



A landscape that will make a difference

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Potomac Watershed Partnership
Information Exchange
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What is the Backyard Buffer program?

- ❑ Suburban private land program
- ❑ Designed to assist homeowners who have a stream or other waterway on or adjacent to their property



What is the Backyard Buffer program?

- ❑ Reaches people and properties that don't qualify for other incentives & programs
- ❑ Differs from the Tree-mendous program in that BYB is for private homeowners to plant trees on their residential property



So what's the big draw for BYB?



But it's more than just free trees...

- We all understand the benefits of buffers
 - Improved water quality
 - Reduced erosion
 - Wildlife habitat
- Many homeowners want to do their part to achieve the same benefits -

they can make a difference, right in their own backyard!



Photo: Mark Beals



What's in the bag?



- ❑ 20-30 native tree and shrub seedlings
- ❑ Information on each species
- ❑ Planting and care instructions
- ❑ Information on where tree shelters can be purchased



What's in the bag?

- ▣ Each BYB packet contains enough trees to plant 50 linear feet of buffer (35 ft wide)



BYB Packet Species Selection

- ❑ We only offer Maryland native trees and shrubs
 - Pin Oak
 - Redbud
 - Silky Dogwood
 - Hazlenut
 - Red Osier Dogwood
 - Alder
 - River Birch
 - Paw Paw
 - Swamp White Oak
 - White Oak
 - Sycamore
 - American Plum
 - Elderberry
 - Serviceberry
- ❑ Selection varies each year based on nursery availability (all seedlings are ordered from MD Forest Service nursery)
- ❑ Each county selects 3-6 species each year



What do homeowners have to do?

- Mail tear-off portion of brochure, e-mail, or call their county BYB coordinator to sign up

- We collect the following information
 - Contact info
 - Name of stream or waterway
 - Length of stream or waterway



Backyard Buffers Application

Please take a minute to fill out the following information. We will contact you as soon as possible.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

County _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Best time to reach you? _____

Length of stream you wish to buffer (in feet) _____

Length of stream on the property _____

Stream name or name of closest named water body _____

How did you hear of this program?

- Radio
- Newspaper
- Television
- Other (specify) _____

Please detach form, place stamp and mail to the address on the other side.



What do homeowners have to do?



Be willing to plant their trees!



Program Costs – Frederick County

- BYB is funded through competitive grants
- To produce 75-100 packets
 - Mailings (target stream, to past participants & for pickup notification)
\$65
 - Seedlings (over-order by 10% for cull)
used 30 seedlings per packet
\$1,650
 - Packaging supplies (bags, twist ties, TerraSorb)
ordered in bulk to last for several years
\$40/year
 - **TOTAL Cost for 2012: \$1,755**



How to generate public interest



Photo: Aaron Cook

- ❑ Newspaper articles
- ❑ **Radio PSA's**
- ❑ TV – news or paid advertising
- ❑ Targeted mailings
- ❑ Watershed Associations
- ❑ Homeowner Associations
- ❑ Forestry Boards
- ❑ Display at local home & garden shows/events



How to generate public interest

- Develop and maintain partnerships!



Maryland
Conservation Corps



BYB Brochure

Clean Water Through The Backyard Buffers Program



The Potomac Watershed

The Potomac Watershed Partnership, in cooperation with Maryland DNR Forest Service, Frederick County Government, and the Monocacy & Catoctin Watershed Alliance present the "Backyard Buffers" program. This program is designed to assist homeowners who have a stream or other waterway on or adjacent to their property to create a streamside buffer of native trees and shrubs. A streamside buffer can create habitat for wildlife, reduce peak water temperatures, and reduce the amount of sediment, fertilizer, and toxic materials that enter our waterways. Deep-rooted trees and shrubs can also stabilize streambanks, protecting them from erosion.

What's In The Bag?

The Backyard Buffers program provides a free "buffer in a bag" to help get homeowners started in buffering their streamside. The bag includes twenty-five native tree and shrub bare-root seedlings, 1 to 2 feet in height, of various species that are well suited to streamside conditions.

Also included are fact sheets on tree planting techniques, typical planting arrangement, proper tree maintenance, native plant species suitable for streamside plantings, and additional information for those who wish to learn more.



How Do I Get Involved?

If you are a homeowner and have a stream or other waterway on or adjacent to your property, and are interested in creating a streamside buffer, complete the attached application form, detach it from the brochure, and return it to the address on the back with a letter stamp. The bags will be available for pickup at a designated local site in time for the spring planting season. Participants can also help complete the cycle and "pay back" the cost of the "buffer-in-a-bag" by returning the bag in the autumn filled with select sorted acorns or black walnuts that will be used to grow new seedlings as part of the "Growing Native" program. If you need assistance with planting due to a disability, contact the Maryland DNR Forest Service office at the number on this brochure.



Backyard Buffers Can Make A Difference



Were you aware that water from your property ultimately drains into the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay? The Backyard Buffers program is designed to help homeowners protect a natural resource that needs our help. Plant native trees and shrubs along your waterway and become a part of the solution. For further information on the Backyard Buffers program, fill out and return the attached application or contact:

MD DNR Forest Service at 301-791-4010

Brochure printing made possible by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Chesapeake Bay Program, the USDA Forest Service, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant Program.





Retractable banner stand displays can be used at workshops, conferences, home & garden shows, and other public places.

Cost is about \$200/banner display



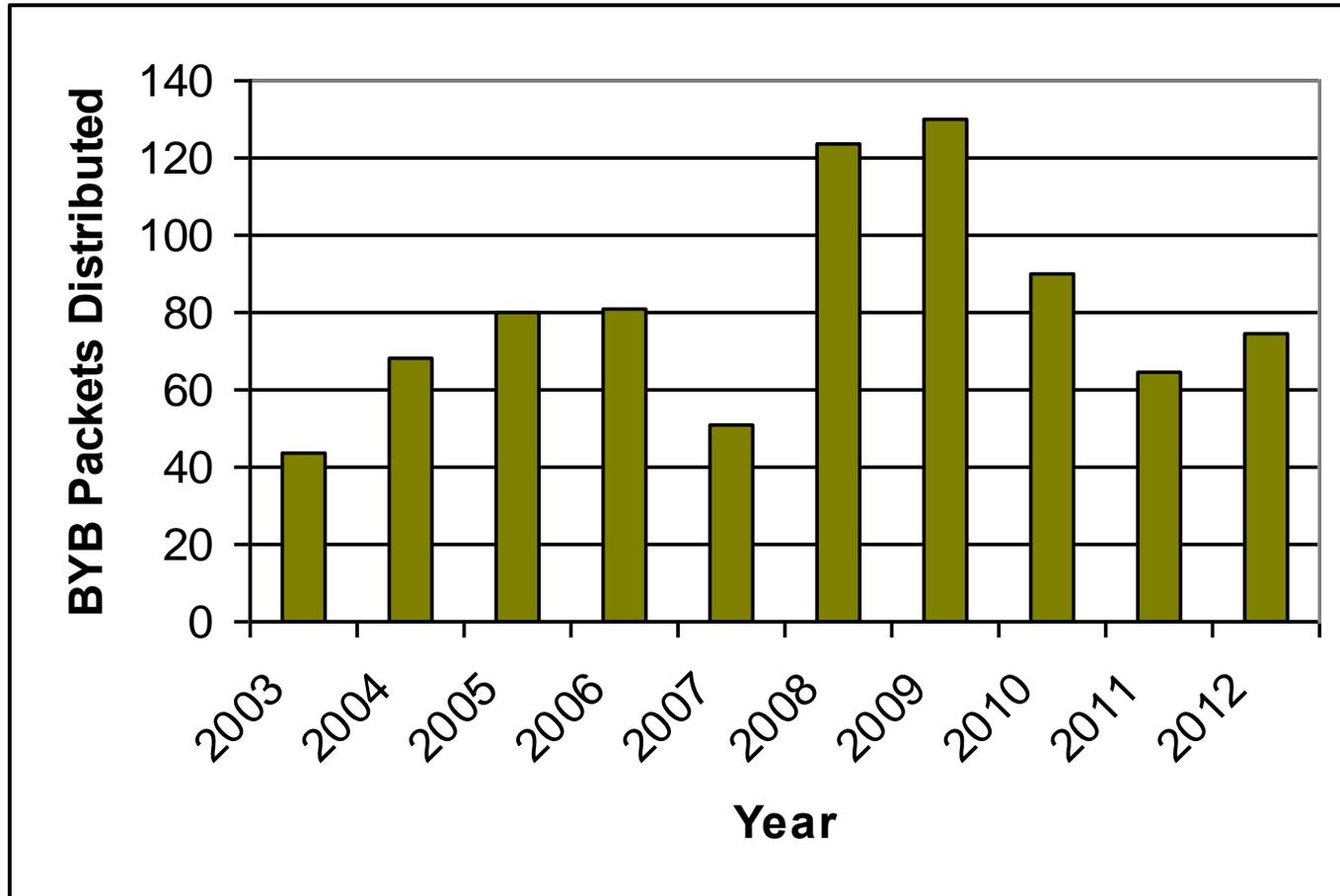


Photo: Ernie Metz

BYB displays at the Ruth Enlow Library in Oakland, MD



Frederick County, MD Summary

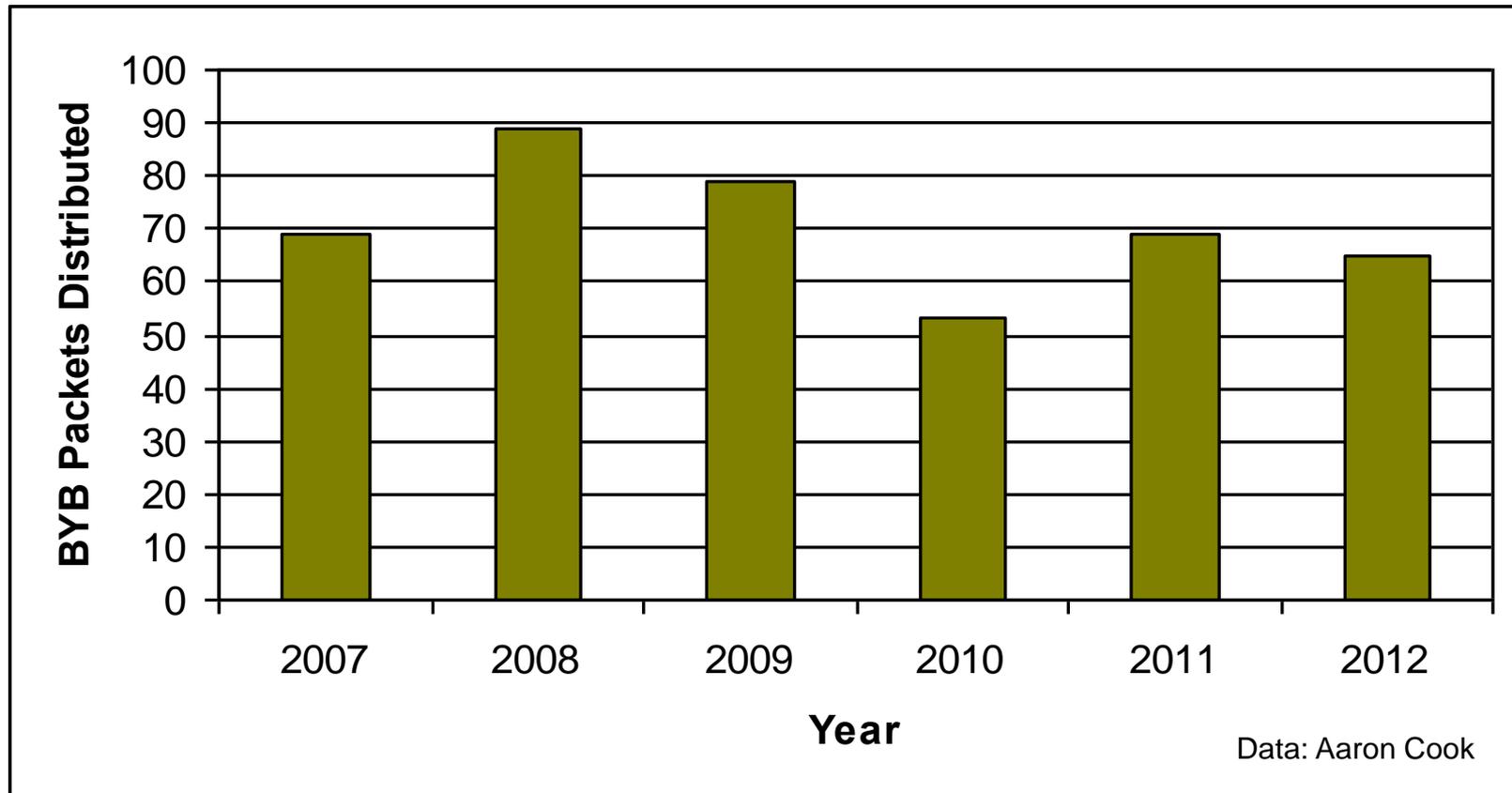


Total of 808 bundles since the program began (2003)

That's over 7 miles of buffer in Frederick County!



Washington County, MD Summary



**Total of 424 bundles since the program began (2007)
That's over 4 miles of buffer in Washington County!**



2012 Maryland BYB Summary

- **10 out of 23 counties** held a BYB program
- **722 total packets** of seedlings distributed (average of 25 trees/packet)
- Total of **18,125 trees**
- **6.8 miles** of buffer



Tracking Program Accomplishments

□ Challenges

- Time consuming to visit each planting
- Area had not been seen pre-planting
- Landowner self-verification may or not be accurate



Tracking Program Accomplishments

- Possible solutions
 - Accept level of error in conducting a survey (current method)
 - Conduct site visits based on a sample
 - Ex=visit with a set percentage of landowners to verify survival
 - This may be done with the help of partners (Forestry Boards, Watershed Associations, etc.)



What to Ask on A Survey

- Number of trees planted
- How many survived
 - Either percentage or total number
- Which species did they like in the packet?
- Were there any they didn't like?
 - If so, why?



What to Ask on A Survey



- ❑ Do they maintain their planting?
 - Mowing, pull weeds around seedlings, etc.

- ❑ Did they install any type of deer protection?
 - Tree shelter, wire cage, etc.

2011 Frederick County Survey Results

- Surveys mailed in September
- Survey return rate 75%
- Average tree survival rate 68%
- Redbud and Pin Oak were most preferred species



2011 Washington County Survey Results

- Average tree survival rate 26-45%
 - Drought and deer browse listed as reasons for mortality
- 93% of people maintained their buffer (mowing, etc.)
- Redbud was most preferred species



Setting up a Backyard Buffer Program



Sample Program Timeline

- ❑ **October 1st** –Select species and order seedlings based on nursery availability.
- ❑ You will have to anticipate/set a goal for total number of packets
 - 30-50 packets is a good target for first year



Sample Program Timeline

- **February 1st** – Initial media contact (newspaper, TV, Radio)
- **Early-mid February** – Mailings to target stream & past participants



Sample Program Timeline

- **March 1st** – Second media release
- **Mid-March** – Select a pick-up day, time, and location that will be convenient for you and your participants.



Sample Program Timeline

- **March 31st** – Good deadline to use for packet reservation.
- **Late March** – Notify participants of pick-up date, time, and location
 - We have found snail-mail to be the best option. It costs money, but it's easier to forget a phone call or e-mail.



Sample Program Timeline



- ❑ **Late March/ Early April –**
Prepare BYB packets
 - Keep seedlings cool & moist from time of delivery to time of handout
 - MD Forest Service uses large, walk-in coolers



Sample Program Timeline

- **Early/Mid April** –
Pick-up day
 - Usually a 2-3 hour pick-up window is sufficient



Photo: Aaron Cook



Sample Program Timeline

- ❑ **Late August/Early September** – Send follow-up survey to all participants via e-mail, phone survey or snail mail.
- ❑ Survey can also serve as a means for participants to express interest for the next year



The Future of BYB

**Celebrating 10 Years
2003-2013**



**BACKYARD
B U F F E R S**



- Anticipate participation from 3-4 additional counties in 2013
- Benefits add up & fill an unattended niche
- Long-term status dependent on available funding (grants)



Contact Information

□ Backyard Buffers

- Melissa Stevens, Watershed Forester
MD DNR – Forest Service

mstevens@dnr.state.md.us

301-791-4010

- http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pdfs/byb_program.pdf

