

# HUDSON ESTUARY TREES FOR TRIBS INITIATIVE

## Planting Project Overview

Healthy vegetated riparian (streamside) buffers help to improve stream health and water quality by: filtering and slowing pollution runoff; preventing soil erosion; providing upland habitat; contributing essential nutrients to the food chain; providing woody debris for in-stream habitat, and shading the stream to keep water temperatures down. Buffers also help absorb flood waters to protect human life and property. The wider the buffer, the better it will support a variety of functions. Recent studies recommend 100 feet as the minimum buffer width to achieve multiple benefits.

The Hudson River Estuary Program's Trees for Tribs initiative offers free native trees and shrubs for qualifying projects in the Hudson River Estuary watershed. We may also be able to assist you with plant selection, creating a planting plan, site preparation, advice on project installation, and other technical information to improve the odds of success for your project.

### How to apply:

Applications are available for download at: [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/43668.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/43668.html)

**The application deadline is March 1** for a planting in spring and **August 1** for planting in the fall. We strongly encourage you to apply before the application deadline (especially if you have a large site or you want to request specific plant species).

After we receive your application, Trees for Tribs staff will contact you to discuss the options for planting your specific site. In most cases, we will ask you to meet with us at the proposed site for this discussion.

### Eligible Projects:

An eligible project must be in a riparian area, adjacent to a waterbody. Plants may be used to extend or enhance existing vegetation, but the planting area cannot be separated from the waterbody by a road, structure, stormwater practice or other man-made feature. Streamside sites will be given preference, but projects along lakes, ponds and wetlands may also be considered.

Plants are **not** available for:

- large projects where proposals should have included buffer restoration costs from the outset, particularly projects involving stream channel realignment or other major excavation work.
- sites already enrolled in other state and federally funded riparian buffer programs, which provide cost-share and other funding for planting trees and shrubs.
- planting along stormwater ponds, drainage ditches, or other man-made structures.

Project sites must be within the Hudson Estuary Grant Boundary (see [www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation\\_hudson\\_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf) ). Sites outside this boundary may be eligible for assistance under another Trees for Tribs program (see [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html) )

### Priority will be given to projects that include:

- Participation of local watershed groups, land trusts, or other environmental organizations
- Planting in high profile, public, or highly visible areas, such as town parks
- A larger planting area with a wider resulting buffer
- Projects with an outreach and volunteer component

## Planting dates:

Plants are generally available from late-April through May for spring planting, or late-September through October for fall planting. For larger planting events that include volunteers, Trees for Tribes staff may be available to deliver plants and provide assistance during the planting event. Applicants with small plant requests will be asked to pick up plants at our office in New Paltz (see address below).

## Technical Assistance:

Trees for Tribes staff can help you to choose plant species that are appropriate for your site and project goals. We can also provide guidance for placement, site preparation and maintenance. Applicants are responsible for all site preparation, planting, and site maintenance. We encourage applicants to recruit local volunteers to help with planting. For larger planting events that include volunteers, Trees for Tribes staff may be available to provide additional assistance before and during the planting event. Planting day assistance may include plant delivery, tools for planting, a planting demonstration and planting guidance for volunteers.

## Available plants:

The species offered will be determined on a site by site basis depending on availability and existing conditions. The majority of the plants that are available are seedlings grown by New York State Tree Nursery (see [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7127.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7127.html)), but other species may also be available in limited numbers. If you are hoping to secure specific species for your site, we encourage you to share your preference with us as early as possible **before** the application deadline.

Most plants are between 2-5 years old, but age and size will vary from year to year. We cannot reserve the largest or oldest plants for your site. All participants will be asked to accept a variety of plant sizes.

## Maintenance:

Maintenance is essential to ensure the long-term success of your plants and the overall strength of your new stream buffer. For the first few years, you should allocate time each month to check on your trees and shrubs. They will require attention in the same way as garden plants.

Trees for Tribes may also provide tree shelters to protect trees from deer browse and weed mats to improve planting success. Tree shelters and mats can boost tree growth and survival if properly installed, but they also require additional maintenance. Applicants receiving tree shelters agree to provide maintenance at least two times annually and to remove tubes only at an appropriate time for tree health.

For more detailed descriptions of maintenance required on a typical site, go to the "Useful Resources" heading on this page: [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html).

## For more information contact:

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