

SHORELINES

A Newsletter of the Chesapeake Conservancy
Saving the Chesapeake's Great Rivers and Special Places

Winter 2013



Masonville Cove URBAN WILDLIFE REFUGE PARTNERSHIP

Baltimore, Maryland



Community Partners:
Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Coalition
Living Classrooms Foundation
National Aquarium



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Department of the Interior

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Chesapeake Conservancy

EXPLORE. CONNECT. CONSERVE.

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Mission

The Chesapeake Conservancy's mission is to strengthen the connection between people and the watershed, conserve the landscapes and special places that sustain the Chesapeake's unique natural and cultural resources, and encourage the exploration and celebration of the Chesapeake as a national treasure.

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Note from the Executive Director

Advancing Our Mission Through Innovation

Scientists now believe we need to approach conservation on a landscape scale. Otherwise we risk reducing the Chesapeake's most beautiful habitats and historic places to small isolated patches, resulting in local extinction of our flora and fauna and loss of our history. That means we need to broaden our work from protecting single parcels to protecting entire corridors and addressing gaps in a patchwork quilt of protected and unprotected lands.

To achieve landscape-scale conservation in our watershed (from Cooperstown to Virginia Beach), we need to be wildly creative. Conservation is complicated and isn't cheap. In an era of declining public conservation dollars and emerging ecosystem services markets, we need to break down traditional barriers, forge new partnerships, and think differently. Also, our limited conservation resources must be deployed in the right places to maximize our effectiveness.

The Internet and the Web have had a revolutionary impact on our lives. So have rapid advances in cloud-based computing, remotely sensed data such as satellite imagery, and the development of powerful software like Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for analyzing data. These transformative innovations are the great opportunity of our time. They enable us to collaborate, inform,



and engage partners and communities in conservation like never before.

In our previous newsletters we have highlighted the Conservancy's work to connect the public with the Chesapeake and to protect our river corridors along the John Smith Trail. This newsletter highlights our intentional effort to emulate the way some of the world's most successful companies use technology to create new opportunities to advance their missions. We do the same through an effort we call *conservation innovation*.

We hope you will join our adventure and support our work today.



JOEL DUNN, *Executive Director*

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FUN TO DO THIS WEEKEND?



Check out Tripsandtips.org

and find a wide variety of activities which will get you out and about from the Susquehanna to the mouth of the Bay and everywhere in between.

The Touch Tank is a favorite with visitors of all ages to the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News.

PHOTO: VIRGINIA LIVING MUSEUM

Masonville Cove

The Chesapeake's great rivers, beautiful scenery, numerous recreational opportunities, and abundant resources, make the Bay watershed a place where people want to work and live. So many people, in fact, that 150,000 new people call the Chesapeake watershed home each year—and most move near urban centers.

Living in cities can make it hard to stay connected to nature, which is why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Chesapeake Conservancy are coming up with new and creative ways to bring nature to urban centers.

On September 26, 2013, the USFWS designated Masonville Cove in Baltimore as the nation's first Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership. Such partnerships are meant to reach beyond traditional boundaries and help the conservation community engage city dwellers.

Masonville Cove was chosen through a nationwide competitive process because of its location in an under-served community; grass-roots origins; and strong, committed partners. The Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center and nature area allow



Volunteers plant grasses near Masonville Cove, as part of the site restoration work.

public access to the cove, as well as offer classroom space, walking trails, a fishing pier, and a ramp for paddle craft.

The Chesapeake Conservancy supported Masonville Cove during the competitive designation process. The Conservancy will continue to work with USFWS, the Maryland Port Administration, and the partners that operate the center—Living Classrooms Foundation and the National

Aquarium—to advance the partnership's objectives to help inner-city residents connect with the Chesapeake Bay and the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.

Opening a door to nature for city residents and opening cities to wildlife is a powerful way for more people to tune into the joys of being outdoors and to understand the rivers and the Bay.

Gateways Legislation

U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and U.S. Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD) recently introduced legislation to reauthorize the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network (CBGN). A program of the National Park Service, CBGN is an effective partnership of parks, wildlife refuges, historic sites, museums, and trails supporting access, trail development, and interpretation of the Chesapeake Bay and its waterways.

Since its authorization by Congress in 1998, the program has awarded more than \$11 million in financial assistance to improve public access, provide visitor experiences, and promote resource stewardship. The Conservancy remains a strong supporter of this program and commends the leaders and their co-sponsors for introducing legislation to continue the Chesapeake Gateways program.

CHESAPEAKE CONSERVANCY

Captain John Smith
CHESAPEAKE SOCIETY

Join the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Society Today!

The Chesapeake Conservancy recently launched an exclusive donor society celebrating the legacy of Captain John Smith. For an annual contribution of \$1,000 or more, you can become a Charter Member of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Society and a member of one of two giving levels: the Chesapeake Circle (\$1,000–\$4,999) or the Captains Circle (\$5,000 and above). You will be part of an exclusive group of friends who are helping to make a difference for the Chesapeake Bay. Your donation is fully tax-deductible.

Join today by calling the Conservancy office at 443.321.3610, or making your contribution online or by mail. Your membership will be automatically activated, with our sincere gratitude for your support.

Conservancy Pioneers New Ways to Advance Conservation in the Chesapeake

Innovation has been at the heart of land conservation in the United States since the first public open space was set aside for the good of society. City parks, conservation easements, and the National Park System were once revolutionary concepts, but are now familiar ways to permanently protect large ecosystems throughout the country.

The Chesapeake Conservancy was founded to support another conservation innovation: the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the nation's first all-water national historic trail. The trail set the standard for water trails as a nationally recognized public resource and built a framework for conservation throughout the Bay. It helps the public celebrate the history and landscapes of the Chesapeake and its great rivers, and allows Chesapeake Conservancy to partner with countless federal, state, and local agencies to achieve conservation and public access goals.



PHOTO: JANE THOMAS

Landscapes such as this show the complex interaction between land and water that needs to be understood to make informed conservation decisions.

The Conservancy has made it a priority to identify opportunities to incorporate innovative practices into all of its programs. Taking advantage of emerging technologies, financing methods, and non-traditional partnerships allows the Conservancy to do more with its resources and ensure programs have the largest possible impact.

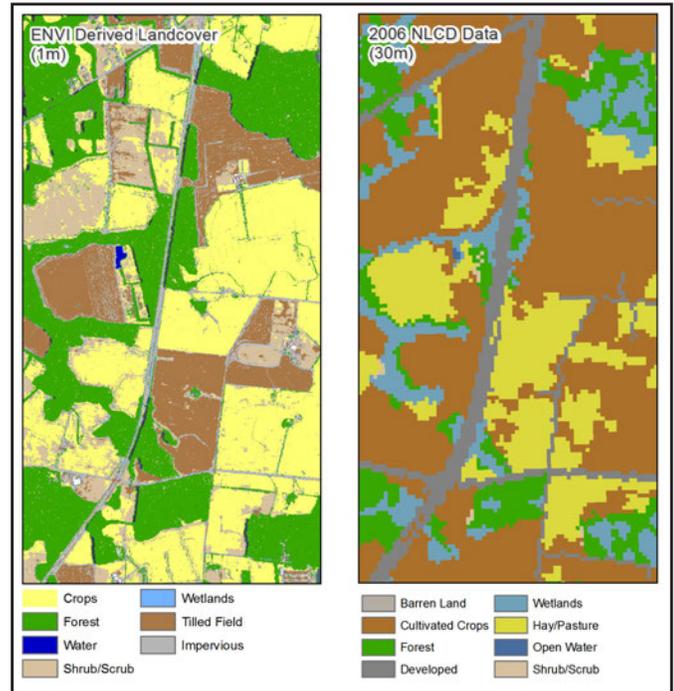
High-resolution Landscape Analysis

Examples on the Chester and Choptank rivers show how Chesapeake Conservancy applies innovation to landscape conservation.

In a project funded by a grant from the Digital Energy and Sustainability Solutions Campaign, Chesapeake Conservancy applies advanced remote sensing and computer modeling to create high-resolution datasets that can be used to detect which parts of the Chester River watershed have the highest conservation or restoration potential. The information developed is far more detailed and a dramatic improvement over existing datasets. It will provide local partners with information they need to target outreach and education programs and protect these high-quality landscapes.

Through a grant from NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office, the Conservancy is also using these techniques to inform conservation and restoration decisions in the Choptank River watershed. With significant investments in oyster restoration at the mouth of the Choptank, NOAA will use the Conservancy's analysis to identify landscapes that will help maintain or improve water quality and to work with local partners to ensure that the lands are permanently protected.

In addition to providing water quality benefits, these landscapes will provide critical habitat and have the potential to expand public access along the Choptank River.



New high-resolution data (left) the Conservancy is developing in the Chester and Choptank River watersheds will help managers identify priority landscapes in ways they couldn't determine using existing datasets (right).

University Engagement

The Conservancy is now partnering with colleges and universities to engage the next generation of conservationists in its work. The students generate new, greatly needed datasets and gain "real-world" experience, access to new software, and the chance to develop skills that will eventually help them find jobs.

On the James, the Conservancy partnered with the University of Richmond this summer for five students to analyze landscapes in two sub-watersheds. Their work provides the Conservancy's *Envision the James* community-based planning initiative with information that will help identify conservation opportunities.

The students won second place in the Virginia Association for Mapping and Land Information Systems student research competition for their project. The university expanded the summer research to involve eight additional students on the project this fall.

In Pennsylvania, a group of six colleges and universities in the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies, have been collecting field data and conducting research to identify previously unmapped historical resources



PHOTO: TODD LOCKINGBILL

A student from the University of Richmond uses a smart phone to collect data while on a trip on the Chesapeake Bay.

throughout the watershed in support of the Conservancy's *Envision the Susquehanna* program.

Eight students from Washington College, Chestertown, MD, are helping the

Conservancy with the Choptank River project by generating high-resolution land-cover classification data from aerial imagery throughout the watershed.

The Conservancy sees colleges and universities as a tremendous untapped resource in the Chesapeake and is working to expand the number of schools involved in its projects.

Eagle Camera Educates Audiences about the Need for Conservation

Building on the success of the Osprey Cam, Chesapeake Conservancy will add a new live-action camera this winter. The Conservancy will partner with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Skyline Technologies, Earth Security, and the Shared Earth Foundation to bring audiences a new web cam focused on an active bald eagle nest on the Rhode River in Maryland. The bald eagle, a species once listed as endangered, is more than a national icon. It illustrates the need for land conservation and the impact that eliminating environmental poisons and protecting important habitats,

food sources, and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed can have.

To see all the action, tune into Chesapeake Conservancy's website www.chesapeakeconservancy.org to find links to the new Eagle Cam coming soon and the return of the Osprey Cam in March—two more examples of Chesapeake Conservancy's innovation at work.



PHOTO: JAN PLANT

Visit the Chesapeake Conservancy's new www.eaglecamera.org.

Thanks!

The Chesapeake Conservancy appreciates the many individuals and organizations who helped make the recent Captain John Smith Chesapeake Society event a success.

Our special thanks for the generosity of friends Randy and Jan Kell, Bob and Chris Friend, John and Susan Neely, Gretchen Peters and Barry Walsh, and Catering by Bernardo Coelho for helping to make it a night to remember.

Local produce and fresh-from-the-Bay seafood delicacies provided guests an opportunity to learn about the Chesapeake Conservancy and appreciate the bounty that comes from within the watershed that the Conservancy works to protect every day.

Thanks to everyone who attended the event, and those who served, spoke, and supported our mission. The Conservancy relies on the generosity of friends like these—and you—to make our work possible. Please join the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Society today, and help us continue to conserve our most precious natural resource, the Chesapeake Bay.



From left to right, Charlie Stek, Chesapeake Conservancy chairman; Bob Friend, District Photo; Joel Dunn, executive director, Chesapeake Conservancy; Randy and Jan Kell, our hosts.

Envision the Susquehanna

Following in the footsteps of *Envision the James*, the Chesapeake Conservancy is employing its community-based Envision conservation model on the more than 700-mile-long Susquehanna River. From its headwaters in Cooperstown, NY, and the West Branch's beginnings in the Alleghenies, to its connection with the Chesapeake Bay at Havre de Grace, MD, the river faces unprecedented challenges, resulting in a loss of environmental and cultural integrity.

The Susquehanna has twice been listed as "America's Most Endangered River" in American Rivers reports. As the Susquehanna provides 50 percent of the freshwater flowing into the Chesapeake Bay, its problems affect not only those living within the river's basin, but the entire Chesapeake Bay community.

To turn the tide, the Chesapeake Conservancy has launched *Envision*

the Susquehanna with a core team of partners: the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies, Wildlife Management Institute, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, and Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Thanks to generous support from the Degenstein Foundation, the partnership recently launched the first phase of its website and will be working in the coming months to engage communities and stakeholders in a process to develop their vision for their sections of the river.

The project's ultimate goal is increased awareness of the natural, historic, and



Golden light on rocks, Susquehanna River, MD

www.envisionthesusquehanna.org

cultural resources along the river; the creation of new opportunities to connect people to the Susquehanna; and the improvement of the ecological and cultural integrity of the landscape.

PHOTO: IAN PLANT

Envision the James: A Community-Based Conservation Framework

With *Envision the James*, the Chesapeake Conservancy flipped the traditional model of conservation planning and led a true community-based effort, allowing stakeholders and the general public to decide which conservation actions their community most needs.

After more than a dozen public meetings and focus group sessions, the Conservancy and its partners—the James River Association and National

a vibrant future for the James River watershed. Specific goals include clean accessible waterways, restored wildlife habitat and streamside forests, tourism and recreation benefits for local communities, and landscape conservation.

To achieve these goals, the Conservancy and its partners have developed two implementation initiatives. The first, the James River Heritage and Recreation Corridor Initiative, will focus on creating a network of heritage sites and land and water trails to conserve and connect people to these culturally significant sites and recreation assets. The second, the James River Wildlife and Landscape Conservation Initiative, will seek to improve water quality and wildlife habitat and conserve important natural and cultural landscapes throughout the watershed.

The James River Association will manage the Heritage and Recreation work, and the Conservancy will lead the Wildlife and Landscape Conservation work. Both efforts will be overseen by a new James River Conservation Council, convened by the



Cypress crescent moon, Jamestown, VA

www.envisionthejames.org

Envision the James team to guide and broaden participation in the two new implementation initiatives.

The Conservancy will use new GIS analysis techniques to guide stream buffer restoration and land conservation work. The James River Association will build on previous web-based tools developed by the *Envision the James* team to build a new web platform that promotes heritage tourism and river-related recreation opportunities along the James.

PHOTO: IAN PLANT



Fall foliage, Rappahannock River, VA

Geographic Maps—have developed and published *A Vision for the James River Watershed*. The vision affirms each community's strong desire to realize

PHOTO: IAN PLANT

Staff Updates

Allenby Promoted to Director of Conservation Innovation



Jeff Allenby, formerly the Conservancy's Conservation Planner, was recently promoted to Director of Conservation Innovation. Jeff is working on advanced remote sensing and geographic information systems to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Conservancy's projects and is exploring ways to use online engagement tools to disseminate data and increase public outreach. Congratulations, Jeff!

Conservancy's Growth Continues

The Chesapeake Conservancy Adds Three New Employees



Paula Degen joins the staff as Interpretive Specialist. She comes to the Conservancy from the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office, where she developed content for Smithtrail.net—the website for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail—and for interpretive signage along the Smith and Star-Spangled Banner national historic trails. She has a B.A. in American History and M.A. in American Studies.

Conor Phelan joins the staff as Conservation Analyst. Conor provides computational, geospatial, and community involvement support for the Conservancy and works on programs such as *Envision the Susquehanna* and large landscape analysis. He holds a B.S. in Biology and Geography from the University of Richmond.



Abbi Wicklein-Bayne joins the staff as Education Specialist. Abbi has more than 15 years' experience in educational programming for museums and heritage organizations around the Chesapeake region. She has worked as an interpretive and education specialist for the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office since 2009. She holds a B.A. in History from McDaniel College and an M.A.T. in Museum Education from the George Washington University.

Hunt, New NPS Superintendent

Charles "Chuck" Hunt took the helm of the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office in September, succeeding John Maounis who retired last spring. Hunt will administer the Annapolis-based NPS unit responsible for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, and NPS participation in the multi-agency Chesapeake Bay Program.



Hunt comes to NPS from Paris, France, where he was regional director in Western Europe for the American Battle Monuments Commission. There he managed 23 sites in France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Belgium. Prior to that, Hunt managed the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial in France. In previous experience with the National Park Service, he served as superintendent of Fort Davis National Historical Park and as management assistant at Big Thicket National Preserve. Hunt also served as a special assistant within the Department of the Interior where he helped form the Clean Water Action Plan.

Embracing the Partnership

In meetings with Conservancy leadership, Hunt showed his commitment to building upon the Chesapeake Bay Office and the Conservancy's strong partnership. NPS recognizes Chesapeake Conservancy as the lead partner in implementing the Captain John Smith Trail. Due to a shared vision and the Conservancy's flexibility, resources, and record of success, NPS looks to the Conservancy to garner support for the trail's conservation strategy; identify land conservation and public access priorities; convene partners and participate in segment planning and large landscape conservation initiatives; and create new public access to the Bay and its rivers.

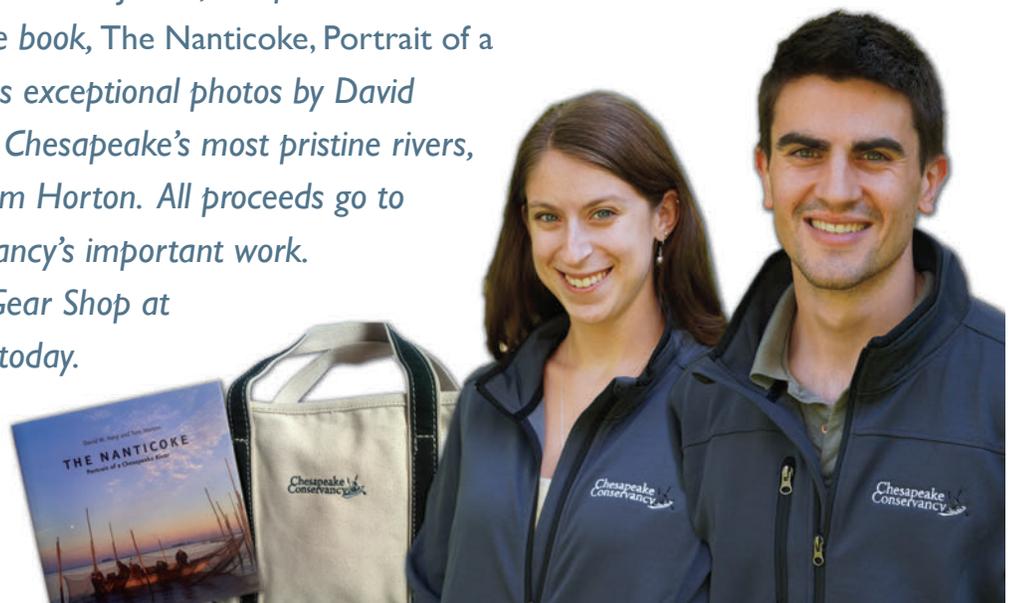
"I have every confidence that Chuck Hunt will not only continue, but also enhance this great partnership and will look to us as essential for meeting the NPS mission in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," said Joel Dunn, executive director of the Conservancy.

There's still time!

The IRA Charitable Rollover Provision has been extended to December 31, 2013. If you're 70½ or older, you can make a direct transfer contribution from your IRA to the Chesapeake Conservancy, up to \$100,000, without having to count the transfer as income for federal tax purposes. Call Sarah Elder, Director of Development at 443.482.9015.

HOLIDAY GIFT-GIVING TIME IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!

Give a Conservancy canvas tote, insulated jacket, or - for a limited time only - a beautiful coffee table book, The Nanticoke, Portrait of a Chesapeake River. This edition has exceptional photos by David Harp with the story of one of the Chesapeake's most pristine rivers, the Nanticoke, by noted author Tom Horton. All proceeds go to support the Chesapeake Conservancy's important work. Check out our new Chesapeake Gear Shop at www.chesapeakeconservancy.org today.



The Chesapeake Conservancy relies on our many friends to protect and conserve the Chesapeake's Great Rivers and Special Places. Your tax-deductible contribution of any amount is truly appreciated. Our tax number is #26-2271377.