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# WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

October 18, 2017

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

## Clean Water Act - 45th Anniversary

[Join or Renew](#)

Today, October 18, marks the 45th anniversary of President Richard Nixon signing into law the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972—known more by its common name, the Clean Water Act. The first FWPCA was enacted in 1948 and had little effect as it did not have any enforcement aspect to it. The 1972 "amendment" was a complete rewrite of this important federal law.

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>>Clean Water  
Act Celebrates  
45 Years  
>>Annual  
Meeting  
November 18



Clean water should not be a partisan issue. Water is a vital element in our existence and clean water is essential to life. While there is considerable mis-perception of Nixon's, a Republican, support for enforcement of pollution standards, Republican President Ronald Reagan embraced the Clean Water Act and set the tone for the Chesapeake Bay Program—a six states and the District pact to clean up our Chesapeake Bay (1983).

*“Preservation of our environment is not a liberal or conservative challenge, its common sense. Though this is a time of budget constraints, I have requested for EPA one of the largest percentage budget increases of any agency. We will begin the long, necessary effort to clean up a productive recreational area and a special national resource—the Chesapeake Bay.”*

—President Ronald Reagan

While those first few attempts at a collaborative effort to stem the tide of pollution failed, it was the Clean Water Act's provision to allow the public to be stakeholders and to utilize the Courts that forced action. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation sued the Environmental Protection Agency in 2009 and the Courts negotiated a settlement with measurable goals and a timeline to limit pollution flowing into the Chesapeake Bay. Since that time we have witnessed a turnaround. The Bay's health is improving, thanks to the Clean Water Act.





*"The year I was born, 1956, our government pledged to clean up our environment, stop the onslaught of deadly chemicals that was killing people around our country and the world. But as my childhood progressed, I watched the TV and read the NY Times of account after account of catastrophic events linked to human induced pollution. Stillborns and miscarriages skyrocketing in California, dying fish laced with mercury poisoning, eagles unable to breed or hatch eggs are vivid memories along with events such as the Cuyahoga River catching fire, Bhopal, Times Beach, Love Canal and the DDT truck coming down my street spraying the ditches...and me."*

—Executive Director Bob Lewis

We are currently facing a concerted effort to roll back environmental protections. The question we all need to ask ourselves is: Can I be complacent and allow this to happen? We risk our Bay clean-up stalling or even going backwards. We risk our health, our children's and grandchildren's health and prosperity, the welfare of the animals we need for our sustenance and sustainable ecosystems, and "skin" of the earth, our atmosphere.



Although widely claimed to be a photo of President Nixon signing the Clean Water Act in 1972, it is the signing of the Clean Air Act in 1970. Nixon vetoed the Clean Water Act prior to Congress overriding his veto thus mandating his signatory. That's why one cannot find a photograph of this highly touted historic event of President Nixon signing the Clean Water Act.

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### Annual Meeting

## Dr. Henry Miller to speak on Oysters in the St. Mary's

### "Some Observations on Oysters and the St. Mary's River Through Time"

10 to 11 am Saturday November 18  
Ruddy Duck Seafood and Alehouse  
St. George Island

**RSVP is required - text 301-904-2387 or email**  
[info@stmarysriver.org](mailto:info@stmarysriver.org)

**ELECTIONS OF DIRECTORS WILL BE HELD**  
(only members in good-standing can vote)

The Public is Welcome - Please RSVP.

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We're on the web!  
[www.smrwa.org](http://www.smrwa.org)



[Join or Renew Today!](#)

## Upcoming Events:

- Oyster Festival  
October 21-22  
County Fair Grounds
  
- ANNUAL MEETING  
Saturday, November 18  
10 am  
Ruddy Duck St. George Island  
Speaker: Dr. Henry Miller

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