



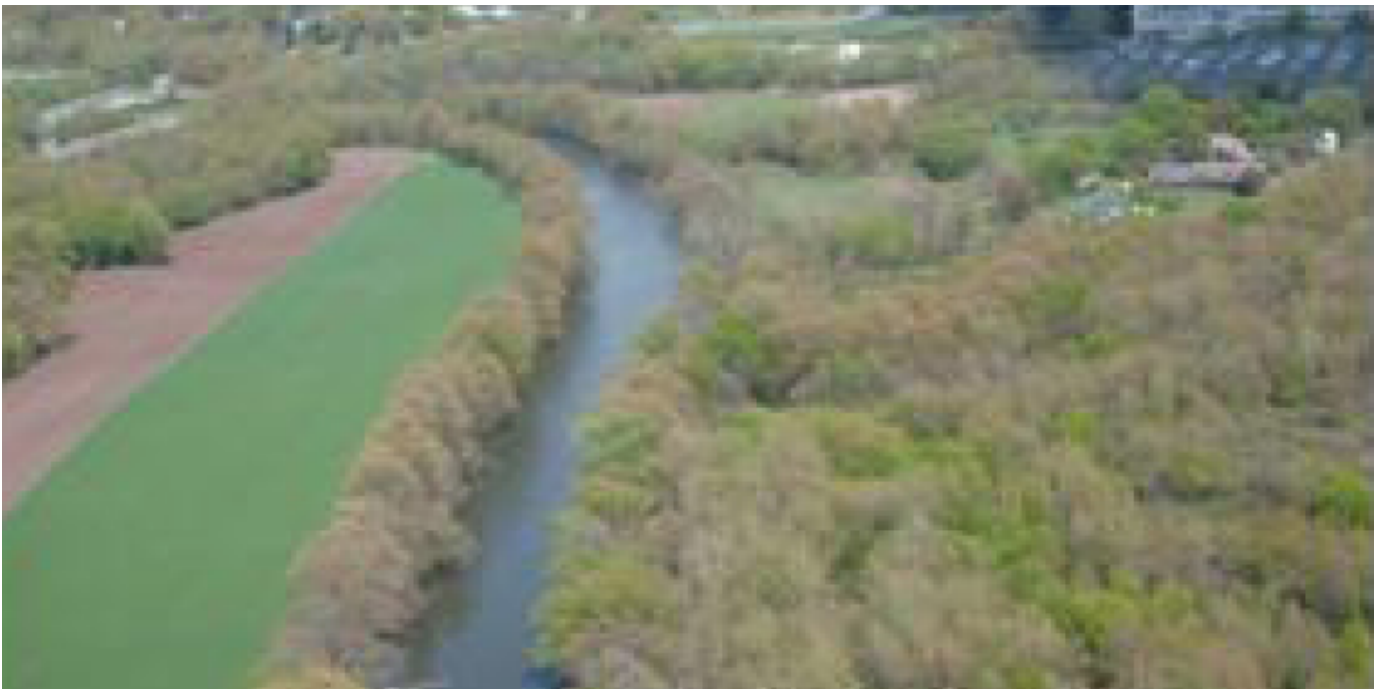
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

“Buffer in a Bag” Program to Provide Free Trees to Landowners

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE March 21, 2019

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Senator Ritchie’s Weekly Column

For more than a decade, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s (DEC) “Trees for Tribs” Program has helped reforest small creeks, streams and tributaries throughout the state. By planting young trees and shrubs along these waterways through this program, people are helping to prevent erosion, protect water quality, increase floodwater retention and improve wildlife and stream habitat. Since 2007, “Trees for Tribs” has received help from nearly 9,000 volunteers, who have planted more than 100,000 trees

and shrubs along more than 600 New York State bodies of water.

As part of “Trees for Tribs”, the New York State DEC is reaching out to all landowners, or land managers, across the state to join in the effort through an initiative called “Buffer in a Bag.” Through this program, with help from the Saratoga Tree Nursery, the DEC is providing people a free bag featuring a variety of bare-root trees and shrubs to enhance their streamside property. Each bag includes 25 bare-root native tree and shrub seedlings, approximately one to two feet in height, specifically tailored for the region you live.

Here in our region, the “Buffer in a Bag” will feature Red Osier Dogwood, Balsam Fir, White Spruce or Hemlock, Wetland Rose and/or Pussy Willow. Each bag also comes with supporting materials, including a planting guide, layout instructions, a protection guide, a maintenance guide and a maintenance checklist. These guides are designed to help ensure your trees and shrubs are at their very best to create the proper, healthy buffer needed to achieve the program’s desired goals of preventing erosion, supporting wildlife and improving water quality.

To be eligible for this program, you must own or manage at least 50 feet of land along a stream or body of water. If you own or manage more than 100 feet, you may be eligible for two bags. The application period is now open and applicants must provide photos and information indicating where trees will be planted. The bags will be provided on first-come, first-serve basis. Plants will be available in late April or early May.

For more information, or to receive an application for a “Buffer in a Bag”, please email treesfortribs@dec.ny.gov. You can also fill out an application online. The link to the online application can be found here, <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/115903.html>. Please note that all applications must be submitted by April 3rd.

By working together, we can not only protect ourselves, and our property from flooding, but also help improve our waterways and their wildlife, making New York State an even better place to live.