

Watershed Stewards Academy December 2025 Newsletter

Happy Holidays!

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.



Continuing Education

2025 Forestry and Natural Resources webinar

Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 12pm - 1pm

Please join Dr. Daniel Pratson, Natural Resources Extension Specialist with University of Maryland. Through this webinar, you'll learn about some of the ways Maryland communities value, manage, and interact with forests. Attendance is free, but registration is required. This webinar is for anyone interested in learning more about forest resources in Maryland.

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

Salinization of our Waters – What Can We Do - UME's Andy Lazur

Wednesday, December 17, 2025, 12 pm - 12:40 pm

The use of deicing salts and rising sea level is increasingly making our surface and ground water more saline. This issue has major implications on aquatic ecosystems and the numerous species that depend on them. In addition, increasing salinity can increase corrosion with subsequent infrastructure damage and releasing toxic metals in our drinking water. This webinar will discuss the impact of this issue, ways to reduce impacts and protect drinking water quality.

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



Upcoming Events

Dark Skies, Bright Future Webinar

Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 7pm

Join Sustainability Matters on Giving Tuesday for a webinar on the effects of artificial light on wildlife. Excessive artificial light doesn't just hide the stars, it impacts wildlife, human health, and the character of our communities. In this enlightening webinar, we'll explore the importance of dark skies and how reducing light pollution benefits both people and the planet.

Hear from experts who have passionately worked with their local communities to promote dark sky advocacy and implement practical protections. They'll share their experiences, lessons learned, and tips for getting started in your own neighborhood. Join us to learn how small lighting changes can have a big impact on preserving our natural nightscape and creating healthier, more sustainable communities.

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

GivingTuesday Healthy Forests Workday with Scenic Rivers, Save Our Trees, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Tuesday, 12/02/2025, 10am - 12pm

Location: Philip Merrill Environmental Center, Herndon Avenue, Annapolis

Give back on the most generous day of the year: This year, Scenic Rivers is partnering with Save Our Trees and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for a day of action! Join us for a special Healthy Forests workday dedicated to removing English ivy from the trees on one of Scenic Rivers' conservation easements—the Philip Merrill Environmental Center campus!

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

ICPRB's 85th Anniversary Webinar Series

Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 11am - 12pm

Tuesday, December 9, 2025, 11am - 12pm

The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin is celebrating 85 years of protecting and preserving the Potomac River watershed. Much has happened since ICPRB was authorized by Congress in 1940, so please join us for this webinar series highlighting the past, present, and future of our nation's river.

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

First Saturdays – Invasive Plant Management Workdays (Washington, DC)

Saturdays, 12/6/25, 1/3/26, 2/7/26 & 3/7/26, 10 am - 12:30 pm

Join DOEE staff to remove invasive plants near the entrance of Kingman + Heritage Islands and the Anacostia River Trail on the First Saturday of each month. DOEE will provide tools, gloves, and instruction. Please wear closed-toe shoes and long pants, and bring water, sunscreen, and bug spray. We will meet at the RFK Lot 6 entrance to Kingman + Heritage Islands (575 Oklahoma Ave NE).

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

Webinar: 20 years of Raingarden Research (virtual)

Thursday, December 11, 2025, 12 - 1 pm

The Stormwater Committee of the Chesapeake Water Environment Association invites you to join us at our fall webinar. Dr. Robert Traver of Villanova University will present his findings of over 20 years of research into raingardens. 1 PDH. \$10 fee for non-members. Free for members with the code MEMBER24. Schedule a watch party and join us!

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

Level 1 CBLP Training Winter Schedule

We're excited to announce that registration is now open for Level 1 Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP) training! This program provides a strong foundation in sustainable landscaping, stormwater management, and ecological practices.

Winter 2026 Training Dates & Locations:

February 4–5 – Arlington, VA

February 19–20 – Lancaster, PA

February 25–26 – Norfolk, VA

March 3–4 – Annapolis, MD

March 10–11 – Charlottesville, VA

March 17–18 – Baltimore, MD

Hybrid Option:

Online sessions January 27–28

(Participants also attend one in-person field day of their choice.)

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



Funding and Material Support

Jones Falls Watershed - Healthy Environment, Healthy Communities Grant Program

Deadline: Thursday, March 5, 2026

The Chesapeake Bay Trust and partners, Blue Water Baltimore, are excited to announce the Jones Falls Watershed Healthy Environment, Healthy Communities Grant Program is open! This program will support restoration projects in the Jones Falls Watershed.

Eligible Project Types:

Applicants can request funds for project types that fall into one of the following:

- Environmental action projects that improve the environment/natural resources in the community Watershed/environmental restoration projects
- Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, community, homeowners, and/or neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations, service, youth, and civic groups, and more.

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

Chesapeake Bay Trust- Anne Arundel County Watershed Restoration & Forestry Grant Program

Deadline: Friday, February 27, 2026

This grant program supports the reduction of pollutants flowing into our local waterways, implementation of cost-effective reforestation and greening efforts, and the increase of protected forested land.

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

Urban Trees Mini Grant Program is now open – Chesapeake Bay Trust and 5 million Trees for Maryland

Deadline: Rolling

The Urban Trees Mini Grant Program is part of the Maryland General Assembly's initiative to plant 5,000,000 native trees across the state by 2031. This grant program welcomes requests for tree planting projects in urban, underserved communities that cost up to \$10,000. The Urban Trees Mini Grant Program aims to empower communities with the resources they need to plant trees, and thereby transform their neighborhoods into healthier, greener environments for current and future generations. Local governments, non-profit organizations, community and homeowner associations, faith-based organizations, and more are encouraged to apply.

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

Chesapeake Bay Trust - Community Engagement and Restoration 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. To see a longer list of potential projects, read the full Request for Proposals (RFP).

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](#).



Other Items of Interest

Chesapeake Guardian Award Nominations

The Chesapeake Community Modeling Program (CCMP) is soliciting nominations for the 2026 Guardian Award. Individuals nominated should have made significant and selfless contributions to the research, management and policy maker communities in Chesapeake Bay and/or its watershed. The nominee should have demonstrated sustained contributions. A worthy recipient might also be someone who has influenced Chesapeake research and/or management via teaching and training. Efforts in support of community and open source databases and models are also valued.

Please submit nominations for the 2026 Chesapeake Guardian Award to Raleigh Hood (rhood@umces.edu) by December 15, 2025. The nomination should include a brief nominating letter (no longer than one page) that summarizes the nominee's contributions.

A subcommittee of the CCMP will evaluate the nominations and select the award recipient. The awardee will be identified by the 1st of March, 2026.

2025 Potomac River Report Card with a new grade

Potomac Conservancy is thrilled to announce our 2025 Potomac Report Card Grade! The Potomac has received a “B” in overall health. The river’s improved significantly from when it received a dismal “D” back in 2011, but its progress has stalled, and it’s still unsafe for swimming and fish consumption. We’re raising awareness that we can get the Potomac to an “A” in the next decade by strengthening our natural defenses against pollution and climate impacts.

The Potomac’s comeback is real — but fragile.

🌿 Pollution is down

🌲 Forest protection is up

🌧️ Urban polluted runoff is up

🐟 Fish are struggling

Read the [full report here](#).



Employment Opportunities

[Watershed Restoration Specialist Lower Eastern Shore- TTK ENR Agent](#) | University of Maryland Extension

[Community Engagement Coordinator](#) | JBO Conservation

[Project Controls Specialist](#) | Underwood & Associates (U&A)

[Watershed Restoration – Natural Resource Supervisor](#) | Baltimore Co. Dept of Env. Protection and Sustainability

[Executive Director](#) | Chesapeake Research Consortium

[Vice President of Development & Strategic Partnerships](#) | Chesapeake Conservancy

[Donor Engagement Coordinator](#) | Rock Creek Conservancy

[Forest Resilience Manager](#) | Rock Creek Conservancy

[Chesapeake Bay Trust](#) | Director of Development

[Director of Administration and Finance](#) | The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB)

[GIS Intern](#) | Casey Trees

[Program Coordinator](#) | Maryland Coastal Bays Program

[Chesapeake Gateways Ambassador](#) | National Park Service

[Youth Programs Assistant](#) | Casey Trees

[Horticulture Foreman](#) | Casey Trees

[Urban Forestry Foreman](#) | Casey Trees

[Clagett Farm Program Manager](#) | Chesapeake Bay Foundation

[Master Shipwright](#) | Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

[Boat Builder / Shipwright II](#) | Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

[Project Specialist, Community Flooding](#) | University of Maryland Extension

[Executive Director](#) | Chesapeake Research Consortium