



CHRISTINA CONSERVANCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Funds Awarded for Christina River

WILMINGTON – On Wednesday, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced that the Christina Conservancy will be awarded a grant from the 2020 Delaware River Watershed Conservation Fund. Almost \$250,000 from this fund will support a multi-year effort to make the lower Christina and Brandywine Rivers in Wilmington fishable and swimmable.

The Christina Conservancy will use these funds to develop plans for the lower Christina & Brandywine River Remediation, Restoration and Resilience (“CBR4”). This award is a result of collaboration between the Christina Conservancy, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), BrightFields, Inc., Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, and Sarver Ecological, with input and support from many others. Awarded funds will be used to develop a cohesive vision, strategies and hands-on projects for addressing contamination and restoring fish and wildlife habitat in and around these rivers.

CBR4 builds on the success of Wilmington’s Riverfront redevelopment and years of cleaning up debris and pollution from its lands and waters. Community experts, including local residents and volunteers, will be invited to give input to the CBR4 plan along with technical experts who will gather data on the river’s health. The total investment over three years is anticipated to be over \$770,000 thanks to resources being provided by DNREC, the Christina Conservancy, and other sources in addition to the grant.

For almost 30 years, the Christina Conservancy has worked with DNREC and others on the Christina River Watershed Cleanup to remove over 400 tons of trash and debris from the river and its tributaries. John Williams, President of the Christina Conservancy’s Board of Directors acknowledges, “This is a paradigm shift. Most of the focus to date has been on cleaning up lands adjacent to the rivers — the sides of the bathtub, if you will. This plan looks at how to clean up the bottom of the bathtub, the river itself, and create a healthier place for fish, wildlife and people in the process. We’re grateful for the support of the Delaware River Watershed Conservation Fund for making it possible.”

“Being able to swim in and eat fish from these rivers are long term goals,” says Marian Young, President of BrightFields. “The Christina Conservancy, DNREC, the Riverfront Development Corporation and the City of Wilmington continue to make major cleanup strides; CBR4 is the path to take us the rest of the way. This grant launches a new level of river stewardship.”

For additional information about the Christina Conservancy and CBR4 project, visit www.ChristinaConservancy.org. For more information about the 2020 Delaware River Watershed Conservation Fund see <https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/dwcf-2020-grant-slate.pdf>.

The mission of the Christina Conservancy is to promote the preservation, restoration, and appreciation of the historic and natural resources of the Christina River watershed. The Conservancy seeks to achieve this mission by providing financial support, advocacy support, communication, education, and leadership in cooperation with state and local agencies, other non-profit organizations, businesses, residents, landowners, and user groups.

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