



Protecting Land Forever

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2014

JULY 1, 2013 - JUNE 30, 2014



Maryland Environmental Trust
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FY2014

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Michelle Grafton - Land Trust Assistance Coordinator
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maryland Environmental Trust 2014 Annual Report is prepared and submitted to the Governor and General Assembly of Maryland, pursuant to the requirements of the Natural Resources Article, §3-203.10.

Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1967 as a charitable organization with state support and funding, and with an independent Board of Trustees. In 1969, MET was assigned to the Department of Natural Resources for organizational purposes.

For more than four decades MET has worked with the citizens of Maryland and partner organizations to foster the appreciation and conservation of scenic open space, natural areas, and working farmlands across the state. With one of the largest portfolios of preservation and conservation easements in the nation, MET is a leader in its field. MET is responsible for perpetually stewarding these properties, some of Maryland's most iconic and culturally significant landscapes and properties.

MET's Creation

In 1967 MET (then referred to as "the Trust") was established "to conserve, improve, stimulate, and perpetuate the aesthetic, natural, health and welfare, scenic, and cultural qualities of the environment, including, but not limited to land, water, air, wildlife, scenic qualities, open spaces, buildings or any interest therein, and other appurtenances pertaining in any way to the state. Through educational and other means, the Trust shall encourage and motivate the populace of the state and others to do so and shall promote continuing interest in and the study of these matters. The purpose of the Trust is of general benefit to the citizens of the state, and it is charitable in nature."

MET's establishment, powers, and responsibilities are codified in Natural Resources Article § 3-201. MET has characteristics both of a unit of the Department of Natural Resources and an independent land conservation organization, and serves as the only statewide land trust. The statute clarifies MET's duties and directs it to:

- (1) Receive annual appropriations;**
- (2) Sponsor research and education programs pertaining to scenic or cultural qualities of the state, including the provision of financial grants to public and private agencies assisting MET;**
- (3) Acquire and hold real and personal property of scenic or cultural importance to conserve it;**
- (4) Accept gifts, and apply their value to the general purposes of the Trust;**
- (6) Assist other units of the state and public or federal agencies and foundations in furtherance of MET's mission; and**
- (7) Report annually to the Governor and to the General Assembly on MET's activities during the preceding year and provide recommendations or requests to further the purposes of MET.**

While MET holds fee title in several properties, the vast majority of its property interests are in the form of conservation easements donated by landowners (and, in some cases, purchased using various sources of funding). Generally speaking, a conservation easement may be defined as a legally binding, recorded agreement between a

landowner and MET which serves to restrict future development activities on the land and thereby to protect it.

Governance

MET is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees. The Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates, or their designees, are ex officio members of the Board. The remaining 12 trustees are elected by the Board for a term of four years. In addition, the board can appoint up to 12 area representatives to assist in carrying out the powers and duties of MET.

Staffing

In addition to the Director, who is selected by the Board, the staff includes a Conservation Easement Program Manager, a Stewardship Program Manager, a Land Trust Assistance Coordinator, a Volunteer Coordinator, three regional Natural Resources Planners, and administrative support staff including seasonal and long term contractual employees and consultants. MET also relies on a corps of some 40 trained volunteers to assist with the regular monitoring of 1,067 easement properties held by the organization. MET operates in an office currently located in the People's Resource Center in Crownsville. At the conclusion of FY14, MET staffing was approximately 12 positions including full-time, part-time, and temporary staff.



MET staff and Area Representatives with Governor O'Malley.

Mission and Programs

MET has four key focus areas:

- (1) To provide strong leadership in the negotiation, acquisition, and recordation of new conservation easements and to hold such easements in perpetuity for the benefit of the people of Maryland;**
- (2) To serve as a responsible steward of land already protected by such easements;**
- (3) To provide training, technical assistance, and support to non-profit land trusts in the state; and**
- (4) To educate and provide outreach, including the administration of the Keep Maryland Beautiful (KMB) program, as well as other supportive activities.**

MET pursues this work through five core programs: Conservation Easement Acquisition, Stewardship, Volunteer, Education and Outreach including KMB, and Land Trust Assistance. MET administers the KMB program that provides annual grants to schools and non-profits for environmental and educational projects.

Partnerships with other local, state, and federal government agencies, local and regional land trusts, private, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector are critical to the ongoing success of MET. Among state agencies, a particularly close working relationship is maintained with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Department of Planning, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). MET works with over 50 land trust and conservation organizations, including The

Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy and the Civil War Preservation Trust. MET is an active member of the Land Trust Alliance, the national association for land trusts.

Funding

MET receives its operating capital from several sources. In fiscal year 2014, \$1,032,414 of state funds was appropriated to MET. This included \$695,188 in general funds, \$53,248 in special funds and \$283,977 in reimbursable funds (SHA and DNR as Coastal Zone Management and Program Open Space [POS] administrative fees). In addition, MET received grants from several foundations and corporations and contributions from individual donors totaling \$55,354. The summary of MET's Financial Statement of Activities for Fiscal Year 2014 is included in the Appendices of this report.

Conservation Easements and Their Stewardship

Conservation easements - their negotiation, acquisition, recordation, and stewardship - is a central part of MET activities. Easements are the primary mechanism by which MET works to accomplish its mission of preserving open space throughout the state of Maryland. Most of Maryland's recent permanent land conservation has been, and for the foreseeable future will be, in the form of less-than-fee interests in real property, specifically, recorded legal instruments known as deeds of conservation easements. A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and an eligible organization that restricts future activities on the land to protect its conservation values. The value of a conservation easement is the difference between the property's fair market value before and after the imposition of permanent development restrictions on the property.

MET currently holds more than 1,067 conservation easements, covering over 132,000 acres, in perpetuity. Such conservation easements protect an important variety of scenic open space, including targeted ecological areas, wildlife habitat, working farms, forests and heritage areas statewide, and in so doing assist in achieving broader public policy goals. The importance of the Maryland State Income Tax Credit Program (a valuable incentive for land conservation) and the charitable contribution deduction for donation of perpetual conservation easements allowable under the federal Internal Revenue Service Code are key contributors to fostering gifts of conservation easements to MET and other land trusts.

Conveyance and Perpetual Stewardship of a Conservation Easement

MET staff members work with landowners to assist and guide them through the process of conveying a conservation easement to MET. The process, which may take from a few months to more than a year for completion, typically includes the following: landowner consideration of easement donation, site visit to the subject property by MET staff, research regarding subject property by MET, draft of conservation easement by MET, action (acceptance, acceptance subject to changes, or rejection) by MET Board of Trustees regarding proposed easement, follow-up site visit to the property by MET staff, preparation of baseline documentation report regarding the property by MET staff, ratification/approval by the Board of Public Works (in most situations), final preparation of deed of easement and execution by landowner and Director of MET, and recordation of deed of easement.

After the deed of easement is recorded, the long term work for MET begins. The

"forever" deed restriction imposed with the gift and legal recordation of a conservation easement carries with it the responsibility of stewardship and public trust. Accordingly, the success of MET in negotiating and recording over 1,067 easements has brought with it increased responsibilities relating to easement stewardship. As more and more easements are recorded, requisite stewardship of those easements will increase accordingly.

The stewardship process - critical to the integrity of any easement program - consists of a range of activities essential to protecting land on which easements are donated in perpetuity. Key components of the MET stewardship program include: landowner support, education, and assistance relating to such issues as land management practices and interpretation of specific easement provisions (regarding, for example, property subdivision or amendment to deed of easement); documentation and records management (to ensure, for instance, accurate details of ownership, boundaries, and structures for easements held); regular site visits to property under easement; and upholding the public trust to ensure correction of easement violations, preferably through voluntary action by the landowner but, where necessary, with counsel from the Office of the Attorney General.

MET significantly enhanced its already-effective stewardship program in Fiscal Year 2014. Among its many accomplishments, MET successfully developed stronger partnerships with public and private partners, including the completion of many new cooperative agreements, thereby fostering more efficient preservation and stewardship of open space throughout the state.

MET also progressed toward streamlining its processes for easement stewardship and meeting *Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices* with benchmarks relating to property baseline documentation, file documentation, records management, site visits, and enforcement of deeds of easement restrictions. Perhaps most importantly, MET worked diligently to enhance working relationships and focus on the provision of technical support, education, and assistance to those through whom the success of its mission is ultimately made possible: the landowners who so graciously have donated conservation easements on their properties.

Conservation Easements Acquisition and Stewardship: Notable Accomplishments

Fiscal year 2014 was another successful year for MET in advancing its mission of acquiring, recording, and stewarding conservation easements. The numbers are inspiring: 2,533 acres were protected on 25 easements, and 456 properties received stewardship visits.

Other notable highlights:

- Launched the “Open Space Legacy Society” to honor donors who have provided for MET in their estate plans.
- Created a “Donate Now” button on MET’s homepage.
- Held a successful statewide conference at the Claggett Center in Adamstown for the land trust community with over 200 attending.
- Hosted a Farm to Table dinner at Tyrconnell, in Baltimore County, for current and potential donors. Over 110 guests attended the event.
- Designed a 2014 calendar for distribution to the public depicting MET properties.

- Awarded grants totaling \$35,000 to schools and nonprofit organizations.
- Participated in SHA’s “Adopt A Highway” Program by adopting a .86 mile stretch of Solomns Island Road in Anne Arundel County.
- Received a 10K grant from the Land Trust Alliance for Development of a Long Range Plan.
- Long Range Plan was approved by MET’s Board of Trustees.
- A Gift Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Lands Owned by MET

While the MET mission is accomplished largely through its conservation easements program, MET also has acquired land in various regions of the state. MET currently owns approximately 137 acres of land, acquired primarily through gifts from individuals.

Keep Maryland Beautiful

The functions and activities of the Governor’s Committee to Keep Maryland Beautiful (KMB) were transferred to MET in 1973. Since that time MET has awarded KMB grants annually and further developed the program to include the Bill James Environmental Grants, and the Margaret Rosch Jones and the Jan Hollman Awards for projects that focus on environmental education. The funding for these awards has been made possible through the support of SHA.

Accreditation

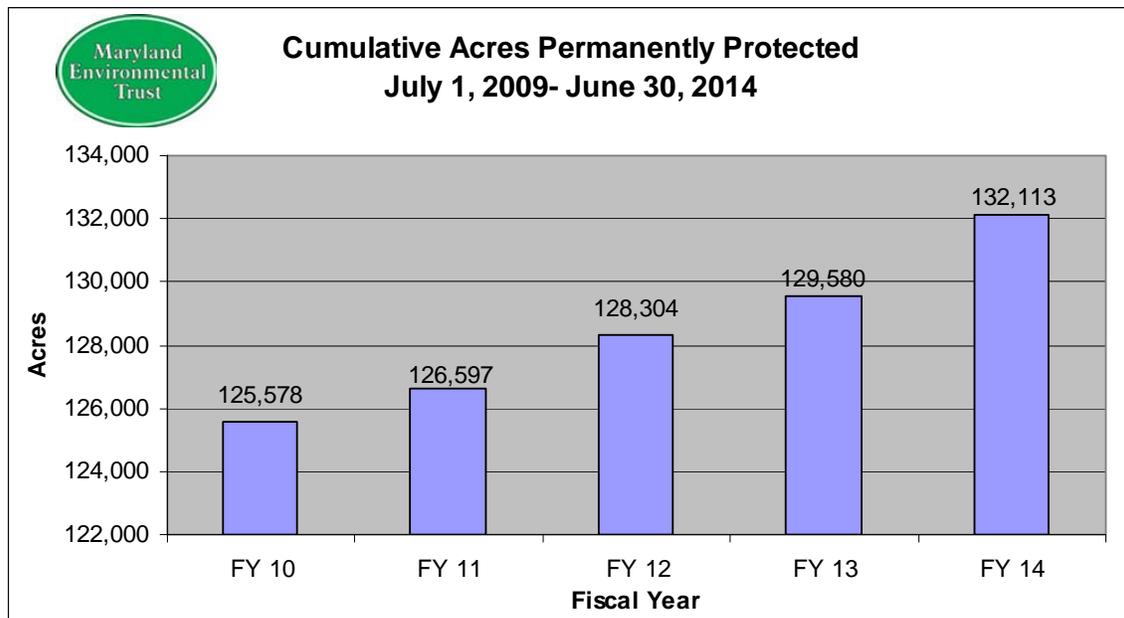
The land trust movement in the United States has grown rapidly over the years and has become more professional, thanks in large part to the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). The LTA has promulgated *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and provided funding to MET and other land trusts in Maryland to advance these practices and

support strategic planning. The LTA has also sponsored the Land Trust Alliance Commission, an independent program of the LTA to verify a land trust's ability “*to operate in an ethical, legal and technically sound manner and ensure the long-term protection of land in the public interest.*”

MET began preparations for accreditation by hiring a consultant to assist with an *Accreditation Work Plan*, which was completed in 2014, and appointing an *MET Accreditation Working Group*, looking to eventual national accreditation of MET.

Conclusion

For MET, 2014 was a year of great achievement despite the uncertain future of the federal enhanced income tax incentives for donations of easements. Ever mindful of the outstanding contributions of its many donors, partners and volunteers, MET expresses sincere appreciation to all who have so generously given of their time, talents, and resources to foster open space land conservation throughout Maryland.



CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM

From the forested mountain tops of Garrett County to the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland boasts an ecological diversity and scenic beauty rivaled by few states in the nation. MET works with private property owners to permanently protect these valuable natural resources with conservation easements. A conservation easement is a legal agreement entered into voluntarily by a landowner and a government entity or land trust that permanently limits the uses of the land in order to protect its scenic, agricultural, woodland, wetland or habitat conservation values. An easement allows landowners to continue to own, use, and manage their property, and sell it or pass it on to their heirs. Conservation easements offer great flexibility and are tailored to fit a landowner's vision and goals for the property. The donation of a conservation easement is a reflection of a landowner's commitment to conserving scenic vistas and water quality for public benefit, ensuring the future viability of farming and forestry, and preserving the rural character and natural beauty of communities all across Maryland.

OVERVIEW

In the 2014 fiscal year (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) MET had three Regional Conservation Easement Planners soliciting, negotiating and completing conservation easements. This year MET protected a total of 2,533 acres on 25 properties statewide.

WESTERN-CENTRAL REGION

(Allegany, Baltimore, Baltimore City, Carroll, Garrett, Frederick, Harford, Washington)

A total of 151.54 acres were permanently protected in the western and central region in FY2014. Easements were recorded in Garrett, Washington, Frederick, Carroll, and Baltimore Counties. One amendment which added acreage was recorded in Baltimore County. A total of 36.44 acres of Targeted Ecological Areas, 62.98 acres of Targeted Agricultural Areas and 2,730 feet of scenic road frontage were protected through the easements in the region in FY14.

Barry K. Salisbury donated a 6.35 acre easement to protect a forested property in Frederick County which is entirely Targeted Ecological Area. The property contains interior forest habitat and is adjacent to a larger swath of protected forestland with over 700 protected acres within a mile

In Carroll County, MET accepted a 32 acre easement owned by David Caple along Green Mill Road. The easement is co-held with the Carroll County Land Trust, a partner of MET. Much of the property is pasture and the easement protects scenic views, as well as the water quality of unnamed tributaries to Beaver Run, which drains into Liberty Reservoir.



Permanently protected forest land in Garrett County.

In Garrett County, MET partnered with the Allegheny Highlands Conservancy to accept an easement donation from Ed and Donna Gates in the northeastern part of the county. The easement protects the forest and interior forest habitat as well as the scenic view along Frostburg Road. The entire property falls within a Targeted Ecological Area and received an “excellent” green infrastructure rating from the DNR.

In Washington County, MET accepted an easement donation on a small but important property bordering the C&O Canal and adjacent to a large block of protected property. The donation by Delbert Martin protects an undeveloped scenic view from both Remsburg and Bowie Roads as well as from the C&O Canal National Park.



Baltimore County land protected in perpetuity.

MET accepted a donated easement, co-held with Land Preservation Trust, on a portion of George Murnaghan’s property in Baltimore County. The 34 acre easement protects crop and forest land within the Worthington Valley National Register Historic District and Piney Run Rural Legacy Area. Scenic views are preserved along Piney Grove Road. This easement adjoins or is in the vicinity of hundreds of acres of existing protected land.

In Baltimore County, MET accepted a donated easement from Robert Hamilton on property he is currently managing as an organic fruit farm. The easement protects the agricultural land from development as well as water quality on two tributaries of the Gunpowder River. The property is located within the Long Green Valley Rural Legacy Area.

Also in Baltimore County, Marvin Tenberg amended an existing easement to protect additional acreage. Tenberg previously donated an easement on about 20 acres of forest land. The adjoining three acres he added will protect forest as well as water quality along Beaverdam Run and a tributary.

SOUTHERN REGION (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George’s, St. Mary’s)

A total of 398 acres were permanently protected by donated conservation easements in the southern region in FY2014. Of the six properties protected, two are in Charles County, two are in St. Mary’s County, one is in Anne Arundel County, and one is in Howard County. Five of the six easements are co-held with local land trust partners. The projects protect important ecological areas, agricultural land, and scenic views from public roads and historic sites.

In Anne Arundel County, MET partnered with Scenic Rivers Land Trust on a conservation easement that protects 95 acres of critical habitat along a tributary of Herring Bay. The easement was donated by Colony Cove, LLC, owned by S. Hamilton Chaney. The property is located in southern Anne Arundel County, and is home to significant woodland and wetland acreage that provide habitat for a variety of rare birds, as well as beautiful views along the Roots and Tides Scenic Byway. Together with existing easements on adjacent parcels, the addition of this easement creates an area of protected land totaling 673 acres in size – one of the largest tracts conserved by easements in “South County.”

In Charles County, MET partnered with the Conservancy of Charles County on two donated easements that protect a total of 115 acres. One of the easements, donated by Horsehead Property, LLC, protects 50 acres containing agricultural land and woodlands, as well as a tributary of the Zekiah Swamp known as Devil’s Nest. The other Charles County easement was donated by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union (MVLAU) on a 65 acre tract along the Pomonkey Creek, a tributary of the Potomac River. MVLAU acquired this property in 2012 to protect the scenic view from Mount Vernon, George Washington’s historic estate, located across the Potomac River in Virginia. The property contains ridgeline woods that shield neighboring structures, which would be visible to visitors at Mount Vernon if the woods were cleared. The conservation easement contains provisions that will prevent the woods from being cleared.



Permanently protected wetland in southern Anne Arundel County.

In Howard County, Charles Steggerda donated a 27 acre easement to MET and the Howard County Conservancy. The primarily forested property is located along a tributary of the Patuxent River in the vicinity of several hundred acres of previously conserved land. Water quality, interior forest bird habitat, and scenic views are afforded protection by this easement.

In St. Mary’s County two easements were granted to MET that protect a total of 161 acres. The Parlett Family, LLC donated an easement to MET on 136 acres in the vicinity of Mechanicsville. The easement protects farmland, woodlands and wetlands as well as a portion of Killpeck Creek, a tributary of the Patuxent River, which flows through the property. A 25 acre forested tract within the environmentally critical McIntosh Run watershed was conserved by an easement donated by Vivian Marek to MET and the Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust. The property is located along Newtowne Neck Road near Leonardtown.

EASTERN REGION (Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester)

A total of 1,983 acres were permanently protected in the eastern region in FY2014. Of the twelve properties protected, four are in Kent County, three are located in Dorchester County, two in Worcester County, one in Talbot County, one in Caroline County and one in Queen Anne's County. Ten of the easements are co-held with land trust partners. A total of 810 acres of Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 620 acres of forest, 841 acres of Targeted Ecological Area, two miles of scenic frontage on navigable waterways and over 3.6 miles of scenic road frontage were protected through easements in the eastern region in FY14.

In Kent County, Linda Leigh donated an easement on a forested and agricultural tract along the Sassafras River. The 1,386 feet of frontage on the Sassafras River provides boaters with views of dramatic cliff faces with forest on top of the cliff. The property contains habitat to the endangered Puritan tiger beetle.



Farmland on the Mason property in Kent County.

Also in Kent County, MET worked with federal, state and local partners to purchase three conservation easements

for a total of 985 acres of farmland along the Chesapeake Country National Scenic Byway. The easements were purchased using federal transportation funds set aside for the protection of scenic views along the Byway. MET, together with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC), Kent County and the Maryland State Highway Administration have been working cooperatively to permanently safeguard key properties along the Byway and the scenic, rural and agricultural character of this landscape

In Queen Anne's County, the County government partnered with MET and ESLC to protect an urban property that provides green space in the town of Stevensville and allows public access. This 5.27 acre park will be open to the public and could possibly be the landing site for a pedestrian bridge over U.S. Route 50, connecting the two sides of The Cross Island Trail in the future.

In Talbot County, 89 acres of agricultural land, 41 acres of woodlands, and a portion of Beaverdam Branch are now protected thanks to a generous landowner. This conservation easement property is adjacent to a 1,296 acre block of land protected by conservation easements held by ESLC, the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

In Dorchester County, MET worked with three landowners to protect 660 acres of wetlands, forest land and farmland. Two properties are along Parsons and Slaughter Creeks and near Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. One property is along U.S. Route 50 providing sweeping views of open

farmland for those traveling on that major highway. All three properties protect habitat of the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel.

In Worcester County, MET and the Lower Shore Land Trust worked with two landowners to protect 36.9 acres of farmland and forestland. These two conservation easement are located in a rural area of Worcester County, an area dominated by farmland and forest lands along the Atlantic Coastal Bays. They are adjacent to a 4,491 acre block of protected farmland and forestland. In Caroline County, MET worked with the Frase family to protect their 48.7 acre farm. This easement protects 34.7 acres of agricultural land, 11 acres of woodlands, and a portion of Fowling Creek. The property is adjacent to a 2,162 acre block of protected farmland.

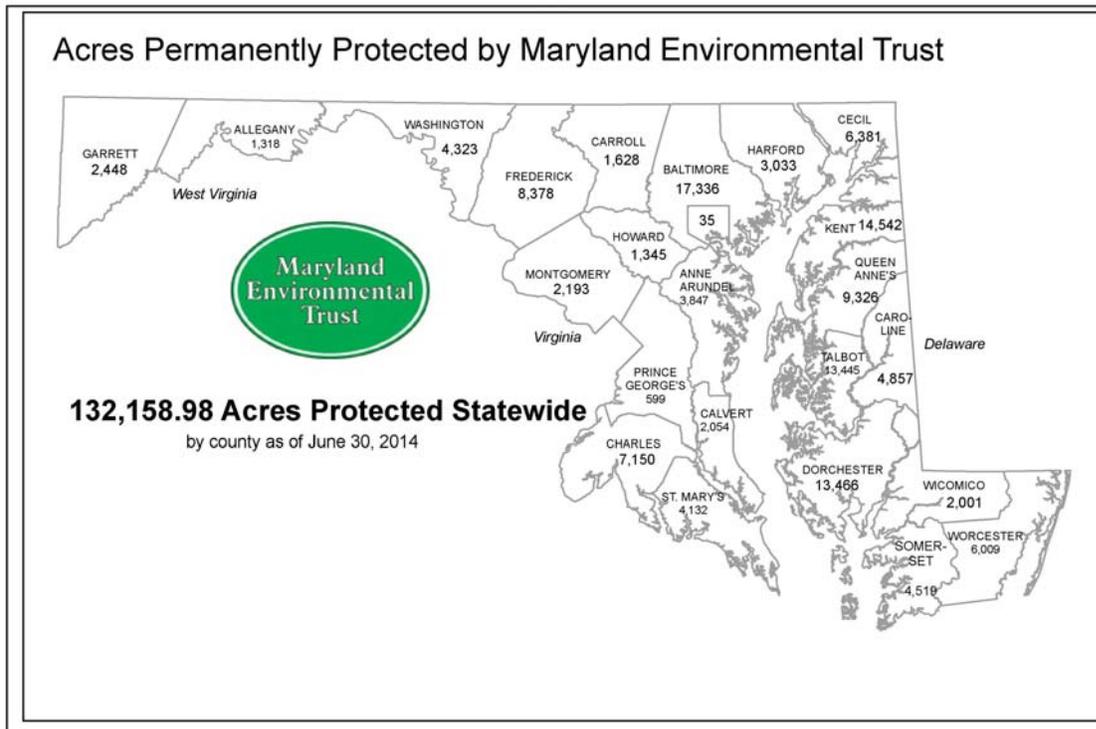
STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The donation of a conservation easement to MET is a major investment in the continued health, beauty, and enjoyment of Maryland's open spaces and the Chesapeake Bay. Protecting one's property does not stop with the signing of the conservation easement. MET and cooperating local land trust staff and volunteers continue to look after the land on an ongoing basis through regular monitoring of conservation properties. Stewardship involves a larger set of issues, which can include addressing landowner questions or concerns or requests for MET to approve various proposed structures or activities on the property. MET works with local land trusts in the Land Trust Assistance Program to ensure that stewardship and monitoring procedures comply with or exceed national guidelines.

In FY2014 MET and its cooperators together conducted monitoring visits to 456 easement and fee properties covering 64,107 acres, which represents 42% of the Trust's easement portfolio. Monitoring visits are conducted in order to document current conditions and assess compliance with easement requirements. This was a 31% decrease over FY13 monitoring accomplishments, caused by factors including the long term illness of a staff member, as well as decreased funding for stewardship and monitoring among local land trust partners. Monitoring visits are conducted in order to document current conditions and assess compliance with easement requirements. As part of its Land Trust Assistance Program, MET staff assists land trusts with the training of volunteers and the inspection of co-held easement properties, with enforcing easement terms, and the implementation of recordkeeping and documentation protocols. This year MET staff assisted land trusts with the monitoring of 36 properties, and land trusts monitored an additional 189 properties on their own.

At the end of FY2014, MET was tracking approximately 20 active stewardship issues, enforcement matters, and violations on easement properties. Over the course of the year, three matters were resolved with the assistance of the Office of the Attorney General. Staff presented 12 landowner and local government requests for approval of activities, including eight amendments. All but two requests were approved by the MET Board. One was tabled for more information and later approved. Staff routinely review and deny activity requests that are clearly prohibited by easement language, only presenting to the Board those that have

some likelihood of favorable consideration or which the landowner is insistent on having formally reviewed.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Volunteer Program has become a valued component of the Stewardship Program, supported entirely by donated funds. MET relies on approximately 40 trained volunteers to help monitor its easement properties and assist the staff as the inventory of protected lands grows.

At the end of its eleventh year, the Volunteer Program provided much needed “feet on the ground” inspections and documented reports on the current land uses of the easement properties. This year, 41 trained volunteers monitored 193 easements on over 20,815 acres throughout the state.

In the office, eight volunteers devoted more than 504 hours on a variety of projects. In total MET Volunteers contributed over 1,071 hours to MET’s Volunteer Program, a value equal to \$27,236. In fiscal year 2014, there were 42 volunteer assignment submissions, out of which 11 requested postage reimbursement and 16 requested mileage reimbursement. The total cost of volunteer mileage and postage totaled \$3,677 of which 63% or \$2,334 was donated, with the remaining \$1,343 paid by MET.

Staff presented seven training sessions in monitoring at which 23 new recruits were trained as Land Steward Volunteers. Attendees were provided training on the theory, objectives, and procedures of monitoring, and then led outside to conduct an on-the-ground monitoring inspection. Volunteers were then honored at an annual Volunteer

Appreciation event at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center with a catered lunch and kayak tour.

MET’s Volunteer Program received high marks from both volunteers and landowners alike. Volunteers were asked to complete surveys regarding MET’s volunteer program. Twenty four volunteers completed the survey, resulting in the following collective scores (out of 100).

Training Content=91
Organization=98
Communication=96
Guidance & Feedback=99
Field files arrangement=87
SmugMug on-line photo site=81
Usefulness of volunteer manual=74
Work load=90
Sense of reward=97



MET Staff and Volunteers at SERC for the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event.

2014 Volunteers

Ronnie Adams
Shan Allen
Derek Baumgardner
Andrea Blohm
Jason Boothe
Andrew Brignole
Ken Brown
Ann Burchard
Christine Cadigan
Susan Cohen
Carrie Dike
Jeffrey Dillon
Sharon Dillon
Eric Dircksen
Christina Dzingala
Stephen Fogle
Heather Foley
Dave Godfrey
Christine Hammer
Pamela Hargest
Joe Hasuly
David Hobson
Carol Holland
Peter Holland
Gina Im
David Kieffer
Nancy Kieffer
Emily Kimak
Dennis King
Toby Lloyd
Brittany McBride
Christine McCreary
Charles Montgomery
Patrick Pence
Ben Peterson
Werner Schumann
Elizabeth Schumann
Theodore Sheppard
Kevin Smith
Stuart Stainman
Don Sweet
Marsha Sweet
Charlie Wells
Melissa Tully
Joseph Yates

“The volunteer work preparation is very well organized and communication is easy and thorough. It has been my pleasure to be able to volunteer for several years for MET.”

Werner Schumann, Land Steward Volunteer

“The best part of volunteering for MET is visiting new areas of MD and meeting the easement owners.”

Carrie Dike, Land Steward Volunteer

“Great place to volunteer! Everyone is super nice and helpful. I had a great time here and would definitely recommend this place to anyone looking for a rewarding volunteer experience!”

Gina Im, Office Volunteer



Land Steward Volunteer Joe Hasuly monitoring an easement in Calvert County.

LAND TRUST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MET serves as the statewide land trust. Local land trusts of which there are over fifty in Maryland, work with and are assisted by MET. The Land Trust Assistance Program supports the work of these land trusts. The program is funded by a grant from Maryland's Department of Natural Resources Coastal Program, from the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), and the National and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Land Trust Assistance Program helps build and sustain the quality and effectiveness of the state's land trusts, and encourages participation in a number of national programs, such as the LTA's *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

Local land trusts are not-for-profit corporations designed to protect land within their geographical area from development, using conservation easements, gifts or purchases of land, limited development, conservation buyers, or promotion of existing local, state, or federal easement programs. These land conservation organizations range from small groups operated solely by volunteers to large land trusts with multiple professional staff. A directory



of Maryland land trusts can be found on the MET website. (See list on p. 18). The Land Trust Assistance Program provides land trusts with:

- Technical Assistance - information and training, including webinars and the annual Maryland Land Conservation Conference
- Financial support - through the Land Trust Grant Fund, the Janice Hollmann Grant and the Aileen Hughes Award
- Targeting of Conservation Easements - information on state land conservation priorities
- Organizational support - to ensure adoption of Land Trust Standards and Practices
- Conservation Easements and Land Conservation - taking a lead in drafting new easements and easement amendments
- Cooperative Agreements – with MET

MET adopted a new model Cooperative Agreement in 2011. This agreement establishes roles for MET and land trust partners and outlines principles in land conservation. A signed cooperative agreement is required for land trusts to receive MET grants and potential state tax benefits for owners of properties with easements.

In FY2014, MET signed cooperative agreements with the following local and regional land trusts:

City of Annapolis
Conservancy of Broad Creek
Gunpowder Valley Conservancy
The Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust
Sugarloaf Countryside Conservancy, Inc.

MARYLAND LAND CONSERVATION CONFERENCE

MET held the 14th annual statewide Land Conservation Conference on April 3-4, 2014 at the Claggett Center in Adamstown. Over 200 conservationists from 115 organizations across the Chesapeake Bay region convened for the two-day training and networking event. DNR Secretary Joe Gill provided the keynote address, available at http://www.dnr.state.md.us/met/pdfs/2014_MET_KeynoteAddress.pdf). Secretary Gill highlighted the significance of using alternative environmental messaging when communicating the important work of conservationists.

Conference participants gathered for a unique opportunity to share their experience, learn about priority issues and exchange new ideas on land conservation in our region. Session topics included: *Chesapeake Working Land Conservation Strategy, Coastal Land Conservation, Conservation Innovation, Conserving Maryland's Health Watersheds, Indigenous Landscape Conservation, Scenic Byways Resource Protection Tool, State of the State of Maryland Preservation Programs, Strategic Positioning, Stewardship, and Working in Woodlands Across Parcel Boundaries.*

The Maryland Land Conservation Conference, the only statewide gathering of land conservationists and trusts of its kind in Maryland, was made possible by the generous support from the following sponsors: *The Abell Foundation, American Forest Foundation, Brewers Association of Maryland, Civil War Trust, Chesapeake Conservancy,*

The Conservation Fund, Ecosystem Recovery Institute, Ecotone, Inc., Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust, Land Trust Alliance, Monocacy Brewery Company, National Park Service (Chesapeake Bay Office), Potomac Conservancy, O'Donoghue & O'Donoghue LLP, South Mountain Creamer, The Trust for Public Land, and Wright, Constable & Skeen, LLP.



Conference participants network over lunch. (Photo courtesy of Cate Calson, calsongraphics.com)



James R. O'Connell, DNR Secretary Joe Gill, James W. Constable and Geb Byron (Photo courtesy of Cate Calson, calsongraphics.com)

Maryland Land Trusts and Land Conservation Organizations

CENTRAL REGION

Baltimore Green Space
Carroll County Land Trust
Caves Valley Land Trust
Charm City Land Trusts
Greater Ruxton Area Foundation
Greater Sandy Springs Green Space
Gunpowder Valley Conservancy
Harford Land Trust
Land Preservation Trust
Long Green Land Trust
The Manor Conservancy
Mount Washington Preservation Trust
NeighborSpace of Baltimore County

EASTERN REGION

Cecil Land Trust
Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
Lower Shore Land Trust

SOUTHERN REGION

The Accokeek Foundation
American Chestnut Land Trust
Annapolis Conservancy Board
The Black Swamp Creek Land Trust
Conservancy for Charles County
The Conservancy of Broad Creek
Cove Point Natural Heritage
Crownsville Conservancy
Howard County Conservancy
The Kensington Land Trust
Magothy River Land Trust
Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust
Rockburn Land Trust
Scenic Rivers Land Trust
Southern Calvert Land Trust

WESTERN REGION

Allegheny Highlands Conservancy
Catoctin Land Trust
Potomac Conservancy
South Mountain Heritage Society
Sugarloaf Countryside Conservancy

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

American Farmland Trust
Biophilia Foundation
Chesapeake Conservancy
Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage
Civil War Trust
The Conservation Fund
The Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust
Maryland Alliance for Greenway
Improvement and Conservation
The Nature Conservancy
Patuxent Conservation Corps
Trust for Public Land
The Valleys Planning Council
Wetlands America Trust – Ducks Unlimited

GRANTS AND AWARDS

MET presented a number of grants and awards at the Maryland Land Conservation Conference.

DILLON AWARD

Alverta and Louise Dillon, sisters and retired school teachers, donated a perpetual conservation easement and bequeathed their entire Garrett County property to MET in 1984.

Alverta and Louise were dedicated naturalists and were enthusiastic about conservation and enhancement of the many resources found on their land. Their generous bequest is maintained as an endowment to support the activities and mission of MET, in accordance with the terms of the gifts. The Dillon Award is made annually by MET to a landowner(s) who exhibits outstanding conservation and/or environmental efforts.

Dr. Robert Hamilton was selected to receive the 2014 Dillon Award for his commitment to land conservation in Maryland. In 2013, Dr. Robert Hamilton donated a 46 acre easement to MET, forever protecting the productive agricultural land, woodland, and tributaries of the Gunpowder River in the Long Green Valley of Baltimore County. Dr. Hamilton established Hybridoma Organic Fruit Farm on the site in 1995. In addition to donating the conservation easement in 2013, he partnered with the Maryland Forest Service to plant a riparian buffer consisting of approximately 500 fruit and nut trees along the stream. Also in 2013, a 20 kilowatt/hour solar voltaic system was installed. The system allows the farm to be self-sustaining in regards to electrical use. The organic farm features “pick-your-own” fruit during peak season along with an educational mission to demonstrate sustainable land practices.



James R. O'Connell presents Dr. Robert G. Hamilton with the Dillon Award. (Photo courtesy of Cate Calson, calsongraphics.com)

AILEEN HUGHES AWARD

MET presents the Aileen Hughes Award annually to honor the late Aileen Hughes, a true leader in the conservation movement. Aileen was a supporter of women's and civil rights, as well as the protection of our state's natural and cultural resources. Aileen Hughes was the president of the American Chestnut Land Trust for many years.

The Aileen Hughes Award is given to recipients for their leadership roles in the land trust community. The award is given to an individual representing a Maryland land trust for leadership, partnership and innovation in a conservation project. The award is presented as a cash sum to the organization represented by the individual and is funded by non-state funds from MET.

This year the recipient of the Aileen Hughes Award was presented to Karen Edgecombe, Executive Director of the American Chestnut Land Trust, for outstanding leadership and creative thinking in the pursuit of land conservation in Calvert County.



MET Trustee and Chair of the KMB Grants Committee, Constance Lieder (R) presents the 2014 Aileen Hughes Award to Karen Edgecombe.

JAN HOLLMANN GRANT PROGRAM

The Jan Hollmann Grant Program is part of the Land Trust Assistance Program provided by MET to support land trusts throughout Maryland. The grants are named for a woman who exemplified citizen leadership of local land trusts in Maryland. Jan Hollmann co-founded the Severn River Land Trust and the Arundel Conservation Trust, and served on the Severn River Commission. She was named the Izaak Walton League’s Conservationist of the Year in 1989 and the Capital newspaper’s Person of the Year for 1990. Jan died in April 1990. MET’s tribute to Jan Hollman is this annual grant made in her honor for those local land trusts continuing in her footsteps.

These grants are generally targeted towards land trusts that demonstrate easement solicitation skills and that operate in regions of significant land conservation potential. The purpose of the Jan Hollmann program is to build the capabilities of the local organizations through small matching grants, with a particular focus on start-up assistance for new land trusts and fostering collaborations among neighboring organizations.

The Hollmann grant program supported six organizations. The grants helped fund a variety of eligible costs, including staff positions, landowner outreach programs, office supplies, insurance and internships. Funding for the Jan Hollmann Grants is provided by the SHA.



Recipients of the Janice Hollman Grants: Mariam Avins, Jeremy Rothwell, Hal Delaphane, Ben Lloyd, Kate Patton and Ann Jones.

Recipients of the Jan Hollmann Grants

Organization	Amount
Baltimore Green Space	\$5,000.00
Cecil Land Trust	\$5,000.00
Conservancy for Charles County	\$5,000.00
Harford Land Trust	\$5,000.00
Land Preservation Trust	\$2,000.00
Lower Shore Land Trust	\$5,000.00
Total	\$27,000.00

LAND TRUST GRANT FUND

The Land Trust Grant Fund was created by the Maryland Legislature in 1990 with a primary purpose to provide interest-free loans to help local land trusts purchase conservation lands and easements.

Administration of the Fund was assigned by statute to the Maryland Environmental Trust. (§ 3-2A-02 (c)). Over the years MET has managed the fund so as to aid various land conservation projects throughout the state. These projects permanently protected 2,000 acres (as of June 30, 2011) through purchased and donated easements to MET and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).

The loans made through the Fund have been highly leveraged. The Fund provides on average only one fifth of the project purchase price, the balance coming from local community and other private fund sources. In total, \$2.7 million dollars have been loaned from the Fund to land trusts, with an additional \$9.4 million coming from conservation partners. For the reasons explained below, no expenditures or reimbursements were made during FY11, FY12, FY13 and FY14; all outstanding loans had been repaid prior to the start of the fiscal year.

Administration of the Land Trust Grant Fund

The original monies for the Fund came to MET by General Assembly appropriations in the early 1990's through Program Open Space (POS) funding. The Fund is part of MET's annual budget (Object 14, Item 33). The basic Fund is held in the Fund's Reserve Account, and is a no-year budget item; appropriations for new projects are held for each fiscal year in the Fund's Active Account. The Fund Reserve Account is interest bearing, the Active Account is

not. Repayments are initially made to the Active Account. The Fund is flexible in that monies, such as repayments, can be transferred at the end of the fiscal year from the Active to the Reserve Account, and thus do not lapse.

Loans are given out and repaid in accordance with Land Trust Grant Fund Agreements that are completed for each project. The statute provides that loans can be made to a Maryland land trust for preservation and protection of open space and natural areas. The statute further provides that MET may make the grants reimbursable to the Fund, and may require the dedication of a conservation easement on the property. (Md. Code. Ann., Nat. Res. §3-2A-01.)

As of FY 2009 the Fund had a balance of \$1,500,000 in the Reserve Account, and approximately \$253,000 in the Active Account. However, the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2010 (SB 141/ HB 151) provided that, on or before June 30, 2010, the Governor may transfer to the General Fund \$1,500,000 of the funds in the Land Trust Grant Fund established under Section 3-2A-02 of the Natural Resources Article. That was done - \$1.5 million dollars of the Fund was diverted to the state budget, leaving a balance of less than \$16,831 to assist land trusts.

The Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2010 further provided that for FY14 net interest from special funds shall accrue to the General Fund of the state, and not to the Fund itself. The Special Fund Statement attached does not show interest accrued for FY14 due to this provision.

Recommendations

MET's ability to assist its partners and provide a rapid response to protect significant open space and natural resources has been drastically diminished; as of June 30, 2014, the Fund had a balance of \$16,831 available. Furthermore that balance is rapidly diminishing without any replenishment, since a portion of the remaining fund balance is allocated to MET annually by the state budgeting process, to support costs of monitoring and other related administration costs.

The MET Board feels strongly that the Fund should be replenished so that it may continue to serve as a critical source of financing to land trusts in their efforts to protect open space. The Fund has worked effectively as a rapid response land preservation tool. In the past the Fund was available for grants and loans to land trusts

at no interest for use when valuable resource lands are threatened by development. No other state program is that flexible and available at such short notice. The readjustment of land prices may spur demand for loan funds as public/private partnerships emerge to address local land use issues with voluntary conservation measures. The accrual of interest earned to the General Fund of the state further diminishes future funding for land conservation projects.

The Board of Trustees of MET recommends that the Fund be restored to its original levels and maintained and increased as soon as fiscally possible, and that the Governor and General Assembly thus support the program's goals, to assist Maryland's land trusts in their efforts to preserve open space and the state's natural areas.



KEEP MARYLAND BEAUTIFUL

The Keep Maryland Beautiful (KMB) program was the first program administered by MET. This program is funded by the SHA and provides two sets of grants and awards to non-profit organizations and schools to support environmental education and demonstration projects that enhance and maintain the environment.

The Margaret Rosch Jones Award of up to \$2,000.00 is awarded to one or more non-profit groups or communities for an ongoing project or activity that has demonstrated success in solving an environmental issue, whether local or statewide. This award recognizes those organizations that have been actively educating people in their community about litter prevention, community beautification, or eliminating or reducing the causes of a local environmental problem.

This year the recipients of the Margaret Rosch Jones Award are:

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Blue Water Baltimore, Friends of Tuckahoe & Martinak State Parks, MA & PA Heritage Trail, Inc., Reservoir Hill Improvement Council, Seton Heritage Ministries, Severn Riverkeeper Program & Pines Community Improvement Association, St. Mary's River Watershed Association, Western Maryland Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc., and The Youghiogheny River Watershed Association.

The Bill James Environmental Grant of up to \$1,000.00 is awarded to school groups, science and ecology clubs, and other nonprofit youth groups for proposed environmental education projects.

This year the Bill James Grants were awarded to:

Berlin Intermediate School, Colonel Richardson High School Environmental Club, G.W. Carver Elementary School, Kennard Elementary School, National Commission on Teaching and America's Future/Lakeland Elementary School, Newborn Holistic Ministries Jubilee Arts Program, Roland Park Country School, South River Federation, The Thomas Jefferson Elementary Middle School and Civility Music, and Ward Museum of Wild Fowl Art.



KMB recipient Blue Water Baltimore led a project to replace 18,000 sq. ft. of blacktop with grass, trees, and a new playground; eliminating several hundred thousand gallons of storm water runoff.



Recipients for the 2014 Keep Maryland Beautiful Awards

Margaret Rosch Jones Award	
The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	\$250.00
Blue Water Baltimore	\$500.00
Friends of Tuckahoe & Martinak State Parks	\$500.00
MA & PA Heritage Trail, Inc.	\$250.00
Reservoir Hill	\$250.00
Seton Heritage Ministries	\$250.00
Severn Riverkeeper Program & Pines Community Improvement Assoc.	\$250.00
St. Mary's River Watershed Association	\$250.00
Western Maryland Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.	\$500.00
The Youghiogheny River Watershed Assoc.	\$250.00
TOTAL	\$3,250.00
Bill James Award	
Berlin Intermediate School	\$450.00
Colonel Richardson High School Environmental Club	\$1,000.00
G.W. Carver Elementary School	\$300.00
Kennard Elementary School	\$300.00
National Commission on Teaching and America's Future/Lakeland Elem. School	\$300.00
Newborn Holistic Ministries Jubilee Arts Program	\$750.00
Roland Park Country School	\$300.00
South River Federation	\$300.00
The Thomas Jefferson Elementary Middle School and Civility Music	\$300.00
Ward Museum of Wild Fowl Art	\$750.00
TOTAL	\$4,750.00

Appendix 1

MET Financial Statement - July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014
State Administered Funds

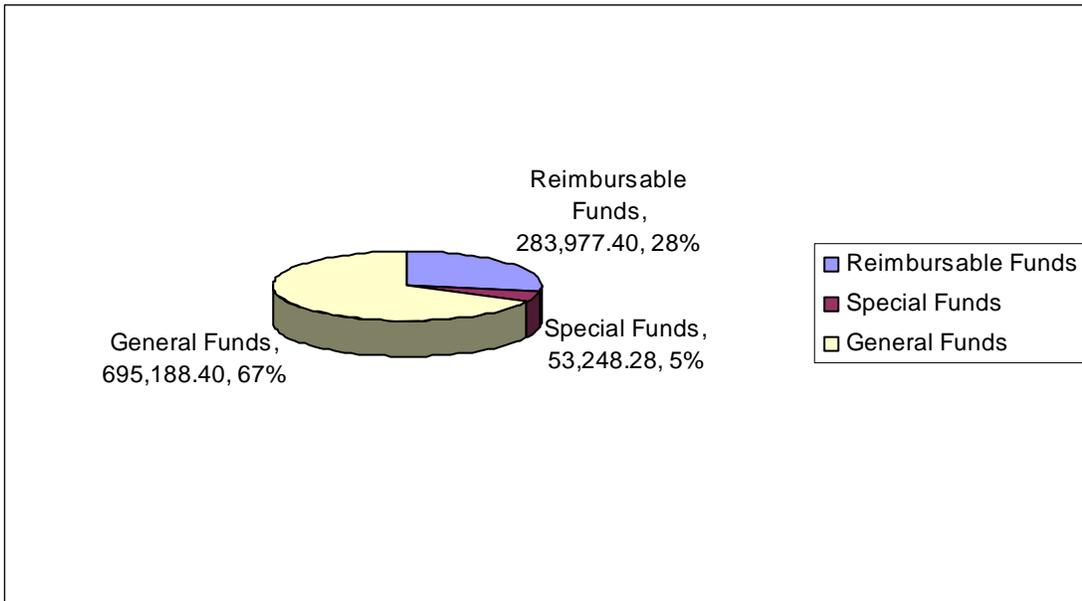
FISCAL YEAR 2014

Number of Authorized Positions	9
Number of Contractual Positions	1.8
Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits	922,422.30
Total Operating Expenses (including contractual services, communications, travel, equipment, supplies and materials)	109,991.78
Total Expenditure	1,032,414.08

FUND SOURCES

Net General Funds	695,188.40
Special Funds	53,248.28
Reimbursable Funds	283,977.40

TOTAL **\$1,032,414.08**



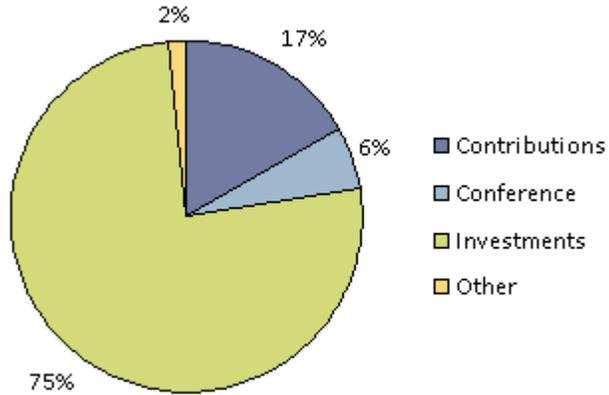
Appendix 2

MET Statement of Financial Activities - July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014
MET Administered Funds

SUPPORT AND REVENUES

Contributions & Grants	\$	55,354
MLTA Conference		19,201
Investment Income, net		250,923
Other Revenues		5,238

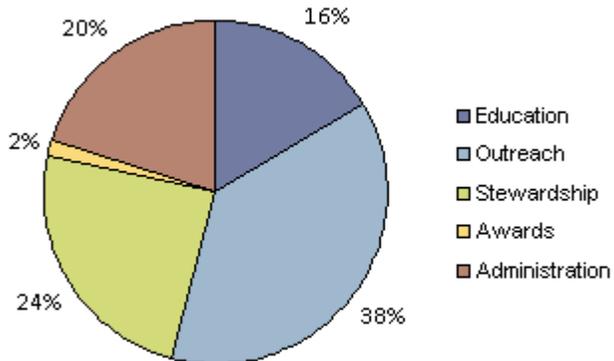
TOTAL REVENUES **\$ 330,716**



EXPENSES

LLT Education Program	\$	33,035
Outreach Program		75,748
Stewardship Program		48,604
Awards & Grants		3,239
Administrative Expenses		40,158

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$ 200,784**



CHANGE IN NET ASSETS **\$ 129,932**

Appendix 3

CONTRIBUTORS

Environmental Benefactor (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Louisa Copeland Duemling
Jennifer Stanley

Green Space Guardian (\$1,000-\$4,999)

Abell Foundation, Inc
American Forest Foundation
Doris Blazek-White and Thacher W. White
Mr. Hamilton Chaney, Colony Cove, LLC
Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc.
Conservation Fund
Wilson and Nancy Coudon
ExxonMobil Foundation
Edwin R. and Marian Fry
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Galli
Royce Hanson
Lorraine B. Healey
Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Hoffman
Oakley and Francie Johnson
Land Trust Alliance
Patricia V. Melville
Mr. and Mrs. James R. O'Connell
O'Donoghue & O'Donoghue LLP
The Honorable S. Jay Plager
James Riepe Family Foundation
William W. Scott
W. Robert Shortall
Robert H. Stevenson
Adena W. Testa
Wright, Constable & Skeen, L.L.P.

Habitat Hero (\$500-\$999)

Daniel P. Beard
Joanne H. Birsh
Mary Burke
Douglas G. Carroll
Civil War Trust
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Constable
Bill and Diana Conway
William F. D'Alonzo, Turners Creek Farms
The Honorable Roy P. Dyson
Ecosystem Recovery Institute

Ecotone, Inc.
Iva Louise Gillet
Harriet S. Iglehart
Julia Jitkoff and Stanislaw
Maliszewski/L'Aiglon Foundation
Robert A. Kinsley
John C. Murphy
Potomac Conservancy
Mr. and Mrs. Steven P. Quarles
Tod P. Salisbury
Alan Schmaljohn
William G. Stewart
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold G. Stifel, II
Trust for Public Land
Mrs. Lynn Vonderhorst (*In memory of
James Vonderhorst*)
Kathryn Weise

Land Supporter (\$100-\$499)

John Blodgett
Mr. and Mrs. Perry J. Bolton
Dorothea P. Brewster
J. Dorsey Brown
Ms. Gemmell M. Bruner
Bruce Campbell
Dr. Gary P. Carver and Darlene T. Carver
Jeffrey E. Christ
Nessly Craig
Robert B. Deford
Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Emery
Mr. Greg J. Gannon
Ruann Newcomer George
Margaret Smith Green
Hollyday Family, LLC/ Richard Gold
Humane Society
Tim and Julie Hussman
Nancy Isaacson (*In memory of David &
Maxine Hammond*)
Thomas B. Jeffers
Beth and Phil Jones
Ellen Kelly
Ms. Barbara B. Knapp
David H. Langstaff
Constance Lieder

O. James Lighthizer
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Maddux IV
Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Montague
Charles Steve Montgomery
J.L. Malcolm Morris
Achsah O'Donovan
Nelson T. Offutt
Henry C. Pitts
Walter Dodd Ramberg
B. Francis Saul II
Dale N. Schumacher
Werner & Elizabeth Fritz Schumann
Harold Scrimgeour
Matthew Stover
Sandra Sweeney
William C. Trimble, Jr.
James and Argye Trupe
Philip and Irmay Webster
Simeon Wooten
Margaret H. Worrall
Lucy and Vernon Wright

Friend (\$10-\$99)

Frank and Christina Allen
John R. Beaver
Ronald Boyer
Elizabeth Buxton (*In memory of
Virginia Buxton*)
Gaylord Clark
Jane E. Halil
Edward R. Huber
Wallace Lippincott
Marilyn Mause (*In memory of John Hanson
Briscoe*)
Nancy McLaughlin
Mr. R.E. Orff (*In memory of Henry V. Orff*)
Robena D. Robinett (*In memory of
Elizabeth M. Flower*)
Wendy Stringfellow
Marian E. Sysak
Catherine R. Tipper
Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Wentworth
Dr. John S. Weske
Kathleen B. White