

# 2021 RIPARIAN FOREST BUFFER SUMMIT

## PLENARY SPEAKERS



**Cindy Adams Dunn**

*Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources*

Cindy Adams Dunn is the Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, where she has helped position Pennsylvania as a leader in conserving land, connecting people to the outdoors, planting trees along streams, managing state parks and forests, and making public lands welcoming to all.

Her career has included several roles in government as well as leadership of non-profit environmental organizations. She is a biologist and a proud graduate of Shippensburg University.

When not championing the efforts of DCNR, Dunn enjoys the natural and recreation resources the department works hard

to protect and promote, including paddling all 444 miles of the Susquehanna River and completing a goal to hike all of the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania.



**Russell Redding**

*Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture*

Governor Tom Wolf nominated Russell Redding to serve as the 26th Secretary of Agriculture for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in January 2015, and was confirmed by the Senate on May 14, 2015. He is the former dean of the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at Delaware Valley University.

Redding has spent more than 25 years representing Pennsylvania agriculture as a public servant in Harrisburg and Washington D.C.

A native Pennsylvanian, Redding grew up on his family's dairy farm and now operates a general crop farm in Gettysburg with his family.

Redding is a graduate of Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

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**Brenda Sieglitz**

*Senior Manager, Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership, Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Brenda Lee Sieglitz is the Senior Manager of the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership. Based in Harrisburg, she leads the collaborative effort, coordinated by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, of over 150 national, regional, state and local agencies, as well as conservation organizations, watershed groups, conservancies, outdoors enthusiasts, businesses and individuals willing to plant trees. Brenda holds a degree in business her background is in business and project management in the private sector. She is an award-winning author, PA Master Naturalist, and has held leadership and mentorship roles with the Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce, Lancaster Chamber, Team Sarcoma: Keepin' it Kevin, and Lancaster Against Pipelines, and has volunteered with National Park Service, Lancaster Conservancy, and Hospice & Community Care. She

lives in Mount Joy, PA with her husband Dave and their rescue beagle Fina. You can often find them camping in their little Scamp trailer or turning their quarter acre into a forest. She has a grown stepdaughter Jade and son-in-law Nick who live "right down the street".



**Marel King**

*Pennsylvania Director, Chesapeake Bay Commission*

Marel King has been the Commission's Pennsylvania Director since 2004. Her focus areas have included the federal Farm Bill and development and implementation of the Commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan.

Prior to joining the Commission staff, she was Director of Regulatory Affairs and then Director of Natural Resources in the Governmental Relations Division of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

Marel is currently a founding board member of the Cove Mountain Community Theatre and Chair of the Perry County Community Foundation Advisory Board. In the past, she has chaired the Perry County Cooperative Extension Board and the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Agricultural Law Committee and has served on the Board of the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership and as an Elder of the Duncannon Presbyterian Church and two Administrative Commissions of the

Presbytery of Carlisle.

She received her J.D. from the Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University and her B.S. in Dairy and Animal Science with High Distinction and with Honors in Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology from the Pennsylvania State University. Marel was captain of the two-time national champion Holstein Dairy Quiz Bowl Team in her days as a 4-H member and stays active in the dairy industry by assisting with her family's ice cream business. She enjoys competitive baking and non-competitive fishing.

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## CONCURRENT SESSION SPEAKERS

### **Art Gover**

*Extension Specialist, Penn State*

Art Gover is an Extension Specialist emphasizing invasive plant management at Penn State. He has worked at Penn State since 1985, engaging in vegetation management in settings ranging from agronomic crops, roadside and utility corridors, turf and ornamentals, leading to his current emphasis on vegetation management in habitat and forest settings through Extension and funding from DCNR-State Parks. Primary duties are to assist land managers to develop and implement habitat management plans at parcel to landscape scales, provide operational and classroom training for staff and volunteers, conduct field research to refine current practice, provide support for private landowners and agency staff on an ongoing basis, and curate the Wildland Weed Management website at Penn State. Areas of interest include habitat management, riparian buffer establishment, suppression of problem species, prioritization approaches for invasive species suppression, restoration approaches for 'intractable' invasive species, and native plant material evaluation and establishment. He has served as President of the Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council, and currently serves as Past President of the Northeastern Weed Science Society. He also operates a small company, complement of one, providing stewardship services such as herbicide application and restoration planning, serving public and private landholders.

### **Robert P. Brooks**

*Professor Emeritus, Penn State*

Dr. Brooks is Professor Emeritus of Geography and Ecology at the Pennsylvania State University's Department of Geography ([www.riparia.psu.edu](http://www.riparia.psu.edu)). He is Founder and Director Emeritus of Riparia, a Center where science informs policy and practice in wetlands and riparian ecology, landscape hydrology, and watershed management, founded in 1993. His body of work has spanned the realm of wetlands and aquatic ecosystems, including riparian best management practices, ecosystem services, policy and regulatory programs affecting conservation and restoration of wetlands, streams, and riparian areas, and their biota.

### **Michael Nassry**

*Assistant Research Professor, Penn State*

Michael Nassry is an Ecological Engineer with Riparia in the Department of Geography at Penn State's University Park campus. His research and teaching efforts focus on water resource management, wetland hydrology, and the impacts of climate change and land management choices on aquatic systems and the ecosystems services they provide. Prior to joining Riparia, Nassry earned a B.S. and M.S. from Penn State's Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, worked as a consultant conducting ecological and human health-based risk assessments, and examined water quality and stream metabolism in meltwater supported streams in southeast Alaska while earning a Ph.D. from Virginia Tech. As part of Riparia his work focuses on science to inform policy and practice in watershed management and landscape ecology.

**Dr. Peter J. Kleinman**

*Research Leader/Soil Scientist, USDA-ARS*

Dr. Peter Kleinman is the Research Leader of the Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Unit (State College, PA). The Unit conducts research to advance the sustainability of agricultural production systems through profitable management strategies that also protect natural resources (especially water and air). Dr. Kleinman is a founding member and leader of USDA's Long Term Agroecosystem Research Network and USDA's Dairy Agriculture Work Group. His individual research program focuses on improving their stewardship of nutrients in agriculture and the environment. He has worked to develop and implement the Phosphorus Index and other decision support tools, including the Fertilizer Forecaster. He has spearheaded comprehensive research in developing and evaluating novel manure application technologies to farmers, from liquid manure injectors to dry manure applicators. He has contributed to the development of new filtration technologies to remove phosphorus from manures and runoff waters. Dr. Kleinman is an advisor to science, action and policy organizations world-wide. He leads and advocates for collaborative, consensus based science at regional, national and international scales. He is an emeritus member of the Chesapeake Bay Program's Science and Technology Advisory Committee, Fellow of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and Fellow of the Soil Science Society of America. He has served on the editorial boards of Journal of Environmental Quality, Agriculture and Environmental Letters, and Journal of Soil and Water Conservation.

**Matt Ehrhart**

*Director of The Robin Vannote Watershed Restoration Program, Stroud Water Research Center*

Matt Ehrhart, Director of Watershed Restoration at Stroud Water Research Center, holds a M.Eng. in Engineering Science and a BS in Environmental Resource Management from the Pennsylvania State University. Matt manages a restoration program that integrates current science into restoration implementation and demonstrates how to maximize ecological and water quality outcomes while serving the needs of communities. Further objectives include leveraging resources, demonstrating improvement of public programs spending on conservation work, and improving conservation policies.

**Kristen Koch**

*Program Manager, Penn State Ag & Environment Center/Extension*

Kristen Koch is the Program Manager for the Penn State Agriculture & Environment Center. She coordinates watershed partnership initiatives such as the Conewago Initiative and the Chiques Reenvisioned project. She is a co-coordinator of the Greening the Lower Susquehanna Volunteer Corps, a group of 500+ volunteers that help plant riparian buffers and other water quality BMPs. She also develops and leads educational programming as part of the Penn State Extension Water Resources Team and is an instructor for the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional level 1 training. She has a B.S. in Environment Resource Management and has a Master's in Public Administration from Penn State.

**Susan Boser**

*Water Resources Educator, Penn State Extension*

Susan Boser has been a Water Resources Educator with Penn State Extension in Beaver County, Pennsylvania for 20 years. She is a graduate of West Virginia University where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a major in Environmental Protection. Susan interacts with clientele throughout Western Pennsylvania via educational programs focusing on the areas of private water supply education, pond management, stormwater, youth water education and pesticide education.

**Danielle Rhea**

*Water Resources Educator, Penn State Extension*

Danielle Rhea is a Water Resources Educator with Penn State Extension, based in Jefferson County. She provides programming related to private water supplies, pond management, nutrient management and agricultural best management practices, and stormwater management in western and northcentral Pennsylvania. She has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Resource Management from Penn State University and a Master of Science in Environmental Science in Management from Duquesne University.

**Jodi Sulpizio**

*Natural Resources Educator & Master Watershed Steward Coordinator, Penn State Extension*

Jodi Sulpizio is a Natural Resources Educator for Penn State Extension in York. She also coordinates the Master Watershed Steward Program and the Gypsy Moth Program in York County. She was a former Naturalist for the York County Parks and Manheim Township in Lancaster. Jodi is passionate about empowering both citizens and volunteers to protect our environmental resources. She is a graduate from Penn State University and majored in Environmental Resource Management with a focus on water resources.

**Jennifer Fetter**

*Water Resources Educator, Penn State Extension*

Jennifer Fetter is the Water Resources Program Team Leader for Penn State Extension. In addition to coordinating the statewide team's efforts on safe drinking water, stormwater management, and agricultural water resource issues education, Jennifer also specializes in coordinating volunteer led conservation practice implementation. She has a decade of live stake harvesting and planting experience and has led many educational opportunities around this topic.

**Beth Ginter**

*Executive Director, Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council*

Beth Ginter became the Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council (CCLC)'s first executive director in January 2020. Based in Maryland, CCLC provides consistent training and practice standards for landscape professionals working in the mid-Atlantic region, through various programs, publications, and events that focus on sustainable practice. She also has directed CCLC's Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP) certification initiative since 2015. Previously, Ms. Ginter was the founding principal of a landscape consulting & design firm, and led scientific communications departments for several large corporations. She earned a Masters degree in Sustainable Landscape Design at The George Washington University and a B.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Justin Ulanoski**

*President, Native Creations Landscaping*

Justin Ulanoski, President of Native Creations Landscaping, is a graduate of King's College with a bachelor's in Environmental Studies. Justin founded NCL in 2013 with a focus of bringing his knowledge of native plants into residential & commercial landscapes, as well as continuing to install forested riparian buffers for conservation benefits. NCL also establishes riparian buffers with Conservation Districts, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Chesapeake Conservancy, USFWS Partners for Wildlife Program, Trout Unlimited, & Pheasants Forever in multiple counties throughout central & eastern PA. Justin Ulanoski obtained Level 1 Certification in the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional program for conservation BMP's, including riparian buffers.

**Tim Seifarth**

*Owner, Earthbound Artisan LLC.*

Tim Seifarth, the owner of Earthbound Artisan LLC., has dedicated his last 7 years to conservation landscaping. In 2014 Seifarth started Earthbound Artisan, which is a design-build conservation landscape company that provides holistic and organic land management services. Earthbound Artisan is a social enterprise that prioritizes native plants, organic management, and a fair prosperous work environment to achieve its mission of enacting social change through thoughtfully working the earth. In 2008 Earthbound Artisan was awarded funds to plant and maintain 4.5 acres of Multifunctional buffer organically through the DCNR/PENNVEST grant. Tim Seifarth is an ISA Certified Arborist, a Chesapeake Bay Certified Landscape Professional, and Landscape Industry Certified through the NALP.

**Ryan Davis**

*Pennsylvania Forests Program Manager, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay*

Ryan Davis manages the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Forests Program out of their PA office in Lancaster. He holds a B.S. in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology and minor in Forestry from North Carolina State University and an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from West Virginia University. He spent the first half of his career in the field, traveling the country to chase critters, and the latter half creating habitat in Pennsylvania. Ryan now specializes in reforestation, forest management, and education and outreach on stewardship.

**Jim Mackenzie**

*President, Octoraro Native Plant Nursery*

Jim MacKenzie graduated from Penn State University with a BS in Landscape Architecture in 1986. He worked subsequently in the field and related professions in Philadelphia and Warren, PA. He also worked for the non-profit Teton County Economic Development Council in Driggs, Idaho. He is the managing partner of Octoraro Native Plant Nursery which celebrates 30 years in business in 2020. Appointed by Governor Ed Rendell, he served on the PA State Water Resources Committee from 2003-2008, and is actively involved in the PA Landscape and Nursery Association on the Government Relations Committee.

**Tyler Groh**

*Assistant Research Professor, Penn State University*

Tyler Groh is an Assistant Research Professor and Watershed Management Extension Specialist at Penn State University. His research and educational background surrounds soil and water biogeochemistry within water quality conservation practices like wetlands, woodchip bioreactors, riparian buffers, and saturated buffers. Tyler has used the findings of his past research to apply to "real world" problems and to provide insight for landowners who have invested their money into these practices.

**Kelsey Miller**

*Lawn Conversion Program Coordinator, PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry*

Kelsey Miller is the Lawn Conversion Program Coordinator at the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry and Western PA Conservancy. She's been a piece of DCNR's Watershed Forestry Team since 2017, previously serving as a Riparian Forest Buffer Specialist. Alongside her team and partners across the state, Kelsey is leading efforts to plant woods and meadows across the Commonwealth by providing funding, technical assistance, and networks to make the work effective. Kelsey enjoys photography, watercolor painting, and stewarding natural spaces with her partner, Ben.

**Adrienne Gemberling**

*Senior Project Manager, Chesapeake Conservancy*

Adrienne Gemberling is a Senior Project Manager at Chesapeake Conservancy, an environmental nonprofit based in Annapolis, Maryland. Adrienne is housed at the Freshwater Research Laboratory at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, PA and has been facilitating collaboration among organizations in central Pennsylvania to implement Precision Conservation for the past 4 years. She is a native of Mifflinburg, PA and has a B.S. in Biology from Lebanon Valley College and an M.S. in Biology from Missouri State University.

**Erin Letavic**

*Civil Engineer & Project Manager at HRG, Inc; WIP CAP Coordinator for Cumberland & Centre Counties*

Erin G. Letavic, PE is the consulting Watershed Implementation Program (WIP) Countywide Action Plan (CAP) coordinator for Cumberland and Centre Counties, and program manages CAPs in 11 other counties in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. She is also a civil engineer and project manager at Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc., where her responsibilities include MS4 program consulting and municipal engineering. She is particularly skilled at facilitating public outreach, building consensus, and identifying creative funding solutions

**Celina Seftas**

*Manager, Huntingdon County Conservation District*

Celina Seftas is the District Manager at the Huntingdon County Conservation District where she oversees a staff of 5 and serves as the program coordinator for the county's Farmland Preservation Program. She is also on the Board of Directors for the Pennsylvania Envirothon and serves as the Chairperson for the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy Charitable Trust. Celina enjoys the collaborative and project-oriented nature of working at the Conservation District and helping others learn more about the local environment. In 2012, she earned Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's President's Award for her work in the county. Celina and her family enjoy spending their free time going hiking, kayaking, and camping.

**Tim Heyler**

*Agricultural Conservation Technician, Lycoming County Conservation District*

Tim Heyler is the Agricultural Conservation Technician at Lycoming County Conservation District. Prior to working at the District, he worked at DEP in the North Central Region. Tim grew up on a grass-based dairy farm in Tioga County. He and his wife enjoy raising cows, chickens, turkeys, and pigs on pasture and teaching their two young children to have a healthy respect for the land.

**Jim Kauffman**

*Pennsylvania Forest Projects Coordinator, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay*

Jim Kauffman is the Pennsylvania Forest Projects Coordinator for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. Jim works with landowners to promote, design, and implement riparian buffers and reforestation projects on private lands. Jim has spent the last 10 years of his career working for conservation organizations dedicated to the delivery of conservation practices, including buffers, on private lands. Jim is also an avid outdoorsman, and enjoys hunting, fishing, and trapping.