

RIPARIAN RANGERS: A COLLECTIVE COMMUNITY APPROACH TO SUCCESSFUL AFFORESTATION

Ryan Davis, Associate Forests Program Director



THE MAINTENANCE PROBLEM

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- Forest planting sites need maintenance, or most trees will die
 - Vegetation management to increase survival
 - Tending of trees, mostly to protect them from shelters



10 year old buffer, no maint, 0% survival



1 year old buffer, excellent maint, 90% survival

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THE MAINTENANCE PROBLEM

Classic paradigm: we don't fund "maintenance", the landowners have to do it all themselves

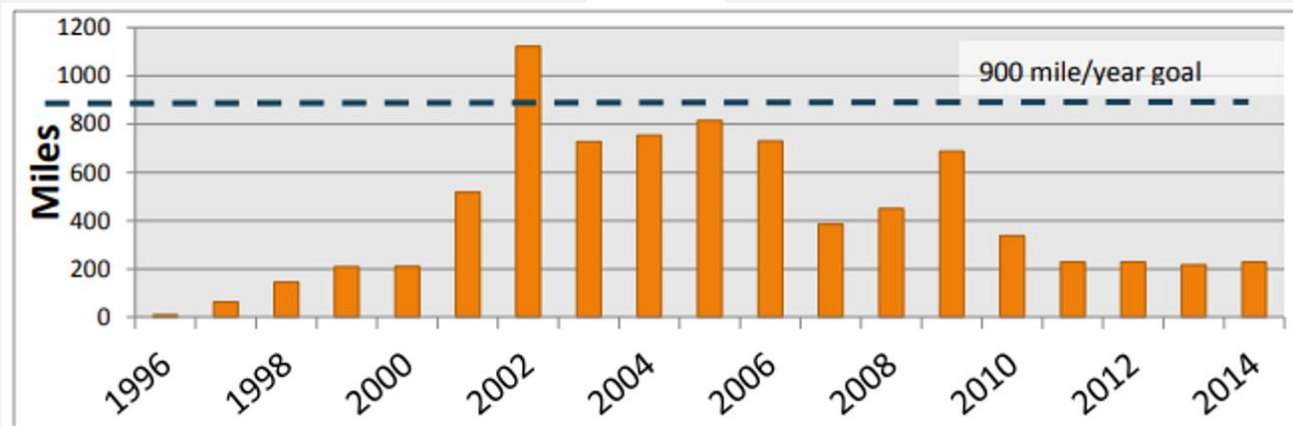


Figure 1. Miles of new riparian forest buffer reported by states to the Forestry Workgroup, CBP.

If we want successful sites, hoping for voluntary action by landowners historically hasn't cut it.

THE SOLUTION

- Luckily, a lot of people want to help!!!
- And buffer tending doesn't take much skill, just a little grit and a bit of training



RIPARIAN RANGERS WAS BORN IN SPRING 2019!

- Immediate success, despite having essentially no resources!
- Volunteers match to a site that they help check and tend through the growing season. We provide training, materials, and respond to issues they find



FUNDING ALLOWED OUR PROGRAM TO DEVELOP AND SPREAD



MONITORING REPORT



Riparian Ranger Site Monitoring Report

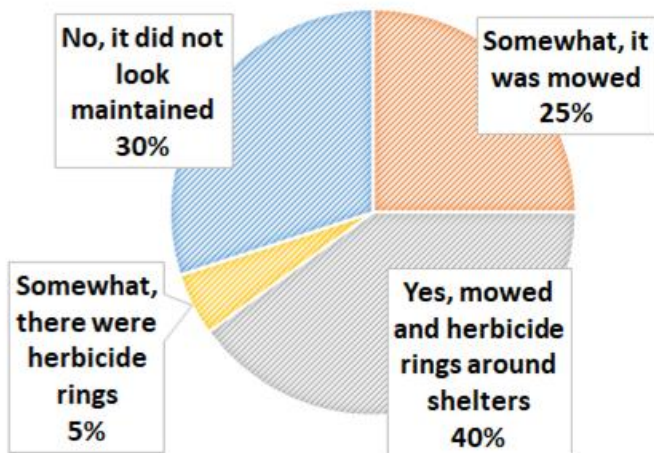
Thank you for taking the time to check on your site and answer these questions.

* Required

Email *

Your email

DID THE SITE LOOK MAINTAINED?



Any other comments/concerns?

22 responses

Wasn't mowed or treated w herbicide, gate was open, hoof prints and manure, many damaged trees and shelters/stakes, tried to repair what we could in the time we had

This site (and the original) should both be mowed soon or the vegetation will begin to have serious negative impact on the trees.

Could probably use herbicide ring renewal in a few months.

Repaired and straightened several stakes. Will mark dead trees in April. Picked up plastic trash around the buffer and stream. Spoke with a home owner adjacent to the site. A small supply of stakes and tubes would be helpful

Looks like there's about 10 dead trees and about 20 dead shrubs, but still hard to get an exact number at this point. However, overall, the site looks really good. Lots of trees getting big (e.g. 10-15 feet high).

Land owner is concerned about height of thistle on property, and potential complaints from Borough. Any additional assistance from contractors would be appreciated.

7 YEARS OF RIPARIAN RANGERS

- Over 200 active Rangers, supporting nearly 500 acres of riparian forest buffer!
- Helping check on over half of Alliance sites, allowing us to spread staff time further
- “Branches” allow us to support partners to run their own RR programs
 - 10 active Branches, in central PA and MD



Super-Ranger
Brian!

SUCCESSSES

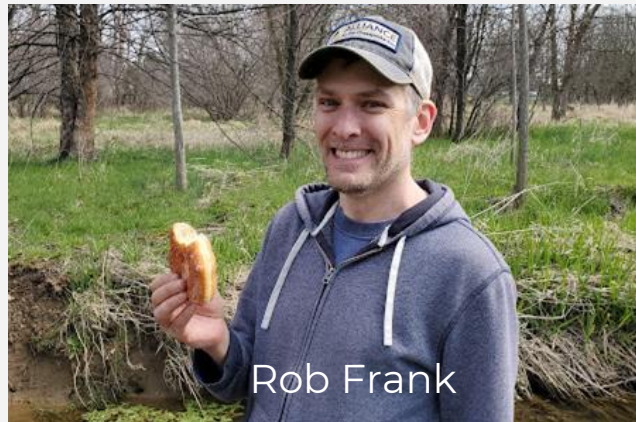
- Very helpful at increasing tree survival!
- Effective way to engage the community in participating more than just planting
- Branches help boost partner success
- Volunteers often get more heavily involved, sometimes bring us new site leads
- Workforce development
- Loads of in-kind match



Nikki Lee, now with PA DCNR

CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

- To be successful, requires a lot of coordination and communication
- This is a great fit for some people, but a bad fit for most people
- Humans are social creatures?
 - Most permutations of RR is more of a coordinated group workday model (“Team Trees”)



A photograph of a grassy field with a fence made of wooden posts and wire. In the background, there are trees and a cloudy sky. A semi-transparent blue rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "Questions & Discussion" in white.

Questions & Discussion