

ST MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2 JUNE 2006

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

We've set sail... and our vessel is underway! This past year, our first in existence, has passed quickly. Our members have been busy with a solid year of activity that has laid a firm foundation for the future of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association (SMRWA).

Since our last newsletter, we have added significant accomplishments to our growing list for the year. Most notably, the SMRWA received official word from the IRS confirming its acceptance as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We recently received two new grants, hired another part-time assistant, held our first annual meeting and backyard conservation workshop, welcomed six new board members and received a scholarship to send a representative to the River Network River Rally in New Hampshire. As we move forward into our second year, it is my

hope that we will continue many of the traditions and activities we started this year and add some new ones as well.

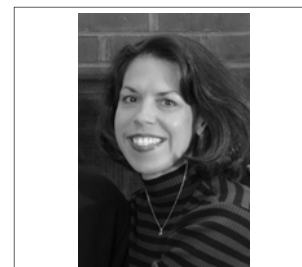
I am so proud that the St. Mary's River Watershed Association, from its infancy, has served as a model organization, spending its efforts on developing positive, win-win solutions for the future of the watershed. As we proceed into our second year, we must stay focused on our mission and continue to foster the spirit of collaboration that has earned us the respect of stakeholders across the community. We accept the fact that development is going to happen in the watershed. But it is our belief that the community can grow and thrive, yet proceed in ways that have minimal impacts the environment. I truly believe this cooperative spirit sets us apart from other organizations and will help us make a difference in

the community with a broad base of support.

As my term as your president comes to a close, I am delighted to have served a truly wonderful group of people and a groundbreaking organization with a mission so close to my heart. As we move into a new year for the SMRWA, please help us continue navigating a course that will make the organization and our community thrive for years to come. Please consider volunteering for one of our field teams (see more information in this newsletter). I also ask that you join me in supporting and welcoming our new officers and board members, as well as our new individual, family and institutional members.

We've already set sail, now we must stay the course and we'll all be pleased with the results!

All my best,
Nancy E. McAllister



Nancy McAllister

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- We are now located on the web! Check us out at www.smrwa.org!
- Next Board Meeting is August 5th, 2006, 10am, at Lexington Park Library.
- Stay tuned for upcoming Backyard Conservation Workshops and all member events in the spring.

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WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Richard Holden
Gary Hunt
Elaine Szymkowiak

Cindy Wettengel
Linda Williams
Gary Williams

PUBLIC POLICY FIELD TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

THOUGHTS FROM THE TRENCHES

During the past year, the Public Policy Field Team made significant progress in the establishment of benchmarks for defining St. Mary's River Watershed Association participation in policy related actions and activities pertaining to the well being of the St. Mary's River.

This past fall several letters were drafted and sent to various entities and organizations commenting on a number of issues impacting the watershed. The St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners were asked to convene the St. Mary's County Watershed Commission which was established by law in 2001 and never empowered. Unfortunately we have not yet received a response from the commissioners to our request, but a follow-up letter will be sent in the near future. Development pressure on each of the county's watersheds are intense and should be addressed formally by this advisory group as soon as possible.

The Watershed Association also provided a letter of support for the St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce's TDR Task Force's recommendations to improve the county's system of transferable development rights. Again no action has been taken by

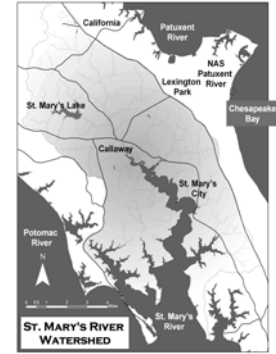
the county commissioners in regards to resolving this important issue.

In what may have been a first, The St. Mary's Planning Commission directed the developers of a new section of the Essex Woods subdivision, to meet with representatives of the Watershed Association to receive comments and recommendations on how they could make the project more watershed friendly. Bob Paul and Bob Lewis participated in this meeting, which was important because it opened a non-threatening dialogue between developers and watershed advocates that we hope will be emulated someday as a matter of course.

Recently, in a similar vein, several representatives from the Watershed Association met with Gary Hunt from Chaney Enterprises to discuss their application for expanded mining rights within the watershed at the future site of the Stewart's Grant PUD. The meeting resulted in a constructive exchange of ideas and facts and initiated a positive relationship between the Association and Chaney that we hope will lead to precedent setting cooperation. On behalf of Chaney, Gary promised to work with us to assure that as this large development was planned

and built, that it be done in a watershed friendly manner. The possibility exists for this to become a model for how to develop in ways that don't negatively impact, and indeed possibly enhance ecologically sensitive areas. Let's keep our fingers crossed on this one.

Finally, at the request of the Public Policy Field Team, several Watershed Association representatives participated in a public hearing held by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to review and comment on a request by the Patuxent River Naval Air Station to renew its discharge permit, which allows the Navy to discharge an average of 45,000 gallons of treated domestic wastewater from its wastewater treatment facility at Webster Field into the St. Mary's River. Approximately 25 people from the community and the navy base attended the meeting, which was marked by spirited debate and pointed questions. Bob Paul presented important data from the St. Mary's River Project, his on-going and long-term analysis of water quality in the St. Mary's River for the public record. Unbelievably, the representatives from the MDE were unaware of Bob's work, but on the bright side, were appreciative of this new source of scientific informa-



tion, and promised to take it into account in relation to the final determination of the application request for renewal. The overwhelming consensus of the group as expressed to the MDE and Navy at the meeting, was that there should be absolutely no negative impact to the St. Mary's River resulting from the discharge of this treated wastewater, and that this should be demonstrated scientifically. We've simply come too far to allow any further degradation of this most valued resource.

The members of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association's Public Policy Field Team are Tyler Bell, Jim Smith, Joan Poor, Gary Williams and Joe Anderson.

If you are interested in joining the team, or if you have items of concern or interest that you'd like to have addressed, please contact Joe Anderson at 301-737-8125, or at jandersoniii@csc.com

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

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St. Mary's City, MD 20686

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.SMRWA.ORG

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.

COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL RELATIONS

During the 2005-2006 year, the community/school relations committee has worked on three major projects.

In September, the group organized and displayed a month long library exhibit at the Lexington Park Public Library. The display exhibited information on the association and basic facts about the St. Mary's River Watershed.

October of 2004 marked the inaugural St. Mary's River Fest, an event aimed to educate the community on environmental programs and activities available in the surrounding area. The Watershed Association welcomed over 300 visitors and approximately 20 ex-

hibitors to the event at the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab on St. George Island. This year, 2006, the committee has been focused on issuing the association a logo, updating the brochure, and participating in Earth Day on Leonardtown Square.

Events for the summer/fall will include exhibiting information at the River Concert Series, held at St. Mary's College of Maryland, in order to reach a larger audience, and planning and executing the second annual St. Mary's River Fest. If you would like to help, please email us at:

smwatershed@yahoo.com.

OTHER NEWS

RIVER RALLY

The Association was the recipient of a scholarship covering the admission costs for one member to attend the 7th Annual National River Rally.

New Hampshire's White Mountains provided the backdrop for the biggest River Rally ever, where over 500 river leaders from 284 organizations attended the five-day event. Association board member Elaine Szymkowiak, who attended the event, was able to network with fellow conservationists, attend many of the 101 workshops offered, and bring home valuable information.

AWARDS

Association President **Nancy McAllister** was recently honored with the *Conservationist of the Year* award by the Southern Maryland Audubon Society. McAllister's experience, commitment, and untiring energy supported her recognition.

Similarly, Association member **Bob Lewis** was honored at the Earth Day festival with the *Environmentalist of the Year 2006* award—an honored bestowed annually by the Potomac River Association (PRA). Lewis served as co-president of PRA from 2002 until 2004.

CHESAPEAKE BAY TRUST

AWARDS SECOND GRANT

The Association has received a second capacity building grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

"The Trust's commitment to the Watershed Association is truly a blessing. We intend to grow and become more effective in executing our mission," stated incoming President Joe Anderson.

Recently, the Association received grant monies from the Westpark Group, Town Creek Foundation, and the Abell Foundation.

NEW OFFICERS FOR 2006

At its June Board of Directors meeting, the Association elected Joe Anderson to serve as President and Linda Williams to serve as Secretary. Vice President Bob Paul and Treasurer Joan Poor were re-elected to a second term.



**I'D LIKE
TO HELP THE
ST. MARY'S RIVER!**

I support the St. Mary's River Watershed Association and its mission to help protect the St. Mary's River Watershed and engage the community in such efforts!

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	\$100.00
<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:

Name

Address

Email Address

Phone

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

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