

## **Attend the AEC's Next Meeting!**

The Annapolis Environmental Commission's (AEC) meetings are open to the public. We hope you'll join our upcoming discussion about environmental issues facing our city on Wednesday, June 11, 2014 in the third floor conference room at 145 Gorman Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. AEC meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month. June's meeting will include a special guest, Rick Anthony. Mr. Anthony is the Director of Parks and Recreation for Anne Arundel County. He will discuss how the County and City work together to conserve land that is designated for preservation under the [County's Greenway Program](#).

## **Events Calendar**

*Bands in the Sand - Fundraiser for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, June 14, 5:30 - 10 p.m.*

A fun-filled evening on the water's edge with friends, great live music, cool drinks, and mouth-watering grilled food at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's annual Bands in the Sand event. Grilled fare provided by the Boatyard Bar & Grill and live music from UNITY, Mad Planet, and Misspent Youth. Tickets: \$100 each and include all you can eat and drink. Click [here for more information](#).

*Severn River Association Annual Dinner & Oyster Celebration, June 18, 2014. 5:30 - 9 p.m.*

The public is invited to the [Severn River Association's](#) (SRA) annual dinner to celebrate the mighty Severn River Oyster. SRA has the largest voluntary oyster growing program on the Chesapeake. SRA seeks the public's help to double the number of oysters its growers will raise in the coming year. This year's SRA dinner will feature a gourmet dinner with oysters and tenderloin. Highlights will also include remarks by Michael Busch, Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates; and Tim Devine, owner of Maryland's most successful oyster farming operation. SRA officers will be elected at the event. Tickets \$65, couples \$120; tables of eight, \$400. Annapolis Maritime Museum, 723 Second Street, Eastport

*9th Annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum, September 26 - 28, 2014*

The Chesapeake Watershed Forum is a three day/two night conference held in Shepherdstown, WV that brings together representatives from local watershed organizations and local governments to learn the latest restoration science and direction, network with other groups facing similar challenges, and be inspired to continue the work of preserving and restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Click [here for more information](#).

*Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Signing, June 16, 2014*

The annual meeting of the Chesapeake Executive Council's members, the Bay restoration's top policy makers, takes place June 16 in Annapolis. They are expected to sign the new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, which will guide the state-federal Bay Program partnership for at least the next decade. The agreement was developed by the watershed jurisdictions — Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, New York and the District of Columbia —

along with the Chesapeake Bay Commission, which represents state legislatures, and the EPA, which represents other federal agencies. State governors, the DC mayor, Chesapeake Bay Commission chair, and EPA administrator make up the Executive Council. Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, the current council chair, will host the public portion of the meeting in the Governor's Reception Room at the Maryland State House at 10 a.m. A press conference is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. at Susan Campbell Park in downtown Annapolis.

### **Chesapeake Bay Region Chosen for Additional Farm Bill Conservation Funding**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced that the Chesapeake Bay region has been selected as one of eight Critical Conservation Areas (CCA), part of the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), in the federal Farm Bill. A total of \$100 million dollars per year, plus 7 percent of funding from several conservation programs, will be available to the RCPP and the CCA designation means the Chesapeake Bay region is eligible to compete for a large share of those conservation dollars. The RCPP replaced several programs from the previous Farm Bill, including a program targeted to farmers in the Chesapeake Bay region. Like that program, this new program is critically important to help farmers in the region implement the conservation measures. Except taken from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Read the whole article [here](#).

AEC Analysis: This may sound like good news, but in all likelihood Bay conservation will receive less money from the new Farm Bill. The previous Farm Bill, from 2008, had a Chesapeake Bay specific fund called the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative that provided \$188 million over five years for conservation measures in the Bay watershed, and it was extended for two years with the full funding for those years.

The new program designates eight critical conservation areas and the Bay will have to compete amongst other conservation efforts for a single pot of funding that is \$100 million per year.

### **Chesapeake Bay Health Report Card**

Researchers at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) measured minimal changes in Chesapeake Bay health in 2013, once again giving the estuary a "C" in their annual Chesapeake Bay Report Card. This grade was the same in 2012, up from a "D+" in 2011. The Bay Health Index was reached using several indicators of Bay health, including water clarity and dissolved oxygen, the amount of algae and nutrients in the water, the abundance of underwater grasses, and the strength of certain fish stocks, including [blue crab](#) and [striped bass](#). Introduced in this year's report card, the Climate Change Resilience Index will measure the Bay's ability to withstand rising sea levels, rising water temperatures and other impacts of [climate change](#). From the [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)

### **Maryland's Oyster Population Reaches Highest Level Since 1985**

The amount of oysters in Maryland waters has continued to rise, according to the results of an annual survey conducted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). While habitat loss, disease and historic over-harvesting have reduced Chesapeake Bay [oyster](#)

populations to a fraction of historic levels, Maryland's 2013 Fall Oyster Survey found that oyster abundance in state waters has reached its highest level since 1985. With the diseases Dermo and MSX remaining at below-average levels, oyster survival rate has risen to 92 percent. As a result, harvests have increased.

“Preliminary harvest reports for the past season have already surpassed 400,000 bushels—with a dockside value in excess of \$13 million—the highest in at least 15 years,” said DNR Secretary Joe Gill in a [media release](#). “Coupled with the survey results, we have reason to be cautiously optimistic a sustainable oyster population can once again play a vital role in the Bay’s ecosystem and Maryland’s economy.” From the [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)

### **Blue Crab Population in the Bay Has Dropped**

The blue crab population in the Chesapeake Bay has dropped, due to a range of factors that include weather patterns, coastal currents and natural predators. According to scientists with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the long, cold winter and resulting low water temperatures killed an estimated 28 percent of adult [crabs](#) in state waters. This marks one of the worst “cold-kill” events since the state started tracking blue crab populations in 1990.

Both Maryland and Virginia measure the Bay’s blue crab population by conducting an annual winter dredge survey. Over the course of three and a half months, scientists visit 1,500 sites around the Bay, using metal dredges to pull up the crabs that are over-wintering in the mud. [Results](#) of the most recent winter dredge survey show that the Bay’s total blue crab population fell from 300 million to 297 million between 2012 and 2013; the number of spawning-age females fell from 147 million to 69 million, passing the minimum threshold that managers adopted in 2011. The Chesapeake Bay Program tracks this latter number as an [indicator](#) of Bay health, and a decline could be a factor in determining blue crab management methods.

Indeed, Maryland, Virginia and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) have committed to collaborating on a two-pronged management approach to conserve adult female crabs: first, the groups will work to protect adult females that will be spawning this summer. Second, the groups will work to protect the current population of juvenile females through next spring, in order to build up the population of females that will spawn next year.

“Even though our 2008 conservation measures were designed to allow for naturally occurring fluctuations in crabs, these results are not what we had hoped to see,” said DNR Fisheries Director Tom O’Connell in a [media release](#). “What is most important here is that the structure we put into place to cooperatively manage this fishery is strong, and that we continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to initiate a new stock assessment that could help evaluate our current management framework.” From the [Chesapeake Bay Program](#).

### **Development Updates**

Here is a list of all projects currently under Forest Conservation Act Compliance Review by the Department of Neighborhood and Environmental Programs (DNEP). Citizens can use the Trakit

numbers provided to get the information on all these projects on the City's [eTrakit website](#). Visit DNEP's [FCA site](#) for more information.

**Katherine Properties, aka Crystal Spring**, 111 acre mixed use development located off of Forest Drive, proposed to include residential, retail and a critical care facility. The majority of the property is forested with some isolated wetlands. Revisions to most recent Forest Stand Delineation (FSD, March 5, 2013) received March 18, 2013 and determined to be complete and correct March 21, 2013. This project has submitted eight versions of their FSD since August, 2011. The approval of the Forest Stand Delineation was appealed and was heard by the Building Board of Appeals. The BBOA granted the motion to dismiss the appeal Sept. 10, 2013 as it was determined to be premature. The Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan was received May 28, 2013 and posted to the DNEP web site May 29, 2013. City staff sent review comments to the developer June 28, 2013. **Trakit: FCP2013-001.**

**Hayes Annexation Property, aka Reserve at Annapolis Station**, 7.65 acres, multi-family residential development located off of Old Solomon's Island Rd. The part of the site proposed for development is flat, treeless and recently farmed. The remainder of the property is forested with steep slopes. Comments from developer and DNEP have been exchanged regarding FSD review first received Dec. 13, 2012, with most recent comments dated April 26, 2013. This project has submitted three versions of their FSD since June, 2012. Staff met with environmental consultant on site April 30, 2013 to confirm details of the most recent FSD submittal. The FSD was determined to be complete and correct May 6, 2013. **Trakit: FSD2012-005**

**Thomas Woods**, 1.44 acres, residential use located on Forest Drive near Forest Hills Avenue. The property is forested and immediately adjacent to an apartment complex. The FSD was determined to be complete and correct Dec. 27, 2012. This project has submitted two versions of their FSD since July, 2012. Forest Conservation Plan submitted August 20, 2012 for review. Staff responded October 3, 2013. Developer response and revised plans received February 24, 2014. Currently under review. **Trakit: FCP2014-001**

**Primrose Hill**, 2 acres residential use development off of Milkshake Lane. The property currently has an historic farmhouse and trees mostly at the perimeter. The most recent revised FSD received February 5, 2013, comments sent to developer March 4, 2013 with an approval of the FSD subject to minor corrections which were received March 6, 2013. The Forest Stand Delineation was determined to be complete and correct March 19, 2013. This project has submitted four versions of their FSD since December, 2012. The approval of the Forest Stand Delineation was appealed to the Building Board of Appeals July 23, 2013. The BBOA granted the motion to dismiss the appeal Sept. 24, 2013 as it was determined to be premature.

Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan was submitted July 5, 2013. Response to developer September 16, 2013. Revised Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan submitted November 14, 2013. Staff responded December 27, 2013. Developer response and revised plans submitted February 11, 2014. DNEP staff responded on March 18, 2014. Currently under review.

**Trackit: FCP2013-002**

**Aris Allen Blvd., Rocky Gorge.** 31 townhome lots and 17 single family dwelling lots. Subdivision plat approved September 18, 2008 by the Planning Commission but permits never issued. Revised Forest Stand Delineation received February 19, 2014. Currently under review. **Trakit: GRD14-0006, FSD2014-001.**

### **The Enclave on Spa**

1023 Spa Road, 3.819 acres; zoning R2 (0.01 acres), R3 (3.809 acres)  
2.997 acres within the Critical Area (IDA), .812 acres (34,559 sf) outside Critical Area.  
Proposed, 36 townhomes. Impervious surface existing within Critical Area 82%, proposed reduction to 43%, steep slope to the rear of the property. Current Status: Hearing held before the Planning Commission, 02/20/14 with continuance until 03/06/14. **Trakit PD2013-001**

### **Chesapeake Grove at Bembe Beach**

Rogers Property, east of Bembe Beach Road between Chesapeake Harbor and Baywoods, fronting the Severn River, 4.997 acres entirely within the Critical Area (IDA); zoning R3. Proposed 44 townhomes. Current Status: Awaiting response to comments from P&Z, Critical Area Commission, DPW and DNEP. **Trakit PD2012-003**

### **Newest Annapolis Environmental Steward Presented with Certification**

The AEC would like to congratulate the BayWoods of Annapolis retirement community for being awarded the City's Environmental Stewardship Certification. The facility has and advanced energy management system, stormwater management system, highly efficient heating and air conditioning equipment, and community volunteers that remove invasive species from the property and maintain oyster growing baskets at the community pier. To read more about their achievements and to find out how your business or community can become an Environmental Steward, click [here](#).

### **A Reminder about the Stormwater Fee Credit Program**

City's residents and businesses can apply for a 50% reduction in their Stormwater Utility Fee by installing an on-site stormwater management facility (such as rain barrels or rain gardens). Please see the [Department of Neighborhood and Environmental Programs Stormwater page](#) for more information.

### **Large Recycling Bins Still Available**

The City Public Works Department still have a number of the 64 gallon wheeled, lidded recycling bins available for free for city residents. Visit the Public Works facility at 935 Spa Road between 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Monday through Friday to get yours. Be sure to bring a current I.D. and a copy of your water bill for verification. To find out more about recycling in the city, visit the [Public Works website](#).

**Get in Touch with the AEC!**

Do you have any questions or suggestions for the AEC? We'd love to hear from you! Contact us at [annapolisenvcom@gmail.com](mailto:annapolisenvcom@gmail.com).