

Bulgaria: Environmental Waves on the Danube



by Fred Tutman, Patuxent Riverkeeper

When a friend offered me his Sofia apartment to use over the holidays, I became intrigued by this unfamiliar and suddenly affordable destination. Quick research reminded me that Bulgaria is one of many nations sharing the fabled Danube River.

While its size and scope dwarf the Patuxent, it occurred to me that this river and its watershed, one of Europe's largest, might teach me something about how to address our issues. Curious about parallels that could be drawn, I grabbed my backpack and, with notepad and camera in hand, set out to see what I could learn.

The Danube River Ecosystem

The Danube is a huge river system, originating in Germany's Black Forest, running through or along eleven countries, including Bulgaria, and emptying into the Black Sea via Romania. It is a major commercial waterway and is home for many species of plant and animal life.



The Danube River basin is the longest marshland in Europe, containing the greatest stretch of reedbeds in the world. In fact, these plants dominate the plant life of this marsh. In the delta, 1,700 square kilometers is covered with reedbeds--only about 150 square kilometers are not covered by them.

Besides reedbeds, there are many different species of water lilies. Sandy areas along the river are covered with a grass called Stippa.

There are many forests along the Danube which contain their own specific plant life. In the Letea Forest, there are dunes that are 250 meters wide and 10 meters long. There are trees coupled in with these dunes that reach the height of 35 meters. This forest is home to many rare plant species.

The delta of the Danube is the second largest wetland area in Europe, a region of marshes and swamps, broken by tree covered elevations, which serve as a good flood plain protection. The wide variety of habitats in the basin support many species and genetic diversity – it is home to a wide variety of species of plants, fish, birds, and mammals, some of which are endangered. The waters of the river form an aquatic ecosystem of high economic, social, and environmental value.

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Spring Forward!

Daylight Saving Time starts early this year, on Sunday, March 11 at 2:00AM. That's this weekend. Before you go to bed on Saturday night, remember to turn your clocks ahead one hour.

CALENDAR

March 14.....PRC Meeting
17.....Roughnecks first
Governor's Bridge survey
24.....Laurel Cleanup
26.....Spring Newsletter
31.....Roughnecks trip

April 11.....PRC Meeting
14.....Patuxent Annual Cleanup
15.....JPPM Earth Day
Celebration
27.....Tree Potting Party
29.....Roughnecks Trip

May 9.....PRC Meeting
11.....Patuxent Growth Summit
12.....Roughnecks Trip
20.....Roughnecks Trip

Easy Money



Here's an way to raise money for Patuxent Riverkeeper. Use GoodSearch to search the internet and about a penny per search can be directed to Patuxent Riverkeeper. Those pennies add up.

Powered by Yahoo, GoodSearch donates 50% of its revenue to charities and schools. Its founder estimates that "a charity with 1,000 supporters searching the internet twice a day will receive \$7,300 a the end of the year."

For more information go to: www.goodsearch.com

GoodSearch



2007 Jug Bay Award

The Friends of Jug Bay have chosen Patuxent Riverkeeper, Fred Tutman, as the recipient of this year's Jug Bay Award for his outstanding contribution to the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary.

The award will be presented at the FOJB Annual Meeting on **March 18th** (3-5pm in the McCann Wetlands Study Center at the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary). The meeting is open to anyone interested in JBWS and the Patuxent River. For more info visit <http://jugbay.org/>.

Accokeek Foundation Riverkeeper Lecture

On **May 20**, The Accokeek Foundation will host Fred Tutman, guest speaker of their 2007 Robert Ware Straus Lecture Series. He will share reflections in words and pictures about growing up in the Patuxent watershed and his own journey of activism and stewardship to help protect the endangered Patuxent ecosystem. The event is free. Coffee at 3pm, lecture at 4pm. For more information go to www.accokeek.org.

Mini Summit

The northern section of the Patuxent is increasingly urbanized. With Base realignment and closure, the likely increase in the number of people, houses, highways, wastewater treatment plants, and other additions could have an enormous impact on water quality. On **May 11**, a one-day symposium will focus on watershed planning and trends and help participants better understand the measures that must be taken in planning, housing design, and conservation in order to save the waterway and its ecology. It will be held at the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge. See the our web site for details and updates.

Patuxent Water Trail Ready in 2007

The vision of a Patuxent Water Trail is an ambitious project of a persistent group of public and private agencies:

- Patuxent Riverkeeper
- Patuxent River Commission
- Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)
- Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks Department
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Calvert County
- St. Mary's County, and other entities

Their vision is gradually becoming a reality. They have been planning, mapping, surveying, and developing new launches, campsites, and other amenities to prepare for the day in the near future when regional paddlers will be able to put their boats into the water near Route 3 on the Little Patuxent and make their way south to the Chesapeake Bay.

A journey of approximately 60 miles to the Bay (below the Reservoir in Laurel) will be dotted with navigational markers, rest stops, publicly owned campsites, and other amenities, making it arguably one of the most comprehensive and fully realized water trail systems on the Chesapeake Bay tributaries.



The current plans include about ten locations in Anne Arundel County, ten in Prince George's, seven in Calvert County, one in Charles County, and seven in St. Mary's. There are also about eight paddle launch locations listed in Montgomery & Howard County, but the WSSC reservoirs make it impossible to paddle from the upper river down to the middle and lower sections. Additional access and camping sites are possible with the addition of more publicly owned properties on the riverfront.

The water trail concept will consist of simple launch sites and primitive campsites. In nearly all instances, the campsite will be accessible only from the water. A centralized reservation system is being designed that will allow users to both reserve and pay the modest fee for the campsite of their choice. The agency stakeholders have been meeting monthly to work out uniform access policies, water management issues, and other establishment and maintenance concerns related to this ambitious project.

The website resource for the project is currently being overhauled by Patuxent Riverkeeper, with content being developed by the Patuxent River Commission. Funding support is coming from M-NCPPC and considerable advice, support, and assistance being provided by other stakeholders. The website should be operational in time for the 2007 paddling season, www.Patuxentwatertrail.org



Fowler Wade-In

On **June 10**, at the 19th Annual Bernie Fowler Wade-In, the whole family can join Senator Fowler to see how far he can wade into the river at Broomes Island and still see his sneakers. This Southern Maryland tradition is a great opportunity to gather in the spirit of protecting and cherishing the river.

Patuxent Riverkeeper will be running a bus shuttle from the Route 95 Park-and-Ride near College Park. Bus space is limited, so reserve early. A \$5 contribution helps defray the cost of fuel. Contact fred@paxriverkeeper.org.

Patuxent Sojourn

June 14-19. The Patuxent Sojourn has been growing by leaps and bounds these past few years—but in a good way. There are more attractions, more activities, more sights to see, and more fun to have.

Come for a day or multiple days to paddle and camp down the river. This year's Sojourn starts pretty far upriver at the newly established Governor's Bridge boat ramp and runs to Kings Landing in Calvert County. See stretches of untouched inland waterway, experience history and ecology firsthand. Reservations are required so register early: www.paxsojourn.org



Patuxent River Cleanup

A call for sites and coordinators

Each Spring marks the return of the Annual Patuxent River Cleanup, a tradition which amasses citizens and watershed groups in seven counties seeking to maximize the amount of trash hauled out of the river on a single day. This year's date is **April 14**. Since the cleanup's inception in 2000, we have tried to grow exponentially the number of cleanup sites, the number of volunteers, and the tonnage of trash pulled out of the river.

Know a site that needs attention? Interested in being a site coordinator? Contact us by **March 20** so we can post accurate information on the web site. General information about the Patuxent River Cleanup, registration, and supplies can be found at: www.cleanpatuxent.org

This year, Patuxent Riverkeeper will make available cleanup supplies: bags, gloves, litter gitters, etc. We also will provide assistance finding cleanup sites, and site management forms and other resources to help our partnering groups and individuals maximize their productivity. As usual, we will tally and publish the cleanup results.

A number of communities stage their own cleanups throughout the year, separate from this annual river-wide event. All of the various cleanup traditions build stewardship, help to beautify the river corridor, and remove an amazing amount of debris from the water, bettering the health of people and the ecosystem.



Reward Program

Commercial dumpers are a perennial problem for the watershed, especially in isolated parks and recreational areas along the river. In an attempt to target people who litter for profit, we are initiating a trial program to encourage our citizens to report the practice.

Private donors are helping us offer a \$500 Cash Reward for each detailed tip that results in conviction of a person or business who knowingly and willfully dumps bulk refuse within 500 feet of the river's flood plain. Tipsters should contact Patuxent Riverkeeper and must be willing testify or provide evidence to support an investigation of criminal dumping activity.

Truck Wanted

Urgent need for a full-size, full-powered 4WD pickup. Our short bed truck is too small to meet our towing requirements and doesn't have cargo room to haul trees, Roughneck's tools, or trash gathered at the river cleanups. If you know of an affordable truck with a known maintenance history, please contact fred@paxriverkeeper.org



Demand Change!

By Lori Edmonds

"In every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

- The Iroquois Confederacy



In an age of consumption and destruction, we need to consider future generations if we expect our children to have any hope of a livable environment. Somewhere in the back of our minds, we all worry about what is going to happen to the Earth in the future, but what happens to it depends on the choices we make today. The problem is we feel we are part of a conglomeration that runs on its own without our input. While it's true that large corporations call many of the shots, with our input (LOTS of it) we can affect their choices. That is the beauty of capitalist society—the market changes to meet demand.

Help stop destructive land development. DEMAND SMART GROWTH AND ECO-SMART APPLIANCES.

When buying a home, look for homes that already exist and have been renovated, or you can do the renovations yourself. This helps preserve undeveloped land, saves energy, and cuts down on waste. If you move into a new development, look for a developer who plans to maintain existing trees. Ask what their plans are to leave some of the area undeveloped. Make sure proper measures are being taken to protect nearby waterways from construction damage. If no measures have been taken, contact your local Waterkeeper.

Whether you are moving into an old or new community, check to see how walkable it is. Can you walk to shopping, services, and entertainment locations? Communities designed with walking in mind are more healthful and environmentally friendly because they don't require residents to start their engines every time they leave home.

Consider these environmentally conscientious products and services*:

- General Electric- Ecomagination appliances
<http://ge.ecomagination.com>
- Southwest Windpower- Skystream wind turbines
www.windenergy.com
- Green Mountain Energy- Electricity w/ reduced carbon dioxide emissions
www.greenmountain.com
- Ice Energy- Ice Bear cooling unit (coming soon)
www.ice-energy.com
- Naturalawn- Organic lawn-care service
www.nl-amer.com
- Citizenre Corporation- Solar roof panel rentals
<http://renu.citizenre.com>
- TerraLink Geothermal Systems
<http://www.arit.com/geothermal.htm>

*Provided for informational purposes only, Not specifically endorsed by Patuxent Riverkeeper.

The Patuxent Roughnecks

by Lauren Webster



The Patuxent Roughnecks is a premier volunteer group working to maintain fish passage and a free flowing river for humans. Crews work in fringe areas to remove blockages that harm the ecology of the river.

The team is dedicated to improving fish passage, paddle navigability, and establishing land trails that serve the Patuxent Greenway and the preserved space in the region.

Minimum impact techniques are used to achieve these goals in order to avoid injuring the ecosystem.

The season kicks off with a survey trip on March 17, involving hiking along the banks of the Patuxent River to identify, map, and plan a removal strategy for blockages on the river. We expect to find trees blocking the river due to the winter weather and recent ice storm.

In preparation for the Annual Patuxent River Sojourn, we will begin this season by working on the section of river spanning from Governor's Bridge to Queen Anne Bridge. This year's sojourn will be starting further upstream than in past years, thanks in part to the work of the Roughneck Crew. For more information contact Lauren Webster at 301-249-8200x6 or Lauren@paxriverkeeper.org

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There are also many different types of animal life. There are over 300 species of birds. A large percentage of the world wide population of these species live in area of the Danube basin. The Danube delta is a very important area for fish. Over 45 species of freshwater fish live in the lakes formed by the delta. One of these species, the Acipensidnidae, is endangered.

Bulgarian Environmentalism

Democracy and local home rule are relatively new concepts since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989. Previously, the State controlled and allocated natural resources; so, the private property ethic that pervades American society is absent in this former Soviet Bloc country.

Bulgaria, along with neighboring Romania, was admitted formally into the European Union (EU) on New Year's Day 2007. EU Membership brings a new currency, new food standards, a revised market economy, and new environmental directives dealing with pollution and protecting shared resources, like air and water.

The connections between wealth, empowerment, and environmental protection can be closely fused when it comes to determining governmental ethics and priorities for water preservation. Pressures are great in developing countries to convert natural resources into needed wealth. "Progress," technological change, and geopolitical shifts have created new problems for the Danube, even though the old problems are still unsolved.

The same is true here on the Patuxent, especially as more people have migrated into the watershed. For example, prior to the 1970's, there were far more gravel pits, industrial operations, and high intensity activities on the Patuxent. While many of these no longer exist, there has been a distinct rise in the number of wastewater plants on the river to accommodate new growth and the flow of nonpoint source pollution flowing into the river from the upstream areas.

In the 1970's, wastewater plants were the main focus for those concerned about protecting the Patuxent River. Some countries on the Danube only recently stopped discharging raw sewage directly into the river. For example, with little regard to the impact of pathogens on the surrounding ecology or their neighbors downstream, Hungary built its first wastewater plant in 1980. Interestingly, 96% of Hungary's drinking water comes from the Danube.



The Danube has had its share of water quality strife. Major ecological catastrophes have burdened the Danube with a wide range of chemical contaminants. The 1990's Balkan Wars and a NATO military campaign in 1998 ravaged the Sava and Drava tributaries of the Danube in Croatia and Serbia. Waste from Romanian Mines has impaired the river and enormous mining accidents have occurred, like the Baia Mare incident, where 50-100 tons of mining waste, containing cyanide, were released into the river.

The public is only starting to become aware of the risks, hazards, and dangers of this unchecked pollution. With a new standard of intergovernmental cooperation through EU membership, environmental issues are starting to form center stage. The EU depends on bilateral and multilateral accord between its members and includes environmental directives that encourage recycling and compliance with manufacturing protocols that lean toward environmental protection. Now, with the addition of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU, **ALL** of the countries with riparian boundaries on the Danube will be subject to these accords.

The Patuxent has also been beleaguered by a accidents and the steady onslaught of civilization's byproducts over the years. For example, the Pepco fuel oil spill in 2000 at Chalk Point was ecologically catastrophic to the river, endangering marine life, habitat, and the livelihood of watermen. It's arguable that, fundamentally, the Patuxent and the Danube Rivers share the same basic problem, human beings. continued on p. 9



River Bus Update

The conversion of our new-to-us miniature school bus into a mighty River Bus is well on its way. Its new engine has been installed and it is nearly ready for the paint job. We are honing our bus driving skills so we can get our Commercial Driver's Licenses.

This year we hope to coordinate trips to Tuckahoe State Park, Baltimore Harbor, Shenandoah, Western Maryland, West/Rhodes Rivers, Lower Susquehanna, Delaware Gap, Point Lookout State Park, Chester River, and Assateague. Our trip schedule will be published in the next newsletter.



New Task Force Minorities & Environmental Issues

Dumps and environmentally hazardous projects, are many times more likely to be located in minority neighborhoods where the people are poor, disadvantaged, and/or without political power or adequate representation. Unfortunately, the folks who suffer the most from this injustice also are underrepresented in the movement to protect the environment.

The Maryland General Assembly has authorized the formation of a Task Force on Minorities in the Environmental Community, charged with improving minority participation in environmental issues.

Patuxent Riverkeeper has been asked to be a part of the new venture. Task force members are appointed by legislators or the Governor's office and include environmental activists, educators, and members of the General Assembly.

Initially, work groups will be established to develop recommendations to:

- Establish Environmental Centers at Historical Black Colleges and Universities
- Improve communication to the minority community involving environmental and natural resources issues
- Improve outreach to the minority community on water quality, environmental health and environmental justice issues

The Task Force work will identify existing projects and programs that address these issues, identify gaps and barriers to achieving goals, and develop strategies to achieve legislative objectives.

John Smith on the Patuxent

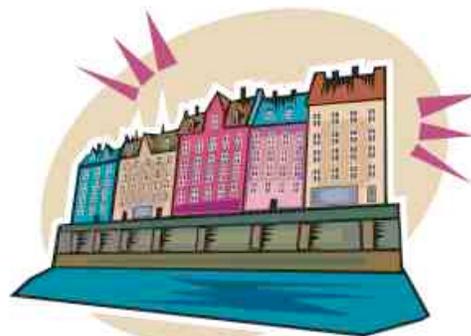
This summer a crew of historians, naturalists, and educators will try to retrace Capt. John Smith's 1608 expedition. In a replica of Smith's shallop, they will voyage to the headwaters of almost every tributary of the Chesapeake Bay.

On **August 4 & 5**, you can enjoy the river and reconnect with its past. Commemorate Smith's first encounter with the Patuxents at Jefferson Patterson Park in St. Leonard. Capt. Smith's shallop will be stopping at the park to participate in the event. Enjoy living history, dancers and drummers, a recreated Indian Village, traditional arts, and skilled demonstrations. For more information about this and other events on the John Smith Trail, go to: <http://www.johnsmith400.org/>

PRAD/State of the River Summit

Last year's summit focused on the State of the River and what needs to be done to bring the waterway back to robust health and shelter it from the ravages of pollution, indifference, bad growth, and other causes.

On **October 5**, the 2007 Summit will focus on the implementation of things learned at the 2006 Summit and will recap efforts that have been made during the year.



Annual Riverkeeper Party

Once a year we get together with members, boosters, and Roughnecks to celebrate another successful year of work and play on the river. This year's date is **October 20**.

Volunteers of distinction will be recognized, and there will be music or a movie to feed the mind and the spirit. There will be great food, good company, and a fabulous party.

Save the date!

Patuxent 4-H Center Offers Paper Recycling Service

The Patuxent River 4-H Center has a PAPER recycling container by their parking lot. The service is a fundraiser for environmental education programs that the Center provides to schools. The container ONLY takes paper products.

Patuxent Four-H Center
18405 Queen Anne Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Green SoMD Website

Green Southern Maryland is dedicated to environmental awareness, community building, and sustainable living. With a focus on Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties, their website provides environmental news, an events calendar, and a directory of green organizations and businesses serving the community:

www.greensomd.com

Job Openings:

Patuxent Riverkeeper Office Assistant



Patuxent Riverkeeper has an opening for a part-time office assistant for up to 3 days/week. Duties include maintaining records, conducting basic research, performing light bookkeeping, fulfilling requests for information from the public, editing, booking river tours, assembling funding requests, and other support tasks. We offer a pleasant office setting, negotiable pay, team atmosphere, and a chance to do positive work for the environment. Position will be available Spring 2007. For more information, contact fred@paxriverkeeper.org.

Chesapeake Regional Coordinator

Based in Annapolis, the Coordinator's primary responsibility is to help the fifteen regional Chesapeake Bay Watershed Waterkeeper programs meet their collaboration goals:

- Enhancing a common presence for Chesapeake Bay Watershed Waterkeeper programs, as well as broad public awareness for their individual work on each of the waterways they serve;
- Facilitating a common and consistent Waterkeeper voice for regional issues;
- Executing the Coordinator's annual work plan to help regional Waterkeeper programs share and learn from each other's work
- Increasing the exposure, capacity, and value received by the area Waterkeeper programs through collaborative activities; and helping Waterkeeper programs to thrive as a collaborative presence in the region.

Full-time, exempt position: 40+ hours/week. Must be flexible to work weekends or longer hours, as needed. Competitive non-profit salary, DOE, with health, dental, and vision insurance, vacation, and sick leave.

No calls please. Send resumes and expressions of interest to: Emily Egginton, Waterkeeper Alliance, 50 South Buckout Street, Suite 302, Irvington, NY 10533 (egginton@waterkeeper.org).



Open Government

Sunshine Week, March 11-17, is a national initiative promoting freedom of information and the public's right to know what its government is doing, and why. It seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in all levels of government, and to give them access to information that improves lives and strengthens communities. Visit their website, www.sunshineweek.org

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In 2000, the United Nations sponsored a study called the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. The study concluded that there would be consequences for the unsustainable development of these countries, unless a cooperative framework was devised. The problem of trans-boundary pollution was clearly identified as an essential area of concern. The countries along the Danube have grappled with it for generations. On the Patuxent, we struggle with trans-boundary challenges, too, as counties deal separately with local watershed issues under general state guidelines, with no cooperative framework existing between the jurisdictions.

On the Danube, a 1948 non-binding management system was ratified by the Danube Convention. Unfortunately, it offered no solid set of ground rules for dispute resolution. Comparatively, Maryland's Patuxent River Commission also has been historically unable to serve a meaningful role in resolving disputes.

In the 1970's, limitations were imposed by European authorities on certain fish caught in the North Sea. Threatened fish stocks were among several emergent areas which raised awareness of the need to find sustainable resource management practices in order to avoid the risk of losing overall productivity of the resource.

The accords are imperfect, but unlike for the Patuxent, at least there is a framework for exploring and developing solutions to the problems that are well enumerated, plus a general recognition of the ongoing need to act cooperatively for the greater good. To do nothing will eventually impair everybody's interest.

Battle lines are forming, as Bulgarian citizens reject the development of vast natural resources into tourism attractions, like ski resorts, which result in the wholesale loss of habitat and the destruction of additional unspoiled areas. Some assessments show that by 2030, in order to ameliorate the impact on the environment caused by growth, existing industrial and environmental practices will need to be ten times more efficient than they are now. On the Patuxent, most of our protection paradigms and technical solutions are holdovers from the 1970s. Growth and other factors can make our goals difficult to attain.

Bulgarian society has become much more transparent since the fall of the Soviet Union. The practical ability of citizens to



inform themselves about problems. using statues very similar to our Freedom of Information Act, provides potent tools for people who care about the environment to get the essential information they need to identify problems.

Lessons Learned

Overwhelmingly, it seems Bulgarians are becoming aware of the need for a deeper commitment to addressing environmental problems. It is a new movement, however, and one that is laboring under great disparities, in terms of resources to address the issues and environmental solutions needed to alter the country's natural resources future.

America is one of the wealthiest nations in the world, yet solutions to its environmental problems are not proportionately advanced beyond those of one of Europe's poorer nations. We can learn much from our European cousins in terms of where to put our resources. We need to learn that we cannot always solve environmental challenges by merely assigning them a line item. The structure of our societal thinking on these matters has much to do with the lack of progress.



Thanks to Maria Stefafanovich for valuable technical input and assistance in the preparation of this article".

New Waterkeepers

The Waterkeeper Alliance continues to grow, with the addition of a new program in Monterey, California and TWO in China. We wish them well and, on behalf on the world's waterways, thank them for their efforts.

- Monterey Coastkeeper, Steve Shimek
- Beijing North Canal Waterkeeper, Zhang Junfeng
- Middle Han Waterkeeper, Yun Jianli



Issues and Ripples

- Patuxent Riverkeeper continues working with Farmer **Joseph Mills** near Bowie. His **stream water supply was diverted** by a state permit that allowed a nearby housing developer to take the stream for use in their stormwater management system. State authorities who issued the permit continue to blame the County, the Army Corp of Engineers, and nearly anyone else for the outcomes of the permit issued by their agency.
- Riverkeeper has been researching the causes and consequences of a mid-February (during the ice storms) **outflow of raw sewage** from a **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission** facility located near Crain Hwy, near Bowie.
- An **abandoned, junked houseboat** near Hollywood (St. Mary's County) is the target of advocacy to get the owner to clean it up before it breaks up completely, releasing debris and chemicals into the water.
- Efforts are being made to resolve whether a motorcross track, located in the flood plain of the Patuxent, has the potential of pushing **unregulated sediment** into the waterway.
- Civic activists in **Lothian** (AA County) report that plans to place a **Target store** mall at the headwaters of Galloway Creek and the gateway to the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary have been withdrawn, but forecast another large-scale construction project will emerge at that location as long as the land has zoning associated with "Big Box" installations.
- **Crofton** residents await final review by the MD Department of the Environment of plans to put a 20+ acre **Wal-Mart** store in the flood plain and sensitive areas by the banks of the Patuxent, near Rt. 3 and Rt. 450.
- On January 30, a commercial waterman from Cambridge, **Zachary Seaman**, was charged in St. Mary's County (Cedar Point at the mouth of the Patuxent) for **exceeding the legal daily catch** limit of oysters by over 10 bushels. Fines for these infractions are typically up to \$95 per bushel over the limit and the overage is generally returned to the waters, on the spot. The legal commercial limit is 12 bushels per licensee, not to exceed 24 bushels per boat.
- On January 28, **Adam Cardinale, II**, of Prince Frederick, was charged with **catching oysters** for non-commercial purposes on a **prohibited day**. A Maryland resident may take up to one bushel of oysters per day without obtaining a license if the oysters are for personal use and consumption, not for sale or marketing. This season runs from October 1 through March 31, Monday through Friday, from sunrise until 3pm and on Saturdays from sunrise until noon--not allowed on Sundays.
- **Senator Roy Dyson** (D-Dist. 29) introduced a bill, titled "The **Yellow Perch Conservation Act** of 2007." The bill, if enacted, will ban nets from the Chesapeake Bay's tributaries from January 1 through March 20, the height of the yellow perch spawning season.
- A new watershed group called **Lower Patuxent Mud Busters** is forming in St. Mary's and is seeking citizens concerned about water quality and the environment. Contact **Kelly Gofus** in California (MD) at 301.862.9813.

The following information was distributed by the Citizens Campaign for the Environment at the 2007 Environmental Legislative Summit on January 15, 2007.

Maryland 2007 Environmental Legislation to Watch



Clean Cars

A solution to global warming

Global Warming

Global warming is the greatest environmental challenge of our time. Here in Maryland, it is likely to lead to a three foot increase in the water level of the Chesapeake Bay, more intense hurricanes, reduced agricultural productivity, and other major problems. Global warming is happening because the concentration of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is higher than it has ever been, according to the fossil record. The sea level will inevitably continue to rise, but we can stabilize it and avert the worst impacts of global warming by implementing energy conservation and clean energy measures.

Clean Cars Act

The Maryland General Assembly will be debating the Clean Cars Act, which would bring Maryland's vehicle emission standards up to the level already adopted by eleven other states. At the same time, the O'Malley administration is considering whether to enact the program without legislation. The Clean Cars Program is a state-based policy that:

- Strengthens the standards for emissions that form smog and other health-damaging pollution.
- Adds carbon dioxide—the main cause of global warming—to the list of pollutants that are covered by vehicle emission standards.
- Requires that a percentage of new cars sold each year are advanced technology vehicles such as hybrids.

The Clean Cars Act would reduce global carbon dioxide, the main global warming pollutant by 4.4 million tons per year by 2020. The program would also reduce benzene and other cancer-causing pollutants by 2,100 tons per year and nitrogen pollution by 1,500 tons per year by 2027.

Update: The Clean Cars Act has passed in both the Senate and House. Governor O'Malley is expected to sign it.

The technology to reduce global warming pollution will reduce driving costs, saving consumers money and boosting the state economy. Requiring new technologies will marginally increase the sale price of an average car, but that additional cost is more than offset by reduced fuel costs. Overall, by 2016, the average consumer will save \$20-\$40 per month once the program is fully phased in.

Eleven other states have already adopted the Clean Cars Program. The hard work of developing the policy has already been done and the carmakers are already gearing up to meet the requirements in 30 percent of the new car market in America. Maryland can take the simple step of requiring the carmakers to meet those standards in our state as well, bringing us the benefits of reduced pollution without spending large amounts of government resources.

Car companies already have the technical know-how to make cars and trucks that pollute much less. Requiring car companies to make cars that emit less pollution is one of the best things we can do to address global warming.

Smart Growth

We can plan for a better future

Population Growth

We have heard the figures: 1.5 million new Marylanders are coming in the next 25 years. We must make tough decisions today to ensure that future development will be an asset to our quality of life, not a burden. But, for the past 50 years much of our growth and development was not only poorly planned but was actually responsible for many of the serious problems facing the environment: the degradation of the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays, our poor air quality, and threats to our drinking water supply.

The good news is that we can design a future in which growth is environmentally, economically and socially robust. Maryland has been a leader in forging innovative policies to encourage well-designed communities. It is time to become this leader once again.



Four steps to take in the 2007 Legislative Session

- **Applying planning requirements to the counties** Last year the legislature established important new planning requirements for cities and some counties. These planning elements include stronger policies for annexation, a requirement to consider water quality and quantity when planning for growth, and stricter policies for planning growth in environmentally sensitive areas. Unfortunately, the element that requires analyzing past and current growth trends as well as the land and infrastructure available to support future growth applies only to towns. We support expanding that important provision to apply to the counties.
- **Encouraging regional cooperation.** Currently there is little to no cooperation between counties and municipalities, or counties and their neighbors. This leads to serious problems for transportation planning, environmental protection, and agricultural preservation. It is critical that we improve regional cooperation to ensure better results for the citizens of Maryland and so that scarce tax resources are efficiently deployed.
- **Create a Planning fund for smaller jurisdictions.** Many communities do not have the staff capacity to provide the planning needed in this market. A fund is needed to help local jurisdictions have new capacity to plan better for their future. This fund should be granted on competitive bases to those that would use the funds for smart growth planning, including working cooperatively with neighboring jurisdictions.
- **Laying the groundwork to overhaul our planning regulations.** Counties and cities are required to submit comprehensive plans to the state every six years, but there are numerous problems with these plans. They are not enforceable and are too-often ignored. Many jurisdictions are years behind schedule for updating their plans. They often are not linked to zoning changes and are frequently changed. There is no requirement for housing in these plans and certainly no requirement that the local jurisdictions plan for housing for all members of the community. Many counties do not have agricultural zoning that truly protects agricultural uses or other open spaces. A legislative task force established in 2006 will be meeting to look at current growth policies and see where changes can be made. We support clear instructions from the task force that recommend significant changes to these policies. Strong enabling legislation this year will ensure that the task force comes back with strong legislation next year.



Cleaner Development for a Cleaner Bay Reducing runoff at its source

The problems of stormwater runoff

Development is one of the biggest threats facing the Chesapeake Bay and its source waters. Current land development involves grading a site, removing native vegetation, and covering the natural landscape with concrete, asphalt and buildings. As a result, the ground becomes less able to absorb water and filter pollution like a natural ecosystem, instead creating polluted runoff.

This polluted runoff has a significant impact on water quality across Maryland. Stormwater runoff in the watershed is responsible for about 16 percent of the phosphorus, 11 percent of the nitrogen, and nine percent of the sediment polluting the bay and feeding the algal blooms which create the dead zone each summer. Stormwater runoff also pollutes the bay with toxic chemicals. Bay-wide, more pollutants such as metals and oil come from stormwater runoff than from industries, federal facilities and wastewater treatment plants combined. The loss of natural filters like forests and wetlands causes flooding, streambank erosion and loss of habitat.

Preventing this type of pollution is far simpler and cheaper than addressing the problem once it has begun. Cleaning up the stormwater runoff from existing developments will cost the state over \$5 billion. Establishing stricter standards for stormwater runoff from construction and new development sites can prevent these problems before they happen.

Changing the Way We Grow

The state needs to change how it manages stormwater. Currently, developers are only required to plan for runoff during large storms, and apply standardized practices, like silt fences and stormwater ponds, to all sites.

Instead, developers should be required keep the pre-development runoff of a site by using low impact design (LID) techniques. LID aims to reduce stormwater runoff and protect water quality by making the built environment function like the natural environment. It is a strategy applied at the parcel and subdivision scale that utilizes on-site, natural features (e.g. native vegetation) and low-cost, engineered controls (e.g. rain barrels) to maintain predevelopment stormwater flows.

LID benefits the environment by preserving native vegetation and preventing stormwater flows that cause flooding and erosion, destroy habitat, and carry pollutants into waterways. LID also benefits communities and developers by improving the value of developed properties and reducing the need for costly stormwater infrastructure improvements.

By reducing runoff at its source Maryland can be a leader in stormwater management and can take significant steps to restoring the Chesapeake Bay.





Program Open Space A Priority for MD in Fiscal Year 2008

Your tax dollars are supposed to be protecting critically important parks and open space.

Everyone who purchased property in Maryland since 1969 has paid a real estate transfer tax. The legislation that created Program Open Space dedicated this revenue source to help build parks, preserve forests and open space, and protect our working farms. The real estate transfer tax is expected to generate up to \$188 million next year for Maryland's nationally recognized land conservation programs. We need to ensure that all these funds will be used for their intended purpose of land conservation. Last year, the Governor and legislature fully funded land conservation and we need to continue that trend to provide a stable source of funding for these programs. Previous diversions of funds have seriously set back the progress of these programs in the protection of our open spaces and working lands, which could disappear under record-breaking rates of development.

Funding for Land Conservation is a Priority for Maryland in Fiscal Year 2008.

The environmental community is anxiously awaiting the Governor's Fiscal Year 2008 budget to see if he will fulfill his campaign promise to fully fund Maryland's land conservation programs. Since 2002, more than \$480 million of dedicated land conservation funds, slated for protecting lands at the state and local level, have been taken from these vital programs and diverted to unrelated state programs. This has threatened to undermine a long history of protection for Maryland's rich natural and cultural heritage. You can help turn this situation around by contacting Governor-Elect O'Malley and your legislators, and tell them that these programs are important to you and should be fully funded this year and every year.

The Governor's Fiscal Year 2008 budget must include full funding for Program Open Space and the other land conservation programs funded by the real estate transfer tax. In addition, loopholes that allow certain real estate transactions to avoid the real estate transfer tax must be closed and a mechanism must be established to prohibit future diversions.

For the third year, Partners for Open Space, a statewide coalition of 150 organizations has organized to stop the diversion of the real estate transfer tax and ensure full funding for Maryland's land conservation programs. This coalition has strong public support and is dedicated to maintaining the funds urgently needed to protect our land and parks. The recent election illustrated the public interest for land conservation when 85% of Maryland voters supported the constitutional amendment to protect our preserved lands.



Energy Efficiency for Pollution Prevention

The Problem

Public health and environmental quality in Maryland remain at risk from emissions resulting from energy consumption. The fastest, cleanest, and cheapest way to reduce air pollution and combat global warming is to use energy more efficiently.

Three steps to take in the 2007 Legislative Session

- **Utility Investments in Energy Efficiency.** Prior to the restructuring of the state's electric utility laws in 1999, Maryland had some of the most extensive energy conservation programs in the nation. These programs were found to be saving over 2 billion kilowatt-hours of energy in 1998 – equal to about 3% of total electricity sales – resulting in substantial pollution prevention. Virtually all of these programs have now been ended by Maryland's major utilities. In 2006, Senator Frosh succeeded in placing a provision in the June emergency bill that requires the Public Service Commission to include efficiency in the Standard Offer procurement process. However, the language was watered down such that no specific targets or timetables were enacted. Sen. Frosh will be reintroducing a new version of the 2006 bill to create specific savings targets and ratemaking policy improvements. These measures will save costs for Maryland consumers while reducing pollution.
- **Energy Efficiency Standards for New Products and Equipment.** Energy efficiency can be designed into new products and equipment as they enter the marketplace. When energy-saving features cost less than the energy they save, everybody wins -- the manufacturer, the consumer, and the environment. The energy efficiency of several products (i.e., cars, refrigerators) is regulated exclusively by the federal government, but states are free to establish efficiency standards for most other products. Maryland has been a leader, enacting standards in 2004 over the veto of Governor Ehrlich. New legislation is proposed for efficiency standards for 10 new types of products sold or installed in the state. If adopted, these standards could reduce peak summer electric use by over 150 megawatts in 2020. The electricity saved in 2020 alone would be enough to meet the needs of over 75,000 typical Maryland households.
- **Tax Incentives for Efficient Heating and Air Conditioning Equipment.** Residential heating and air conditioning are major contributors to the high cost of natural gas in the winter and the high cost of electricity in the summer. These heating and cooling loads are also responsible for much of the pollution from buildings and power plants. New products on the market today are substantially more efficient than the furnaces and central air conditioners installed in years past, but barriers in the marketplace often prevent the most

efficient products from being installed. Legislation will be introduced to provide tax incentives of up to \$500 for landlords, building contractors, and home owners who install high efficiency heating and cooling equipment during the next five years.



The Maryland Global Warming Act

Environmental Challenge

Global warming is the greatest environmental challenge of our time. Sea levels are on the rise, ice and snow cover are decreasing, and storms are becoming more powerful. Leading scientists, such as James Hansen of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, caution that we are nearing a climate "tipping point," beyond which large-scale, dangerous impacts would become unavoidable. The Global Warming Solutions Act sets us on the course to keep emissions of the pollutants that cause global warming below this threshold and protect future generations from catastrophic changes to the climate.

Maryland has begun to make significant strides toward reducing its emissions of global warming pollution, joining other states in the Northeast and across the country in efforts to reduce global warming pollution power plants and to increase our use of clean, renewable energy.

But the challenges posed by global warming are large, and the need for additional action to reduce emissions is immediate. Thankfully, many technologies and policy tools exist that could

enable Maryland to cut its emissions of global warming pollutants within the next two decades, while moving the state toward a clean, secure energy future.

Bill Framework

Scientists and policymakers recognize a 2°C (3.6°F) increase in global temperature over the pre-industrial average as a limit beyond which "dangerous anthropogenic interference" with the climate system would become unavoidable.

Even below 2°C, significant impacts from global warming are likely, such as damage to many ecosystems, decreases in crop yields, sea level rise, and the widespread loss of coral reefs. Beyond 2°C, however, the risks are grave, such as the disintegration of the Greenland ice sheet, which would trigger an eventual 23-foot rise in sea level and displace millions of people worldwide.

Scientists agree that nationwide we must reduce global warming pollution by 15 to 20 percent over the next fifteen years if we are going to be on course to keep the global temperature increase below 2°C. The Global Warming Solutions Act is designed to mirror that reduction by committing to a reduction of Maryland emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, a reduction of 16 percent from current levels.

Achieving the Emission Reductions

To help achieve the emission reductions, the bill calls for a greater reliance on clean, renewable energy sources, improved energy efficiency, and clean cars. It directs state agencies to design programs to achieve the maximum feasible and cost-effective reductions in global warming pollution. It also provides companies flexibility in meeting the pollution-reduction goals through a "cap-and-trade" program.

Support Patuxent Riverkeeper - Become a Member

Please complete this form and send it with your check to:

Patuxent Riverkeeper
18600 Queen Anne Road, Rear Barn
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

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Thank
you!