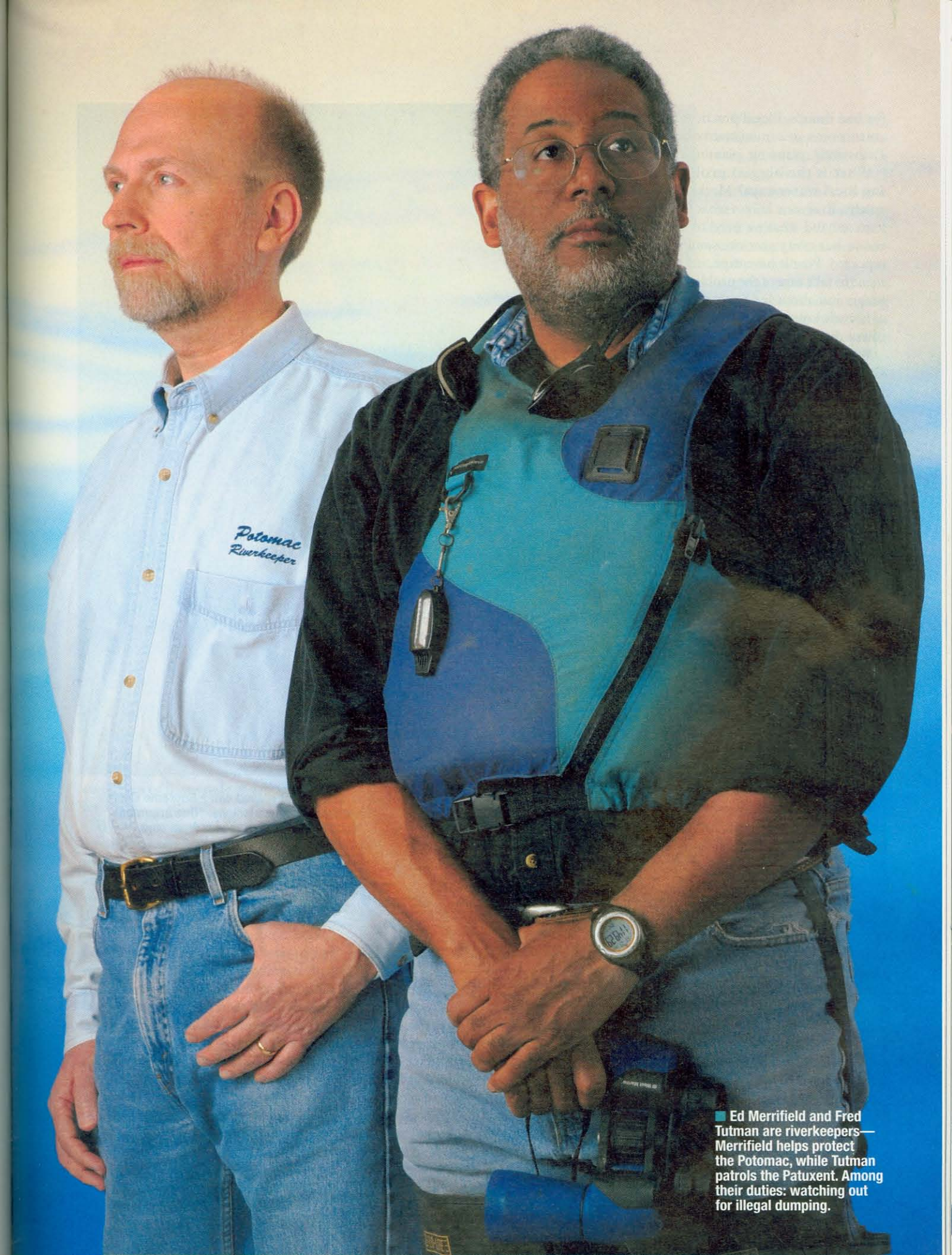


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*Potomac  
Riverkeeper*

■ Ed Merrifield and Fred Tutman are riverkeepers—Merrifield helps protect the Potomac, while Tutman patrols the Patuxent. Among their duties: watching out for illegal dumping.



# Green POWER

BY BROOKE LEA FOSTER

**These 30 people are changing the environment**—for the better. They're cleaning up the air, improving the Chesapeake Bay, lobbying for energy changes, and saving everything from oysters to historic sites to rainforests.

■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY VINCENT RICARDEL

Environmentalists say they've sensed a green tipping point.

"The debate about climate change in the scientific community has been over for ten years," says Mike Tidwell of Chesapeake Climate Action Network. "The debate in the media ended right around Hurricane Katrina."

Environmental activists say that lawmakers invite them more often to testify—and House speaker Nancy Pelosi ordered an energy audit of the Capitol. Big companies are partnering with conservation organizations. Venture capitalists are investing billions in clean-energy projects.

Al Gore organized Live Earth, a star-studded, seven-continent concert event that made ecoliving ecocool. The green glitterati frequently visit here to lobby lawmakers. Brad Pitt is working with Global Green USA on rebuilding a sustainable New Orleans. Robert Redford, Leonardo DiCaprio, and James Taylor sit on the Natural Resources Defense Council's board. A board member of Conservation International? Harrison Ford.

"Celebrities have been particularly

helpful in getting out the message that the stakes are high but there are solutions," says the NRDC's David Hawkins.

Doing the work in the trenches are members of Washington's environmental establishment—lobbying Congress on renewable energy, fighting for international bans on overfishing, kayaking local rivers to track pollution. They've taken some of their battles to the Supreme Court—and won.

We asked more than a hundred environmental activists to name the region's biggest changemakers. We haven't included some obvious names—for example, Will Baker at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is well known for doing everything he can to clean up the bay, while Patrick Noonan, founder of the Conservation Fund, has helped protect more than 6 million acres of land in the United States. We dug deeper. Sometimes all it takes is an individual with a dream to make a big difference.

Here are 30 Washingtonians working to make the region—and the world—a greener place.

## **Fred Tutman, 50** **Ed Merrifield, 60** **Michele Merkel, 40** **Waterkeepers**

*"The river needs an advocate."*

In 1999, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. co-founded the Waterkeeper Alliance to empower citizens to protect their local waterways. It was created to support waterkeeper programs, including 14 in the Washington region; among them are programs for the Patuxent and the Potomac.

Individuals are attracted to the job from all walks of life. Merrifield, the Potomac riverkeeper, is a retired chiropractor. Tutman, the Patuxent riverkeeper, spent 25 years in various mass-media roles including as a media consultant. Merkel, regional coordinator of Waterkeepers Chesapeake, spent about five years trying to get power plants to lower emissions. She's hoping to organize all 14 waterkeepers into a single powerful voice.

**Describe a typical day.** Tutman: I get up at the crack of dawn and patrol my waterway by boat. Sometimes I fly above the river in a Cessna. I'm looking