



ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2012
JULY 1, 2011 - JUNE 30, 2012



Maryland Environmental Trust
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FY2012

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Kevin Bull – Seasonal Steward
Ann Gutierrez Carlson - Eastern Region
Planner
Jon Chapman- Stewardship Program
Manager
Catherine Ford - Program Assistant/Keep
Maryland Beautiful Coordinator
Carol Holland -Bookkeeper
John Hutson- Easement Program
Manager/ Southern Region Planner
Michelle Johnson - Land Trust Assistance
Coordinator
Joan R. Lally- Stewardship Assistant
Wendy Stringfellow – Consultant
Vaughn Weitzman – Seasonal Steward

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maryland Environmental Trust 2012 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.

The Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1967 as a charitable organization. MET has State support and funding, 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 (8th largest according to the Land Trust Alliance 2010 Census Report), 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. 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 and of financial grants to public and private agencies;**
- (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 each year 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 hired 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 corp of 30 trained volunteers to assist with the regular monitoring of more than 1000 easement properties held by the organization. MET operates in an office currently located in the People's Resource Center (DHCD building) in Crownsville. At the conclusion of FY12, MET staffing was approximately 12 positions including full-time, part-time, and temporary staff.



MET Staff

Mission and Programs

MET has four key focus areas:

- (1) To provide strong leadership in the negotiation, acquisition, and recordation of new conservation easements;**
- (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 administer the Keep Maryland Beautiful (KMB) Program, as well as other supportive activities.**

MET pursues this work through three core programs: Conservation Easement, Stewardship, and Land Trust Assistance. MET also administers the Keep Maryland Beautiful 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 and the Maryland Historical Trust, and 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 2012, \$837,613 of state funds was appropriated to MET. This included \$553,648 in general funds, \$40,859 in special funds and \$243,106 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 \$34,737. The summary of MET's financial position for Fiscal Year 2012 is included in the Appendices of this Report.

Conservation Easements and Their Stewardship

Conservation easements - their negotiation, acquisition, recordation, and stewardship - are at the heart of MET activities. Easements are the primary mechanism by which MET works to accomplish its mission of preserving open space across 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 1,000 conservation easements, covering over 128,000 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 cannot be underestimated in fostering gifts of conservation easements to MET and other land trusts.

Conveyance and Perpetual Stewardship of a Conservation Easement

MET staff work diligently with landowners to assist and guide them through the process of conveying a conservation easement to MET. The conveyance process, which may take from a few months to more than a year for completion, typically includes the following procedures: landowner consideration of easement donation, site visit to the subject property by MET staff, research regarding subject property 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 long term responsibility of stewardship and public trust. Accordingly, the success of MET in negotiating and recording over 1,000 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 - so critical to the integrity of any easement program - consists of a range of activities essential to protecting land on which easements are donated for 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 amendments to deeds of easements); 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 2012. 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 its 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 2012 was another extraordinary year for MET in advancing its mission of acquiring, recording, and stewarding conservation easements. The numbers are inspiring: 1,850 acres were protected with 18 easements, and 528 properties received stewardship visits.

Other notable highlights:

- Hosted a reception with Governor O'Malley at the Government House for 100+ easement donors.
- Held an outreach event in St. Michael's in Talbot County.
- Completed an organizational assessment by national consultant Marc Smiley that will serve as a road map for Land Trust Alliance (LTA) accreditation.
- Designed a 2013 calendar for distribution to the public depicting MET properties.
- Implemented the stewardship strategy to help monitor all MET easements annually.
- Held a successful statewide conference in Howard County for the land trust community with 150+ attendees.
- Awarded grants totaling \$26,000 to schools and non-profit organizations.
- Adopted new Urban Settings Policy and approved two urban easements.
- Adopted new Ecosystem Services Marketing Policy and incorporated optional language into the MET model.
- Hosted a full day seminar with Tim Lindstrom on conservation easements for 100+ professionals.
- Partnered with Civil War Trust on "Saving Maryland's Critical Civil War Battlefields," funded by transportation enhancement funds from SHA.
- Participated in the National Easement Revitalization project showcased at National Land Trust Rally.
- Began the Long Range Planning Process.
- Developed *Conservation Land for Sale* webpage.
- Created an online Wikipedia page about MET with links to various related sites.

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 120 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

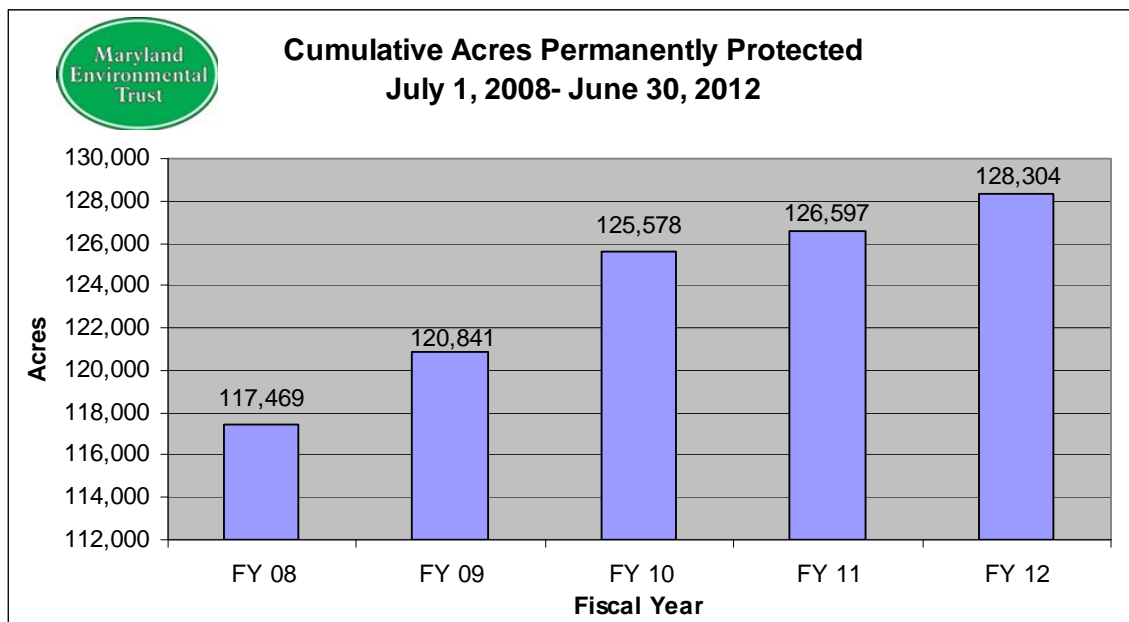
The land trust movement in the US has grown rapidly over the years and has become more professional, thanks in large part to the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). The LTA has promulgated *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and provided funding to MET and other land trusts in Maryland to advance these practices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

As part of its strategic planning process, with assistance from the Land Trust Alliance, the MET Board commissioned an *Organizational Assessment Report*, by the Solid Ground Consulting Group,¹ which specializes in strategic planning for land conservation organizations.

Completed in 2011, the assessment determined the need for improvement in seven areas of organizational effectiveness, including: “1) *Defined Constituency*, 2) *Strategic Plan*, 3) *Fundraising*, 4) *Organizational Structure*, 5) *Board Development*, 6) *Land Transactions-Land Management*, and 7) *Conservation Planning*.” It also provided a list of 33 more specific “*Recommendations, Synthesized*.” In FY 2012, the Board continued to work on preparation for accreditation.

Conclusion

For MET, 2012 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 gave of their time, talents, and resources to foster open space land conservation across 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 and 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. This year MET protected a total of 1,850 acres on eighteen properties statewide.

OVERVIEW

In the 2012 fiscal year (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012) MET reorganized regional responsibilities to accommodate the loss of one regional planner. Baltimore, Carroll and Harford counties were added to the Western Region which then became the Western-Central Region. Howard and Montgomery counties were added to the Southern Region and Cecil County was added to

the Eastern Region. MET completed 18 projects of which 3 were amendments to add acres and 15 were new properties.

WESTERN-CENTRAL REGION (Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Garrett, Frederick, Harford, Washington)

A total of 473 acres were permanently protected in the western & central regions in FY2012. One easement was recorded in Carroll County, one amendment which added acreage was recorded in Washington County, two easements were recorded in Frederick County, and Baltimore had two easements and two amendments which added acreage for a total of eight easement transactions in the region. Five of these projects are co-held with our local land trust partners, including Catoctin Land Trust, Carroll County Land Trust, and Land Preservation Trust. A total of 171 acres of Targeted Ecological Areas, 77 acres of green infrastructure, 18 acres of Ecologically Significant Areas, and 157 acres of prime farmland were protected through easements in the western & central region in FY12.

In Washington County, the Bowser family added over 10 acres to their original easement. The easement now covers 129 total acres. They also added protections to the forest by requiring a Forest Stewardship Plan through the amendment.

In Frederick County, Gary and Darlene Carver protected their 59 acre property with MET and Catoctin Land Trust. This easement protects the scenic view along Back Woods Road, water quality along Fahrney Branch, and protects a Targeted Agricultural Area. MET also worked with Lafarge Mid-Atlantic to protect

their 143 acre property southeast of Frederick. This property was a former summer camp and the easement protects roughly 140 acres of woodland which includes an important forest interior dwelling bird species (FIDS) habitat, the scenic view from Ball Road, and a portion of Tabler Run.



The Carvers protected 59 acres in Frederick County.

MET partnered with Carroll County Land Trust to protect the 157 acre Shortall property north of Westminster. The Shortalls are second time MET easement donors. This easement protects 91 acres of agricultural land, 65 acres of woodlands, and a one acre pond. The property is an integral part of the predominantly agricultural and forested setting of the area. The view from Rinehart Road is marked with variety and contrast provided by the visual scene of rolling agricultural fields with a backdrop of pines and other forested areas.

Partnering with Land Preservation Trust (LPT) in Baltimore County, MET helped protect the 14 acre Schmaljohn property near Manchester. This easement protects approximately 11 acres of woodlands, a portion of Poplar Run, a tributary of the Prettyboy Reservoir, and the scenic view along Gunpowder Road. MET and LPT also accepted amendments on the

Ramberg easement and North Charleston Land Corporation easement. The Ramberg amendment added 12 acres to the original easement. The easement now covers over 26 acres. The North Charleston Lands Corporation amendment added 7 acres to the original easement. The easement now covers over 270 acres. Also in Baltimore County, MET worked to protect the Healey property which includes nearly 70 acres along a State Scenic Byway in Kingsville. The easement protects the scenic view along the byway in addition to protecting the forest resources.

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

A total of 299 acres were permanently protected in the southern region in FY2012. Two easements were recorded in Anne Arundel County, and one easement each in Howard and St. Mary's Counties, for a total of four easement transactions in the region. All four of these projects are co-held with our local land trust partners, including Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust, Howard County Land Trust, and Scenic Rivers Land Trust.

A total of 203 acres of Targeted Ecological Areas, 90 acres of green infrastructure, 136 acres of woodland, 16 acres within an Ecologically Sensitive Area, 41 acres of Special State Concern, and 51 acres of prime farmland were protected through easements in the southern region in FY12.

In southern Anne Arundel County, the Scenic Rivers Land Trust and MET protected two properties totaling 150 acres of scenic road frontage, farmland, woodland and pristine marshland within

the Patuxent River watershed. The properties are an integral part of the predominantly rural setting of the area; which is dominated by preserved land as part of the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Patuxent River Rural Legacy Area and Patuxent River Park complex. Bald Eagles and state-listed threatened plant species are known to occur in close proximity to the properties.



Landowner surveys property in Anne Arundel County.

In Howard County, Gary and Stacia Smith protected their 29-acre property with MET and Howard County Land Trust. Located near Ellicott City along the Middle Patuxent River, the conservation easement is within a Targeted Ecological Area and protects forest interior dwelling bird species habitat.

MET partnered with Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust to protect the 120-acre Summerseat Farm, Inc. property, a historic, publicly accessible 120-acre working farm at Three Notch Road and Loveville Road in Mechanicsville. With its gently rolling fields and dense woodlands that border well-traveled roads, Summerseat Farm is a scenic landmark. It is also the only farm in the region where the public is invited to observe a herd of American Bison. A

portion of Summerseat Farm is in the watershed of the McIntosh Run, which empties into Breton Bay in Leonardtown. The McIntosh Run area is one of the most beautiful and biologically diverse areas in Maryland and contains many unique species and habitats.

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

A total of 1077.571 acres were permanently protected in the eastern region in FY2012. Of the six properties protected, three are located in Queen Anne's County, two in Talbot County, and one in Kent County. All six of the easements are co-held with land trust partners. A total of 211 acres of green infrastructure, 131 acres of Targeted Ecological Area and 517 acres of prime farm land were protected through easements in the eastern region in FY12.

In Queen Anne's County, MET partnered with the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, Inc. to protect 111.671 acres of Mudford Farm owned by the Biophilia Foundation. The Property is surrounded by and adjacent to a 171.42 acre Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) conservation easement held by DNR and Queen Anne's County. Together, the CREP easement and this conservation easement create a 283.091 acre block of protected land. Red Lion Branch, a tributary of the Chester River, runs through the forest of the property. Approximately 58.2 acres are prime farmland and another 35 acres are farmland of statewide importance. The 28 acre woodland is potential forest interior dwelling bird species habitat. The entire property falls within a Targeted Ecological Area.

In Queen Anne's County MET also worked with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Inc. (ESLC) and the Gray family to protect two farms with two conservation easements. The adjacent easements, one 204.046 acres and the other 113.992 acres, are immediately adjacent to a 2,141 acre block of protected farm and forest land. Together these easements protect 173 acres of agriculture land and 140 acres of forest in a rural section of Queen Anne's County that is dominated by active farmland and forestland. Approximately 90 acres of the protected forested area contains forest interior dwelling bird species habitat. Both easements are within a Priority A/B (highest priority) Targeted Agricultural Area, identified as a conservation priority by the Maryland Department of Planning as part of the *AgPrint* effort.

In Talbot County a total of 511.272 acres were protected. MET combined efforts with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy to protect the Yorktown Farm family property near Longwoods in Talbot County. This conservation easement protects 245 acres of active farmland classified as "prime farmland" and 186 acres of forest that is home to the Delmarva fox squirrel, a federally listed endangered species, and forest interior dwelling bird species that are declining in Maryland. The Longwoods area is recognized as a high priority area for aquatic and ecological resource protection in the Talbot County Green Infrastructure Plan. *AgPrint* and *GreenPrint* both identified this property for protection. This conservation easement, 439.269 acres in total, is a big step forward in protecting targeted ecological and agricultural areas on the Eastern Shore.

JD, LLC donated an easement on 72.003 acres in St. Michael's. The conservation easement protects approximately 1,286 feet of scenic road frontage on Maryland Route 33. This section of Maryland Route 33 is part of the Chesapeake Country Maryland Scenic Byway. The property provides travelers with a view of open fields within a small town setting. The agricultural and open space value of the property and lack of structures provide a contrast to the surrounding small town setting and are therefore a visual refuge and key transition area from the urban to the rural environments to all those traveling this section of Maryland Route 33. The property contains approximately 765 feet of scenic frontage on the Miles River and consists of approximately 64 acres of tilled farmland, two acres of marsh, three acres of wooded hedgerows that divide the agricultural fields, and three acres of open space (mowed grass area and meadow).



Bradley's 136 acre farm is protected in Kent County.

In Kent County, thanks to Andrew Bradley, 136 acres of important farmland on Pomona Road is protected forever. In July of 2011, Andrew C. Bradley and Associates, LLC generously donated a conservation easement to MET and the Eastern Shore Land

Conservancy, Inc. The property contains approximately 1,718 feet of scenic road frontage along Pomona Road and approximately 2,592 linear feet shoreline along the East Fork of Langford Creek. Approximately 79.4 acres of the property are prime farmland and another 27.3 acres are farmland of statewide importance. This farm is an integral part of the pastoral setting of the area providing views of open fields and rolling hills from Pomona Road. While MET and ESLC were working with Mr. Bradley on the conservation easement, it became clear to Mr. Bradley that farming the property on his own was no longer feasible due to his extensive international travel schedule. At the same time, young farmer Marshall Owings was looking to purchase a farm. Mr. Owings shared Mr. Bradley's vision and love for this farm, and they worked closely to come up with a solution that would allow Mr. Owings to acquire the property after the conservation easement was in place. MET is thrilled to have helped Mr. Bradley protect this farm and to see it transferred to a new landowner committed to conservation and farming.

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. The permanent protection of land does not stop with the signing of the conservation easement. MET together with land trust partners have the responsibility to look after the land on an ongoing basis through regular monitoring of the conservation properties. Stewardship involves a larger set of issues, which can include addressing landowner questions and

concerns, or requests for MET to approve proposed structures or activities on the property. MET works with land trusts and partners to ensure that stewardship and monitoring procedures comply with or exceed the guidelines established by the Land Trust Alliance.

In 2012 MET and its cooperators together conducted monitoring visits to 528 easement and fee properties covering 56,889 acres, which represents 51% of the Trust's easement portfolio. This was an 83% increase over FY11 monitoring accomplishments. Monitoring visits are conducted in order to document current conditions and assess compliance with easement requirements.

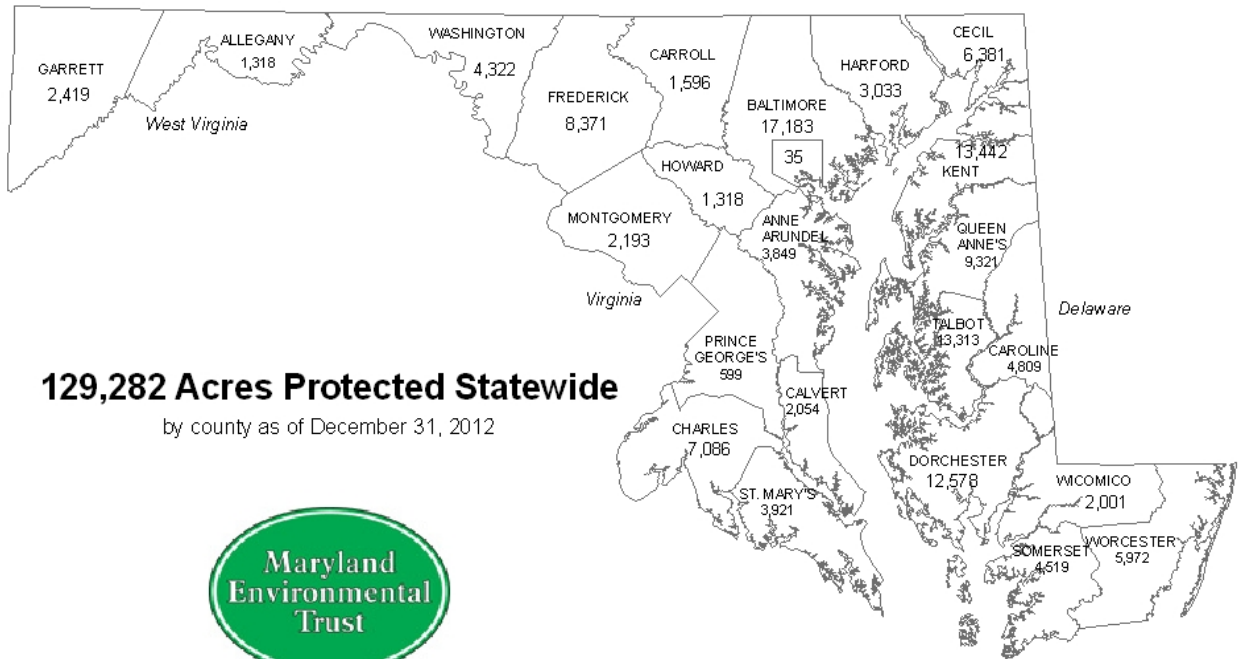
Many of MET's easements are co-held with one of the local land trusts in the state. As part of its Land Trust Assistance Program, MET staff assists land trusts with the inspection of co-held easement properties, enforcement of easement terms, and recordkeeping and documentation protocols. This year MET staff assisted land trusts with the monitoring of 26 properties, and land trusts monitored an additional 81 properties on their own.

At the end of FY 2012, MET was tracking approximately 20 active stewardship issues, enforcement matters, and violations on easement properties. Over the course of the year, 12 matters were resolved with the assistance of the Office of the Attorney General. Staff presented to the Board of Trustees 11 landowner requests for approval of activities, including two amendments. All but one (a request for an amendment to allow a prohibited subdivision) were approved. Staff routinely review and

deny activity requests that are clearly prohibited by easement language, only presenting to the Board those that have a likelihood of approval or which the

landowner is insistent on having formally reviewed.

Acres Permanently Protected by Maryland Environmental Trust



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Volunteer Program has become a valued component of the Stewardship Program. MET relies on approximately 30 trained volunteers to monitor its easement properties and assist the staff as the inventory of protected lands grows.

At the end of its ninth year, the Volunteer Program continued to grow and provide much needed “feet on the ground” inspections and documented reports on the current land uses of the easement properties. This year 28 trained volunteers monitored 148 easements on over 13,800 acres throughout the state.

In the office, over 225 volunteer hours were devoted to MET’s Baseline Project. The Baseline Project involves digitally scanning and organizing baseline information.

The Stewardship and Land Trust Assistance staff held a training session for 14 volunteers including MET staff and board members at Cromwell Valley Park in Baltimore County on March 24, 2012. Attendees were shown a PowerPoint presentation on theory, objectives, and procedures, and were then led outside to conduct an on-the-ground monitoring inspection of this MET easement protected property.

In total MET Volunteers contributed over 725 hours to MET’s Volunteer Program during FY2012. This achievement was celebrated on June 23, 2012 at MET’s 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciate Event. Volunteers joined MET board and staff for lunch, a hike and a canoe trip at the Jug Bay Wetland Sanctuary in Lothian, MD.



Volunteers canoeing at Jug Bay.

2012 Volunteers

Greg Bartles
Margaux Bereston
Jennifer Bolin
Ann Burchard
Susan Cohen
Charles Deering
Carrie Dike
Sharon Dillon
Jeff Dillon
Christina Dzingala
Scott Fetterolf
David Godfrey
Joe Hasuly
David Hobson
Caitlin Katrinic
Nancy Kieffer
David Kieffer
Dennis King
Ted Kluga
Myra Knowlton
Arthur Meinecke
William Saunders
Elizabeth Schumann
Werner Schumann
Kevin Smith
Stuart Stainman
Sean Toole
Charles Wells

LAND TRUST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Land Trust Assistance Program supports the work of over fifty land trusts working in Maryland. 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 encourage participation in a number of national programs, specifically the *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. 17).



Red-bellied woodpecker in Anne Arundel County.

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 implementation of Land Trust Standards and Practices
- Conservation Easements and Land Conservation – new easements and easement amendments
- Cooperative Agreements

MET adopted a new model Cooperative Agreement in 2011. This agreement establishes the role 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 fee simple owned properties.

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

Accokeek Foundation
American Chestnut Land Trust
Bay Land Trust
Lower Shore Land Trust
Southern Calvert Land Trust

MARYLAND LAND CONSERVATION CONFERENCE

Over 160 land conservationists from around the Chesapeake Bay Region convened at the annual Maryland Land Conservation Conference at the new Robinson Nature Center in Howard County on May 15. The statewide conference, hosted annually by MET, offered a full day of educational sessions, tours and “lightning talks” related to the theme “*Saving Land – Saving the Chesapeake*”.

Led by an inspiring keynote address by Howard County Executive Ken Ulman, the attendees heard about successful sustainability initiatives and land protection measures in Howard County. The conference also featured 19 conservation leaders who presented on “Thinking Landscape: Beyond Random Acts of Conservation”. In a series of six minute “lightning talks,” attendees learned of current initiatives in land conservation and water conservation, large landscape conservation planning, advancements in science and technology, land trust partnerships and collaboration, land trust capacity building and financing to sustain the work of land conservation in Maryland and the Chesapeake watershed.

Conference participants enjoyed an outdoor lunch, a walk to identify invasive species, and a tour of the new Robinson Nature Center, Howard County’s newest LEED certified building, with the architect. The afternoon concurrent sessions included Stewardship, Capacity Building for Land Trusts, Large Landscape Conservation Plans for the Chesapeake, Building Strong Easements, Conserving Urban

Open Space, Preparing for Accreditation, Understanding Watershed Implementation Plans & Total Daily Maximum Loads, as well as Collaboration and New Tools for Land Trusts. The day concluded with an Awards Ceremony, honoring environmental stewards and conservation leaders.

The Maryland Land Conservation Conference was made possible by the generous financial support from *The Abell Foundation, The Chesapeake Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, Kann Partners Architects and Planners, The Land Trust Alliance, The National Park Service-Chesapeake Bay Office and The Trust for Public Lands. MET is grateful to our sponsors for helping to make this conference a success, we thank you.*



Maryland Land Trust Conference



Maryland Land Trusts and Land Conservation Organizations

CENTRAL REGION

Baltimore Green Space
Caves Valley Land Trust
Cecil Land Trust
Garrett Park Conservation Trust
Greater Ruxton Area Foundation
Greater Sandy Springs Green Space
Gunpowder Valley Conservancy
Harford Land Trust
Howard County Conservancy
Kensington Land Trust
Land Preservation Trust
Long Green Land Trust
The Manor Conservancy
Mount Washington Preservation Trust
Neighborspace of Baltimore County
Rockburn Land Trust

EASTERN REGION

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
Lower Shore Land Trust

SOUTHERN REGION

The Accokeek Foundation
African American Land Trust.
American Chestnut Land Trust
Annapolis Conservancy Board
Bay Land Trust
Black Swamp Creek Land Trust
Conservancy for Charles County
Cove Point Natural Heritage
Crownsville Conservancy
Magothy River Land Trust
North County Land Trust
Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust
Scenic Rivers Land Trust
Southern Calvert Land Trust

WESTERN REGION

Allegheny Highlands Conservancy
Carroll County Land Trust
Carrollton Manor Land Trust
Catoctin Land Trust
Potomac Conservancy
South Mountain Heritage Society
Sugarloaf Countryside Conservancy

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

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

GRANTS AND AWARDS

MET presented a number of grants and awards at the Maryland Land Trust 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 for outstanding conservation.

Louisa Copeland Duemling was selected to receive the *2012 Dillon Award* for her commitment to land conservation in Maryland and dedication in preserving Andelot Farm in Kent County. In 2009 Mrs. Duemling donated a 2,894-acre easement to MET and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, forever protecting the scenic open space, agricultural and forestland. The property includes approximately 1,087 acres of forest, 1,692 acres of tilled land and 50 acres of freshwater ponds. The easement will also preserve a 200-foot vegetative buffer strip along 9.2 miles of the Chesapeake Bay, Churn Creek, Tims Creek, Worton Creek and Still Pond, protecting water quality and riparian wildlife habitat. In addition, the property contains high quality habitat for several threatened and endangered species, including the Delmarva fox squirrel.

In 1975, Mrs. Duemling together with her brother Gerret Van Copeland donated the 632-acre Copeland Biddle easement to MET. This property adjoins Andelot Farm to the south across Worton Creek and was MET's seventh easement.

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.



Scenic Rivers Land Trust Director Rick Leader received the Aileen Hughes Award from MET Board Chairman Jim O'Connell.



This year the recipient of the Aileen Hughes Award is Rick Leader. For the last two and a half years, Rick Leader has been the moving force behind Scenic Rivers Land Trust (SRLT), a 21 year old land trust serving five watersheds (Severn, South, Rhode, West and Patuxent Rivers) in Anne Arundel County. Together with a dedicated board of directors, Rick oversees SRLT programs and its growing portfolio of 50 easement properties covering over 2,100 acres. In a short period, Rick has successfully led SRLT on a path toward accreditation and is currently preparing their application.

Rick has quickly built the SRLT conservation easement program into one of best in the state, making SRLT one of MET's strongest land trust partners. Rick and his staff were instrumental in the Crownsville Woods project which permanently protects 630 core acres of the South River watershed and provides public access for passive recreation. Rick's dedication and hard work also resulted in an important milestone for SRLT, the Patricia Melville conservation easement (co-held with MET), a 50-acre property located along Mallard Lane in Lothian and is SRLT 50th conservation easement.

In awarding the Aileen Hughes Award to Rick, MET acknowledges his positive management style, low key demeanor, and exceptional personnel skills. During his short tenure, Rick has raised SRLT's profile in the community and positioned SRLT as one of the leading land conservation organization in Maryland. The SRLT was awarded \$2,000 as a result of Rick Leader's outstanding leadership.

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 usually targeted towards land trusts that demonstrate easement solicitation skills operating 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 five 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 State Highway Administration.

Recipients of the Jan Hollmann Grants

Organization	Amount
Baltimore Green Space	\$5,000
Harford Land Trust	\$2,000
Lower Shore Land Trust	\$1,000
Neighborspace of Baltimore County, Inc.	\$1,000
Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust	\$1,000
Total	\$10,000

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. No expenditures or reimbursements were made during FY11 and FY12; 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 the 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. 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 \$300,000 to assist land trusts.

The Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2010 further provided that for FY12 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 FY12 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, 2012, the Fund had a balance of \$74,588 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 when valuable resource lands are threatened by development. No other

State program is that flexible and available at such short notice.

The re-adjustment 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 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 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:

Ann's Circle, Baltimore Orchard Project, Friends of Martinak State Park, Friends of Patapsco Valley & Heritage Greenway, Greater Baltimore Urban League, Greater Waldorf Jaycees Foundation, Inc., Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition, Philips Wharf Environmental Center, Normal, Inc., Red Wiggler Community Farm, University of MD College Park, and World Arts Focus.

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:

Bishop Walsh School, Environmental Concerns, Inc., The GreenMount School, Inc., Perryville High School, Pine Grove Middle School, Silver Spring Day School, Sligo Creek Elementary School PTA, and St. Mary's Elementary School.



KMB recipient The GreenMount School for their gardens.

Recipients for the 2012 Keep Maryland Beautiful Awards

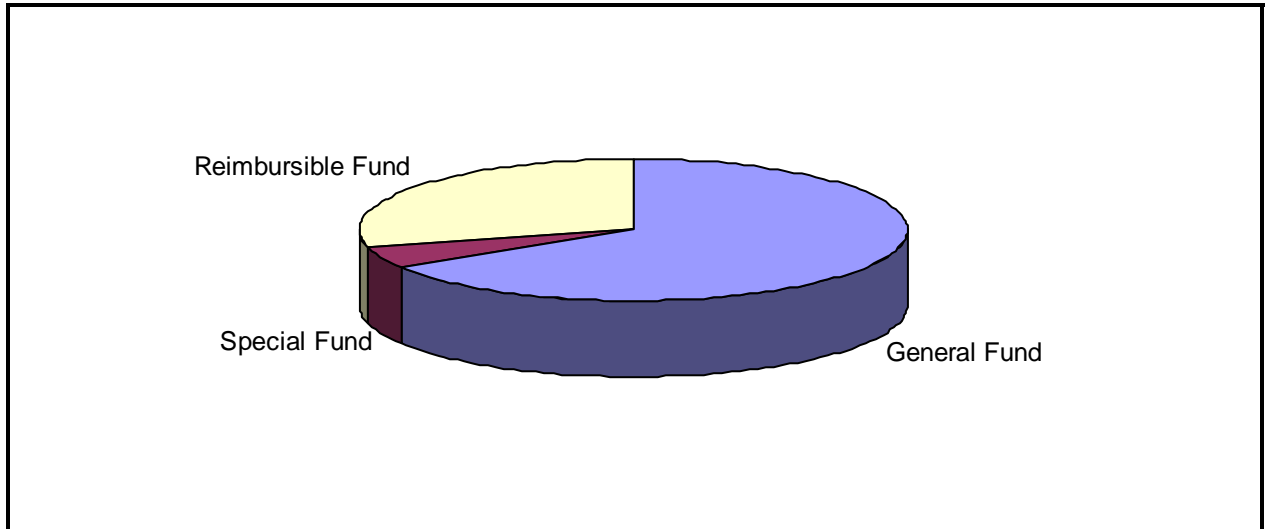
Margaret Rosch Jones Award	
Ann's Circle	\$1,000.00
Baltimore Orchard Project	\$1,000.00
Friends of Martinak State Park	\$1,000.00
Friends of Patapsco Valley & Heritage Greenway	\$500.00
Greater Baltimore Urban League	\$1,000.00
Greater Waldorf Jaycees Foundation, Inc.	\$500.00
Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition	\$500.00
Normal, Inc.	\$500.00
Philips Wharf Environmental Center	\$1,000.00
Red Wiggler Community Farm	\$500.00
University of MD College Park	\$1,000.00
World Arts Focus	\$500.00
TOTAL	\$9,000.00
Bill James Award	
Bishop Walsh School	\$500.00
Environmental Concerns, Inc.	\$1,000.00
The GreenMount School, Inc.	\$1,000.00
Perryville High School	\$1,000.00
Pine Grove Middle School	\$500.00
Silver Spring Day School	\$1,000.00
Sligo Creek Elementary School PTA	\$1,000.00
St. Mary's Elementary School	\$1,000.00
TOTAL	\$7,000.00

Appendix 1

MET Financial Statement - July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012
State Administered Funds

FISCAL YEAR 2012

Number of Authorized Positions	9.0
Number of Contractual Positions	1.8
Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits	743,348.07
Total Operating Expenses (includes contractual services, communications, travel, equipment, supplies and materials)	94,265.31
Total Expenditure	837,613.38
FUND SOURCES	
Net General Funds	553,648.00
Special Funds	40,859.21
Reimbursible Funds	243,106.17
TOTAL	837,613.38

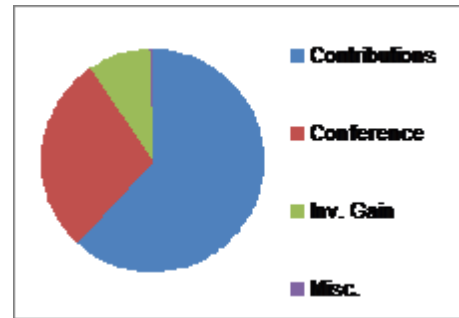


Appendix 2

MET Financial Statement - July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012
MET Administered Funds

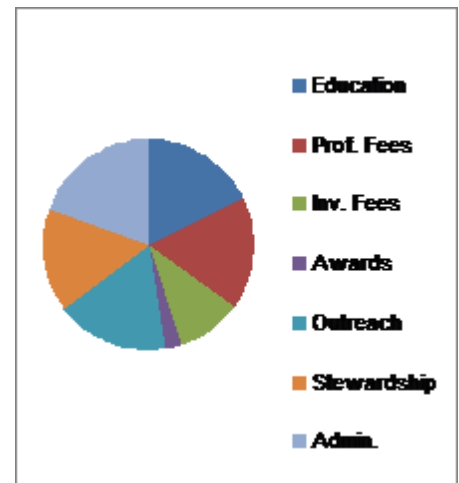
REVENUES AND SUPPORT

Contributions & Grants	26,136
MLTA Conference	12,220
MET Investment Gain	(3,815)
Miscellaneous	196
TOTAL REVENUES	\$34,737



EXPENSES

LLT Education & Training	30,013
Professional Fees	30,464
Investment Fees	17,470
Awards	4,109
Outreach	29,578
Stewardship & Monitoring	27,014
Administrative Expenses	34,048
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$172,696



CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	<u>\$(137,959)</u>
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Appendix 3

Contributors

The Abell Foundation
Anonymous
The Aybar Family
Scott Bartram
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Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc.
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Dr. Gaylord Lee Clark
The Conservation Fund
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Diana Conway
Nessly and Susan Craig
Sarah and Bill D'Alonzo
Delaware Community Foundation
James and Georgia Eacker
Mrs. Alice Eastman
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Exxon Mobil Foundation
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Mr. Walter D. Ramberg
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Harold Scrimgeour
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Mr. A. Patrick Smithwick
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold G. Stifel
Desiree and Matthew Stover
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Kathryn Weise
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