

the

# Maryland natural resource

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Governor

**Maryland Department of  
Natural Resources**

**John R. Griffin**  
Secretary

**The Maryland Natural Resource**  
*...Your guide to recreation &  
conservation in Maryland*

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# THE COMMON GOOD



John Griffin

On December 3, DNR Secretary John Griffin and I announced a new plan to restore our native oyster population to the Chesapeake Bay. We were joined by scientists, aquaculture entrepreneurs, industry representatives, recreational anglers and environmental advocates, who all agree that, with a population at 1 percent of historic levels and a struggling industry, we need a new course of action. Under our plan, we will pursue a three-pronged approach to restore oysters for ecological purposes, jump-start a new aquaculture initiative and refocus our public fishery.

We will increase the number, size, and quality of our network of oyster sanctuaries, which will allow oysters to live longer, develop natural resistance to disease, and to spawn without harvest pressure; open up additional areas available to lease for oyster aquaculture while streamlining the permitting process; and continue to maintain substantial areas open to the public fishery, to ensure a more targeted, sustainable, and scientifically-managed public oyster fishery, while strengthening monitoring and enforcement against poaching.

Historically, our oyster population filtered pollutants from our waterways and supported a thriving industry. By taking bold, decisive

action to restore our native oyster, we can also restore those ecological services and create a new oyster industry.

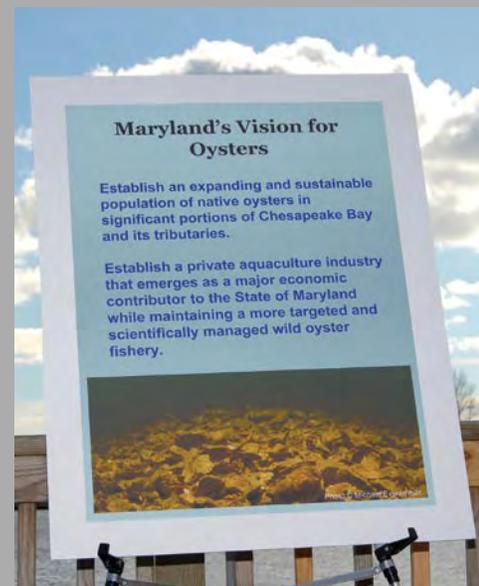
The connection between rebuilding our oyster population and creating jobs is clear; in Virginia, aquaculture is already producing \$35 million in dockside value. Here in Maryland, we have that potential: By some estimates aquaculture could be contributing as much as \$25 million annually (including more than 200 jobs) to our State's economy by 2015.

Earlier this year, we passed legislation to support Maryland aquaculture jobs and the health of our oyster population. In June, following a 6-year environmental impact study, we agreed with our partners — the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — to pursue a native-only oyster restoration option for the Chesapeake Bay. Last week's announcement begins an extensive public process that will result in new regulations by mid-May.

Our native oyster is part of the public trust, and we have a clear and urgent responsibility to restore this iconic species to the Chesapeake Bay. In December, looking out across the water from the deck of the Annapolis Maritime Museum — where a thriving oyster packing company once stood — we took a critical next step in our efforts to rebuild that population for ecological and economic benefits that will serve the Bay's health and Maryland's working families for generations to come.

Martin O'Malley  
Governor

*Learn more about Maryland's Proposed Oyster Restoration and Aquaculture Redevelopment Plan at [www.dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries)*



# McNASBY OYSTER CO.

Home of the ANNAPOLIS MARITIME MUSEUM

## CONSIDER THE ELEMENTS

Whether it's Didymo algae infesting trout streams, marsh-devouring water rats from South America, or the zebra mussels that have created so much ecological and industrial havoc in the Great Lakes, invasive alien species are increasing at an appalling rate.

Across Maryland, in almost every ecosystem you can think of, from mountain ridges to caves, from rivers to the Chesapeake, invasive species are causing ecological damage and endangering native species and habitats.

Why is this happening? If you think about it, it's quite counter intuitive that a species that evolves on one continent could suddenly find itself transported to an alien landscape and thrive there. You would expect that a species that evolved in that habitat would have developed the tools and tricks to survive there. So how can these things, with so little local experience, be so successful?

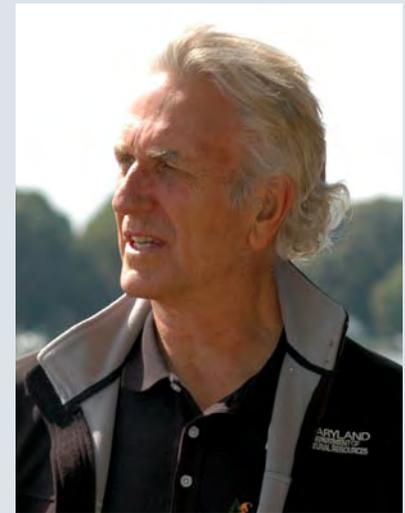
Part of the explanation is that invasive species are highly adaptive. They don't need any special habitat features and can survive just about anywhere — they just have to get there. Part of our global economy means the massive transcontinental movement of materials, and this has increased the rate of introduction. In some cases, invasive species can change habitat to their benefit. Often, simply by being transported to a new habitat an invasive species gains tremendous benefits by escaping from the

predators, parasites, and diseases of its native heath. Unfettered by the enemies it evolved with, an alien plant or animal can thrive in its new home, outcompeting native species.

Unlike chemical pollutants, a biological entity does not dilute and does not decay. A tiny introduction can grow — and grow — into a huge infestation. In the case of some invasive algae, a single cell can develop into a river-clogging mass with profound ecological consequences.

Generally, once an invasive species is loosed upon the landscape, there is a very limited window within which we can do much about it. That's why stopping the introduction of alien species is so vital to protecting natural resources. An ounce of invasive species prevention really is worth a pound of ecological cure. It's too late to do much about many of the invasive species that have become established in our landscape. And eradicating some others, while possible, is difficult and expensive. But keeping the next pest species out is far easier and cheaper than dealing with its aftermath.

This is the hopeful side of the invasive species dilemma. Amid growing awareness of biological invaders, people are beginning to change their behavior to avoid transporting them. On an international scale, the Federal government has tightened regulations on the import of harmful species and the Coast Guard is



John Griffin

developing tighter regulations to prevent ships coming from foreign waters from accidentally carrying invaders in their ballast water. Closer to home, boaters are learning to protect their waterways by cleaning the weeds off their trailers and props before moving boats among waterways. Pet owners are learning not to release unwanted animals. And landscapers and gardeners are becoming aware of the danger of some species. Our native ecosystems depend upon us to turn that growing awareness into increased concrete action to prevent new invasions.

  
John R. Griffin  
Secretary

Learn more about invasive species in Maryland at [www.dnr.maryland.gov/invasives](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/invasives)

# Meeting

## KING WINTER

### Snow Sports at New Germany State Park

By Melissa McCormick

Tucked between two mountain ridges and surrounded by state forest and agricultural land lies a small state park called New Germany. The park has been open since the late 1930s, yet it is still considered a “best kept secret” by many of its visitors. On a busy summer day, hundreds of visitors enjoy camping, swimming, picnicking and fishing, but the park is truly in its element when covered in snow.

#### New Germany Village

German immigrants were the first known permanent residents of the area, as even the Native Americans thought the climate too harsh to brave in winter. The local historical journal, *The Glades Star*, reports snowfalls so deep that settlers who ventured out to cut firewood in winter would return in the summer to find 8-foot stumps.

Undaunted by difficult conditions, the settlers established farms and other basic services for the community. In the first quarter of the 20th century, the New Germany village centered around a small lake, formed by a crude earthen dam used to power a grist mill. A nearby resident maintained a saw mill, fueling



A great sign for skiers

station, and “jot ‘em down” store.

Winter recreation was central to life at New Germany long before it became a park. While children were kept busy with school and farm chores for most of the year, winter allowed a respite from manual labor and some free time for recreation.

“In the wintertime, we did a lot of sled riding,” recalls resident Grace Shunk.

Open farm fields and low-traffic roads beckoned to the children of New Germany with their homemade sleds. Village residents also ventured onto the frozen lake to take a few turns on the ice.

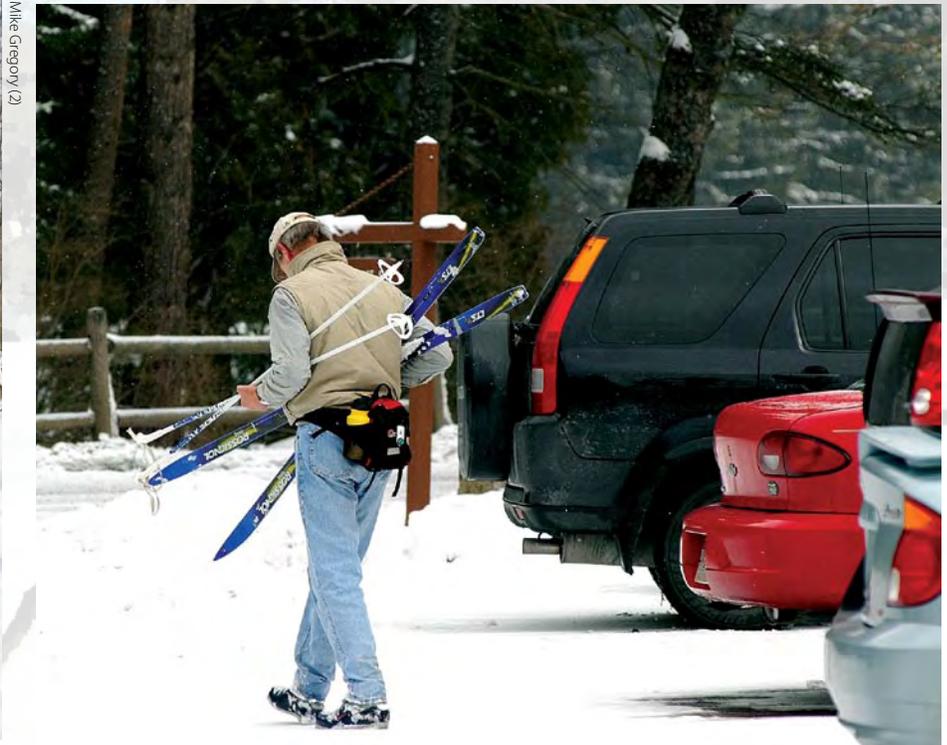
From 1933 to 1938, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built visitor facilities for the park. After spending their first snowy winter in tents, the CCC

“boys” built more permanent facilities, including beautiful log cabins suitable for year-round visitation. The new cabins allowed guests from Baltimore and Washington to visit the “wilds” of Garrett County in comfort even during the coldest months.

offered a new challenge to local residents, and attracted ski clubs from the cities. Local residents became proficient skiers on handmade skis crafted from surplus CCC supplies, and the local economy got a boost as many visitors stayed with families and bought concession items

Heaven, a skier’s Mecca.”

New Germany continued to be a popular alpine ski area for almost two decades, until the construction of New Germany Road bisected the slalom course and other resorts with more dependable snow were established nearby.



Skiing down Dynamite Shack

Headed for the trails

## A New Era

1938 marked the beginning of a new era at New Germany. After receiving many requests to build a ski resort in Western Maryland, State Forester Fred W. Besley, enlisted the help of fellow-forester Joe Davis. Inspired by the Boy Scout merit badge book for skiing, Mr. Davis and others designed two major ski slopes in the New Germany area. One was a slalom course across a neighbor’s farm field. The other was a winding downhill course that weaved through hemlock and rhododendron in Whiskey Hollow, about three miles south of the new park. The National Youth Administration assisted in the clearing and construction of these trails, as well as four miles of cross country ski trails along the ridge of Meadow Mountain.

The ski slopes opened in January 1940 to a crowd of about 200 people. The slopes

from the park. Bill Martin, son of the first Savage River State Forest Superintendent, recalls grossing \$125 a day selling hamburgers and sodas.

Without constructed chair lifts, a crude rope tow, powered by a 1935 Dodge truck engine, offered skiers rides to the top of the slalom course. Local residents provided shuttle service for the Whiskey Hollow Trail for a small fee.

Despite the 6- to 8- hour drive from the city, many made the trek to New Germany for skiing. *The Baltimore Sun* called New Germany the “Maryland Alps” and the 1950s guidebook *Your Maryland Vacation* advertised, “out-of-season vacationists in New Germany meet King Winter in all his majesty and glory... New Germany gives itself up to the delights of winter sports. Then, indeed, the 5 1/2 miles of ski trails, the ski lodge, and the open ski slopes turn the whole area into a tobogganist’s

## Winter Recreation Today

Despite the decline of downhill skiing, New Germany remains a hot spot for cross country skiing, sledding and enjoying winter scenery. The 11 cabins are frequently booked for winter weekends, and heavy snowfalls bring many day visitors, who may drive three or more hours to reach the park.

The trail system has been expanded to 10 miles, with diverse opportunities for skiers of all abilities. When snow conditions warrant, park staff groom and track the trails; snowshoeing is permitted in the park as long as users avoid the ski tracks. The park staff also maintains a designated sledding hill along the pink trail to prevent conflicts and provide a safe alternative to sledding across the road. Families

# New Germany Winter Memories



Courtesy of Maryland Archives

## DIRECTIONS

New Germany State Park is located near Grantsville off I-68 at Exit 22. Turn left at the end of the exit ramp onto Chestnut Ridge Road. Pass Comfort Inn and follow Chestnut Ridge Road for three miles to New Germany Road. Turn left and travel two miles to the New Germany State Park entrance on left. Park headquarters office is on the right before entering the park. Herrington Manor State Park is also off Rt. 68 west at Exit 14. Follow Rt. 219 south 19.5 miles to Mayhew Inn Road (2 miles past Deep Creek Lake). Turn right on Mayhew Inn Road, travel 4.5 miles to end of road. At the stop sign turn left onto Oakland Sang Run Road, travel 0.3 miles to first road on the right which will be Swallow Falls Road. Turn right onto Swallow Falls Road and travel 5.8 miles to Herrington Manor. Both parks offer ski and snowshoe rentals, a warming hut and each has a toboggan/sledding hill. Both parks also offer rustic CCC vintage cabins for two, four and six people, which can be reserved ahead of time by calling the reservation number, 1-888-432-2267. It is always recommended to call ahead to find out what the ski conditions are; New Germany, 301-895-5453, Herrington Manor, 301-334-9180.



Mike Gregory (2)

ABOVE AND BELOW: Enjoying King Winter



enjoy snow sculpture and fort building in open areas of the park.

Planning a winter weekend stay can be a bit tricky since the park relies on natural snow for coverage on the trails; however, most years the weather cooperates well enough for several weekends of good skiing. (In fact, heavy snowstorms are common, and snowy and icy roads are a part of the experience.) Even in the absence of snow, there are other ways to enjoy the outdoors, including hiking, biking, and winter birding.

Both New Germany and Herrington Manor State Parks have full-service cabins available year-round, and cross country ski trails with rentals available on site. Deep Creek Lake State Park also offers opportunities for skiing and

snowshoeing on their trails. Savage River and Potomac Garrett State Forests offer snowmobile trails from December 15 – March 15 when snow conditions allow. Many professional outfitters also offer opportunities for winter activities in the area.

The mountains of western Maryland have been a winter play land since the first settlers established their homes in the area. Today, opportunities for winter recreation abound and Garrett County is an ideal place to escape from the urban landscape just a few hours from home. ■

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**Melissa McCormick** is a Park Ranger at New Germany State Park. She is a novice cross country skier, an avid alpine skier, and a volunteer ski patroller at Wisp Resort.



# Maryland is for Crabs

## Reducing Fishing Pressure as a Management Tool

By Brenda Davis and Joe Evans

**M**aryland is for crabs and crabs are for Marylanders. Unfortunately, the number of crabs in the Bay has dramatically fallen over the past five years to less than half of the number we enjoyed in the early 1990s. This disturbing decline began in the late '90s and has continued in spite of fisheries managers' best efforts to reduce the pressure on these iconic crustaceans.

### How many is too many?

A group of independent fishery scientists has determined that 46 percent of the

crabs can be removed annually from the Chesapeake Bay population, and still sustain the population. But the hard-won limitations the State and watermen previously agreed to have not succeeded, as the target harvest rate has been exceeded in nearly every season since 1997.

In 2008 fishery managers in Maryland and Virginia determined that the Bay needed a substantial reduction in crabbing pressure to ensure the continued viability of the fishery. It was clear to all that the greatest benefit would come from protecting female crabs so they could

survive, thrive and reproduce. The two states joined to reduce the harvest of females by 34 percent across the Bay and its tributaries. In Maryland, we achieved this by reducing the harvest limit on possession of females, and by prohibiting the harvest of female crabs during critical spawning and migration times.

Still, it was clear that more needed to be done to protect the crab population and preserve the heritage and traditions of crabbing and crab feasts on the Chesapeake Bay. To appreciate the challenges that blue crab fisheries managers are tackling, it

helps to know that Maryland had about 6,000 commercial crab licenses in 2008. About 4,000 of the licenses restrict the crabber to 50 pots or an unlimited amount of trotline. This restricted license is called a Limited Crab Catcher or LCC license.

The other 2,000 or so Tidal Fish Licenses (TFLs) allow a larger number of pots (up to 900 per licensee) and an unrestricted amount of trotline to catch crabs. The holder of a TFL may also catch and sell finfish.

## Addressing Latent Effort

Harvest records from the past five years show that 1,100 LCC-holders did not report any crab harvest, not even one crab, between 2004 and 2008. DNR refers to these inactive licenses as “latent.” Herein lies a big problem for managing crabs and crabbers.

Fisheries biologists and managers must know the actual level of fishing pressure and how many crabbers will be working in order to set effective limits and preserve the resource. These latent licenses are the wild card in the deck since these crabbers could decide to re-enter the fishery at anytime.

One solution would be to restrict catch limits across the board to hedge against the possibility that some or all of these crabbers will become active. The alternative is to find a way to remove these inactive licenses from the equation.

The problem with the first option — restricting catch limits across the board — is that it would reduce the amount of crabs that a commercial crabber can take to such a low level that it would be hardly worth the effort. At the present state of the crab population, it would be very difficult for a Maryland crabber to make a living.

The challenge with the second option is that it takes away a privilege that has become a cultural cornerstone and in some cases a valuable safety net for LCC holders, many of whom have considered the ability to catch and sell crabs a part of their heritage. Additionally, simply freezing these inactive licenses would only delay the problem since those licenses could become active when the crab population rebounds and thereby reawaken the management flaw.

## The Buy-Back Solution

After a series of public meetings and robust input from a variety of stakeholders — including representatives of the watermen, crabbing industries, seafood processors, restaurants, and conservation groups — DNR forged a plan to buy out the inactive licenses. Using Federal Blue Crab Disaster Funding, which was secured with great leadership and help from Senator Barbara Mikulski and the Maryland Congressional Delegation, DNR launched a reverse

rebound for at least three consecutive years, at which time, the license holder may be allowed to re-enter the fishery. This option will also allow the license holder to sell or transfer his license to anyone he wishes.

The second option is designed for those who would like to crab in 2010 and beyond. In this case, a crabber must permanently restrict his harvest to males. The license may never be sold on the open market, and will never return to include full-harvest privileges.



Chuck Gallegos

auction to determine the fair market value for the latent licenses. Unlike a conventional auction, a reverse auction rewards the low bid from the seller.

Nearly 500 bids came in ranging from \$30 to \$425 million. Economists at the University of Maryland examined the results and determined that an LLC license could be appropriately valued at \$2,260. At that price DNR has purchased 555 licenses to date, using 42 percent of the available funds. The buyout program will continue until the fund is depleted.

To address the other concerns about the loss of a latent license, DNR has created two options for those who miss or choose to forego the buyout. A crabber may choose to have his license frozen until the time that the crabs have rebounded to a point that the fishery can expand. Fisheries scientists would like to see a substantial

The license may, however, be transferred to a family member in the interest of continuing a family heritage.

The take-away message is this: Protecting female crabs and reducing the number of licenses in the blue crab fishery are essential steps in meeting the challenge of reversing a trend toward a complete disaster. Doing this now will help preserve the opportunity for career watermen and the industries that support them to survive and thrive, and it will fulfill the hope that we will be able to enjoy the pleasure of crab feasts with friends and family in the future. ■

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**Brenda Davis** is a fisheries biologist and blue crab expert with DNR. **Joe Evans** is a communications specialist with the Fisheries Service.

# MARYLAND IS... SMART, GREEN

## Governor O'Malley Receives Prestigious Climate Leadership Award

The Chesapeake Climate Action Network recently presented Governor Martin O'Malley with its highest annual prize, the Maryland Climate Leadership Award. The group recognized the Governor for his critical leadership in helping to pass the historic Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act in Maryland earlier this year.

"I'm humbled by this recognition, and recognize that one person's actions toward a healthier, more sustainable environment — while helpful — would not be nearly as impactful as the actions of a group of caring and committed individuals fighting for the future of our planet," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "In many ways, the challenge of global warming represents one of the greatest public health challenges of our time. I am honored to have served alongside those courageous advocates who work on the grassroots level, and who give meaning to what we do as public servants."

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions Act — SB 278/HB 315 — mandates the strongest economy-wide reduction in global warming pollution of any climate bill in the country. The law requires the State to cut greenhouse gas emissions 25 percent below 2006 levels by 2020 and directs the Maryland Department of the Environment to craft a plan and a timeline to achieve that goal. With this bill, Maryland joined six other states in enacting a legally

binding goal for emissions reductions. "With global warming accelerating, it's more important than ever to recognize



Governor O'Malley receiving his award

true global warming champions like Governor O'Malley," said Executive Director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Mike Tidwell.

**For more information on these and other Smart, Green & Growing initiatives, visit [www.green.maryland.gov](http://www.green.maryland.gov)**

## Clean Energy Projects to Spur Economic Growth

In partnership with the University System of Maryland, Governor Martin O'Malley recently announced the results of the *Generating Clean Horizons* initiative to spur large-scale, commercial renewable energy projects that will provide electricity to Maryland.

The awards are issued in response to an innovative competition for the supply of clean energy to the State, offering long-term power purchase agreements to a suite of clean energy developers that can place a portfolio of renewable power on the grid before 2014, create green jobs, and promote a more sustainable energy future. "Our State is a leader in clean energy, and the results of this initiative demonstrate Maryland's commitment to the clean energy technologies of today as significant building blocks towards a smart, green and growing Maryland," said Governor O'Malley. "With the combined resources of strategic public and private partnerships, we will continue to bring more green jobs to our communities, use public resources more efficiently, and lead by example."

The University System of Maryland's Board of Regents and the Department of General Services approved the award of four renewable energy projects which will produce over 20 percent of the institutions and state agencies annual electric needs. The contracts will also further the State's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint 25 percent by 2020.

"This is a significant step under our Environmental Sustainability Initiative," noted Chancellor William "Brit" Kirwan, "which reflects our commitment to carbon reduction through a 20-year agreement for the purchase of renewable energy."

## Going Green Downtown Guide Launched

An exciting new publication is now providing insight and instruction on best practices to foster Smart, Green & Growing planning and revitalization



Tree lined streets, green spaces and rain barrels help make communities green.

activities in Maryland's cities and towns.

Developed jointly by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, *Going Green Downtown: A Sustainability Guide for Maryland's Main Streets* is designed to give communities an important set of principles, guidelines, and examples of how to pursue and implement sustainable practices that focus on environmental conservation and economic growth.

The Guide has already been lauded by National Trust Main Street Center Director Doug Loescher as, "one of the nation's most comprehensive guides yet produced on this topic that could serve as a great model for other states to emulate."

# CELEBRATING CHILDREN

**O**n a glorious fall day at Riverfront Park in Laurel, environmental advocates, educators, State and local officials and students joined Governor Martin O'Malley to celebrate children and our natural world. After exploring bird and horseshoe crab exhibits, and enjoying a hayride with the kids, the Governor announced the next step in the State's efforts to advance environmental literacy and a connection with nature among Maryland's young people.

"Last year, under the Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature, we brought together our best and brightest educators and outdoor professionals to make sure every Maryland child has the opportunity to learn about our environment and enjoy the great outdoors — getting their feet wet and their hands dirty," said Governor O'Malley. "Today, we celebrate the release of our 2010 action plan, which outlines steps we are now taking in direct response to the report and recommendations of these experts."

## The partnership and the plan

The 21-member partnership, which is co-chaired by Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary John Griffin and State Schools Superintendent Nancy Grasmick, led the efforts of more than 80 professionals to develop a comprehensive blueprint for the future of environmental literacy and outdoor programming that was presented to Governor O'Malley in April of 2009. The State's short-term action plan will allow for results almost immediately, as new programming for the long term is developed.

Among the new commitments, DNR has already begun working to identify potential acquisitions — using Program Open Space



Governor O'Malley, guests and students enjoy a hayride at Riverfront Park in Laurel.

funding — that will connect children and families to nature, benefit underserved communities, and link Marylanders to schools, trails, and parks. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is pursuing the necessary processes to present a recommendation to the State Board of Education that environmental literacy be considered as a graduation requirement utilizing existing courses.

And one of the partnership's key non-governmental members, The Chesapeake Bay Trust, has identified up to \$2.9 million in competitive grant funding to support both K-12 environmental education as well as hands-on environmental projects that support the objectives of the plan.

## Inspiring stewardship

Young people who spend time outdoors tend to have better mental, emotional and physical health and well-being throughout their lives. They do better in school and are much less likely to suffer from health

problems, including obesity and attention deficit disorder. They are also much more likely to grow to become responsible stewards of our natural resources.

Because of the Partnership's work, Maryland is now a national leader in the effort to combat Nature Deficit Disorder and the lack of connection between our children and the outdoors.

Last spring in celebration of Earth Day, Governor O'Malley announced the Maryland's Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights. From catching a fish to camping under the stars, the proclamation describes outdoor activities every child and family should enjoy — experiences that help children grow to become responsible stewards of our natural resources.

Many DNR programs are designed to not only encourage fun and exciting outdoor adventures, but also to inspire children to care for our natural world. Participation in the Maryland Civic Justice Corps (CJC), an environmental education program

Jay Baker (3)

# CELEBRATING NATURE

by Megan Rhoads and Darlene Pisani



## MARYLAND CHILDREN'S OUTDOOR BILL OF RIGHTS

EVERY MARYLAND CHILD SHALL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY To...

1. DISCOVER & CONNECT WITH THEIR NATURAL WORLD.
2. PLAY & LEARN OUTDOORS.
3. SPLASH & SWIM IN THE WATER.
4. CAMP UNDER THE STARS.
5. FOLLOW A TRAIL.
6. CATCH A FISH.
7. WATCH WILDLIFE.
8. EXPLORE WILD PLACES CLOSE TO HOME.
9. CELEBRATE THEIR CULTURE & HERITAGE.
10. SHARE NATURE WITH A GREAT MENTOR OR TEACHER.



Young seiners at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center

that provides at-risk youth summer jobs in Maryland State Parks, is slated to be doubled this year under the plan.

"The work of the partnership suggests bold changes for outdoor learning in Maryland's schools and communities," says Governor O'Malley. "Secretary Griffin, Dr. Grasmick and I are committed to making certain our children have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, experiences and motivation to enjoy and understand our natural world and grow to become responsible adult stewards." ■

View the action plan and other Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature materials at [www.dnr.maryland.gov/cin](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/cin)

**Megan Rhoads** is a former communications specialist with DNR. **Darlene Pisani** is the agency's Director of Communications.





The Maryland Natural Resource

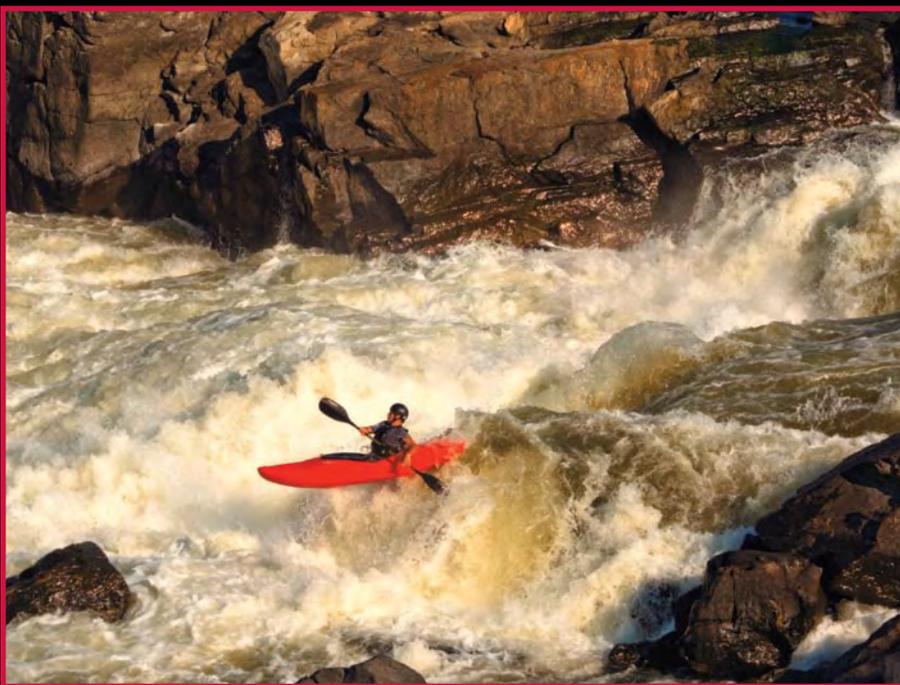
2009

PHOTO CONTEST

the winners



**State Parks 1st Place**  
*Fisherman in Red Shirt*  
Steven Dembo  
Pikesville, MD



**State Parks 2nd Place**  
*Taking the Horseshoe at Great Falls*  
Charles Durfor  
Rockville, MD



**Insects 1st Place**

Twelve Spot • David Gigliotti • Bel Air, MD



**Insects 2nd Place**

*Leap of Faith*

Scott T. Lintz

Sparks, MD



**Mountains to the Bay 1st Place**

*Governor's Cup Setting Sail* • Karen L. Messick • Baltimore, MD



**Mountains to the Bay 2nd Place**

*The Choptank*  
Chuck Prah  
Cambridge, MD



**Plants 1st Place**

*Water Dripping on Bleeding Heart*

My Phuong Nguyen  
Burtonsville, MD



**Plants 2nd Place**

*Trillium*

Karen L. Messick  
Baltimore, MD



**Birds 1st Place**  
*Egret Dancing*  
My Phuong Nguyen  
Burtonsville, MD



**Birds 2nd Place**  
*Pheasant Under Grass*  
Harold Decker  
Berlin, MD



**Wildlife 1st Place**  
*Wash Before Dinner*  
Natalie K. Overholt  
Westover, MD



**Wildlife 2nd Place**  
*Granddad and Me*  
John Gambriel  
Bowie, MD

## Honorable Mention



**Insects:** Sabine Dickens  
Montgomery Village, MD • Butterfly on Orange Flower



**Plants:** Nancy A. Frost  
Cumberland, MD • Stages of Development



**State Parks:** Jeannette Hunt  
Cumberland, MD • Half Frozen Muddy Creek



**Insects:** Daniel Harrison  
Takoma Park, MD • Brookside Gardens



**Birds:** G. Thomas Bancroft  
Silver Spring, MD • Cedar Waxwing



**Mountains to the Bay:** Sherrie Lynne Fornoff  
Baltimore, MD • Kilgore Falls



**Wildlife:** Larry Hitchens  
Easton, MD • A Stroll Along the Shoreline



**Plants:** Linda Roy Walls  
Galestown, MD • Buzz On



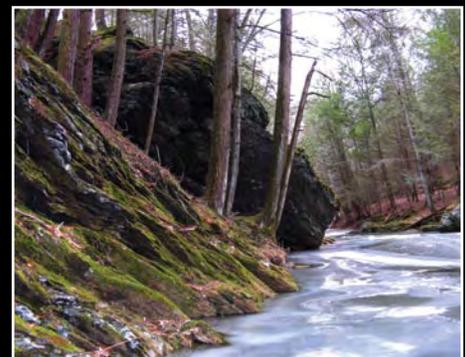
**Wildlife:** Beverly Wyckoff Jackson  
California, MD • Jelly Fish



**State Parks:** David Mosner  
Baltimore, MD • Sunday Morning



**Birds:** Larry Hitchens  
Easton, MD • Can You Hear Me Now



**Mountains to the Bay:** Todd Santmyer  
Manchester, MD • Iced Over

# NEW & IMPROVED

## *All Aboard for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program*

by Royden N. Powell, III



Courtesy of the Maryland Environment Trust

If you are a farmer or landowner looking to earn additional income from your land, don't let this train leave the station without you. Recent changes to Maryland's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) now provide even more financial incentives to farmers who remove environmentally-sensitive cropland from production for 10 to 15 years and plant streamside buffers, protect highly erodible land or establish wetlands to safeguard local streams.

CREP—a federal-state conservation program—was reauthorized and revamped earlier this year to help even more farmers stabilize and protect marginal crop and pastureland. By simplifying program requirements, increasing land rental rates, and offering a one-time signing bonus of up to \$200 an acre, CREP helps landowners reduce soil erosion, protect water quality and create wildlife habitat while earning dependable income from enrolled lands. It's a good investment choice for landowners looking to supplement farm earnings with steady income.

Many farmers will find the new formula for determining the annual CREP land rental payment quite attractive. New this year, landowners receive the local soil rental rate (SRR) plus an additional incentive payment that ranges from 80 percent to 200 percent of the local SRR, depending on the environmental benefits of the practice installed.

Financial help to cover the costs of installing buffers and other best management practices (BMPs) is also available. The Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) program will provide landowners with up to 87.5 percent of the cost to plant buffers, protect highly erodible land and install other BMPs

on enrolled lands. New this year, cost-share to restore wetlands has increased from 50 percent to 87.5 percent. Cost-share is even available to help farmers install livestock fencing, stream crossings and watering troughs to protect local streams from animal traffic.

In addition, USDA will provide a one-time practice incentive payment worth 40 percent of the total cost of establishing certain qualifying BMPs. This payment is in addition to the 87.5 percent cost-share that is available from MACS for most practices. Free technical assistance to install BMPs is provided by local soil conservation districts.

At a time when every dollar counts, CREP is an excellent way for Maryland farmers to protect local waterways and earn extra income. If you have marginal cropland or pastureland that is next to a stream or highly erodible land that is within 1,000 feet of a stream, you may be eligible to participate in CREP. Keep in mind that CREP also offers easy re-enrollment of expiring CREP or CRP contracts at attractive rates.

Contact your local soil conservation district or Farm Service Agency today to find out if you qualify for CREP. But don't delay...or this train may leave without you. Sign-up is ongoing until acreage goals are met. To date, Maryland landowners have enrolled more than 70,000 acres toward a goal of 100,000 acres, so now is the time to get on board with CREP. ■

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**Royden Powell** is an Assistant Secretary with the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

# Threatened & ENDANGERED Species

## Saving Them, Saving Ourselves

by Glenn Therres

**W**hen one hears the words “endangered species” the image of an animal probably comes to mind, such as a bald eagle, manatee, timber wolf, sea turtle, or one of the great whales. There are 37 threatened or endangered species listed by the Federal Government that call Maryland home; 28 are animals and 9 are plants.

### Canaries in a coal mine

Animals and plants declared threatened or endangered by the Federal Government are at risk of becoming extinct — being lost to the planet forever. Because these species are part of the web of life, their loss can affect other species as well as the ecosystem.

Endangered species are like canaries in a coal mine. They can serve as a warning system to us, saying that something is going wrong within their ecosystem that could ultimately affect us as well. For example, the decline of the bald eagle was caused by pesticides that could also harm humans. Some endangered species

Protection and additional conservation attention is given to species designated as threatened or endangered. With adequate attention, they can be recovered and saved from extinction. Again, the bald eagle is a great example of this. The decline of the bald eagle population was reversed by banning the use of dangerous pesticides and protecting nesting sites. The population in the United States, including Maryland, is now fully recovered. This was a great success story for our national symbol.

### Maryland populations

Maryland supports several endangered species whose futures are far from secure. Over 90 percent of the world’s population of four such species occurs in Maryland. Their future on the planet depends on what happens in our State and the protection we can provide them.

Unfortunately, one may already be lost. The Maryland darter is a small fish that only occurred in streams along the Susquehanna River in Maryland. The darter has not been found since the late 1980s and may now be extinct. Scientists and volunteers are now conducting extensive surveys in a last ditch effort to find it.

The story is different for the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. As its name implies, this squirrel only occurs on the Delmarva Peninsula, with most of its population on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Conservation of forested habitat and an active reintroduction program resulted in the expansion of its population, and this animal is now close to meeting its recovery goals.

The cliffs along the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay support the vast majority of the world’s population of Puritan tiger beetles. This insect lays its eggs in the eroding cliff faces along the Calvert County shoreline and the cliffs along the SassafRAS River. There are only 6,000 individuals left on the planet, compared to 88,000 people residing in Calvert County and over 5 million people in the State of Maryland. The challenge to keep this tiger beetle from going extinct is allowing natural erosion processes to keep their cliff habitats clear of vegetation. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is now experimenting with vegetation management on certain cliffs as a way to maintain suitable tiger beetle habitat.

*Sandplain gerardia* is an endangered plant that grows on serpentine soils. The bedrock that forms these soil conditions occurs in a band that runs northwest of Baltimore to Philadelphia. Much of this habitat is now developed with homes, shopping malls, and roads. The largest population of *sandplain gerardia* on the planet occurs on state park property in Baltimore County, where DNR is actively restoring suitable habitat by clearing pine trees and conducting prescribed burns to maintain grassland conditions. The excessive deer population, which feeds on these endangered plants, is also being reduced through a managed hunting program.

Not only is it our responsibility to safeguard globally imperiled species; it is also important to protect and conserve all species in Maryland. Modeled after



Swainson's Warbler

may also hold the cure to certain human diseases. Their loss would be tragic.

the Federal Endangered Species Act, the State of Maryland has its own endangered species law. This law authorizes the DNR to list species at risk of disappearing from the state as threatened or endangered. There are 346 plants and 103 animals officially listed by the state, including the federally-listed species.



Gene Nieminen, USFWS



Richard Webster

**You can help. ✓  
Check line 37 on your  
Maryland Tax Return**

Citizen support of land acquisition and habitat conservation is essential. You can contribute directly to endangered species conservation by donating to the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund. When completing your Maryland income tax return, check line 37 and write in a donation. Half of the donation goes to the Chesapeake Bay Trust for education and local grants, while the other half helps fund DNR's endangered species efforts.

Your assistance in helping to conserve Maryland's endangered species is greatly appreciated.

DNR's biologists conduct extensive inventories and surveys to determine which species should be listed as threatened or endangered. After this population assessment has been completed, species that meet the official criteria are listed through State regulations. The eastern tiger salamander, hellbender, black rail, least tern, Swainson's warbler, small-footed bat and fringed gentian are all listed as threatened or endangered by the State. Locations of threatened and endangered species are mapped and maintained in a central database.

**Acting to conserve**

Conservation of state threatened and endangered species is accomplished



Ohio Department of Natural Resources



Richard Wiegand

through a variety of means. Purchases of lands that support these species through the use of Program Open Space funds is one protection strategy. Public lands that support threatened and endangered plants and animals are managed to conserve or enhance them. And DNR biologists work with private landowners to encourage habitat conservation

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Piping Plover, Delmarva Fox Squirrel, Green Salamander and Fringed Gentian

and, in some cases, assist with habitat restoration.

DNR biologists also work with local government planning and zoning offices and other state permitting agencies, such as the Maryland Department of the Environment, to ensure that development activities do not negatively impact listed species. Over 3,000 development proposals are reviewed each year.

Endangered species conservation in Maryland is very challenging. The high human population and associated development places great pressures on Maryland's forests, wetlands, streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Habitat conservation is the key to keeping and recovering threatened and endangered species in Maryland. ■

**Glenn Therres** is an Associate Director for DNR's Wildlife and Heritage Service. He oversees the Natural Heritage Program,— which is responsible for the conservation of the state's endangered species and wildlife diversity.

# SHORT TAKES

## Governor O'Malley Proposes Oyster Restoration And Aquaculture Development Plan

On December 3, Governor Martin O'Malley and DNR Secretary John Griffin released the details of Maryland's Proposed Oyster Restoration and Aquaculture Development Plan, a new multi-faceted effort to rebuild Maryland's decimated native oyster population. The two were joined by scientists, environmental advocates, aquaculture entrepreneurs, industry representatives and recreational fishermen for the announcement, at the Annapolis Maritime Museum, former site of the city's last shellfish packing business, McNasby's Oyster Company.



Assistant Secretary Frank Dawson, Secretary John Griffin, Governor Martin O'Malley, Deputy Secretary Eric Schwaab, Shellfish Program Assistant Director Mike Naylor and Fisheries Service Director Tom O'Connell

The plan is designed to enhance oyster restoration for ecological purposes and encourage the development of aquaculture businesses, while continuing to support a more targeted and sustainable public oyster fishery.

As proposed, it will significantly increase Maryland's network of oyster sanctuaries as well as the State's ability to enforce them; increase areas open to leasing for oyster aquaculture and streamline the permitting process; and identify areas off limits to leasing.

"By opening up these areas for oyster aquaculture, we estimate there could be up to 150 oyster aquaculture operations in Maryland in the short term — more if we can expand the market for Maryland oysters," said Governor O'Malley.

Since 1994, the Chesapeake Bay's oyster population has languished at one percent of historic levels; quality oyster bars have decreased 70 percent from 200,000 to 36,000 and the number of harvesters has dwindled from 2,000 in the mid 1980s to just over 500 annually since 2002. Today there are only 8 oyster processing companies in Maryland, down from 58 in 1974.

The proposal and additional information are available online at [www.dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries)

**Maryland State Parks**  
**Outdoor Adventure Awaits!**

**Maryland Park Service**  
**1-800-830-3974**  
**[www.dnr.maryland.gov](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov)**

## Black Bear Harvest a Success

The 2009 black bear hunting season closed on October 29 — its fourth day — with 68 bears reported to mandatory check stations.

"The 2009 bear hunt was an unqualified success," said DNR's Game Mammal Section Leader Harry Spiker. "Despite marginal weather conditions most of the week, our harvest range of 60-85 bears was met in four days. The hunt remains a safe, effective, well-regulated and scientifically sound tool for sustainably managing our bear population."

The average estimated live weight of the bears taken this year was 140 lbs. The largest bear of the season was a 409 lb. male taken by Wayne Chenoweth of Westminster, MD.

## DNR Officials Named to Lead Associations

Two members of DNR's leadership team have been tapped to head associations in their respective fields.

Maryland Natural Resources Police Superintendent Colonel George F. Johnson, IV, was recently sworn in as President of the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association.



Brandon Linton

NRP Superintendent Colonel George F. Johnson and Maryland State Forester Steve W. Koehn

Johnson, a 38-year veteran of Maryland's law enforcement community, is the first official to serve as president of both the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association and the Maryland Sheriff's Association.

Maryland State Forester Steve W. Koehn is now serving as President of the National Association of Foresters (NASF).

A seasoned and highly skilled licensed forester with 26 years of experience, Koehn has previously served as the Association's vice president and treasurer, and has also served as the President of the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters. Congratulations to both!

## Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail Guide Now Available

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Maryland Park Service released the first issue of the Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail Guide December 1, 2009.

Dr. Brown was a driving force in transforming the abandoned railroad into a multi-use recreational trail enjoyed by hikers, bicyclists and equestrians.

The 20-mile trail is part of Gunpowder Falls State Park and runs from Ashland Road near Loch Raven Reservoir, past Monkton to the Maryland – Pennsylvania border.

The Guide is waterproof, tear proof and feature a full color map, along with pictures and information. It costs \$3.00 and is available in the DNR online store at: <http://shopdnr.com/trailguides.aspx>. Learn more at <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/gunpowder.html>.

## Angler Nets Record Golden Tilefish

Maryland angler and DNR Fisheries Service biologist Steve Doctor recently broke a state record by catching a 62-pound golden tilefish about 60 miles off the coast of Ocean City. The catch broke the former state record of 59.2 pounds, set by Ron Callas in May of 2007.

"At first he took off like a freight train and I was only able to get him up approximately 20' off the bottom," Doctor said. "It was a slug fest of give and take until I got him to the surface."

Golden tilefish are one of a group of deep water fish that live along the edges of the continental shelf, often in mud burrows. They feed on deep water crabs, shrimp and lobsters, and represent a rarely tapped fishery due to the extreme depths and difficulty.



Chris Nurzak

# OUTDOORS Maryland

## INVESTIGATES WHIRLING DISEASE

By Susanne C. Stahley



Strange spores. Fatal neurologic diseases. Carrier worms. Scientists with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fervently wish this was all only science fiction. But a disturbing invasive species has been found in Maryland waters.

A microscopic parasite introduced into the U.S. from Europe in 1950's, "Whirling Disease," as it's called, affects fish of the trout and salmon family— fish prized by anglers everywhere. The parasitic spores eat cartilage in the head, especially in the young. Their tails may turn black, and infected fish swim in an erratic, whirling motion – hence the name.

Unable to feed or escape prey, most young fish die.

Maryland Public Television's (MPT) Outdoors Maryland film crews traveled the state recently to capture the story of how Whirling Disease is affecting the state's trout population. The story will be broadcast March 2, 2010 at 7:30 pm on MPT.

According to Don Cosden, Chief of Inland Fisheries for DNR, whirling disease cannot be passed from fish to human. Scientists have found that the state's brown trout population is not susceptible to it; but Cosden says that brook trout are very vulnerable.

Whirling Disease was found in Maryland in 1995 in the north branch of the Potomac River and two small fish facilities, and then at the Bear Creek Hatchery in the Youghiogheny River basin in 2007.

Rehabilitation of the Bear Creek Hatchery is ongoing. The two smaller facilities are permanently closed.

Tests show the disease has not spread to other Maryland streams or hatcheries – so far.

Close to half a million trout are stocked in Maryland waters every year. The oldest and largest hatchery, Albert Powell near Hagerstown, remains disease free to date.

DNR conducts annual population surveys of all wild and stocked trout streams. Charlie Gougeon, director of operations for Inland Fisheries, is in charge of the survey on Gunpowder Falls. He uses slight electrical current in the water to temporarily stun fish so that they can be examined for size, weight and population numbers – as well for signs of Whirling Disease. Some fish samples are sent to a lab in Pennsylvania for further testing to see if Whirling Disease spores are present.

Cosden says there are many things anglers can do to prevent the spread of whirling disease:

- clean out gear before moving to different watersheds. Clean the trailers, clean boats, empty boat bilge.
- scrub the mud and debris from boots. DNR recommends that anglers not wear felt soles because felts are very difficult to clean and disinfect.
- do not move fish, or fish parts from one stream to another.
- do not dump your bait, any unused bait of any kind, in Maryland waters.

"Be aware that it's very easy to move these unwanted hitchhikers around the state and the country," Cosden said. "And we just have to be more vigilant than ever." ■

**Susanne Stahley** is a producer with MPT's Outdoors Maryland.

**Outdoors Maryland  
Tuesdays at 7:30 pm**

# Joe Gill

## Principal Counsel, Generous Spirit

By Josh Davidsburg

Assistant Attorney General Joe Gill has a smile that stretches from ear to ear. Talking to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Principal Counsel, you'd never guess that this—the time leading up to the holidays—is one of his busiest times. Everyone is trying to get their requests done and submitted to Gill before they go on vacation. But despite being pulled in several directions, Gill makes everyone he talks to feel like they are the most important part of his day, and he does it with a smile.

Gill didn't plan to become an environmental lawyer. He didn't take environmental law classes in law school. He grew up in Buffalo, NY, the son of a steel worker, got his undergraduate degree from Notre Dame and went to law school at Georgetown University. He liked to kayak, bike and camp, but says he knew nothing about natural resources.

But now, after 12 years at DNR, instead of seeing roads on a map, he sees green and blue.

"It changed the way I look at things," says Gill. "Now, when I travel to places, I visit state parks and national parks because I know how cool it is."

Gill manages nine other lawyers who represent the department and its employees, give legal advice, and review and draft regulations and legislation. He credits his staff with natural resources knowledge.

"I needed to be able to learn from my attorneys and the first five years I spent a lot of time learning," laughs Gill.

His DNR colleagues call his expertise on environmental law unparalleled.

"Joe is both a brilliant legal mind

and generous, dedicated member of his community," said DNR Secretary John Griffin. "He not only does an outstanding job of leading his team to serve the legal needs of the different units within the department, he also goes well beyond the traditional role of counsel, lending his wisdom and talent to departmental policy development and analysis."

"On so many different levels, his expertise is an incredible asset," says DNR EGov and Online Services Manager Gene Deems, who works with Gill on a regular basis. But it's not only Gill's work professionally that his coworkers rave about.

"His devotion to the community is inspirational," says Deems. "He is so selfless. He does more hours volunteering than anyone I know... and he's the most humble guy in the world."

Gill's community service resume reads longer than some of the legislation he drafts. He has served on several boards, worked to build a children's center in Odenton, been incredibly involved in the Annapolis Lighthouse Shelter including a four-year stint as board president. He has spent the past two years as a project director and building committee chair working to build a new shelter that will serve as a model for homeless shelters nationwide.

"Joe is especially unique in that he is defined less by his job than by his charitable works, which are central



Brandon Linton

to his purpose and touch the lives of many of his neighbors each day," says Secretary Griffin.

But if you ask Gill why he volunteers, what he gets out of it, you don't get the normal "just because it feels good." To Gill, it's a higher calling.

"I have just been drawn to volunteer work," said Gill, "It's my belief as a person and my spiritual belief that we're here to serve others. What I've found is that spending time, helping other people — whether in my job, with my family or as a volunteer working with others — is just the right way to live. It enhances my life experience. It's living."

And maybe that's why Gill is always smiling and so easy to talk to, no matter how busy his day might be. ■

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**Josh Davidsburg** is DNR's senior communications manager.



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