

# Watershed Program – RIBITS User Guide



## Nutrient Bank Tree Planting Project Information

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### About RIBITS

This user guide provides guidance for looking up nutrient bank tree planting project information using the [Regulatory In-Lieu Fee and Bank Information Tracking System \(RIBITS\)](#).

RIBITS was developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to track mitigation banking projects throughout the United States. Information about individual projects, their location, certification status, and credit availability may all be found in RIBITS.

Each project will have a copy of a letter from DEQ certifying the project for nutrient credits. Details in the letter include project location and description, acres, species planted and the number of trees per acre. Other information about the project can also be found in these letters, such as recent inspections, survivorship of the planted trees, reports of invasive plants, etc.

#### Important Note!

If you decide to record these projects in IFRIS, **indicate in the remarks section that they are Nutrient Bank Projects** so they can be filtered for reporting purposes.

### What is a Nutrient Bank?

A nutrient bank is an environmental trading program intended to generate nutrient credits that can be purchased by municipalities or industrial facilities that are required to reduce nutrient discharges. In Virginia, certain conservation practices generate a quantifiable environmental improvement through reduction in nutrients, namely nitrogen and phosphorus. Examples of conservation practices include wetland restoration, stream restoration, afforestation (conversion from agricultural land to forestland), or even switching from row crops to hay. These practices can be used to produce nutrient credits that are certified by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Once a conservation practice is established and certified, the credits it generates can be purchased by a regulated party to meet their pollution reduction requirements.

### What is DOF's role with these projects?

This information is provided purely for informational purposes. Nutrient banks fall under DEQ's purview and DOF field staff do not have a formal role in these projects. This information is being shared for the following reasons:

1. It may be helpful to know if nutrient banks are in your locality so you can better understand land-use trends in your area.
2. You may have seen an open field recently planted in trees as part of a nutrient bank project in your area and wanted to learn more about it.
3. You may be asked by a landowner to develop a planting plan for a nutrient bank project.

4. **Nutrient bank projects are ineligible to receive cost-share dollars.** However, you may need to provide management recommendations for landowners so knowing more about nutrient banks and their objectives could be useful in crafting these recommendations.

### How is this information helpful to you?

- ◆ Using this information, you may choose to map the project in IFRIS and record it as a **Tree Planting Project**.
- ◆ If there are areas on the project that meet the description of a riparian buffer (minimum 35-foot-wide to maximum 300-foot-wide forested area protecting a waterway), you can estimate the acres and record them in IFRIS as **Riparian Buffer Establishment**. **Be sure to indicate in the remarks that the planting is a Nutrient Bank Project.**
- ◆ A nutrient bank tree planting project is NOT eligible for other cost-share assistance programs to execute management work on the project.

IFRIS Codes that may be used for mapping/reporting purposes:

Accomplishment Code	Include in the Remarks section:
Tree Planting	Tract or stand details and include Nutrient Bank Tree Planting Project
Riparian Buffer Establishment	Tract or stand details and include Nutrient Bank Tree Planting Project

## Finding Nutrient Bank Tree Planting Project Information

Follow the steps below to find information about nutrient bank projects in your county:

1. Use the following link to navigate to the RIBITS database. This link already has the search criteria for nutrient bank projects in Virginia, so those are the only projects you will see listed.  
<https://ribits.ops.usace.army.mil/ords/f?p=107%3A285>
  - Select **Projects** from the list on the left or zoom in on the map to a specific location.
  - Use the boxes to the right of the map to toggle features like roads on and off.
  - Collapse the brown menu bar on the left for a larger viewing pane.
  - Approved projects are indicated in green.
  - Pending projects are indicated in yellow.
  - Sold-out projects are indicated in red.

**RIBITS**  
Regulatory In-lieu Fee and Bank Information Tracking System

Home | Help Desk | Webservices | WQT Projects

**TRACKING**

Mitigation  
 WQT  
 Both

**MENU**

Mitigation  
 Banks & Sites  
 ILF Programs  
 Umbrella Instruments  
 NRDA Projects  
 BLM Projects  
 Public Notices

Knowledge  
 Related Resources  
 Credit Classifications  
 Bank & ILF Establishment  
 Mitigation Concepts

Tools  
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 Find Credits

Training  
 Help / User Guides

**FILTER**

USACE District  
 State  
 FWS Field Office  
 NMFIS Region  
 BLM State Office  
 BLM District Office

ALL DISTRICTS ▼  
 [Terms Of Use]

**WQT Projects**

To filter this report, choose from the dropdown or enter a search word in the box below and click search. See Actions menu for formatting options.

Download

Q — Enter search word — Search

Select Report: 1. Primary Report

Rows: All Actions

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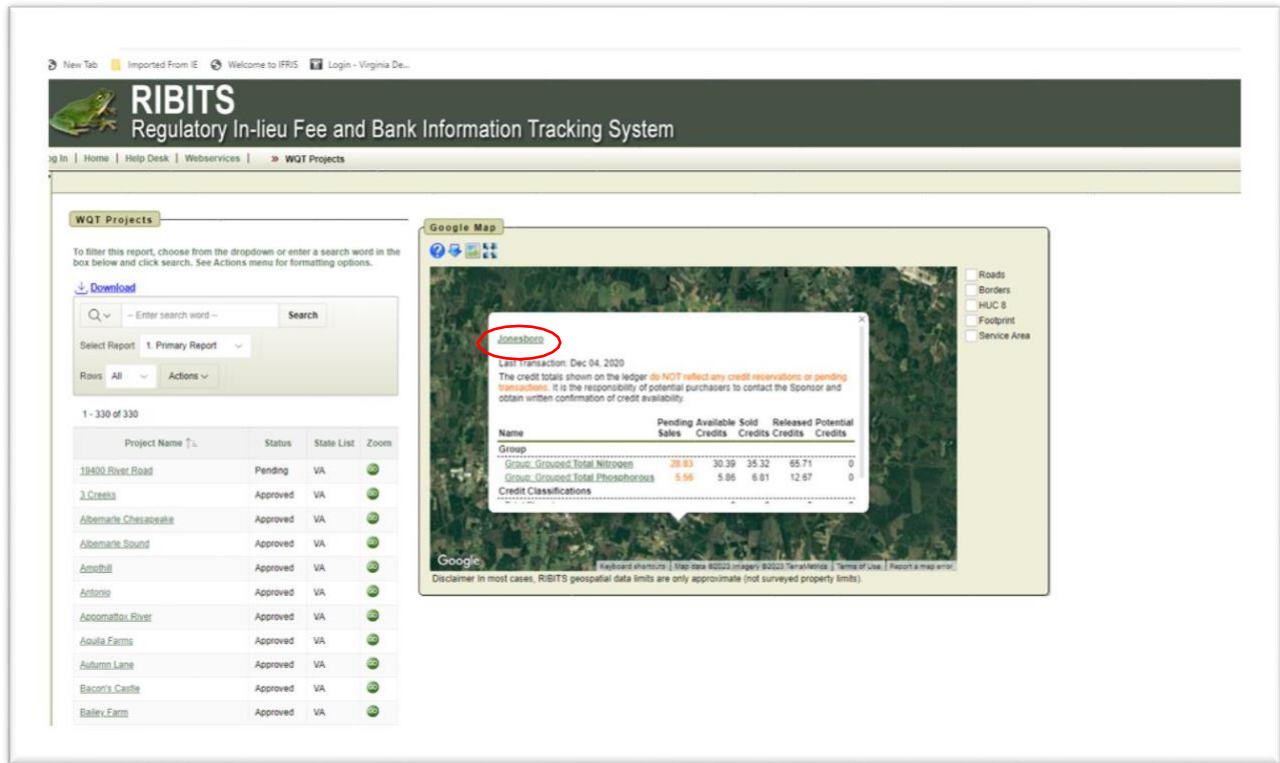
Project Name	Status	State List	Zoom
19400 River Road	Pending	VA	🔍
3 Creeks	Approved	VA	🔍
Albemarle Chesapeake	Approved	VA	🔍
Albemarle Sound	Approved	VA	🔍
Amthill	Approved	VA	🔍
Antonio	Approved	VA	🔍
Appomattox River	Approved	VA	🔍
Avails Farms	Approved	VA	🔍
Autumn Lane	Approved	VA	🔍
Bacon's Castle	Approved	VA	🔍
Balev Farm	Approved	VA	🔍

**Google Map**

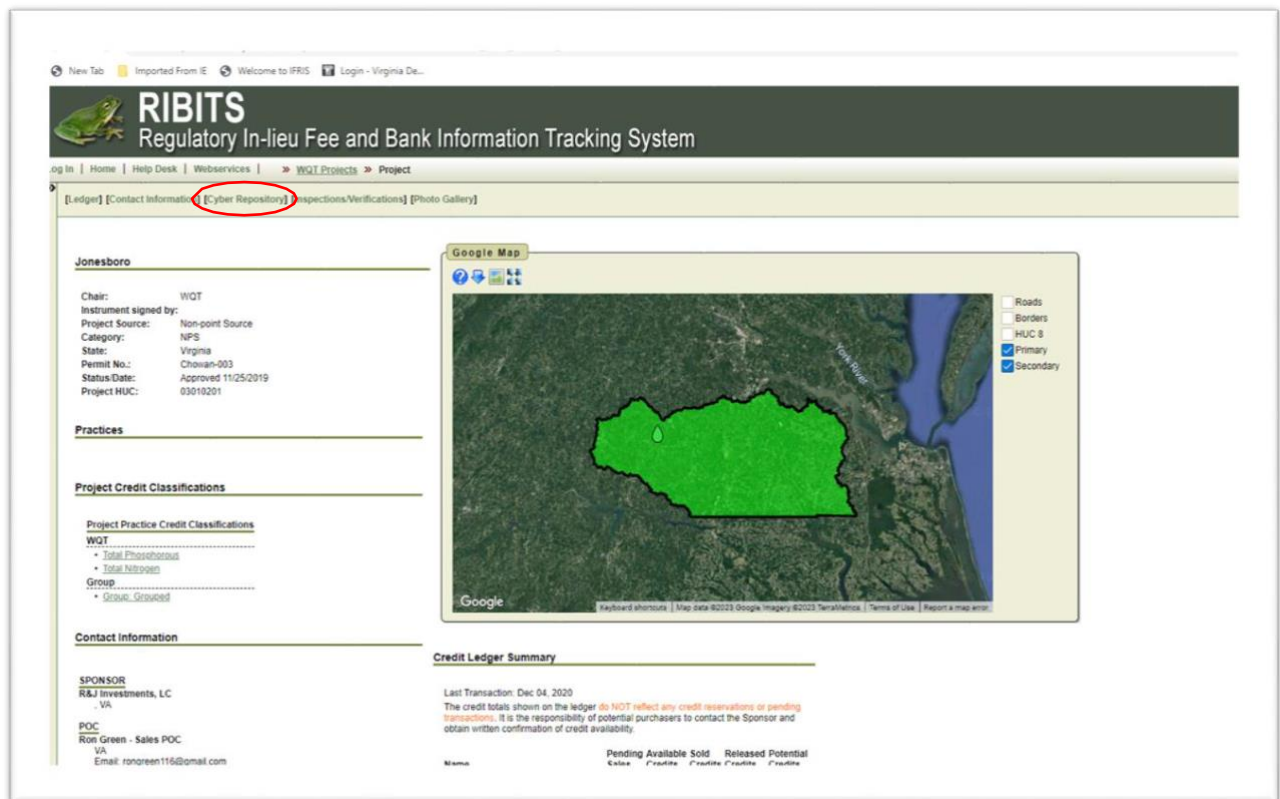
Roads  
 Borders  
 HUC 8  
 Footprint  
 Service Area

Google  
 Keyboard shortcuts | Map data ©2023 Imagery ©2023 TerraMetrics | Terms of Use | Report a map error  
 Disclaimer: In most cases, RIBITS geospatial data limits are only approximate (not surveyed property limits).

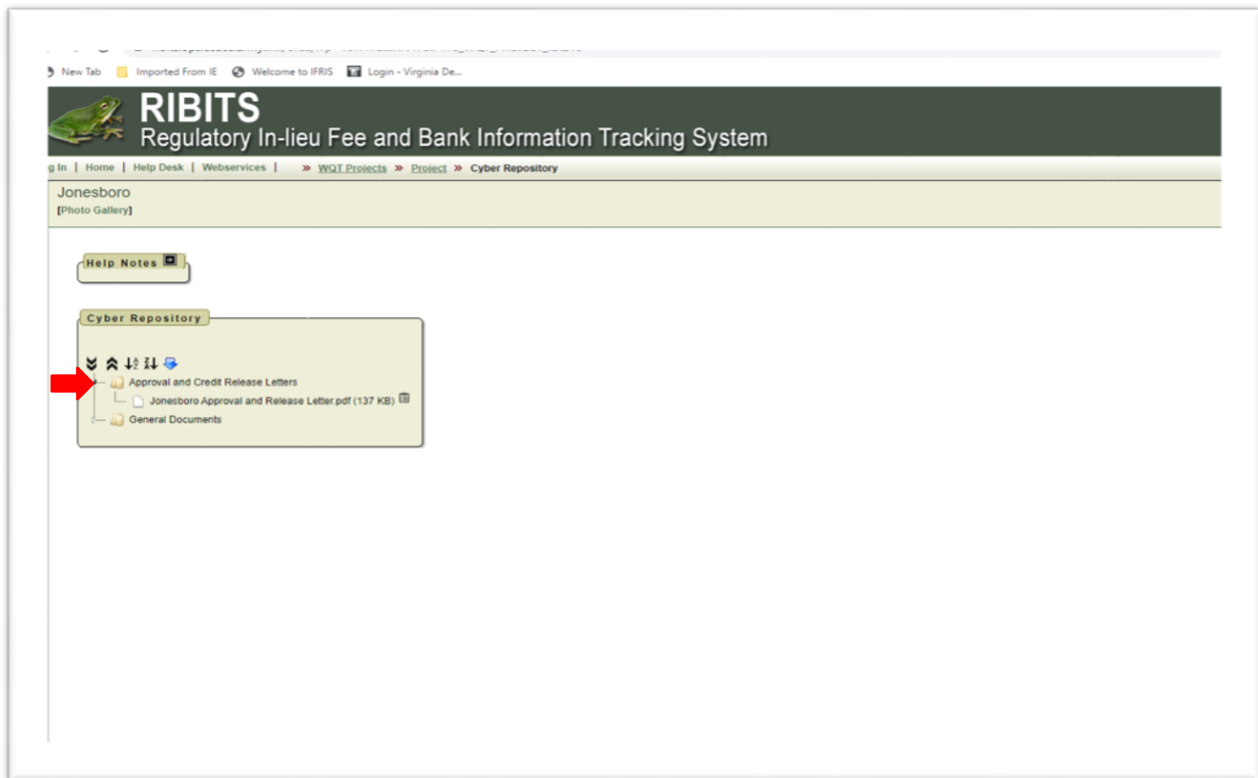
- Click on a teardrop and a pop-up window appears with basic details about the project. Click on the project name in the upper left corner of the pop-up window.



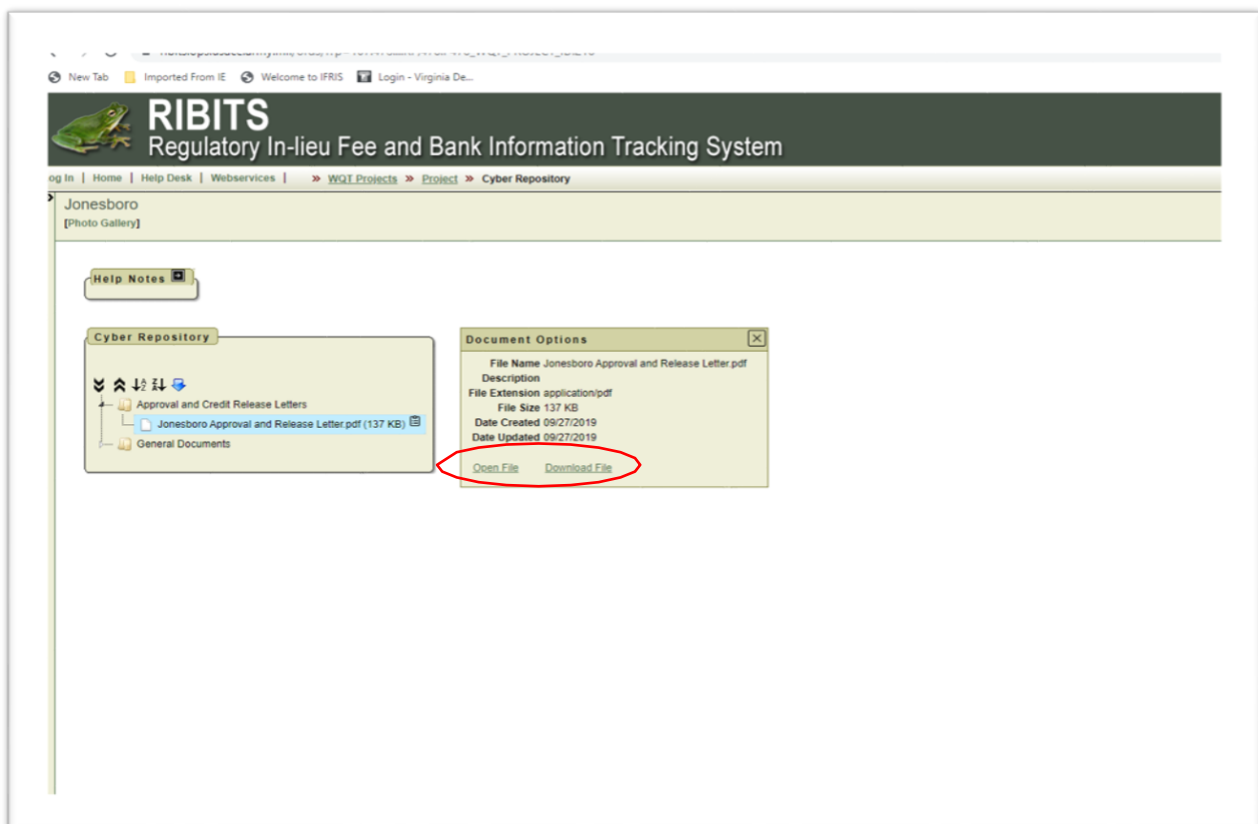
- A window will appear with more details about the project. In the upper left-hand side, click on **Cyber Repository**.



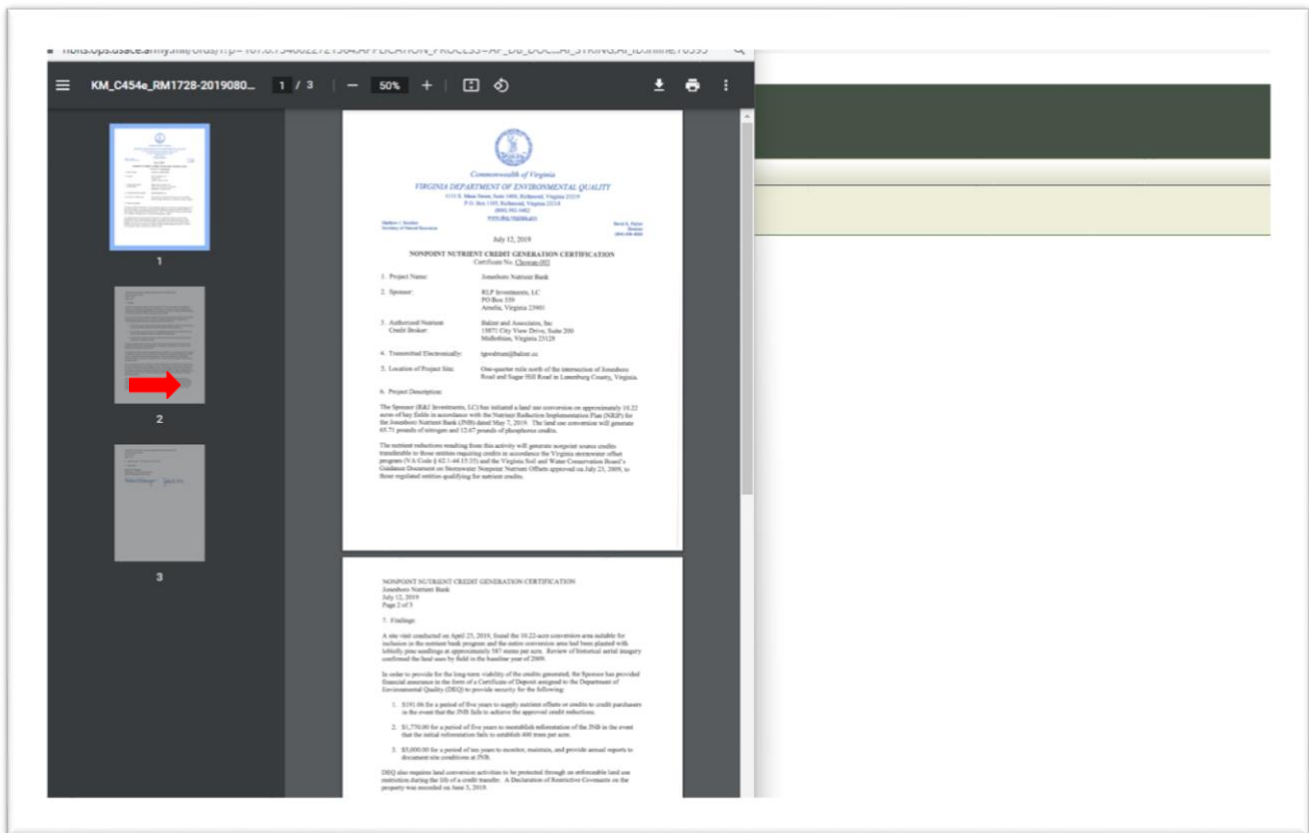
- Click on the small arrow to the left of "Approval and Credit Release Letters" and another document will appear below the folder.



- Click on the document to open another box with the option to **Open** or **Download** the file.



- Open the file, another window will open containing a PDF of the letter confirming the nutrient bank credit certification and details about the project.



## Additional Resources about Nutrient Bank Credits and Nutrient Trading

### Virginia Citizen's Guide to Environmental Credit Trading Programs: An Overview

<https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/ANR/ANR-173/ANR-173.html>

### Trading Nutrient Reductions from Nonpoint Source Best Management Practices in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Guidance for Agricultural Landowners and Your Potential Trading Partners

[http://nutrientcreditsva.com/images/DEQ\\_Nutrient-Trading-Manual.pdf](http://nutrientcreditsva.com/images/DEQ_Nutrient-Trading-Manual.pdf)

### Buying and Selling Nutrient Credits in Virginia

<https://thelandlawyers.com/buying-and-selling-nutrient-credits-in-virginia/>