



2016 ANNUAL REPORT





CONTENTS



Boating **3**

Chesapeake & Coastal **4**

Fisheries **5**

Forestry **6**

Land Conservation **7**

Natural Resources Police **8**

Park Service **9**

Resource Assessment **10**

Wildlife & Heritage **11**

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3 BOATING

Developed an interactive boating speed limit map, and installed it on the department's webpage and mobile app for use by boaters statewide. The Boating Speed Zones map was accessed by the public via the internet and app approximately **68,600** times.

Maintained more than **4,770** navigational buoys and signs and broke ice to clear passage across the state's waterways, through the Maryland Hydrographic Operation's four in-service boats.

Provided funding and manpower to remove **23** abandoned vessels and **31** debris-related objects obstructing state waters, protecting Maryland's fragile ecosystems.



4 CHESAPEAKE & COASTAL

Secured **\$51.3** million for the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund, representing only the second time in state history that it has been fully funded.

Completed three living shoreline projects, protecting approximately **3,600** linear feet of eroding beachfront, including the first living shoreline in the country consisting of a man-made shingle beach, located at Conquest Preserve in Queen Anne's County.

Supplied **4** grants to aid local governments in coastal hazard preparedness, planning and outreach: Baltimore City, Calvert County, the Town of Cambridge and the Town of Snow Hill.

Certified five additional boatyards practicing pollution prevention, resulting in a total of **154** Maryland Clean Marinas across the state conscientiously striving to reduce their environmental impact.



5 FISHERIES

Approved **38** new shellfish aquaculture leases, bringing the total in place to **391** with many of them held by watermen. Aquaculture produces close to **65,000** bushels of oysters.

Determined the abundance of spawning-age female blue crabs was **194** million—nearly double the number from 2015—from the Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey results.

Certified **4** new recreational Maryland Fishing Records: one cobia, one northern snakehead and two white perch.

Held **43** fishing rodeos for community organizations and youth.

Counted more than **38,000** fish of **62** different species in **22** sites across the bay as part of the annual surveys.

Stocked approximately **600,000** brown, golden rainbow and rainbow trout in more than **100** streams and waterways across the state during the spring and fall stocking seasons for recreational anglers.





Conducted more than **40** tree planting events and activities around the state during the month of April in recognition of Arbor Day.

Provided **1.8** million tree seedlings for wildlife, stream buffers, timber production and other conservation purposes, totaling enough to plant over **4,000** acres.



Responded to **121** wildfires that burned **242** acres in the state.

Provided **\$86,785** in Volunteer Fire Assistance grants to **39** fire departments across Maryland, and obtained **\$891,432** worth of excess federal equipment at no cost to the state for fighting wildfires.

Prepared detailed plans for best forest management on more than **18,000** acres of woodlands owned by families and private individuals, to enable them to use their wooded areas for relaxation and enjoyment and to help them make better homes for wildlife. Almost **10** percent of the state's forests are in private hands.

Approximately **1,639** individual landowners with a waterway on or near their property received assistance from the Backyard Buffers Program in the form of free tree seedlings to help stabilize stream banks while protecting and improving water quality.

7 LAND CONSERVATION



Safeguarded **4,888** more acres through Program Open Space for public conservation, preservation and recreation as well as watershed and wildlife protection, bringing total program acreage to approximately **331,000**.

Provided funding for **166** local recreational projects, including community parks and playgrounds.

Preserved an additional **3,860** acres of land through the Rural Legacy Program, resulting in **88,486** of total acreage on working farms and forests perpetually protected.

8 NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE

Reinstituted aviation division, with refurbished **Natural 1** helicopter resuming its place on the department's police roster after a seven-year absence, as an aid in emergency rescue missions as well as in protecting Maryland's natural resources.



Promoted **45** Natural Resource Police Officers to the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain and Major.

Graduated **27** new officers from the police academy after several months of instruction.



Expanded by **384** acres to a total acreage of **138,015**,
and served **13** million visitors, with
15 out of **72** state parks filling
to capacity **112** times.



Rated as above average or excellent by **88**
percent of visitors surveyed
about their overall park outing.

Constructed amenities at several state parks,
including seven new playgrounds, a new
canoe launch, and an additional **7.5**
miles in trails bringing the total
state park trail system
to **919** miles.

Attained **47** percent of the 2025 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement management goal for submerged aquatic vegetation, with approximately **91,621** acres recently observed in the bay.

Mapped a total of **680** miles of state shoreline from several counties, and more than **3,100** miles of Atlantic Ocean coastal sea floor related to offshore sand resources for beach replenishment projects, through the Maryland Geological Survey.

The Power Plant Research Program conducted a total of **41** energy project reviews, **25** of which were solar proposals. The program assesses a variety of approaches to meet Maryland's long-term energy needs, evaluating each in terms of environmental impact, reliability, sustainability and affordability.



Added more than **5,000** acres of land to the department's property portfolio for public recreation and wildlife management, resulting in approximately **128,000** acres in wildlife management areas.

Reduced the invasive mute swan population to below **15** birds bay-wide, down from a high of **4,000** almost a decade ago.

Invasive nutria along the Eastern Shore remain at **0**, due to our ongoing surveillance as well as monitoring by our community partners.

Maintained statewide deer population at approximately **200,000**, down from a long-term high of **300,000**.

