

Shorelines

Saving the Chesapeake's Great Rivers and Special Places

Spread Your Wings

Where do you measure up?

Abre Tus Alas

Dónde Mides?



New Bilingual Nature Center at Sandy Point State Park

PHOTO OF MARYLAND LT. GOVERNOR BOYD RUTHERFORD

COURTESY OF MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

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Mission

The Chesapeake Conservancy's mission is to conserve and restore the natural and cultural resources of the Chesapeake Bay watershed for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. We serve as a catalyst for change, advancing strong public and private partnerships, developing and using new technology and empowering environmental stewardship.

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From the President & CEO

Save Greenbury Point: A Call to Action

In this issue of Shorelines, we celebrate several conservation success stories and share efforts to increase public access to the Chesapeake for everyone.

And while we celebrate these wins, we also struggle to protect what already seems conserved. We won't stand by and let a place that is now available for everyone to recreate become a place for the elite few. We won't stand by and let a vital wildlife habitat fall victim to another environmentally harmful golf course.

Greenbury Point Conservation Area is a 280-acre parcel in Annapolis, Maryland, managed by the U.S. Navy, located across the Severn River from the U.S. Naval Academy and bordering the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. If you have visited Annapolis, you may recognize the three iconic radio towers that still stand on the property which were once used to communicate with submarines. Today, as one of the last remaining natural areas on the Severn River, Greenbury Point Conservation Area is a popular public destination for nature lovers, runners, anglers and dog walkers. It is also the site of hundreds of mitigation tree plantings where the Navy compensates for environmental harm done elsewhere.

Greenbury Point Conservation Area is adjacent to the recently renovated U.S. Naval Academy Golf Course, where private memberships sell for nearly \$25,000.

Despite being 100% within the boundary of the Maryland Critical Area, designated by the state as crucial to the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and despite a significant array of wetlands, Greenbury Point Conservation Area faces an immediate risk for development into another exclusive golf course as proposed by the nonprofit Naval Academy Golf Association.

In the face of climate change and the Biden administration's admirable goal of protecting 30% of our lands and waters through the America the Beautiful initiative, it is astonishing that the U.S. Navy, a signatory to the Chesapeake Watershed Agreement and an incredible conservation partner in the Chesapeake, would even consider this request to unconserved land for development of a second nonpublic golf course, but it is.

Chesapeake Conservancy needs your help. Please consider taking the following actions:

- 1) Sign the petition sponsored by Chesapeake Conservancy and Severn River Association at www.change.org/p/save-greenbury-point and share the petition with your networks.
- 2) Join the grassroots efforts and stay informed by joining "Save Greenbury Point" on Facebook.
- 3) Write to U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen and U.S. Representatives Dutch Ruppersberger and John Sarbanes.

We—and future generations—thank you.

Sincerely,



JOEL E. DUNN, President and CEO



Greenbury Point Conservation Area
PHOTO BY DAVID SITES

P.S. In this issue, we unveil our new logo! I hope you like our fresh, bold new look. Stay tuned for opportunities to purchase new merchandise to show your support for Chesapeake Conservancy.

New Annapolis Waterfont Park Celebrates Black History

In August, the City of Annapolis, Maryland, and Blacks of the Chesapeake Foundation (BOCF) co-hosted a property deed transfer ceremony in partnership with federal and state officials, Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, The Conservation Fund (TCF) and Chesapeake Conservancy to complete the acquisition of a 5.17-acre waterfront parcel on the Chesapeake Bay important to Black history, culture and heritage.

Elktonia Beach is the last remnant of the original 180-acre property purchased by Fred Carr in 1902. Nearby Sparrow's and Carr's Beaches were privately owned and operated by Fred Carr's daughters, Elizabeth Carr Smith and Florence Carr Sparrow. The "Beaches" (1930s-1970s), as they were called,

represented the heart of Black entertainment throughout the mid-Atlantic region and welcomed Blacks during a time of segregation.

The State of Maryland contributed \$4.87 million to the purchase through multiple funding sources including the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space. Additionally, BOCF received a \$1.2 million Parks & Playgrounds Infrastructure Grant from the state dedicated to the purchase of the waterfront park, through the efforts of State Sen. Sarah Elfreth. The efforts of U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin obtained an additional \$2 million in federal funding through the National Park Service to complete planning and design work for the park.

Chesapeake Conservancy is proud to partner with TCF and BOCF, the latter of which worked tirelessly for 15 years to make this dream become a reality.



From left to right: Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman, Maryland Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, Blacks of the Chesapeake President and Founder Vince Leggett, Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn and Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley PHOTO BY ANNE DELANO WEATHERSBY/PLAY BACK SHOTS

Grant Awarded for New Waterfront Promenade in Cambridge



PHOTO BY S. PAKHRIN

With the help of U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a \$2.4 million grant to Chesapeake Conservancy for the development of infrastructure that will attract tourists to Cambridge, Maryland.

Funded by the American Rescue Plan, this project will support the redevelopment of the Cambridge waterfront through the construction of a new promenade and other improvements. This EDA grant will be matched with \$600,000 in local funds and is expected to help create 73 jobs, retain 7 jobs and generate \$20 million in private investments.

CHESAPEAKE BAY PADDLE

Thank you,
Bay Paddlers!

The third annual Bay Paddle, held August 27-28, 2022, raised more than \$46,000 to benefit Oyster Recovery Partnership, Chesapeake Conservancy and Waterkeepers Chesapeake. The 45-mile, 2-day, staged paddle race on the Chesapeake Bay began at Haven Harbour South Marina in Rock Hall and finished in Cambridge, Maryland.

Since 2020, Bay Paddle has raised over \$330,000 in charitable donations. Chesapeake Conservancy extends heartfelt gratitude to Bay Paddle Founder Chris Hopkinson; Bay Paddle 2022 sponsors Tito's Handmade Vodka, Pacifico and Ørsted; and this year's Bay Paddlers!

PHOTO BY DEVIN CONWAY/410 FILMS





Sandy Point State Park: A Model for an Inclusive Park

Chesapeake Conservancy Receives “Partner of the Year Award”

Maryland Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford cuts the ribbon with other officials and partners at Sandy Point Nature Center opening. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Visitors to one of Maryland's most popular parks will now be able to learn about the Chesapeake Bay and its ecosystem at the new Sandy Point State Park Nature Center. The center features a Chesapeake Bay-themed playground and a redeveloped plaza.

The nature center, located a few miles east of Annapolis, Maryland, was developed in partnership with Chesapeake Conservancy and the National Park Service (NPS) and provides educational opportunities about flora and fauna native to the Bay. Part of \$2.5 million in ongoing investments at the park, the center will offer information on how the public can protect the Bay from the effects of pollution and climate change. Chesapeake Conservancy worked with the Maryland Park Service to outfit the Sandy Point State Park Nature Center with bilingual interpretive materials.

The Maryland Park Advisory Commission honored Chesapeake Conservancy with its prestigious “Partner of the Year Award,” for efforts to create more inclusive park experiences for Spanish-speaking visitors, led by the Conservancy's Manager of Equity and Community Engagement Gabrielle Roffe. Chesapeake Conservancy partners with Maryland's Department of Natural Resources

(MD DNR) on the agency's efforts to improve facilities as the number of visitors is increasing at parks and also to improve programming through the “Es Mi Parque” program.

“We are grateful to Governor Larry Hogan's administration for leadership in enhancing the visitor experience at Sandy Point State Park, including a bilingual nature center,” said Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn. “This is a great example of how the Maryland State Parks, National Park Service and nonprofit organizations can work together to engage the next generation in conservation.”

Bilingual Ranger Program

Since 2019, a collaborative partnership among NPS, Chesapeake Conservancy, MD DNR, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration emerged to fund two bilingual interpretive outreach assistant positions based at Sandy Point State Park to provide translation services and develop programming to better engage the Latinx community.

The program has expanded to include multiple positions that are based in several state parks in Maryland.

Chesapeake Conservancy is currently working to install equipment in the new nature center that will feature “Tom & Audrey,” an osprey couple that nests just across the Bay on Kent Island. A wildlife webcam made possible by a partnership of The Crazy Osprey Family, explore.org and Chesapeake Conservancy has featured the osprey pair each nesting season since 2012.



Chesapeake Conservancy Executive Vice President Mark Conway and Manager of Equity and Community Engagement Gabrielle Roffe celebrate at the nature center ribbon cutting. PHOTO BY MICHAEL BOWMAN

Open Space Honorees

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, Maryland State Senator Sarah Elfreth and Maryland State Delegate Eric Luedtke received special honors from Partners for Open Space, a statewide coalition of environmental, agricultural, recreation and historic preservation organizations and the Maryland Association of County Park and Recreation Administrators (MACPRA) for their exemplary conservation leadership.



From left to right: Director of Wicomico County Parks, Recreation and Tourism & President of MACPRA Steve Miller, Co-Chair of Partners for Open Space & Executive Director of Rural Maryland Charlotte Davis, Maryland State Delegate Eric G. Luedtke
PHOTO BY REED PERRY



From left to right: Maryland Secretary of Natural Resources Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Co-Chair of Partners for Open Space & Chesapeake Conservancy President & CEO Joel Dunn, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, Co-Chair of Partners for Open Space & Executive Director of Rural Maryland Charlotte Davis, Calvert County Parks & Recreation Director Shannon Nazzari
COURTESY PHOTO



From left to right, back row: Akil Leggett, Jr., “AJ” (grandson of Vince Leggett); Director of Wicomico County Parks, Recreation and Tourism & President of MACPRA Steve Miller. *Front row:* Co-Chair of Partners for Open Space & Executive Director of Rural Maryland Charlotte Davis, Maryland Senator Sarah Elfreth, Co-Chair of Partners for Open Space & Chesapeake Conservancy President & CEO Joel Dunn, Founder and President of Blacks of the Chesapeake Foundation Vince Leggett
PHOTO BY JODY COUSER

USDA Grant Boosts Pennsylvania Effort

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded nearly \$10 million through its Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to Chesapeake Conservancy’s project to rapidly restore agriculturally impaired streams in Pennsylvania.

In April 2021, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf announced support for the “30 x 30” goal to restore 30 streams by 2030. The new grant significantly boosts this effort. The Conservancy and 21 partners will work with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation

Service (NRCS) to accelerate work along 18 streams in six central Pennsylvania counties. More than 30 agricultural producers stand ready to implement conservation projects, addressing water quality and wildlife habitat concerns for waterways listed as impaired under the Clean Water Act.

Additional work is underway in Lancaster County toward the 30 x 30 goal, also funded by RCPP through a 2021 award led by Lancaster Clean Water Partners for \$7.4 million.

“We are grateful to our partners who adopted this data-driven strategy, lining up projects to support farmers with conservation that will bring fish and bugs back to local streams,” said Chesapeake Conservancy Program Manager Carly Dean. “This project has come so far since its inception in the fall of 2019, and we’re thrilled that it was selected for an RCPP award.”

In August, U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) joined Chesapeake Conservancy, PA Natural Resources Conservation Service, ClearWater Conservancy and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy for a tour of a stream buffer restoration project on a farm owned by Tom Brodzina in Warriors Mark Run, Pennsylvania. The partners shared information about the rapid stream delisting effort in Pennsylvania.

U.S. Senator Bob Casey, Tom Brodzina, a farm owner, and Chesapeake Conservancy Senior Project Manager Adrienne Gemberling
PHOTO BY ANDREA J. MURRELL/CLEARWATER CONSERVANCY

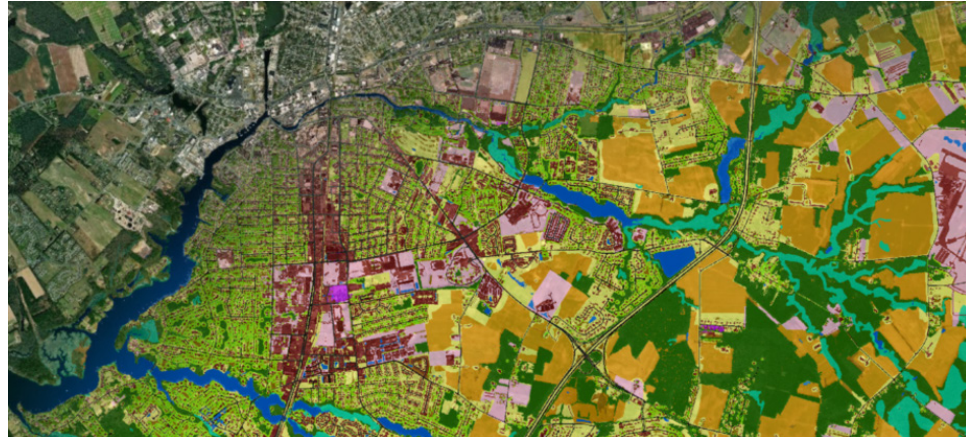


Very High-Resolution Land Use/Land Cover and Change Data Roll Out

In December 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program released the Chesapeake Bay High-Resolution Land Use/Land Cover Data Project. For 10 months, Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center (CIC) geospatial data analysts and project partners from the University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab and Worldview Solutions Inc. worked to produce one-meter resolution land cover and land use data for approximately 100,000 square miles of land in and surrounding the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This new classification provided detailed maps even for individual land parcels—mapping individual trees, roads and homes.

This was significant for the restoration movement in the Chesapeake. “It was like the moment that Bob Dylan took his acoustic set electric. I just love that analogy because it’s true. It was the moment that local governments, big and small, state agencies, federal agencies and conservation organizations throughout the Chesapeake were empowered with groundbreaking, high-resolution data that was free and available for any partner to use—large or small, from mom-and-pop land trusts to the Chesapeake Bay Program itself. It is said that information is power. For the Chesapeake, this information took our acoustic setlist—electric,” said Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn.

While impressive, the methods used to create these initial high-resolution data were very time- and labor-intensive. With forward-thinking and funding from the Grayce B. Kerr Fund, Chesapeake Conservancy added



For the first time, high-resolution change data for both land cover and land use is openly available for the Chesapeake. IMAGE COURTESY OF CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY'S CONSERVATION INNOVATION CENTER

two data scientists with expertise in remote sensing and artificial intelligence (AI) to the CIC's robust team of geospatial analysts in order to explore the use of deep learning algorithms, a form of AI, for land cover classification. This work is still ongoing but is paving the way for the production of more efficient and timely land cover data.

High-Resolution Change Data Emerges

Almost 5 ½ years after the launch of the Chesapeake Bay High-Resolution Land Use/Land Cover Data Project, the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program released an update that is truly a watershed moment.

For the first time, high-resolution change data for both land cover and land use is openly available for the Chesapeake. This allows stakeholders across the watershed to better understand what's happening on

the landscape and to detect changes in land management from 2013/14 to 2017/18.

“For the first time, high-resolution change data is available for the Chesapeake as open data. This allows us to better understand what's happening on the landscape and to do change detection and trend analysis. The significance of this cannot be overstated. For those of us working to restore the Chesapeake, this is practically the James Webb Space Telescope moment,” continued Dunn.

“These new data will help anyone who wants to do their part in protecting every corner of the watershed. There's tremendous benefit in having data like this that can show the good and bad treatment of land so that we can make better decisions going forward,” said Adam Ortiz, regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Mid-Atlantic Region.

Oyster House Park Update

Progress continues at the new Oyster House Park along the Seaford River Walk on the Nanticoke River in Seaford, Delaware. The park, which provides paddling access to the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, officially opened to the public in the summer of 2021 and is located at 201 South Cannon Street at the site of the old J.B. Robinson Oyster House.

U.S. Senator Tom Carper (D-Del.) joined representatives from the City of Seaford and Chesapeake Conservancy to announce \$1.2 million in funding to improve wastewater infrastructure and nurture economic development.

Chesapeake Conservancy also celebrated a \$150,000 grant from the Carl M. Freeman Foundation that will help support the next phase of park enhancements, including a natural green amphitheater.



U.S. Senator Tom Carper PHOTO BY CITY OF SEAFORD

Chesapeake Conservancy Launches Gift Lands Program

Now Accepting Gifts of Real Estate to Support Chesapeake Conservation

Over the years many of our supporters have asked if they can make charitable gifts of real estate to Chesapeake Conservancy. In most cases, we have had to say “no thank you” due to the complexity and risk inherent in gifts of complex assets. Now we can say “yes.” We have established a partnership with Realty Gift Fund, a specialized nonprofit that dedicates its expertise to facilitating gifts of real estate to America’s nonprofits. Through their special mission, gifts of real estate are simple, safe and rewarding for Chesapeake Conservancy and our donors.

Real estate donations fall within two general categories:

1. Trade Lands are donated lands or properties that have limited or no conservation value that donors permit us to sell, with the proceeds going to support our work and mission. Examples include first and second homes, apartments and retail buildings.

2. Conserve Lands are donated lands that have strong conservation values and can be permanently protected with conservation easements or other means in collaboration with regional conservation partners. We are not able to protect all of the real estate that is offered to us. The decisions to accept or decline land for conservation are based on many factors, including conservation features of the property and potential for future transfer of ownership (for example, to become part of a county, state or national park).

For answers to frequently asked questions please visit our program website at plannedgiving.chesapeakeconservancy.org/real-estate.

If you have additional questions or interest in making such a gift, please contact Matt Provost, Senior Vice President, Development, at mprovost@chesapeakeconservation.org.

Conservancy Board & Staff News

Data Science Lead/Senior Data Scientist **Dr. Kumar Mainali** and colleagues created a new biodiversity index, published in *Science Advances* (vol. 8, issue 4), that is now widely recognized as a major advance in biodiversity conservation science. Human Resources Coordinator **Helen Sieracki** achieved Society for Human Resource Management-Certified Professional status.

NPS Chesapeake Gateways Network, the James River Association, Hampton City Schools, Shored UPI, Fort Monroe National Monument, Fort Monroe Authority and the City of Hampton received both the regional and national level **Excellence in Education Award** from NPS for a culturally relevant program for the majority Black student population at Hampton City Schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

Congratulations to former communications team member **Peter Turcik** whose photograph of a shipwreck at Malloes Bay National Marine Sanctuary was chosen for a U.S. postage stamp in the national marine sanctuaries series of Forever stamps released in August.

Chesapeake Conservancy welcomes Bilingual Interpretive Outreach Assistant **Monserat Pizarro** and Senior Geospatial Analyst **Charlotte Weinstein**. **Michael Bowman** has been promoted to communications specialist. Chesapeake Conservancy extends our heartfelt thanks to **Jake Leizear**, **Amelia Lowe** and **Mary Molloy**, who have left to pursue other professional opportunities, and Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member **Shannon Thomas**, whose term ended in August.



Shown left to right: Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn and board members Dr. Mamie Parker, Maite Arce and Rappahannock Tribe Chief Anne Richardson met in Washington, DC, in May, with National Park Service Director Chuck Sams to discuss the Conservancy’s mission and key projects. COURTESY PHOTO



THANK YOU TO WEIS MARKETS!

Senior Vice President of Development and Business Strategy Matthew Provost (center) accepted a generous check from Weis Markets in Edgewater, Maryland, in honor of Earth Day.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF BAY BRIDGE RUN