millionth tree in Frederick County under the Maryland CREP.

Established in 1997, the Maryland CREP was the first CREP in the nation. Today there are more than 81,000 acres enrolled in the state's program with about 24,000 acres planted to trees.

"CREP serves as a model of how a federal program works well with state and local agencies to achieve desired results; improving water quality and wildlife habitat in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," said Anderson.

The partnership between FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Soil Conservation Districts and others continues to successfully fulfill its mission of conserving natural resources and enhancing the beauty of Maryland.



Elizabeth Anderson next to the ceremonial tree.

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