

## *Watershed Stewards Academy March 2025 Newsletter*

Hello Watershed Stewards!

Please remember to enter your projects and volunteer hours into the WSA database and reporting system. Click [here](#) to log in!

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Click here for [WSA's Facebook Page!](#)

To access this private group from the main Facebook page, click on 'More' and then 'Group' to request to join the group.



### *Featured WSA Project*

#### Sweet Hours Way Success

The Sweet Hours Team, Pearl and Alan Seidman and Richard Love, undertook a three-part project to educate residents, engage students, and conduct a pull-and-plant to strengthen the riparian forest buffer on a stream segment in Dickinson. The area is part of Columbia Association's open space path off Sweet Hours Way near where Stream Waders and WSA annually measure water quality. The area is part of the [Green Infrastructure Network](#), a protected hub and corridor for the vitality of macroinvertebrates, pollinators, insects, wildlife, and people.

The first part of the project was a door-to-door, neighbor-to-neighbor awareness campaign about the health of the streams that immediately feed into the Middle Patuxent River. Literature was provided to more than 90 single family homes—to those who answered their door and those who didn't—about stream conditions, fertilizers and other chemicals, soil health, invasive plant replacement by natives, and Howard County and non-profit incentive programs and resources.

The team also engaged 9th grade biology students involved in the annual Watershed Report Card through the HCPSS Environmental Educator. Hands-on learning was meant to add knowledge about invasive identification and provide experience in invasive removal and replacement with natives while earning service credits.

Residents, students, and parents removed garlic mustard, Japanese barberry, and multiflora rose near the streambanks and on steep slopes leading to the stream. Twelve full-size yard waste bags were filled with invasives. Fifteen native trees and shrubs and dozens of perennials were planted to stabilize the streambanks, reduce sediment, absorb chemicals, and slow the flow of stormwater.

The pull-and-plant was immediately followed by a WSA-hosted barbecue with a highly attended non-point source demonstration. Information radiated; community came together. Those using the paths will find inspiration for deer-resistant natives that can thrive, attract pollinators, and increase biodiversity—a virtuous hydrological and ecological loop.

In October 2024, 15 residents and students expanded and continued to strengthen the riparian buffer. Work will continue in May 2025 with an invitation to Howard County 9th grade biology students and residents. Flourishing happens collaboratively- in community.



## *Continuing Education*

### **Flooding and Sea Level Rise Impacts to Wells and Septic Systems**

*Wednesday, March 19, 2025, 12 – 12:40 pm*

Seems we are hearing more about floods in recent years due to extreme weather and the damage they cause to buildings and road infrastructure. What we don't see often with flooding is the damage to underground systems such as wells or septic systems. In these situations, the damage can be to our health due to contamination. This webinar will discuss issues with increased flooding, the impacts to our home water and wastewater systems and strategies to reduce risks.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **WSA's 14th "Spring Into Action" Annual Conference**

*Saturday, March 1, 2025, 9 am – 4:30 pm*

*Location: Maritime Conference Center, 692 Maritime Blvd, Linthicum Heights*

Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA) is a non-profit organization training community leaders to drive change for sustainable landscapes and clean waters in Anne Arundel County (AACo) and we have a truly exciting conference planned for you this year!

This event is designed to explore topics most relevant to restoring communities and improving local waterways. Whether you're a Watershed Steward, stormwater professional, or just interested in environmental restoration, this conference has something for everyone!

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **The Woods in Your Backyard online course - Spring 2025**

*Monday, March 24 thru Monday, June 2, 2025*

Our self-directed, non-credit course runs 10 weeks. The online format lets you access the content when it's convenient for you, without worrying about attending evening classes or weekend workshops. The course will help landowners convert lawn to natural areas and enhance stewardship of existing natural areas. Based on the guide of the same name, the course provides strategies to landowners of small parcels of land (1-10 acres) that improve the stewardship of their property for personal enjoyment and environmental quality. It uses a hands-on learning approach to help participants develop and implement a plan for their property. Activities include how to map habitat areas, understand basic ecological principles about woodland and wildlife, choose and implement a few habitat management projects, and how to set a timetable and record your progress. Online discussion groups will allow participants to interact with others taking the course.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).



## ***Upcoming Events***

### **Wild & Scenic Film Festival**

*Tuesday-Thursday, March 4, 5 & 6, 2025*

A celebration of the connection between land and water. "Surf and Turf" embarks on a captivating journey from the inland mountains and headwater streams of the Chesapeake Bay watershed to the wide-open, salty expanse of the Bay itself.

This powerful environmental tale weaves together the healing power of nature, hope, and an unexpected alliance, showing us how two seemingly different worlds can unite for a shared cause.

Discover how we can all find a way to sit at the same table, share our stories, and strive together for clean air, clean water, and a brighter future.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **Croaks, Peep & Color: Exploring the World of Amphibian Communication**

*Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 7 – 8 pm*

Join Southern Maryland Audubon's Naturalist, Kerry Wixted will introduce us to the amazing variety of calls, scents and colors that frogs, toads and other amphibians use to engage with each other and other wildlife. Much of this talk's focus will be on amphibians in MD, but it will also cover unique species from around the world.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **CSN webinar: Adaptively Managing Beaver with an Eye Towards Protecting Infrastructure and Water Quality**

*Thursday, March 6, 2025, 12 – 1 pm*

Over the last decade or two, beavers have made an incredible rebound on the landscape throughout Maryland and the mid-Atlantic region. This has posed challenges, in terms of infrastructure and other human conflicts, but it also presents tremendous opportunities for our communities, the Chesapeake Bay, and its tributaries.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Patuxent Research Refuge: Film Screening “Flyways”**

*Friday, March 7 or April 4, 2025, 5 pm - 7 pm*

*Location: 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop, Laurel*

This event will be preceded by an exhibit tour by Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps member William O’Boyle starting at 4:15 in the National Wildlife Visitor Center’s main lobby.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Volunteers Needed: Bay Invaders/Anne Arundel Co. Recreation & Parks, AA Co. Public Schools**

*Monday, March 10 thru April 10, 2025*

The award-winning Bay Invaders program is back for it’s 7th year of supporting 9th grade Environmental Science students in Anne Arundel County, Maryland with learning about and removing invasive plant species from our local parks. We are seeking volunteers who wish to help teens disconnect from technology and reconnect through the natural while also learning how to be stewards for nature.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Walk & Talk with Forester and Author Ethan Tapper**

*Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 5pm – 6:30pm*

*Location: Hawkins Road Trailhead, Bacon Ridge Natural Area, Crownsville*

Tapper, the author of the recently released *How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World*, which challenges us to rethink our relationship with forests, will lead an intimate and thought-provoking walk through the conserved portion of Bacon Ridge Natural Area. As we explore the trails, he will share his insights into the hidden complexities of forests—their resilience, their fragility, and the surprising ways we can help them thrive.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Faithful Green Leaders Training**

*Tuesdays, March 11th, 18th, and 25th, 7 - 8:30pm*

Learn how to establish and grow a green team at your congregation, learn about exciting environmental education programs to engage your congregation, learn how to develop an action plan for your Green Team and ways to enhance your communication skills to help spread the word.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).



## **Implementing Climate Resilient Living Shorelines in Maryland**

*Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 12 - 1:30pm*

This webinar will cover the history of shoreline erosion control practices and how traditional techniques have evolved in recent years. What is a 'living shoreline'? How can we enhance habitat, water quality, access, and prepare for climate impacts at the same time? We will cover the Shoreline Conservation Service and discuss which technical and financial assistance opportunities are currently available through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Ospreys on the Patuxent**

*Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 7 pm*

Join us to learn about ospreys, the often-seen “fish hawk” of local rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, with Patuxent River Park's senior naturalist Greg Kearns. Roughly one-fourth of the ospreys in the continental U.S. nest in Chesapeake Bay. But the birds suffered massive declines in the 1950s and 60s due to widespread use of the pesticide DDT. In this talk, Kearns will discuss osprey biology, his banding program with the public, reintroduction efforts, how this once-imperiled bird became a conservation success story and how ospreys are doing today. Part of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center's 60th anniversary webinar series.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Neighbors for Native Plants course, hosted by NeighborSpace of Baltimore County**

The Neighbors for Native Plants training course educates participants on the ecological significance of native plants in supporting native wildlife and fostering healthy ecosystems. The curriculum covers topics such as identifying native and invasive plants and provides practical instruction on removing and properly disposing of invasive species.

### **Class Schedule**

- Saturday, March 22nd, 9-12 at Irvine Nature Center
- Saturday, March 29th, 9-12 at Irvine Nature Center
- Saturday, April 5th, 9-12 at Tollgate Wyndham Preserve

### **Select ONE Field Practical**

- Option #1 - April 12th, 9-12 at Tollgate Wyndham Preserve Practical
- Option #2 - May 3rd, 9-12 at Tollgate Wyndham Preserve

Tollgate Wyndham Preserve is located in Owings Mills, adjacent to Owings Mills Elementary School

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

## **Story Hike: Spring is a Hoot!**

*Saturday, March 29, 1-2:30pm*

Join us for a family-friendly Story Hike, with Anne Arundel County Public Libraries! Meet an owl ambassador from the Owl Moon Raptor Center and enjoy a short story at SERC's Reed Center. Then search for signs of owls while hiking a SERC trail. Registration opens March 15.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **Project Clean Stream Cape St Claire**

*Saturday, April 5, 2025, 9am – 12pm*

*Location: 1380 Cape St Claire Rd, Annapolis*

We will divide up into teams to work on several Cape locations.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **Tidy Up Talbot**

*Saturday, April 5, 2025, 9am – 1pm*

*Location: 672 West Glenwood Avenue, Easton*

A trash clean-up day to tidy up Talbot's parks, streets, and waterfronts, to turn our community into a cleaner, greener, and more beautiful place for everyone!

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **Maryland Osprey and Nature Festival**

*Saturday, April 5, 2025, 10 am – 4 pm*

*Location: North Beach, MD*

If you love birds, wildlife, and nature, or just want to learn more, please come out and be a part of this wonderful Festival for a great cause. It is an event for the entire family and people of all ages. See a live raptor up close, enjoy vendors on the boardwalk, meet Oscar the Osprey and get a selfie, and move through the child-focused nature activity stations, take part in the lecture series.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **Project Clean Stream – Jug Bay**

*Saturday, April 5, 2025, 10 am – 1 pm*

*Location: Patuxent Wetland Park, 1426 Mt. Zion Marlboro Road, Lothian*

For the 5th year, Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary is partnering with Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay for Project Clean Stream. Every year, thousands of volunteers come together to pick up trash from local streams, creeks, rivers, parks, and neighborhoods as part of the Alliance's Project Clean Stream! Join Volunteer Coordinator Debra Gage to pick up trash along the Patuxent River at our Patuxent Wetland Park. We will collect trash on the mile long stretch of shoreline and parking area to ensure safe fishing, paddling, and habitat.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

### **Earth Day Kayak Cleanup at North East River**

*Saturday, April 26, 2025, 8:30 am - 12:00 pm*

*Location: 219 W Walnut St, North East, MD*

We will be kicking off The High 5 Initiative Cleanup season again to celebrate Earth Day for our 5th annual Earth Day Kayak Cleanup at North East River! Volunteers will be using kayaks to clean out the area of marsh across from North East Community Park again before it starts growing too thick.

For more information or to register, click [here](#).



## ***Funding and Material Support***

### **Urban Trees Grant Program - Chesapeake Bay Trust and 5 Million Trees for Maryland**

*Virtual Information Session: Friday, Feb. 14, 2025, 12-1pm*

*Deadline: Thursday, March 6, 2025*

We welcome requests for tree planting projects in urban underserved communities. The goal of the Urban Trees Grant Program is to green communities; enhance quality of life, human health, and community livability by improving air quality, and reducing urban heat island effect; and mitigate some of the effects of climate change.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **Chesapeake Bay Trust - Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant**

*Deadline: Rolling*

Funds activities such as tree plantings, rain gardens, stream cleanups, and storm drain stenciling.

To see a longer list of potential projects, read the full Request for Proposals (RFP).

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **Maryland Native Plant Society Research Grants**

*Deadline: Monday, March 31, 2025*

The Maryland Native Plant Society is funding research grants of up to \$4,000 for empirical, hypothesis-driven research relevant to Maryland's native plants. Projects that concern plants or habitats outside Maryland will be considered if the project results will add to the body of knowledge about plants and habitats in Maryland, or if an appreciable portion of the plant specimens or research sites come from or are located in Maryland. The project may also concern the effects of invasive non-native plants on Maryland native plants and habitats.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **Unity Gardens Spring Grant**

*Deadline: February 28, 2025*

Unity Gardens will be awarding grants to community organizations in Anne Arundel County, Maryland for the installation of native plant gardens. Awards are granted to homeowners associations, faith-based organizations, school and scout groups, parks and public spaces, garden clubs and other qualified non-profit groups.

Two types of grants are available – one, our “classic” grant of up to \$1000 for the installation of native gardens with any mix of plant types, and second, a larger “super grant” of up to \$3000 for plantings comprised primarily of native trees and shrubs. These Super Grants are a recent addition to our grant program and reflect both the importance and additional costs of adding more native trees and shrubs to our landscapes.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program**

*Deadline: Monday, March 10, 2025*

The Chesapeake Bay Trust, US EPA Region III, Chesapeake Bay Program, and WV DEP are excited to announce that the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Grant Program is now open!

This grant program aims to help communities: Reduce stormwater runoff, Increase urban green spaces,

Improve local water health and the Chesapeake Bay, and Enhance community quality of life and livability. Example projects include green streets, rain gardens, green roofs, pollinator gardens, white papers/tools on green infrastructure, and more!

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **The Chesapeake Bay Trust's Anne Arundel County Watershed Restoration Grant Program is Now Open!**

*Deadline: Thursday, March 20, 2025*

The Anne Arundel County Watershed Restoration Grant Program is a partnership between the Trust, the Anne Arundel County Bureau of Watershed Protection and Restoration, and the City of Annapolis. This program will fund projects to reduce pollutants through the implementation of watershed restoration practices. Projects must accomplish on-the-ground restoration that treats rainwater runoff from impervious surfaces at a cost-effective price or demonstrate the accomplishment of another metric that will help the County and City meet local water quality and runoff reduction improvement goals. Applications under this award program that demonstrate sound design and cost efficiency in meeting this goal will be most competitive. To demonstrate this, applicants will be required to provide sound technical designs and project budgets.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **Chesapeake Bay Trust - Community Engagement Mini Grant**

*Deadline: Rolling*

Designed to support activities that enhance communities, engage residents, and improve natural resources. They fund small-scale activities such as tree plantings, rain gardens, stream cleanups, and storm drain stenciling, among others.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

### **Chesapeake Bay Trust Grants and Opportunities**

The Chesapeake Bay Trust's grant-making strategies are shaped by three core objectives; environmental education, demonstration-based restoration, and community engagement. We look to these objectives as basic touchstones for developing our programs, engaging new partners, and communicating about our work.

Click here for more information or to apply, click [here](#).



### ***Employment Opportunities***

[Water Resources Engineer](#) | Biohabitats (Baltimore, MD)

[Landscape Design Intern](#) | Arterra Landscapes

[Administrative Assistant](#) | Arterra Landscapes

[Assistant Landscape Designer](#) | Arterra Landscapes



[CRC Environmental Management Staffer](#) | Water Quality Team

[Pumpout Boat Operator](#) | ShoreRivers

[Natural History Collections Management Intern](#) | Natural History Society of Maryland

[Program Manager, Watershed Resilience](#) | Maryland DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Service Unit (CCS)

[Climate Resilience Program Lead \(Natural Resources Planner V\)](#) | MD DNR, Chesapeake & Coastal Services

[Preschool Director](#) | Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park (AMM)

[CRC Environmental Management Staffer](#) | Water Quality Goal Team – Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC)

[Chesapeake Bay Program Multimedia Intern](#) | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (Chesapeake Bay Program)

[Youth Programs Assistant](#) | Casey Trees

[Executive Director](#) | Rock Creek Conservancy, Bethesda

[Resource Analysis Program Assistant Positions](#) | Montgomery Parks

[Chesapeake Bay Program Multimedia Intern](#) | The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

[Chesapeake Geospatial Project Manager](#) | Chesapeake Conservancy

[Manager III \(Monitoring and Planning Section Chief\), Grade M3](#) | Mont. Co Gov Dept of Environ. Protection

[Robinson Nature Center Early Childhood Programs Educator](#) | Howard County Government

[President and CEO](#) | Chesapeake Conservancy

[EcoCamp Counselor](#) | Pickering Creek Audubon Center

[Director, Tree Operations](#) | Casey Trees

[DC Green Infrastructure Outreach Specialist](#) | The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay