



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Gary D. Maynard
Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Another Milestone for Governor's *Smart Green Growing*
and DPSCS *Public Safety Works* Campaigns:
Inmates Will Travel to Coaches Island to Plant Bay Grasses
They Harvested and Tended in a Special Greenhouse**

**Media Invited to Go By Boat From Tilghman Island
to the Work Site Thursday, June 4 at 9 a.m.**

TOWSON, MD (May 29, 2009)---Members of the media are invited to witness another milestone in the campaign to have inmates "pay society back" while at the same time protecting the environment: On Thursday, June 4, Division of Correction (DOC) inmates will travel by boat to plant more than 20,000 shoreline-protecting bay grasses and other shrubs--- plants the inmates themselves harvested as seedlings, then tended during the winter months at a special greenhouse on prison grounds in Hagerstown. This is the first time ever that inmates have been involved in such a project, which directly benefits Governor Martin O'Malley's *Smart Green Growing* environmental protection effort, and is a key component of DPSCS Secretary Gary Maynard's *Public Safety Works* campaign.

The landmark project is the work of Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE), the prison industry arm of the DOC, in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Anne Arundel Community College Environmental Center. MCE is one of the top ten prison industries in the nation, and is involved in a number of projects that not only save taxpayers money and teach inmates critical employment skills, but help protect the environment and Maryland's natural resources as well.

The fragile shoreline grasses, crucial in protecting the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, were hand-picked by inmates from the Eastern Shore last year. The seeds were grown in a special MCE greenhouse at the DOC's Hagerstown prison complex, where inmates provided all the care. Those inmates have been transferred to an Eastern Shore DOC pre-release facility in order to let them do the actual planting of the grasses they've grown for months.

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DPSCS Secretary Gary Maynard has initiated dozens of community- and environment-benefiting projects that allow inmates in Maryland's pre-release system to pay society back while giving communities the opportunity to do projects they could otherwise never afford. Inmates now operate a rescue farm for thoroughbred horses (Sykesville); build oyster cages for spat (Eastern Shore); provide trail and state park maintenance and special projects (Garrett and Allegany counties); and restore State veterans' cemeteries (statewide), among other projects.

The inmates will first plant on Coaches Island: 20,000 inmate-grown grasses, plus thousands of shrubs and other plants. Then, the following week, inmates will plant on nearby Poplar Island. Work on both islands is critical to restoring and protecting the Bay and its shoreline and surrounding wetlands. The work is being done in partnership with Maryland Environmental Service.

These photos show inmates working in the Hagerstown Maryland Correctional Enterprises greenhouse, where they tended the Shore grasses from autumn '08 through May of '09.





June 4 Logistical Information:

MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA SHOULD ARRIVE BEFORE 9 A.M. AT KNAPP'S NARROWS MARINA ON ROUTE 33 AT THE TILGHMAN ISLAND DRAWBRIDGE. THE BOAT WILL BE LEAVING AT 9.A.M. IT IS APPROXIMATELY 15 MINUTES BY BOAT TO COACHES ISLAND.

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