

Tree for Every Delawarean Initiative



Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)
Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy (CCE)

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Executive Summary

The Tree for Every Delawarean Initiative (TEDI) is administered by DNREC's Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy (CCE) in partnership with the Delaware Forest Service's (DFS) Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program. The program provides grants for tree plantings, technical assistance, funds for free tree giveaways and works with partners across the state to protect and enhance Delaware's trees and forests. Since its inception in 2022, the TEDI program has distributed \$789,281 in grant funds to dozens of partners to plant 123,517 trees in Delaware.

This report includes information on tree planting projects that were installed in FY 2025 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025) under both the FY 2024 and 2025 TEDI Call for Proposals. Annual reports from 2021 forward can be found on the TEDI website at <https://dnrec.delaware.gov/tedi/>.

For the projects selected under the Call for Proposals during the FY 2024 grant cycle and planted in FY 2025, more than 160 volunteers planted 11,248 trees spanning across 14 projects.

For FY 2025, nine of 10 grant recipients completed their project(s) during FY 2025. Due to unforeseen circumstances, one project was granted an extension to plant their trees on a later date. In FY 2025, \$216,061 in grant funding was awarded to plant 4,647 trees. More than 576 volunteers representing at least 28 separate organizations donated thousands of hours of time and labor to help plant trees across nine locations.

This report also describes the projects planted through the DFS Urban and Community Forestry Program using TEDI funds in FY 2025. A total of 218 trees were planted with TEDI funding across 17 locations.



Seven TEDI-sponsored tree giveaway events were held during the fall of 2024. A total of 3,250 trees were distributed by the following six organizations: Sussex Conservation District, Kent Conservation District, New Castle Conservation District, New Castle County Parks and Recreation, CCE at the Blackbird Fall Festival and Delaware Botanic Gardens. TEDI additionally provided partial funding to the Delaware Center for Horticulture to purchase 168 trees for its fall tree give away.

Since introducing the free tree giveaway program in 2023, TEDI has distributed 3,800 trees directly to Delawareans through its giveaway partners.

On April 3, 2025, TEDI hosted the Delaware Tree and Climate Workshop, which convened partners from across the state. Stakeholders from multiple sectors gathered for this one-day event to identify and align priorities relating to forestry, urban trees, natural and working lands and climate resilience. Attendees represented state agencies, county and municipal governments, conservation districts, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and universities. The Delaware Tree and Climate Workshop Summary report can be found on the TEDI website (de.gov/tedi).

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Introduction

TEDI is administered by CCE in partnership with DFS. This partnership works with other Delaware partners to enhance and support tree planting projects throughout the state.

TEDI was established in 2021 to facilitate the state goal of planting 1 million trees by 2030. As of July 1, 2025, the state has achieved approximately 35% of this goal. The total number of trees recorded by the online TEDI tracker since January 2020 was 352,801, of which 120,881 were planted directly through TEDI funded projects or free tree giveaways.

The TEDI program provides financial support through grant awards, supplies trees to partners for giveaways, offers technical assistance and more. It strives to involve the public and bring communities and partners together through a shared common goal to increase Delaware's tree canopy.

This report provides a general overview of program accomplishments to date, while highlighting TEDI projects completed between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025.



Importance of Trees

Whether growing in our state's forests or city parks, trees are natural champions. They improve air, water and soil quality, and they play a critical role in helping fight climate change. Planting and nurturing trees is a nature-based solution for reducing the greenhouse gases that drive climate change. Trees and forests reduce carbon in the atmosphere by absorbing carbon dioxide from the air and storing it in the trees, making it an important tool for mitigating climate change.

Types of Tree Planting Projects

The TEDI grant program focuses primarily on two types of tree-planting projects, reforestation and afforestation. Urban plantings are administered under DFS's Urban and Community Forestry Program. Approaches and methods to planting trees can vary depending on factors such as the location and the surrounding environment of the project. Each project type has specific considerations for implementation.

Reforestation projects involve the replacement of trees previously lost due to natural disaster, disease, insects or other pests, agricultural use or land development.

Afforestation projects establish forests on lands that were not previously forested. Both are typically large in scale (hundreds to thousands of trees) and occur in areas including parks, wildlife areas, agricultural fields and parcels of land owned by conservation partners. Such plantings are extremely vulnerable to wildlife browsing, especially trees in the early stages of growth. For example, deer, rodents and insects can damage newly planted trees and lower tree survivability rates. Therefore, protective measures such as tree tubes and tree guards are often incorporated in reforestation and afforestation projects. Tree survivability is highly dependent on water, and when natural precipitation is insufficient, manual watering is essential.

Urban plantings occur in areas such as residential subdivisions, business complexes, along streets, in parks and on school properties. They tend to be smaller in scale due to limited space, but have higher relative costs because the trees planted are typically larger and more mature. A unique benefit of trees planted in urban areas is they help mitigate the worsening heat island effect driven by climate change. Special considerations should be taken when planning urban tree plantings projects, including: routine maintenance, potential for sidewalk heaving from roots, extreme heat and water stress due to high percentage of impervious surfaces (i.e. sidewalks, roadways, parking lots, etc.) and overhead and buried utilities (i.e. pipes, wires, cables, etc.). For these reasons, projects often include measures such as mulch, soil amendments and watering bags as part of the project.

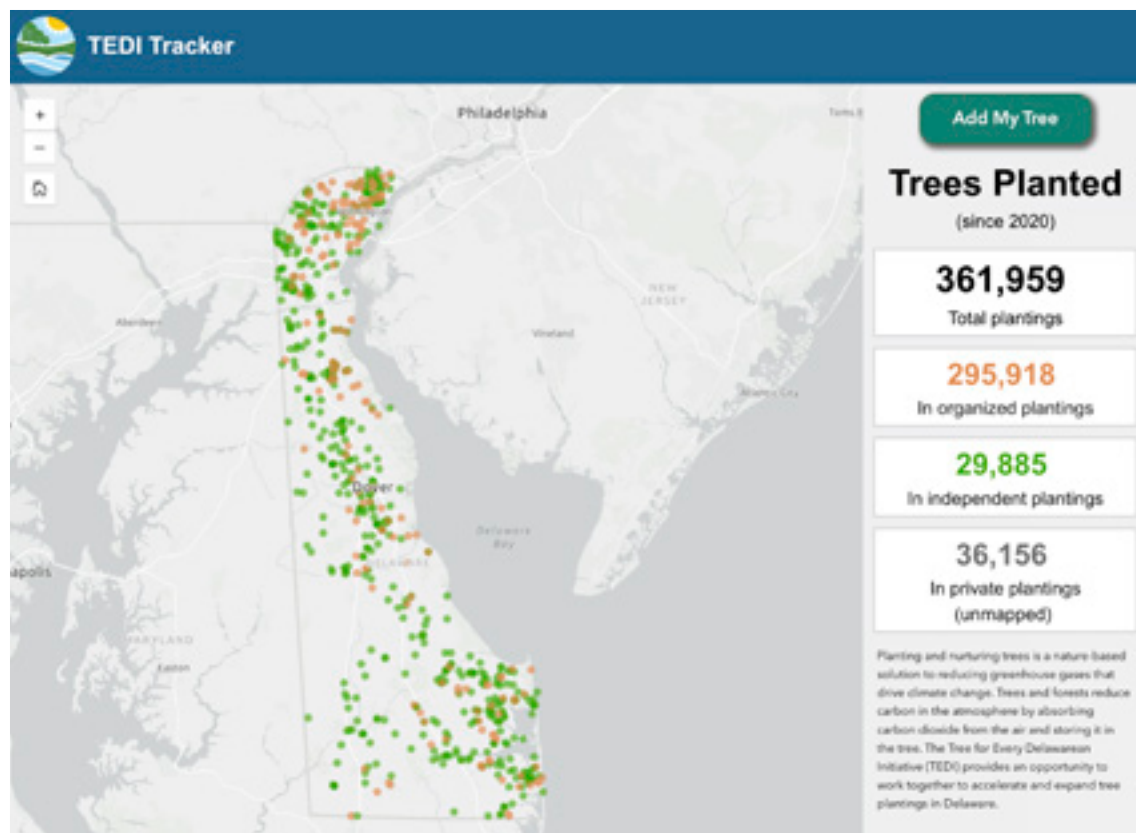
TEDI Website and Tracker

DNREC's TEDI website (de.gov/tedi) features planting tips, maintenance considerations, a list of Delaware native trees and local nurseries that carry native trees.

It also hosts the TEDI Tree Tracker. The tree tracker is the tool DNREC uses to measure progress toward the goal of planting 1 million trees. The tracker incorporates data from tree planting projects located throughout the state and planted since January 2020. It includes all TEDI-funded projects, as well as projects funded through other state, federal and conservation organizations, in addition to trees planted by individuals.

As of July 1, 2025, the total number of trees recorded by the online TEDI tracker since January of 2020 was 352,801, of which 120,881 were planted directly through TEDI funding. As of July 1, 2025, the state has achieved approximately 35% of its goal. Three categories are displayed on the tracker:

- Large-scale tree planting projects by conservation partners and non-governmental organizations (orange circles).
- Individual plantings voluntarily logged by homeowners and business owners (green circles).
- Private plantings unmapped (gray text). This category totals the number of trees planted on private property where the landowner has requested that the location remain anonymous.



TEDI Grant Solicitation and Selection Process

TEDI tree planting projects are solicited through a Call for Proposals, typically released in July of each year. The deadline generally allows six weeks (or more) for interested parties to submit applications.

A panel of experts from CCE, DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship and DFS's Urban and Community Forestry Program evaluate, score and rank project applications after they are received.

In FY 2024, TEDI staff received 15 applications, seven of which were selected for funding (one project was later withdrawn by the applicant). It should be noted that some individual applications contained more than one tree planting project. A total of \$279,774 in funding was distributed for tree planting projects. Two of the projects were planted in FY 2024 and are described in the FY 2024 Annual Report. The remaining 11 projects were planted in FY 2025 and are described in this report. Table 1 lists the projects selected in FY 2024 but planted during FY 2025. Each completed project is described in detail later in this report.

Table 1. Projects selected in FY 2024 but planted in FY 2025

ORGANIZATION	TREES PLANTED	PLANTING MONTH(S)
Delaware Forest Service – 17 Projects	235	Multiple Months
Village of Ardentown	240	November 2024
City of Newark	115	September through November 2024
Delaware Interfaith Power & Light, Mount Lebanon United Methodist Church	26	November 2024
Delaware Technical Community College Stanton Campus	40	April 2025
Delaware Technical Community College Terry Campus	34	April 2025
Delaware Technical Community College Owens Campus	33	November 2024
Delaware Center for Inland Bays - Autumnwood Homeowners Association	700	October and November 2024
Delaware Center for Inland Bays - Millsboro Project	8,500	December 2024
Delaware Wildlands - Office Tract (Appoquinimink-Blackbird Site #1)	55	November 2024
Delaware Wildlands - Milk House Tract (Appoquinimink-Blackbird Site #2)	70	November 2024
Delaware Wildlands – Gitaitis Farm	1,200	November 2024
TOTAL PLANTED	11,248	

*Note: A total of 35,544 trees were selected for funding in FY 2024, with 24,296 planted in FY 2024 (see FY 2024 Annual Report) and 11,248 planted in FY 2025 as shown above.

In FY 2025, 10 projects were selected from 12 applications received. Approximately \$237,245 in funding was distributed for the projects. Table 2 lists the projects selected and planted during FY 2025. The one exception is the City of New Castle project, which will be planted during FY 2026 (fall 2025). Each completed project is described in detail later in this report.

Table 2. Projects selected and planted in FY 2025

ORGANIZATION	TREES PLANTED	PLANTING MONTH(S)
City of Lewes	66	April and May 2025
City of New Castle (Project Extended - will be reported in 2026 Annual TEDI Report)	23	Anticipate Fall 2025
City of Wilmington	324	April and May 2025
Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek	90	March and April 2025
Zoe Ministries	51	March through May 2025
Mt. Cuba Center	1,484	March 2025
Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park	115	April and May 2025
Friends of Bellevue State Park	264	April 2025
Friends of White Clay Creek State Park	1,204	April 2025
Trap Pond (State Park) Partners	1,026	March and April 2025
TOTAL PLANTED	4,647	

TEDI Tree Giveaways

The TEDI tree giveaway program was piloted in the fall of 2023. In this first year, three organizations partnered with DNREC to coordinate tree giveaways. In only one year, the program expanded to seven partners distributing more than 3,250 trees at events across the state. Capitalizing on the success of the pilot 2023 tree giveaway, the TEDI program fully funded seven giveaway events in the fall of 2024, through the six partners as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Number of trees distributed by TEDI tree giveaway partners

PARTNERING ORGANIZATION	NUMBER OF TREES DISTRIBUTED
Sussex Conservation District	750
Kent Conservation District	750
New Castle Conservation District	500
New Castle County Parks and Recreation	500
Delaware Botanic Gardens	500
DNREC CCE	250

The TEDI program provided supplemental funding to the Delaware Center for Horticulture to help fund their tree giveaway held on Saturday November 16 at the Route 9 Library and Innovation Center, distributing more than 200 trees along with a bag of mulch and tree planting and care instructions.



Detailed Project Descriptions: FY 2025 TEDI Grants



Village of Ardentown



Village of Ardentown volunteers install a deer cage to protect a newly planted tree from deer browsing and damage.

The Village of Ardentown is located north of the City of Wilmington. Ardentown's planting included two separate projects, both planted in November 2024. Forty-seven volunteers planted 200 trees along a small stream corridor within Ardentown called Perkin's Run. For the second project, 17 volunteers planted 40 trees in Harvey Mill Park.

Of the 240 native trees planted, species included ironwood, swamp white oak, red maple, hackberry, black tupelo, redbud, sweet bay magnolia, American hornbeam, sycamore, persimmon and bald cypress.

These projects will increase tree species diversity and expand the existing mature tree canopy in the area. Having high species diversity is key in this location due to the over concentration of beech trees and susceptibility to beech leaf disease. The trees will also provide additional wildlife habitat and mitigate soil erosion and storm-water runoff to Perkins Run.

City of Newark



Community volunteers gather at Newark's Karpinski Park to mulch newly planted trees and a playground.

The City of Newark completed three separate tree planting projects within the city's incorporated area. In total, 115 trees were planted, including swamp white oak, honey locust, magnolia and black cherry.

The first project at the James Hall Commuter and Pollinator Habitat Trail, planted in October 2024, is a heavily used pedestrian corridor established over a former brownfield site. Thirty volunteers representing TD Bank, local sororities and Delaware Master Naturalist first cleared invasive species overgrowing the area, then planted 30 trees, including honey locust and swamp white oak along the trail. The project will provide additional shade and cooling to pedestrians using the trail.

For the second project, nearly 60 volunteers from Citi Bank and JP Morgan Bank planted 75 trees, including swamp white oak and cherry along the

Pomeroy Pollinator Corridor in September 2024. The project successfully removed invasive trees and shrubs, where the new plantings will provide additional wildlife habitat and help mitigate stormwater runoff from the trail.

For the third project at Karpinski Park, the City of Newark's Park Operations staff planted 10 trees in September 2024, including swamp white oak, magnolia grandiflora and pignut hickory. These trees will help shade the walking loop. The project replaced several dead ash trees most likely killed by Emerald Ash Borer. In addition to providing shade and cooling, the newly planted trees will benefit pollinators and other wildlife

Delaware Interfaith Power & Light - Mount Lebanon United Methodist Church



A volunteer fills a watering bag to keep the tree watered. The tree also has a protective mesh around the trunk to reduce impacts from wildlife browsing.

Mount Lebanon United Methodist Church is located west of the City of Wilmington and borders Brandywine Creek State Park. Six members of Mount Lebanon Church planted 26 trees in September 2024, including white and willow oak, red and sugar maple, river birch, eastern red cedar, serviceberry, redbud and magnolia.

This reforestation project will provide an important tree corridor that links Brandywine Creek State Park and New Castle County's Woodley County Park. In addition, the church plans to use the project to educate church members and neighboring homeowners on actions they can take against climate change, soil erosion and habitat degradation.

Delaware Technical and Community College - Terry Campus



Heavy equipment such as tree hole augers and skid steer loaders save time and labor when planting large and heavy balled and burlapped trees, such as this installation at Del Tech's Terry Campus.

The Delaware Tech Terry Campus, located in Dover, sits on 112 acres adjacent to the Fork Branch Nature Preserve along the St. Jones River. Facilities staff planted 34 large balled and burlapped trees using heavy equipment in April 2025. The native tree species planted included American elm, redbud, sweet bay magnolia, eastern hop-hornbeam and eastern red maple.

The Terry Campus contains several forested areas that provide urban tree canopy and wildlife habitat. These trees will increase urban tree canopy and tree diversity within the City of Dover, while enhancing the campus environment for students, faculty and staff.

Delaware Technical and Community College - Stanton Campus



Rows of mature trees at Del Tech's Stanton Campus will help shade buildings and reduce the energy used for cooling, provide visual and noise screening and a wind break.

The Delaware Tech Stanton Campus sits on an 83-acre parcel located south of the City of Wilmington along the I-95 corridor. Using heavy equipment, a contractor installed 40 large eastern red cedar trees (balled and burlapped trees) in April 2025.

Adjacent to the White Clay Creek and Christiana rivers, this campus contains several forested areas that provide tree canopy and wildlife habitat. When the newly installed trees mature, they will shade campus buildings and reduce energy costs for cooling, as well as enhance the campus' grounds for students, faculty and staff.

Delaware Technical and Community College - Owens Campus



In addition to shading and cooling the campus, the project at Owens Campus will also reduce lawn maintenance and grass mowing costs.

The Delaware Tech Owens Campus, located in Georgetown, serves students in Sussex County and surrounding areas. In November 2024, facilities staff planted 33 balled and burlapped trees using heavy equipment. Staff secured trees using stakes and installed watering bags to keep the trees watered. The native tree species planted included American beech, American holly, American hornbeam, black gum, serviceberry, eastern red cedar, hawthorne, hackberry, post oak, red and scarlet oak, sweet bay magnolia, white fringe tree and others.

This project incorporates a highly diverse array of native tree species planted as part of the college's new educational arboretum. The new arboretum is strategically situated on the Owens Campus, with large parking areas on three sides. This location allows those entering this area to see the trees grow and mature through time.

Delaware Center for the Inland Bays - Millsboro Project



Workers use dibble bars, a specialized tree planting tool, to make quick work of planting thousands of bare root seedlings.

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays completed the “Millsboro reforestation project” on a property owned by Sussex County, located approximately four and a half miles northeast of Millsboro in the Rehoboth Bay Watershed. The site was previously used to irrigate crops using treated wastewater. However, Sussex County no longer needs or uses the site to receive wastewater.

During December 2024, contractors installed 8,500 hardwood bare root seedlings. Volunteers installed 500 tree tubes aimed to improve tree survivability. The native tree species planted

included eastern red cedar, black cherry, willow and white oak and persimmon.

The eight-acre planting site is now in the first stages of growth and will eventually become a mixed hardwood coastal forest. This project will help reduce the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment entering the Rehoboth Bay and enhance local wildlife habitat.

Delaware Center for the Inland Bays - Autumnwood Homeowner's Association



Community members and scout troop volunteers plant trees inside a protective deer fence in the Autumnwood Community.

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays planned and implemented a reforestation project on 10 acres of community open space managed by the privately-owned Autumnwood Homeowner's Association, located approximately six miles southwest of the City of Lewes in the Rehoboth Bay watershed. The site was previously used as the drain field for the development's large-scale community septic system.

During the fall of 2024, volunteers installed 700 hardwood bare root seedlings. The native tree species planted included eastern red cedar, black locust, red and white oak, hawthorn and

persimmon. Hundreds of additional trees and shrubs not funded through the TEDI program were also planted as part of the project.

This project will provide substantial water quality benefits and reduce the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment entering Rehoboth Bay.

Delaware Wildlands - Office Tract (Appoquinimink-Blackbird Site #1)



The Delaware Wildlands Office Tract tree planting project is situated within the tidal marshlands of the Delaware Bay. The trees are spaced to allow future growth.

The Delaware Wildlands Office Tract reforestation project is located east of the Town of Townsend along the Delaware Bay. The property is owned and maintained by the Delaware Wildlands for habitat and wildlife conservation and preservation.

In November 2024, contractors and staff planted 55 containerized trees. The native tree species planted included northern red and willow oak, pignut hickory, eastern shadbush, tulip poplar, sycamore and Washington hawthorn.

The one-acre planting site will reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff to the adjacent tidal marshland, help extend an existing tree stand and canopy and provide additional and contiguous wildlife habitat.

Delaware Wildlands - Milk House Tract (Appoquinimink-Blackbird Site #2)



Proper use and application of mulch (shallow mound), tree stakes and deer tubes significantly improve the survivability of newly planted trees.

The Delaware Wildlands Milk House Tract reforestation project is located east of Townsend along the Delaware Bay. The property is owned and maintained by the Delaware Wild Lands for habitat and wildlife conservation and preservation.

In November 2024, contractors and Delaware Wildlands staff planted 70 containerized trees. The native tree species planted included northern red and willow oak, pignut hickory, eastern shadbush, tulip poplar, sycamore and Washington hawthorn.

This planting site will reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff to the adjacent tidal marshland, help create contiguous tree canopy and provide additional wildlife habitat.

Delaware Wildlands - Gitaitis Farm (Blackbird Creek Reforestation)



At the Gitaitis Farm, workers plant containerized trees far enough apart to let them grow and mature without interfering with each other.

The Delaware Wildlands Gitaitis Farm reforestation project is located east of Middletown along the Delaware Bay. The property is owned and maintained by Delaware Wildlands for habitat and wildlife conservation and preservation.

In November 2024, contractors and staff planted 1,200 containerized trees. The native tree species planted included white and willow oak, pignut hickory, black cherry, black gum and persimmon.

This planting project is part of 23,000 contiguous acres of protected land that lies along Delaware's Bayshore, which extends from the C&D Canal to the north and Woodland Beach to the south. This project will reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff to the adjacent tidal marshland, help create a contiguous tree canopy, provide additional wildlife habitat and sequester carbon as the trees grow and mature.

Detailed Project Descriptions: FY 2025 TEDI Grants



City of Lewes



Student volunteers from Fred Thomas Middle School National Junior Honor Society help plant a tree at the City of Lewes' Stango Complex

The City of Lewes completed two separate tree planting projects within the it's incorporated area. In total, 66 native trees were planted for both projects. Tree species planted included willow oak, scarlet oak, black gum, sassafras, red maple, American hop hornbeam, fringe tree, redbud, persimmon, sourwood, loblolly pine, pignut hickory, American holly, bald cypress, sycamore, sweetbay magnolia and eastern red cedar.

The first project is located at the Stango Park Complex, which contains the city's library, community center, museum, learning garden and trail head to the Junction and Breakwater trail. Eighteen volunteers representing six different organizations planted 35 trees at the complex during two days in April 2025. The project will provide additional shade and cooling to the complex's buildings and visitors to the park, expand the city's urban tree canopy and increase tree diversity and expand wildlife and pollinator habitat among other benefits.

The second project, located at George H.P. Smith Park, sits adjacent to Block House Pond. This park contains a children's playground, butterfly garden, walking path, benches, picnic tables and other amenities. Five volunteers planted 31 trees on two separate days in April and May 2025. This project will help mitigate stormwater runoff soil erosion into the pond, provide shade to park visitors, increase the city's tree canopy and tree diversity and expand wildlife and pollinator habitat among other benefits.

City of Wilmington



Volunteers help plant trees at the City of Wilmington's new Rodney Reservoir Park.

The City of Wilmington's Rodney Reservoir previously served as a drinking water reservoir for the Hilltop section of Wilmington and sits on a 4.7-acre parcel of land. Constructed in the early 1900s, the reservoir was removed from service more than 20 years ago. This tree planting project is part of a larger reclamation project to create a city park on a formerly unused water reservoir in the city.

The restoration of the Rodney Reservoir as a community gathering space includes multiple funding sources as part of a large, multi-year project. Planted in April and May of 2025, the park design includes more than an acre of native forest and urban tree canopy as well as one acre of native pollinator meadows.

The TEDI grant funded the planting of 324 native trees in the park. Tree species planted included red maple, serviceberry, pawpaw, pignut hickory, shagbark hickory, hackberry, eastern redbud, persimmon, sweetgum, magnolia, loblolly pine, nine types of oak, sassafras and others.

In April 2025, 55 people volunteered to participate in one of two organized planting sessions. And an additional 18 volunteers representing six different organizations planted 35 trees. The forested area in the park will create a new urban tree canopy in the city and provide much needed shade to cool city residents susceptible to the heat island effect. It will also provide recreation, beauty and enjoyment.

Zoe Ministries

Zoe Ministries advocates for those impacted or potentially impacted by sex trafficking. The ministry's Hannah's House facility provides specialized long-term residential care for confirmed and suspected trafficked minors in Delaware.

During the months of March, April and May, contractors planted 51 containerized trees with watering bags. The native tree species planted included black cherry, sweet bay magnolia, eastern red cedar, river birch, eastern shadbush, fringe tree, persimmon, sassafras, red maple and American holly.

This tree planting project will provide additional privacy and security to the facility as well as natural beauty for convalescing residents. It will also provide shade and cooling for the facility, helping to reduce energy costs.

Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek



Volunteers install water bags to improve tree survivability at the tree planting along Pepper Creek.

Delaware Botanic Gardens occupies 37 acres along Pepper Creek near the Town of Dagsboro. This project aimed to protect tidal shoreline and preserve habitat along a 1,000-foot stretch of Pepper Creek. Salt-tolerant trees were selected to stabilize the tidal shoreline and natural embankment while enhancing local biodiversity and safeguarding natural resources for future generations.

In March and April 2025, 15 volunteers planted 90 containerized trees and installed watering bags for each tree. The native tree species planted included bald cypress, black gum, sweet bay magnolia, Atlantic white cedar, hackberry, river birch, swamp white and pin oak, pitch pine and black willow.

This project will provide substantial water quality benefits by stabilizing 1,000 feet of shoreline, reducing stormwater runoff and soil erosion, reducing the amount of nutrients entering nearby surface water, increasing tree diversity and enhancing wildlife habitat.

Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park



Volunteers plant containerized trees in an open area of Holland Glade along the Junction & Breakwater Trail that links Cape Henlopen State Park and Rehoboth Beach.

The Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park completed two separate tree planting projects, the Holland Glade planting project and the Biden Environmental Center project. In total, staff and volunteers planted 115 native trees. Tree species included white and southern red oak, black gum, persimmon, serviceberry, loblolly pine and eastern red cedar.

The Holland Glade tree planting project sits along Cape Henlopen State Park's popular Junction & Breakwater Trail, linking the park and the City of Rehoboth Beach. Forty-three volunteers planted 88 trees in April 2025. In addition to the tree plantings, staff will also install educational signage along the trail describing the project.

The project will provide additional shade and cooling along the trail, increase tree diversity and expand wildlife and pollinator habitat.

The second project was at the newly renovated Biden Environmental Center, located within DNREC's Cape Henlopen State Park. Forty-three volunteers planted 27 trees on the grounds surrounding the Biden Center. The trees will provide shade, help cool the building and reduce energy use. The tree planting project will also create a foundation for a future perpetual learning and pollinator garden near the center.

Mt. Cuba Center



At Mount Cuba Center, protective cages will minimize deer browsing among the stumps of felled ash trees that died due to Emerald Ash Borer infestation.

Mt. Cuba Center identified five high priority sites to be planted along the Red Clay Creek for reforestation due to the large number of ash trees killed by Emerald Ash Borer beetles. Ash trees are critical to the environment and biodiversity, comprising up to 70 percent of tree species in some of northern Delaware's floodplain. Prior to planting new trees, contractors felled dead ash trees, allowing volunteers to safely work in the area.

In March 2025, Mt. Cuba Center staff and volunteers planted 1,484 trees at the five high priority sites selected under this grant cycle. In addition, 201 shrubs were donated and planted by Mt. Cuba Center to increase structural and species diversity within the tree plantings. The species selected for planting included genera identified by University of Delaware professor Doug Tallamy's research as supporting the highest numbers of Lepidoptera species and providing food for wildlife throughout the year.

Sturdy metal cages were installed to protect trees from deer browsing. The native tree species planted included red maple, sugar maple, river birch, hackberry, persimmon, tulip poplar, black tupelo, American sycamore, swamp white oak, swamp Spanish white oak and black willow.

As the new trees mature, they will shade the stream, benefiting aquatic life and water quality by decreasing the temperature and increasing dissolved oxygen. The planting will also help to stabilize the streambank, reduce erosion, mitigate runoff and decrease the chances of flooding downstream. The diverse plantings will increase resiliency and resistance to disturbances such as pests and diseases as well as assist with ongoing management of invasive species.

Friends of Bellevue State Park



Left to right - former Delaware United States Senator Thomas R. Carper, Assistant Park Superintendent Dante Tiberi and DNREC Secretary Gregory Patterson address and thank volunteers prior to tree planting at Bellevue State Park.

The Friends of Bellevue State Park planted trees at three locations within the park. In total, 264 native trees were planted. Tree species included black gum, red chokecherry, black willow, hop hornbeam, red and white oak and sycamore.

More than 198 volunteers representing five different organizations, as well as individual volunteers not affiliated with any organization, planted the trees in April 2025. Because so many volunteers showed up, the tree plantings went very quickly. In turn, volunteers donated the balance of their time to spread mulch on the park's playground.

The tree planting projects will reforest some of the older woodlands whose trees have died due to storm damage, disease or old age. The new trees will restore animal and bird habitat, provide recreational opportunities to visitors as they walk the park's many trails and help with stormwater runoff and soil erosion near the park's pond.

Friends of White Clay Creek State Park



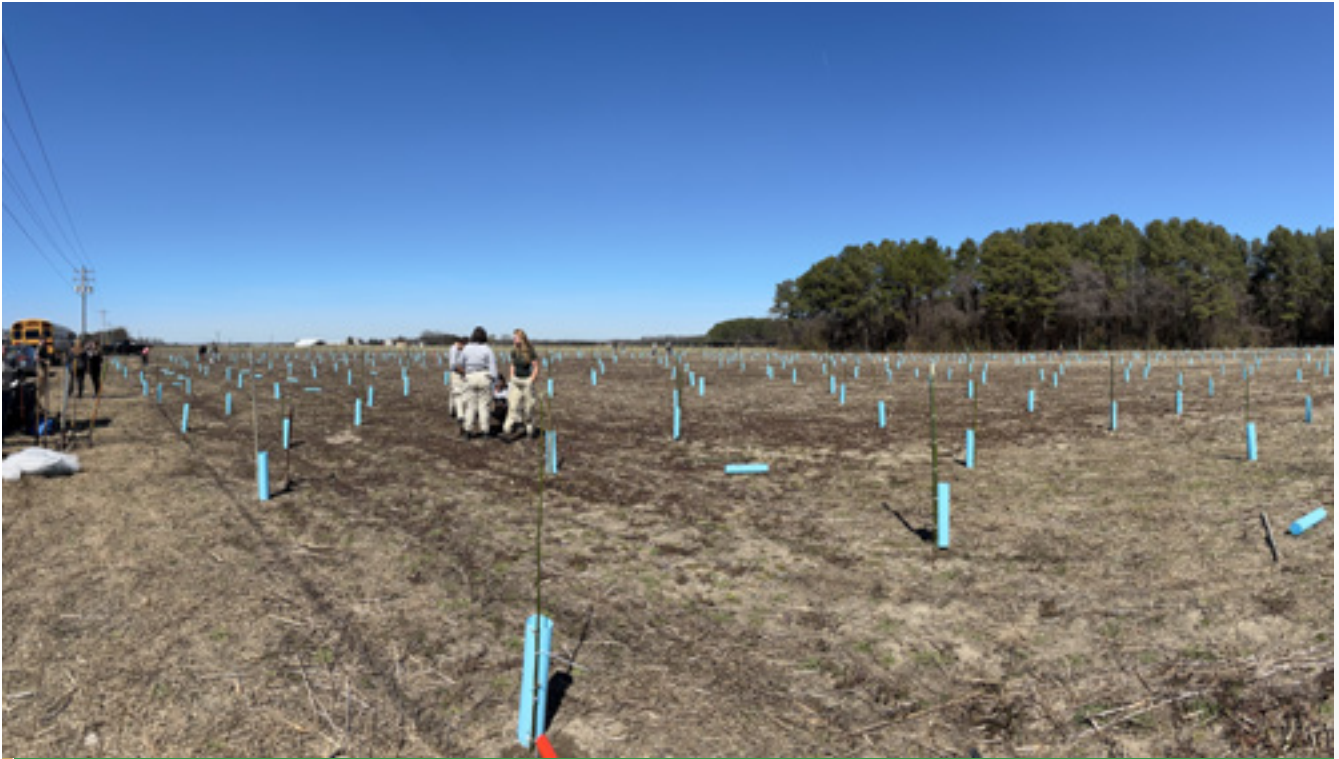
At White Clay Creek State Park, tree tubes and wooden stakes will protect newly planted chestnut oak trees from deer and rodent damage.

The Friends of White Clay Creek State Park tree planting project spanned across five acres of the former Judge Morris private estate, now part of the park. In total, staff and volunteers planted 1,204 native trees. Tree species planted included chestnut oak, white oak, scarlet oak, pawpaw, sassafras, bitter nut hickory, shag bark hickory, hazelnut, southern arrowwood, red maple, serviceberry, hackberry and American hornbeam.

More than 65 volunteers representing six different organizations, as well as 48 individual non-affiliated volunteers, planted the trees during April 2025. Approximately 63 percent of the trees are contained within a four-foot-high tensile knotted wire fence to protect them. Staff and volunteers secured the remaining trees in five-foot tall plastic tree tubes. Volunteers donated more than 724 hours toward the project.

The project will convert five acres of open field to forest, which will increase the park's tree canopy and tree diversity, as well as connect existing tree canopy into a more contiguous forest stand. This tree planting project will benefit both existing wildlife and park patrons.

Trap Pond (State Park) Partners



Volunteers at the Arvey Road Project use a grid to organize and meet their 250 tree per acre planting guideline.

The Trap Pond Partners planted trees at two locations within the park; the first project along Arvey Road and the second within the park's campground and picnic area. During March and April 2025, 107 volunteers representing six organizations planted a total of 1,026 native trees. The tree species planted included red maple, cherry bark oak, chestnut oak, swamp white oak, willow oak, black oak and pin oak.

The Arvey Road Project reforested three acres of agricultural field located in the park, planting the area with 700 bare-root seedlings. This reforestation project will expand Trap Pond's existing forest area and create contiguous wildlife habitat. The project will also reduce an existing soil erosion and dust problem caused by wind scour on the field.

The second project planted 326 trees and shrubs around the park's campground and picnic areas. The shade provided by the trees when they mature will help cool the picnic area and walking trails. Their developing roots and leaf canopy will help prevent soil erosion into Trap Pond as well as shade portions of the pond to reduce temperature for the benefit of fish and other aquatic wildlife.

DFS's Urban and Community Forestry Program: Tree Planting Projects Funded Through TEDI



DFS's Urban and Community Forestry Program provides cities, towns and communities grants with for tree planting, management, care and enhancement of urban forestry resources. In FY 2024, this program received \$100,000 in TEDI funding to increase tree canopy in urban and community settings within Delaware. The Urban and Community Forestry Program awarded grants to 25 projects within urban and community settings, resulting in 1,777 newly planted trees with the TEDI funding alone.

Of the 25 projects completed with TEDI funding, eight were planted during FY 2024, and are described in the TEDI 2024 Annual Report. The remaining 17 projects were planted in the late summer and fall of 2024 and are presented below.



Alapocas

The Alapocas tree planting project is located north of the City of Wilmington. This tree planting project will sequester atmospheric carbon, increase tree canopy cover, shade pedestrians walking along the sidewalk and promote proper stewardship of urban forests.

In total, 11 trees were planted between the street and sidewalks in October 2024. Four different native tree species were planted including black gum, white oak, hornbeam and maple.

Urban trees are useful for shading sidewalks and streets.



Briarwood Estates

The Briarwood Estates project is located west of the City of Lewes. Neighborhood volunteers made an investment in their green infrastructure by planting eight red maple trees along the street and sidewalk in September 2024.

This tree planting project will provide additional wildlife habitat, fill in existing tree canopy cover and help reduce mowing costs and the fossil fuels burned which emit greenhouse gases.

Stakes help trees grow straight and resist being blown over by high winds until their roots establish.



Edenridge

Edenridge is a residential development located near the City of Wilmington. Eight red maple trees were planted between the street and sidewalk in October 2024.

This tree planting project will help mitigate stormwater runoff, shade pedestrians walking along the sidewalk and help shade and cool adjacent homes which will reduce energy use and help mitigate climate change.

Studies show that people generally drive slower along tree lined streets, which improves safety.



Independence

Independence is a new residential subdivision located near Millsboro. In total, 19 trees were planted in the community's open space in November 2024. Five different native tree species were planted, including red cedar, oak, river birch, black gum and red maple.

This tree planting project will improve stormwater runoff and drainage, mitigate soil erosion, increase tree canopy cover, provide wildlife habitat and help reduce mowing costs and turf management and associated energy use which can emit greenhouse gases.

Planting trees in community open spaces can help reduce mowing costs, as well as provide privacy between homes.



Little Falls Village

The Little Falls Village project is located near the City of Wilmington. A total of 31 trees were planted in October 2024, including red maple, red oak, American holly, southern magnolia, eastern red cedar and winterberry.

This tree planting project will provide additional wildlife habitat, mitigate soil erosion and reduce stormwater runoff.

Installing water bags will help to keep trees watered and improve survivability.



Long Neck Shores

The Long Neck Shores project is located near the Town of Millsboro. A total of six trees were planted in October 2024, including sweet bay magnolia and redbud. This tree planting project will provide additional wildlife habitat and increase tree diversity.

This redbud tree was installed to provide additional shade to the bench behind it.



Marian Coffin Gardens at Gibraltar

The Marian Coffin Gardens Project at Gibraltar is located near the City of Wilmington. A total of 12 trees were planted in November 2024, including southern magnolia, winter king hawthorne and redbud.

This tree planting project will provide urban tree canopy and shade along the woodland walking trail, reduce stormwater runoff and expand wildlife habitat.

Properly applied mulch is beneficial to trees year-round, but mulch that is mounded too high can harm the base of the tree's trunk.



Sea Colony West Phase XIX

The Sea Colony West Phase XIX project is located near the Town of Bethany Beach. Nine trees were planted in October 2024, including sweetbay magnolia, serviceberry and redbud.

This tree planting project will reduce stormwater runoff and soil erosion into nearby surface water and provide shade for nearby homes.

Planting trees and shrubs along pond and stream banks can help fix and stabilize the soil and prevent erosion and nutrient run off.



Sea Colony West Phase XI

The Sea Colony West Phase XI project is located near the Town of Bethany Beach. A total of 11 trees were planted in October 2024, including sugar maple, serviceberry, American holly, fringe tree and redbud.

This tree planting project will increase wildlife habitat and shade a nearby walking trail.

Isolated specimen trees can provide beauty and a landscape focal point.



Sea Colony West Phase XIV

The Sea Colony West Phase XIV project is located near the Town of Bethany Beach. Eight trees were planted in October 2024, including sugar maple, serviceberry, American holly, loblolly pine, black gum, hackberry, star magnolia and redbud.

This tree planting project will shade a sidewalk, as well as help shade and cool adjacent homes, which will reduce energy use and help mitigate climate change.

Trees planted around buildings offer shade, increase comfort and help reduce cooling costs.



Saint Philips Church

The Saint Philips Church project is located near the City of Wilmington. Volunteers helped plant 26 trees in October 2024, including black cherry, red oak, American holly and serviceberry.

This tree planting project will increase the existing immature urban tree canopy and expand wildlife habitat and food supply.

Wire fencing can help keep deer and other animals from damaging young trees.



Stonewold

The Stonewold project is located near Greenville. A total of 33 trees were planted in September 2024, including sweetbay and southern magnolia, redbud, willow oak, sweetgum, American holly, and tulip poplar.

This tree planting project will add to existing urban tree canopy and expand wildlife habitat.

Tree stakes help trees grow straight and resist wind that may bend or even break its trunk.



Village of Cinderberry

The Village of Cinderberry is a residential subdivision located near Georgetown. A total of 21 trees were planted in October 2024, including red maple, redbud and bald cypress.

This tree planting project will reduce stormwater runoff and soil erosion into nearby surface water and provide shade for nearby homes.

If applied properly, mulch will benefit trees by holding in the moisture.



Westover Hills C

The Westover Hills C project is located near the City of Wilmington. A total of seven trees, including sugar maple and sycamore, were planted along the street in November 2024.

This tree planting project will help mitigate stormwater runoff, shade pedestrians walking along the sidewalk and help shade and cool adjacent homes, which will reduce energy use and help mitigate climate change.

Properly placed street trees can shade streets and sidewalks and help to reduce heat island effect.



Woodridge

The Woodridge project is a residential subdivision located near the Town of Milton. Nine trees were planted in September 2024, including red oak, serviceberry and redbud.

This tree planting project will help mitigate stormwater runoff and soil erosion, shade pedestrians walking along the sidewalk and reduce energy use associated with grass mowing and maintenance which can emit greenhouse gases.

Proper use and application of stakes and mulch benefit trees.



Bayshore

The Bayshore project is a residential subdivision located near the Town of Millsboro. A total of 15 trees were planted in September 2024, including red maple, serviceberry, black gum, Nelly Stevens holly, river birch and weeping willow.

This tree planting project will help mitigate stormwater runoff and soil erosion, as well as help shade and cool adjacent homes, which will reduce energy use and help mitigate climate change.

A tree's roots and leaf canopy can help reduce stormwater runoff and soil erosion to storm drains.



Sea Colony West

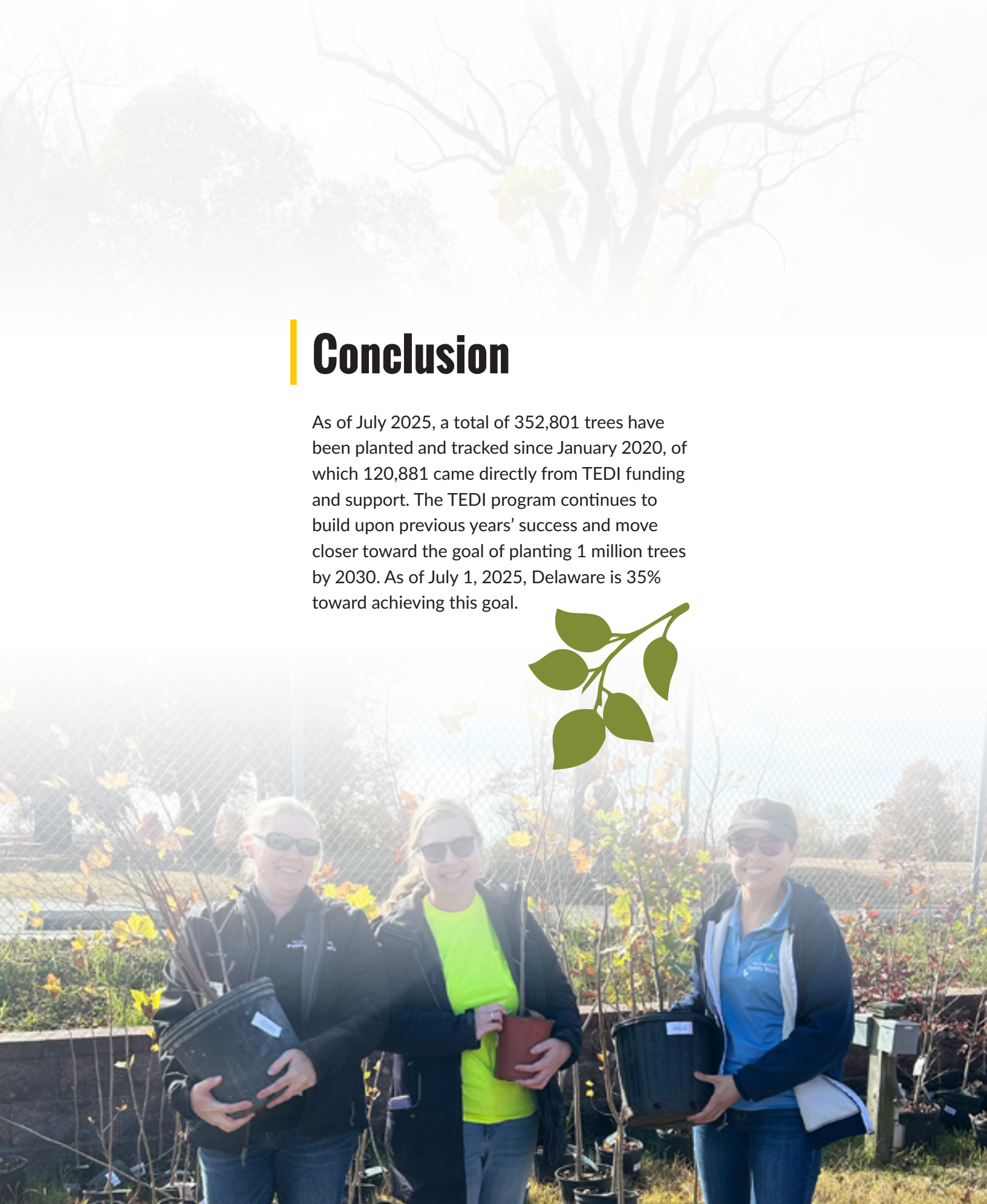
The Sea Colony West project is a residential subdivision located near the Town of Bethany Beach. One redbud tree was planted in October 2025.

This tree project will help shade and cool an adjacent home, which will reduce energy use and help mitigate climate change.

Adding tree stakes, properly installed mulch and a frequently filled watering bag increases the chances for a newly planted tree to survive.

Conclusion

As of July 2025, a total of 352,801 trees have been planted and tracked since January 2020, of which 120,881 came directly from TEDI funding and support. The TEDI program continues to build upon previous years' success and move closer toward the goal of planting 1 million trees by 2030. As of July 1, 2025, Delaware is 35% toward achieving this goal.



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Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)

Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy (CCE)

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