

CBLP – Overview and History with State Farm



CHESAPEAKE BAY
Landscape Professional



Who am I

- Perry Verge
- Virginia Coordinator for the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional program.
- Based in Norfolk.
- Almost 4 months in position - I am *not* a historian on this partnership.
- Intentions:
 - Introduce program.
 - Affirm commitment

Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional Certification (CBLP)

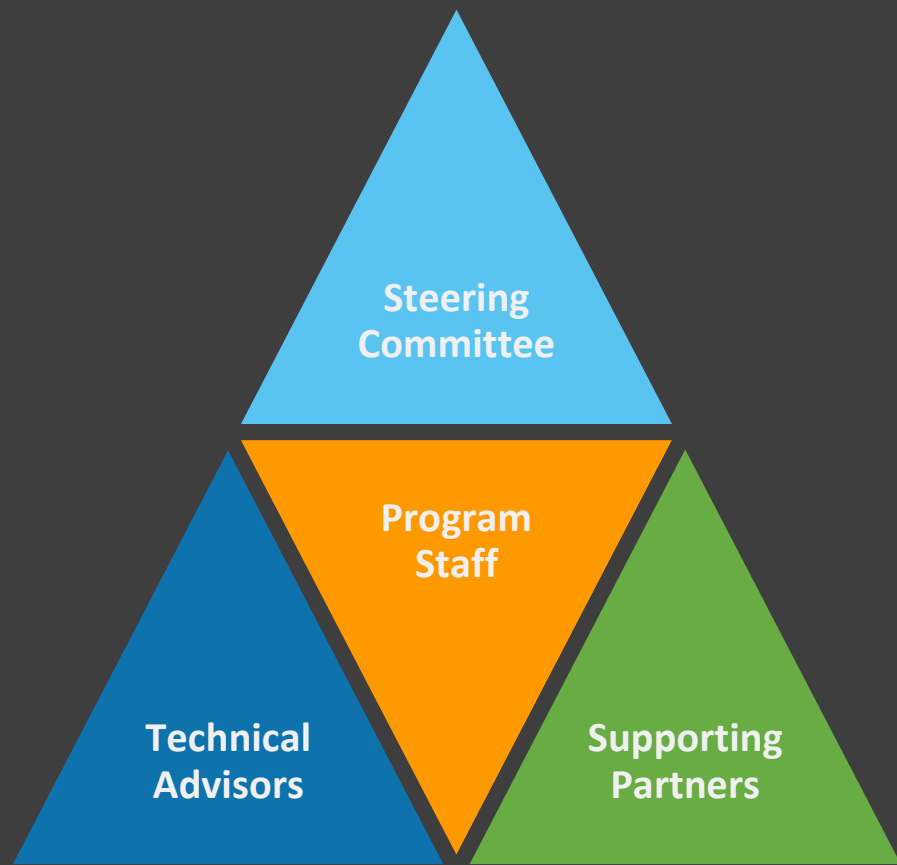
- Established in 2016 to provide consistent training and build a network of sustainable landscaping specialists across the watershed
- Trained professionals = ideal partners for local stormwater programs
- Attractive, well-maintained, functional BMPs help advance the cause for watershed restoration
- Help consumers connect with qualified professionals



Our Guiding Principles

- Work with nature to benefit humans and the environment and function efficiently
- Use locally native plants that are appropriate for site conditions
- Remove and manage invasive plants
- Provide habitat for wildlife
- Promote healthy air quality and minimize air pollution
- **Conserve and CLEAN WATER**
- Promote healthy soils
- Manage to conserve energy, reduce waste and use of pesticides and fertilizers and salts





Development
and Oversight

Consortium Partners



Our Funders



CBLP: Building a Network of Skilled Professionals Across the Watershed

Designed to address challenges, meet the demands of Bay region stakeholders, and engage and empower the landscaping community

Program Hallmarks – We Teach:

- collaborative practice
- critical thinking
- unique regulations and ecology of Bay region
- adaptive management
- how to find answers





CBLP Program Outcomes To Date

Level 1 trained	2002
Level 1 certified	1851
Level 2 trained/certified	202/158
CBLP-A	414
WIGI NJ	67
CBLP-Crews	410
CBLP-Buffers	247
CBLP-Shorelines	105
Advanced training attendees	400+
Certified Level 1 instructors	13
Trained Crews Instructors	15

As of April 2026

Level 1 Training & Certification

Baseline credential: focus on design, install, maintenance of stormwater practices and sustainable landscapes

Level 1 Format:

- In Person or Synchronous Online Classes + Field Maintenance Practicum
- Self Study: Written References, Pre-recorded Videos, Lectures,
- Exam Online
- Hands-On BMP Project
- Earn Partner CEUs





CBLP-Buffers

Certificate Course

- Define the standard of practice for landscape professionals working on riparian buffers
- Generate interest among landscape pros in doing buffer work
- Help connect landscape pros with NGOs, local/state government partners and landowners

CBLP and The State Farm - Timeline

2020

State Farm looking to implement a conservation plan.

CCLC undertook a study to determine feasibility of making programs available in Pennsylvania DOC, in collaboration with the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources and the Department of Corrections.

2021

The Upper and Middle James Riparian Consortium got involved to implement a conservation plan on State Farm.

CBLP launches buffer certificate program.

CBLP buffer certificate included as workforce development for State Farm inmates.

2023

First CBLP buffers held at State Farm.

2024

Second CBLP buffers held at State Farm.

2025

CBLP buffers not held at State Farm.



Non-state farm CCLC buffer training.
Credit Kim Thomas and Larry Quarrick.

CBLP and The State Farm

Program Delivery and Results.

- Two rounds of certificates were held.
- Train - the - trainer model. Administered by Virginia Cooperative Extension.
- Goals was to have it be mostly self sustaining: Point person at State Farm responsible for most of the day to day operations, with some administrative support from the CBLP coordinator.
- 23 people certified through the program.
 - No follow up contact.

Current State

- Past model was sensitive to staff turnover.
- Point person lost.
- Buffer certification program inactive since 2024.



A buffer at Bradford Farm in Virginia
Credit Sarah Coffey

Future of the Program

- CBLP has more capacity in VA than we did two years ago.
- We have money to continue the program.
- We *want* to continue the program.
 - Continue to certify.
 - Do more in helping connect the released with job opportunities - career fair, advocating, connecting.





Different Levels of Potential Future Involvement

1. Career day only:

Inmates learn about riparian forest buffer work, complete some demos, speak with professionals.

1. No one gets certified.
2. Partners would help with promotion, keeping records, some level of expertise input.
3. Least costly to all organizations.

2. Local Training Partner with CBLP Support:

CBLP trains State Farm point person on how to coordinate program.

1. Certify inmates, DOC staff.
2. Full guidance first year, provide administrative support future years.
3. Still have option for career day, industry connection.
4. Sensitive to turnover.

3. CBLP Full Coordination and Training Operations:

CBLP coordinates the program in perpetuity.

1. Does not rely on a point person.
2. Train new instructors as turnover occurs.
3. Option for career fair.
4. Most costly.

For any form of delivery, we need buy in from individuals and the organization.

Thank you!

