

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Christina River

WHY IS THIS WATERSHED SPECIAL?

Half a million people in three states depend on drinking water from the Christina River Basin. The diverse landscape is drained by four rivers that ultimately drain into the Delaware River at Wilmington. The Basin, which includes rapidly developing rural and suburban areas, also serves as home for many major manufacturing, chemical, cable, steel, paperboard and pharmaceutical industries. Several neotropical bird species and a broad array of wildlife including the bog turtle, cerulean warbler, longtailed salamander, and bald eagle inhabit the watershed.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

The Targeted Watersheds Grant focuses on:

- Addressing pollution problems such as excessive nutrients, toxic chemicals, bacteria, fish and habitat loss. Nearly 50 percent (470 miles) of the stream miles of the basin are listed as impaired due to combined impacts from sewage treatment plants, industry, and agricultural and urban/suburban runoff.

RESTORATION ACTIVITIES

Using EPA Targeted Watersheds Grant funds, the Christina Basin Clean Water Partnership will study and test several agricultural and stormwater best management practices in targeted areas. They will:

- Demonstrate more than fifty best agricultural practices to manage farm runoff such as nutrient management plans and systems to exclude livestock from streams.
- Restore more than 10,000 linear feet of stream banks.
- Involve more than 500 local property owners in SMARTYARDS™ environmentally friendly lawn management and rain barrel programs.
- Update comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances in dozens of municipalities.
- Preserve open spaces.
- Demonstrate new urban/suburban storm water retrofits to protect water quality.

“The progress being made in the Christina Basin is the result of the strong, inclusive partnership that builds on the talents of many diverse interests. The Clean Water Partnership aims to achieve fishable, swimmable and drinkable waters by 2015.”

— Carol Collier
Executive Director
Delaware River Basin
Commission



Manure storage facilities prevent runoff and the contamination of surface and groundwater.

A STRONG PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE

Building on gains by regulatory programs over the last several decades, the Christina Basin Clean Water Partnership is improving water quality through collaborative actions. Partners include:

- Local partners such as local planning commissions, health departments, conservation districts and watershed organizations
- State partners, including the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
- The University of Delaware
- Several federal agencies
- Other stakeholders such as residents, small businesses, and non-governmental organizations



Stakeholders get a farm tour of agricultural best management practices installed on a headwater stream outside Honey Brook.



A popular residential rain barrel program is helping homeowners conserve water and reduce runoff.

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EPA'S TARGETED WATERSHEDS GRANT PROGRAM

EPA's Targeted Watersheds Grant Program is a new, competitive grant program designed to encourage collaborative, community-driven approaches to meet clean water goals.

For more information about the selected watersheds, please visit:
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative/>



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