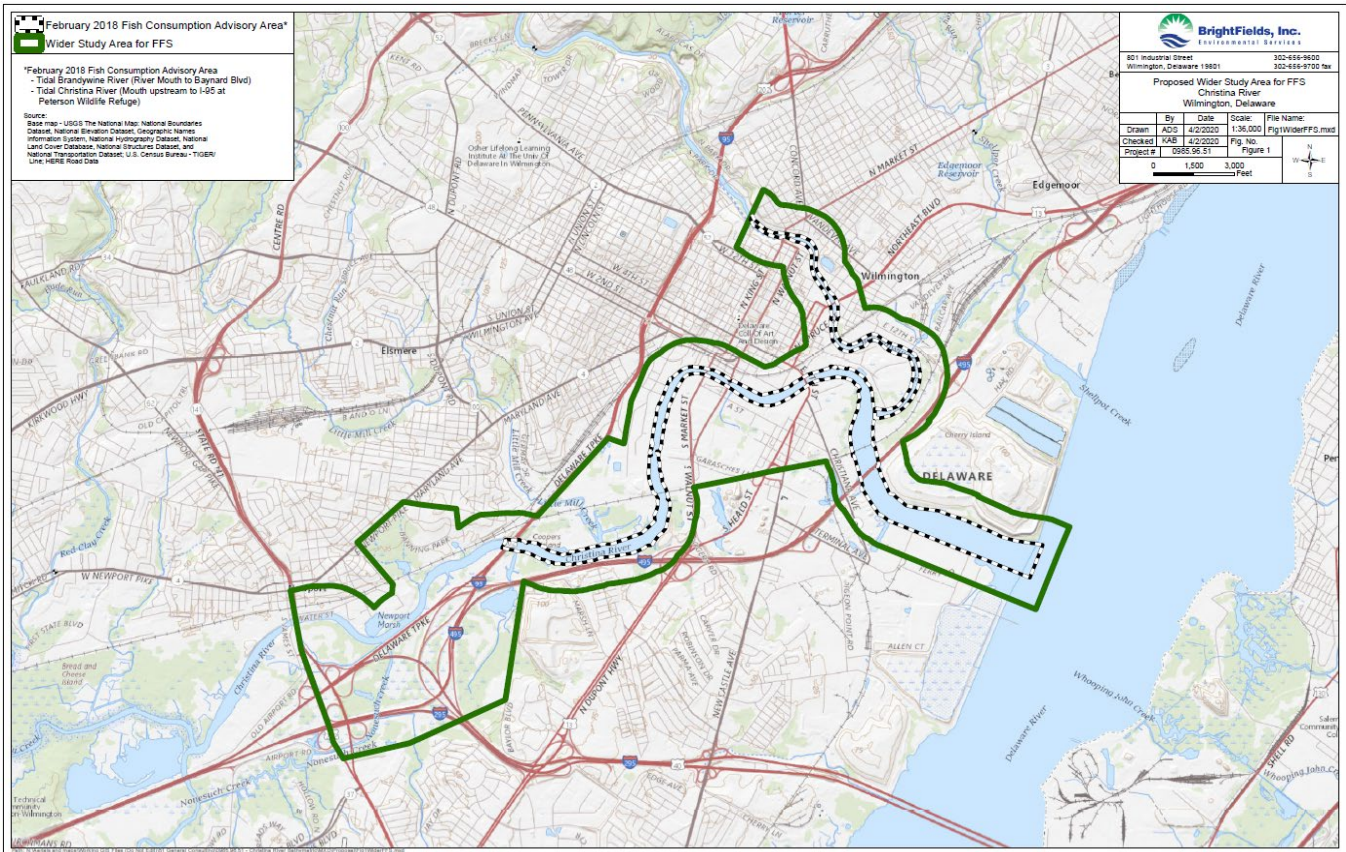


CBR4 Plan Project Summary – March 2021

Thanks to funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), the Christina Conservancy and other partners, a new initiative is underway to create a lower **Christina-Brandywine River Remediation Restoration Resilience (CBR4) Plan**.

The CBR4 planning area is approximately 4,000 acres / 10 linear miles of the tidal main stems of the Christina and Brandywine Rivers and surrounding riparian areas in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, Delaware. This area corresponds with the February 2018 Delaware Toxics Fish Consumption Advisory Area and is the study area shown on this map (Delaware River along right-hand side.)



The aim of the CBR4 plan is a feasibility assessment and plan to guide and complete the transformation of the lower Christina and Brandywine Rivers in Wilmington into fishable, swimmable rivers in the shortest timeframe possible. This will include using a logical step-wise ecosystem-based approach to assess, prioritize and plan for a suite of projects. These projects will remediate legacy toxic contaminants like PCBs in river sediments, and protect and restore tidal wetlands, shoreline, shellfish beds and riparian areas.

After years of industrialization and neglect that left Wilmington’s riverfront abandoned and polluted, the Lower Christina and Brandywine are coming back to life. This is due largely to the City and State’s investment in the Wilmington Riverfront through economic development and environmental remediation. Today, the City is well

on its way to controlling Combined Sewer Overflows, DNREC is addressing land-based contaminants following the Watershed Approach to Toxics Assessment and Restoration (WATAR), and the Riverfront Development Corporation is actively bringing people and businesses back to the river. As a result, water quality is improving, fish populations are healthier and on the rise in conjunction with vibrant redevelopment of the waterfront.

What was formerly thought impossible is becoming possible. This urban river can be restored to health, and this project will address two of the greatest remaining challenges to realizing that vision: cleaning up legacy contaminants in sediments within and along the river and protecting and restoring shoreline and riparian areas as economic development continues. Under the leadership of the Christina Conservancy working with American Rivers, and with technical expertise from DNREC, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Sarver Ecological (SE), and the Delaware Nature Society, working with the South Wilmington Planning Network and Collaborate Northeast, this public-private initiative will establish a comprehensive plan to guide remediation, restoration and resilience efforts from sediment to shore, with support and input from local, county, state and federal conservation and community partners.

DNREC will take the lead on assessing and planning for in-stream remediation of contaminated sediments, engaging with contractor like BrightFields, Inc. in a feasibility assessment to identify and diagnose contaminant hot-spots and the best approaches/technologies to remediate them. American Rivers will coordinate a variety of partners and contractors in a feasibility assessment and plan identifying opportunities for improving fish, shellfish, wetland, and riverside habitat, which also enhances recreation uses. Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and Sarver Ecological will be the primary technical experts for the ecological assessment of shoreline, nearshore, wetland, riparian habitat restoration needs and opportunities. Delaware Nature Society will work with DNREC Coastal Programs, the Christina Conservancy, the South Wilmington Planning Network and Collaborate Northeast to inform and engage people who live near or utilize riverfront areas. New and existing partnerships will be sought and leveraged to engage local government and business stakeholders and provide planning and engineering support to integrate restoration activities with efforts to provide and promote recreation and economic development.

The CBR4 Plan will be built on thorough examination of current conditions by top experts, the application of verified approaches where they work best, and innovative techniques backed by science. It will provide both a compelling vision for a future Christina-Brandywine Riverfront that thrives economically and environmentally, as well as a practical blueprint to guide decision-making and leveraging of resources for implementation, with an eye towards long-term solutions. Thirty years ago Governor Russell W. Peterson and the Task Force for the Future of the Brandywine and Christina put forth a bold vision for the Riverfront and it's the success of that original vision that drives CBR4 planning today.

