



WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
46940 SOUTH SHANGRI LA DRIVE, LEXINGTON PARK, MD 20653

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OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS— —NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE ACTION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

RIVER NEWS	2-3
RIVERFEST WRAP	4-5
MAJOR SPONSORS	4

We all know that our landscape will change over time—and we know that we do have some voice in what that future change may be. Some people will leave this “dirty work” to someone else (and they won’t hesitate to complain when it doesn’t go their way). But that’s not you! So come on, let me tell you how we can *plan* the future together!

For several decades now, *watershed* planning has been recognized as the premier method for land use planning and building healthy communities. Most everything that is change has an impact on at least one of our two most precious resources—land and water. So it makes perfect sense that we develop a plan for a geographic area of land in which all the water drains to one point. That geographic area is called a *watershed* or a drainage basin for a river. Of course the river in question here is the St. Mary’s River.

As our loyal readers know, we are in the process of developing a comprehensive watershed plan for the St. Mary’s River. Currently, we are gathering information about this wonderful place that so many of us call home. This past summer, a great deal of scientific data was collected and is currently being organized and evaluated. Next we need to bring together the rest of the story of this watershed—and this is where you come in!

What’s in your backyard? Do you live near a flowing stream? Are there any fish in it or animals around it? Suds bouncing over it? Good smells? Bad?

Is there a story about the past that goes with your little piece of land and water? What is the nature of your backyard? What is it worth to you? Is it a meeting place for family and friends? Is it farmland? What has it produced? Was there a dump near by? Is trash still visible?

These are the type of questions that you can help us with. Within a year or two, we will begin the

process of restoring portions of the river system—some of that restoration will happen in the water, some will happen on the land. Deciding which project should come first will be a major task. You can help.

Certainly if the river by your house smells bad, we need to know so that we can assess the impact, identify the source, and plan for recovery. If the land has an important story (or history), then we need to know so that we can assess its value for preservation, reconstruction, recognition and remembrance, etc..

We will make this as easy as possible for you. You can attend one of the many public meetings that we will be holding over the next year and a half. Or you can join our St. Mary’s River discussion group. This new forum has options for you to opt-out of receiving emails, if that is your wish. Or you can opt for a summary of discussions on a periodic basis. We won’t force anything on you.

We think you will be interested in this resource and we hope you will join with us in networking and learning about our St. Mary’s River Watershed!

Join the Chesapeake Forum today and have access to the St. Mary’s River Discussion Group as well as more than thirty other regional discussion groups. Remember, you can control what you see and what you want to receive in your email inbox.

Visit <http://www.chesapeakenetwork.org> and join today. Tomorrow you will have access the latest information available on the St. Mary’s River Watershed!



WE NEED YOU

How To Register on Page Three

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

WRAS Reports Available

The first round of reports on the health of the St. Mary's River are available for download from the web site: <http://www.StMarysRiver.org>

Available just this week are the Stream Corridor Assessment, Shoreline Assessment, and Synoptic Survey. Also available on the web site are notes from all of the meetings and links to download several studies pertinent to the WRAS program such as a study of hardened shoreline erosion control devices (breakwaters) and a presentation of the Rural Preservation Task Force.

Student Intern Hired - Launches Discussion Forum

Megan Hession, a senior at St. Mary's College of Maryland, will be coordinating the public process for the Watershed Restoration Action Strategy program (WRAS). Megan brings to the position her experience as a leader of the Education Team of the St. Mary's River Project and her passion for maintaining the health of the St. Mary's River. This past summer, Megan was a field surveyor for the WRAS's stream corridor assessment, a project funded by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration and Maryland Department of Natural Resources and administered in partnership with St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Last week, Megan launched the St. Mary's River discussion group, a part of the Chesapeake Forum. This is a great opportunity to learn more and interact with others about the St. Mary's River.

Help Wanted

SMRWA seeks a motivated and passionate individual for part time employment as membership and volunteer coordinator. This position is funded through a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Interviewing is currently underway and will terminate upon hiring. Interested individuals should send their resume to SMwatershed@yahoo.com For more information call 301-737-2903 or 301-862-3517.

SMRWA Meets With Developer

Association officials again met with the applicant for St. Mary's Crossing, a 868-dwelling unit proposal in the northern reaches of the main stem of the St. Mary's River. Plans released just last week depicted a 55-acre proffer to the county "to be used in any way the county desires," according to the applicant's spokesperson John Norris III. It is expected that the land will be dedicated to two new schools—elementary and middle. Of concern was the proposed use of an existing ten-acre pond and existing river system for storm water control. SMRWA would like to see all runoff treated properly prior to it leaving the site and entering the pond or river. SMRWA also expressed concern over the cutting of trees along the pond (viewshed), but the revised plans depict a wooded buffer between the pond and the housing units and schools. Advanced environmental site design for storm water control should be a part of the agreement between the applicant and the county. MDE will likely not require this in the new regulations.

Boeing Grant to Support Green Living Practices in St. Mary's County

A generous grant from The Boeing Company will provide seed funding for development of an ongoing outreach campaign to provide watershed residents with the tools they need to reduce their footprint on the environment. Covering topics from energy conservation to septic system maintenance and natural landscaping to rain gardens, informative pamphlets, booklets, and downloads will be available next spring. If there is interest, we will hold training workshops—drop us a note and let us know what you would like us to cover:

SMwatershed@yahoo.com

Three Attend Conference

Last month, SMRWA sent three members to the third annual Chesapeake Watershed forum in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. St. Mary's County also sent one staff member, SMRWA board member and county environmental planner, Sue Veith. Sue, along with Association President Joe Anderson, Executive Director Bob Lewis, and member Merideth Taylor spent three days networking and attending workshops in Staff Development, Messaging, Planning Enforcement & Regulation, Diversity, Sea Level Rise, and Fundraising. Southern Maryland was well represented at the forum with members from Coastal Conservation Association, Port Tobacco River Conservancy, Patuxent Riverkeeper, Wicomico Scenic River Commission, and the Southern Maryland Oyster Cultivation Society.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WE NEED YOU !

RiverFest 2009 Planning

The RiverFest 2009 Planning Committee is in search of dedicated volunteers to assist in the planning of this very successful annual festival. RiverFest is our premiere fundraiser. It is also one of the most effective ways that we can pursue our mission—with programs featuring stewardship of our natural environment. Fun activities and games for children, networking opportunities, and social engagement round out a great day for all who attend. In 2009, we hope to keep all of the event’s activities free and accessible to everyone—kayaking, skipjack rides, and free prizes for children. Admission will again be free. The event will take place Sunday September 27, 2009—so mark your calendar and get involved in planning this important event. We are in dire need of volunteers to assist on these six RiverFest Planning Teams:

- Press & Publicity
- Fundraising
- Exhibitors & Vendors
- Programming
- Waterfront
- Kayak In

To volunteer call Bob at 301-737-2903 or email smwatershed@yahoo.com

Help at Headquarters

For those of you who need a routine or just have a hour or two, we can always use help at headquarters. From mailings, data entry, and bookkeeping to graphic layout, design, and website maintenance, there is always more to do than hands to do it! So give a call and volunteer for SMRWA today!



Standing Committees

There are many opportunities and levels of commitment that we can match with your interests and availability. The **Education Committee** is the most important and is our priority for recruiting volunteers at this time. To effectively pursue our mission, we need an effective outreach educational program to meet the needs of a more demanding public. We cannot expect folks to change to green living practices unless we provide the knowledge and tools that they require.

Restoration Action Strategy

If you cannot come to our monthly meeting (2nd Monday of each month at 10 AM), then find out what is happening and give your comments and suggestions—about the environment, the watershed communities, and the project itself—by participating in the **St. Mary’s River Discussion Group**. Sign up today for the Chesapeake Watershed Forum and have access to the St. Mary’s River group as well as thirty other groups. Go to <http://www.chesapeakenetwork.org/welcome.htm> and click the link at the top right “Register For This Network.” You can choose whether to receive discussion entries via email or web browser—or choose to receive periodic summaries. And you can choose to terminate your registration at any time. Add “St. Mary’s River” to your group and find out what your neighbors are saying about the river and the surrounding communities.

Special Pro Bono Needs

- Native Plants
- Backhoe & Grading
- Videography & Editing
- Fundraiser Sailing Cruises

Call 301-737-2903 or email smwatershed@yahoo.com

RiverFest 2008

A Celebration of the St. Mary's River



While heavy rain on the morning of September 27th may have gotten us all a “bit” wet, it did little to dampen the spirits of the many volunteers and hundreds of people who joined the St. Mary’s River Watershed Association as we celebrated the St. Mary’s River at our fourth annual RiverFest. Historic St. Mary’s City proved to be a terrific venue for the event. Many thanks go to the good folks at HSMC who worked so hard and contributed so much to the event’s success.

Despite the rain, many families and people of all ages enjoyed the excellent music, delicious food, and informative exhibits and demonstrations sponsored by scores of local environmental and community groups, local caterers, and musicians.

No RiverFest would be complete without the traditional Skipjack rides aboard the *Dee of St. Mary’s*. As usual, all three cruises were filled to capacity as Captain Jack entertained passengers with tales of his life as a waterman on the St. Mary’s River, and made sure that everyone came away with an understanding of how important the health of our river is to the quality of life in St. Mary’s County.

We were honored this year to have the great champion of the Patuxent River, Senator Bernie Fowler, lead our first ever St. Mary’s River Wade-In. About two dozen waders managed to walk out 4 ½ feet into the river before Bernie’s famous white sneakers disappeared from view. Next year we are hoping to go to 5 ½ feet!

Many thanks go to everyone who made RiverFest 2008 such a success – board members, staff, volunteers, HSMC, caterers, musicians, exhibitors, and especially the people of St. Mary’s County who by attending RiverFest, help support the work that the St. Mary’s River Watershed Association does to ensure the future health of the St. Mary’s River.

Please be sure to mark your calendars now so that you’ll remember to join us for RiverFest 2009, which will be held again at Historic St. Mary’s River, on Sunday, September 27th. Hope to see you there!



From top: The *Dee of St. Mary’s* with a stormy backdrop, Fresco Adventures arriving by kayak, exhibitors Guy and Mark in front of their green development proposal *Glazed Pine*, Jordon and Tania enjoying the many activities. Opposite page clockwise from top left: Cookie D. Clown (Ming Diaz), Mr. Bumble-ritches (Bryan Clapp), Senator Bernie Fowler leads the Wade-In, college student volunteers seine the waters for fun (they caught oodles of fishes!), Todd, Bob, and Michael Smith delighted us all, and Ranger Robert Jones with a local friend riding on his shoulder.

Thank You!!!



RiverFest 2008

A Celebration of the St. Mary's River

Thank you to our sponsors!

GOLD SPONSORS

- Historic St. Mary's City
- The Boeing Company
- St. Mary's County Arts Council
- St. Mary's College of Maryland
- Chesapeake Bay Trust
- Cherry Cove
- Glazed Pine—Live Work Play
- CSC
- Bailey's Catering & Party Rentals
- Creative Beginnings

SILVER SPONSORS

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BRONZE SPONSORS

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- Taylor Gas Company — Tidewater Dental
- WLP Consulting — Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
- Good Earth Natural Foods Company — The Printing Press
- Imagine One Technology & Management, Ltd.

I would like to become a member of the SMRWA

Annual Membership Options	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Limited Income	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate <i>suggested</i>	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____

Total: _____

Yes, I would like to become an active member/volunteer

Please make checks payable to:
St. Mary's River Watershed
Association and mail this form
along with your check to the
address below:

PO Box 94
St. Mary's City, MD 20686

Name

Address

Email Address

Phone



OUR MISSION

To protect, improve, and promote the well-being of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.



Renew Your Membership Today!

It is again time to renew your membership - all memberships are based on the calendar year. Your renewal today will provide full membership benefits to you and your family throughout 2009. Your additional contribution will allow us to focus more of our resources on outreach and programming.

Members' Fall Sale

Blue Rain Barrels \$35 - RiverFest Tee Shirts \$10 - Hats \$5

Call us today 301-737-2903, or
Send us a check to the address on the front of this newsletter.
Tee Shirts are green (2007) or natural in color—please specify.

This newsletter and SMRWA outreach programs are partially funded by generous grants from:

