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# WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

PO Box 94

St. Mary's City, MD 20686

July 8, 2015

## Federal Appeals court upholds earlier ruling in support of Bay TMDL

The American Farm Bureau Federation filed in January 2011 to challenge the EPA's authority to enforce pollution limits on non-point sources claiming the EPA's Bay TMDL, or pollution diet, was based on faulty data and modeling, and that the EPA just did not have the authority to set specific limits on pollution. The National Association of Home Builders, the National Chicken Council, and the attorney generals of 21 states (mostly outside the Bay watershed) joined the challenge, while numerous others petitioned the court to intervene in support of the EPA's action. Assisting in the defense for the EPA included Chesapeake Bay Foundation, PennFuture, Defenders of Wildlife, Jefferson County Public Service District, Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, and numerous other groups.

In September 2014, Pennsylvania Judge Sylvia Rambo issued a thoughtful ruling in defense of the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to enforce the Clean Water Act. The federal court affirmed that the EPA has the authority to issue pollution limits based on sound science and can continue doing its job of protecting the environment.

"Everyone deserves clean water," said Bob Lewis, executive director of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association, "including future generations. It's time for local government to take action and earmark a significant budget for the clean up of our waterways."

Many rural jurisdictions in Maryland were waiting (maybe even hoping) to see if the Farm Bureau would prevail. A recent ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the EPA's regulations on energy generation pollution standards (mainly mercury) citing the EPA's failure to take the cost into consideration.

"It's time we consider the cost of a dirty environment and the need for action. Every day people die early deaths from air and water pollution. Our quality of life is based directly on clean air and water. I hope we continue to choose the right path," Lewis said. "This ruling by the Circuit court is a big win for our environment, for our health and happiness, and for our children's future."

## Growing Oysters for the St. Mary's River

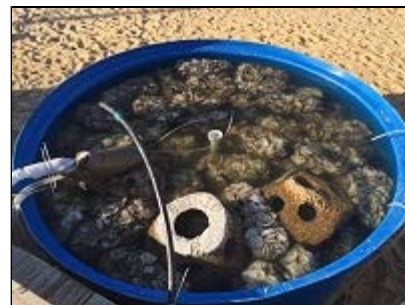
This summer marks the 4th year that the Association has grown its own oysters from larvae for the St. Mary's River oyster sanctuary. Using our nursery tank located at the St. Mary's College of Maryland waterfront, we can produce 100 bushels (200 bags) of spat-on-shell each week by introducing 2.5 million oyster larvae into the tank, which produces about 500,000 baby oysters or spat.



Since 2012 our volunteers have helped us bag 4,400 shell bags for the nursery tank and complete 22 rounds, or strikes, in the tank (a total of 55 million oyster larvae) that have seeded 2,200 bushels of spat-on-shell. We've even struck spat onto a dozen reef balls! Within the past two months volunteers have helped us bag 982 shell bags, of which 600 are now spat-on-shell growing in the St. Mary's River.



For the remainder of this month we will complete three more rounds in the nursery tank, unloading and reloading the tank on Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>. For more information or to get involved please email us at [info@stmarysriver.org](mailto:info@stmarysriver.org) or call our office (301)737-2903.



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## How many oysters can a 15-foot skiff hold?



The answer to that question was determined two weeks ago when the skiff succumbed to the burden of 38 cages of oysters.

"I've always encouraged the student interns to experiment—learn by trial and error," said Bob Lewis. But this "experiment" went awry. Luckily two St. Mary's River watermen were on hand to rescue our staff and volunteer Mike Williams and tow our work vessel to shore. Thanks go out to Capt. Buddy Wathen and another yet-to-be-determined waterman for their willing and timely

response. And a special thanks to Dave Vollmer at Reliable Marine (located in Solomons, MD) who helped us replace our outboard motor with a new 20 HP Honda (discounted nearly to half the cost) after it's unfortunate demise. We are truly grateful.



#### OUR MISSION

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


We're on the web!

[www.smrwa.org](http://www.smrwa.org)



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#### Upcoming Events:

- ***Nursery Tank Unload & Reload***  
Wednesday, July 15, 2015  
8:00 am  
SMCM Waterfront  
Please RSVP  
301-737-2903
- ***Nursery Tank Unload & Reload***  
Wednesday, July 22, 2015  
Time TBD  
SMCM Waterfront  
Please RSVP  
301-737-2903
- ***Governor's Cup***  
Saturday, August 1, 2015  
Time TBD  
St. Mary's College Waterfront
- ***SAVE THE DATE***  
  
Saturday, September 26, 2015  
11:00 am to 4:00 pm  
State House,  
Historic St. Mary's City  
More info 301-737-2903

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