



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Annual Report 2020



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Chesapeake and Coastal Service	1
Engineering and Construction	2
Fishing and Boating Services: Boating	3
Fishing and Boating Services: Fishing	4
Maryland Forest Service	5
Land Acquisition and Planning	6
Maryland Park Service	7
Natural Resources Police	8
Resource Assessment Service	9
Wildlife and Heritage Service	10
Conservation Education Matrix Team	11
Licensing and Registration Service	12



Lt. Governor Rutherford tours Smallwood State Park



Maryland wildfire crews worked fires in Colorado in 2020

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Larry Hogan, Governor | Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary

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DNR 01-060721-278 6/2021

Chesapeake and Coastal Service



Through investment in land use and annual best management practices, the Trust Fund reduced **3,626,925 pounds of nitrogen**; **20,076 pounds of phosphorus**; and **6,774 tons of suspended solids** from reaching the mainstem of the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic coastal bays.

Introduced the Welcome to Boating clinic series by holding clinics in spring and summer 2020. These free clinics sponsored by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Marine Trades Association of Maryland, Annapolis School of Seamanship, and the Boat U.S. Foundation for Safety and Clean Water provide instruction for new and experienced boaters on how to properly launch, load, retrieve, and dock a trailerable boat.

Provided grants to replace **eight pumpout stations**.

The Maryland Climate Leadership Academy equipped **270 professionals** across the state to meet the challenges of climate change, bringing the total number of professionals to 650+ since the program's inception in 2018.

276 acres of riparian buffer planted; **2,186 urban trees** planted; **380 acres of reforestation** completed; **35,654 linear feet of stream restoration** completed; **6,700 linear feet of stormwater management** installed; and **40.44 acres of non-tidal wetlands** and **0.16 acres of tidal wetlands** created or restored in 2020.



Engineering & Construction



Point Lookout Lighthouse Restoration

This project involved the historic restoration of the Point Lookout State Park Lighthouse Complex structures, including the Lighthouse/Keepers Quarters Building, Buoy Shed, Coal Shed, and Smokehouse; the addition of ADA accessibility features, and new public restrooms; and improvements to the utility infrastructure and grounds. Additionally, space and lighting provisions were designed into the lighthouse and buoy shed for the future incorporation of interpretive exhibits and displays.

St. Mary's Boat Ramp Parking Lot Improvements

This project included improvements to the existing parking area and entrance road that serve the St. Mary's State Park boating facility. The pre-existing paved parking area was badly deteriorated and did not include well-defined parking spaces and ingress and egress routes; the new parking area was redesigned to correct those deficiencies. The improvements included repaving of the entrance road and parking areas, the addition of a pervious gravel surfaced overflow parking area, the addition of an automated charge collection system at the parking area entrance, as well as landscaping upgrades.

Fair Hill Water Infrastructure Improvement Project

This project involved the replacement of the entire water system, water treatment plant, and water tower serving the Fair Hill complex. The system provides potable water as well as fire protection for the structures running from the event area to the end of Kennel Road.

Barn Restoration Projects

Two intensive stabilization projects were completed at the Historic Beers Barn in Fair Hill and Bohemia Barn at the new Bohemia State Park. Damaged elements were replaced or repaired and barn exteriors were painted.

Fishing and Boating Services: Boating



The department announced the retirement of the 77-year-old J. Millard Tawes icebreaking vessel.

Supported the Boat Act Advisory Committee (BAAC) in processing **seven boating regulation change requests**.

Navigating COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, BAAC volunteer members studied the requests and conducted public meetings both in person and virtually. Four of the seven boating regulation change requests were approved, modifying three existing regulations in Anne Arundel County and a introducing a new regulation for Deep Creek Lake in Garrett County.

The department's Abandoned Boat and Debris Program pulled 39 boats from Maryland waters from July 2020 through June 2021.

Introduced new email newsletter, **Maryland Waterway Updates and Alerts**, to inform the public about boating news in Maryland.



Photo by Charles Foye

Fishing and Boating Services: Fishing

For the first time in decades, the department resumed successful spawning, production, and stocking of smallmouth bass. **More than 30,000 juvenile smallmouth bass** were stocked to enhance populations in the popular non-tidal Potomac River fishery.



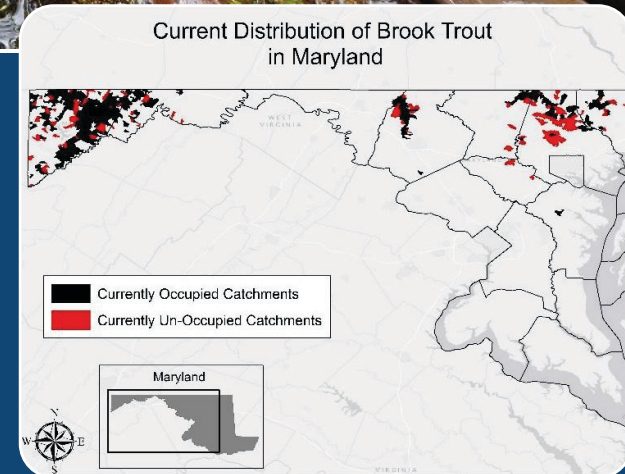
The department received \$4.1 million in CARES Act funding to provide to the commercial fishing industry to help mitigate impacts from COVID-19. FABS staff designed, implemented, and provided customer support for an application process to **provide \$3.1 million in direct funds** to industry members.

Freshwater Fisheries Southern Region staff began their blue catfish radio tagging program by installing **10 radio receivers** along the Patuxent River to track catfish movement.

Completed the oyster restoration project in the Little Choptank River, with a total of 357.8 acres planted.



Supported new catch-and-release regulations to help protect Maryland's only native salmonid, the brook trout, **in more than 100 streams**. Maryland is the first state to do so over such a large geographic area.



Completed an initial statewide watershed assessment of all known brook trout populations and integrated the results into the interactive, web-based Coldwater Resources Mapping Tool. This effort will aid the department and its partners in filling data gaps and facilitate progress toward protecting and restoring existing and lost brook trout populations in Maryland.

Maryland Forest Service

1,422 acres of wildfires suppressed in Maryland.



22,062 seedlings given away via the Backyard Buffers program.

More than **\$3 million** generated in timber harvest revenue.

\$18,332 donated by citizens through Gift of Trees, totaling **458 trees**.

65 Maryland fire crew members participated in **103 assignments**, working on 28 different incidents in 11 states. Crews also served an exceptionally long season, serving in deployments as late as November.



90 attendees at the climate change adaptation workshop hosted by Maryland Forest Service and the Northern Institute for Applied Climate Science in January of 2020.

This free two-day workshop was offered to land managers from state and local agencies, land trusts, and other groups.

Provided forest management assistance to more than **1,300 people representing 80,000 acres**, planted **500,000 trees** and distributed nearly **3,500 large caliper trees** to 44 communities across the state.

29,560 acres now covered by Forest Stewardship Plans.

Land Acquisition and Planning

Program Open Space Stateside

Received approval for **41 acquisition projects** from the Board of Public Works, protecting **more than 4,600 acres**. Program Open Space Stateside preserves natural areas for public recreation and watershed and wildlife protection across Maryland through the purchase of fee-simple and easement acquisitions.

Program Open Space Local

Provided **\$47 million in grant funding** for **155 local park and recreation projects** across Maryland through Program Open Space Local, including the acquisition of 550 acres for public recreation and open space.

Rural Legacy Program

Provided **\$18.8 million in Rural Legacy Program grant funds** to protect more than **5,900 acres**.



Piney Run Rural Legacy Area in Baltimore County



Ivy Hill House (Patapsco Valley State Park)

Resident Curatorship Program

The Board of Public Works approved a new curatorship agreement for the **Ivy Hill House** in Patapsco Valley State Park. The Maryland Resident Curatorship Program offers curators the right to lifetime tenancy in a historic property on DNR lands in exchange for restoring it, maintaining it in good condition, and periodically sharing it with the public.

The Curatorship Program Manager photographed and produced measured drawings of **six historic structures** on DNR lands.

In cooperation with the Maryland Park Service, a **\$100,000 grant** from the African American Heritage Preservation Program was secured for stabilization of the Greenbury Howard House at Patuxent State Park.

Maryland Park Service

Total park visitation jumped a record-shattering 45% in 2020 to **21.5 million**, from the all-time high of 14.9 million in 2019. This surge of visitors necessitated **292 full-to-capacity closures**, nearly triple the previous year, across 14 parks.



Celebrated Earth Day's 50th anniversary by planting 10,000 trees in state parks and participating in virtual events with our natural resources partners.



The "Create Your Own State Park Challenge" was launched to provide individuals staying at home with opportunities and ideas to create a park-like oasis within their own yard.

New Park Land

Pocomoke River State Park: acquired **212 acres with 1,400 linear feet of shoreline** on the Pocomoke River in Worcester County. Conserves riparian forest and a three-acre pond with waterfowl habitat and provides recreational opportunities for hiking, biking, and picnicking.

Sang Run State Park: acquired **182 acres** that support diverse native fish populations and connect the park to the Youghiogheny River Natural Environment Area in Garrett County.

New park reservation transactions increased by 35% in June-September 2020, with 71,331 bookings, compared to 46,205 bookings the previous June-September.



Natural Resources Police

619 total personal flotation device citations issued to people lacking them on vessels, personal watercraft, and paddle-craft.

165 operating under the influence citations issued.

165 citations issued for failure to carry the required safety equipment, including flares, fire extinguisher, visual distress signal, and sound producing equipment.

18,576 recreational vessel inspections.



The Maryland Department of Natural Resources Police welcomed **27 new officers** to our agency in October 2020. In front of supporting family, friends, and officers, the former recruits raised their right hand and took an oath to protect Maryland's citizens and natural resources.

Governor Larry Hogan and Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio were both on hand at Sandy Point State Park, with the ceremony held outside for the first time ever due to COVID-19 safety protocols.

Issued more than **2,200 Hunter Education Certificates** and more than **19,400 Boating Safety Certificates** to help ensure that hunters and boaters safely enjoy their respective activities.



Photo by Carie Sabbott

Resource Assessment Service



DNR's Power Plant Research Program designated the state's first pollinator-friendly solar facility through our designation program for commercial ground mounted solar facilities.

40,000 citizens visited the Eyes on the Bay website to learn more about Maryland's tidal water quality and aquatic habitat conditions.

The Environmental Review Program staff reviewed **1,983 projects**. Each of these reviews was designed to provide recommendations to state, federal, or local government agencies to avoid or minimize impacts to Maryland's natural resources.

Collected, processed, and analyzed more than **3 million water quality records**, while following strict pandemic sampling protocols, to help guide the management, protection, and restoration of Maryland's bays and tidal tributaries.

Created the **Maryland Ocean Acidification Action Plan 2020**, with the Maryland Department of the Environment and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, which emphasizes Maryland's commitment as a global leader in combating ocean acidification through its Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act plan and Chesapeake Bay nutrient reduction strategy.

More than 39,000 acres of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) were recorded in Maryland's tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay, achieving 49% of the state's 2025 restoration target.



The Maryland Geological Survey collected geophysical data (side scan sonar, sub-bottom seismic, bathymetric) covering approximately **13,000 acres** from the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries as well as Maryland's lakes and reservoirs.

Wildlife and Heritage Service

In 2020, Wildlife and Heritage Service staff tagged a total of **20 cubs** from six sows in Garrett, Washington, and Frederick counties. The average cub production this year was 3.3 cubs per sow. Since 1986, when the survey began, 495 cubs have been born to 168 sows for a long-term average of 2.9 cubs per sow. A highlight of the den season was our second recorded five-cub litter from a newly radioed sow in Garrett County.



In 2020, Wildlife and Heritage Service staff captured and banded **1,870 migratory game birds** as part of regional monitoring and research projects. Information derived from banding provides the foundation for much of the migratory game bird management in North America.

In 2020, Wildlife and Heritage Service staff responded to a total of **859 distinct wildlife emergencies** that occurred on privately owned lands across the state. 182 of those responses took place after normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.



Provided information on rare, threatened, and endangered species and unique ecological features to **2,253 individual project inquiries**.

Managed invasive plants and woody vegetation on **over 500 acres in 13 natural areas** to support the recovery of rare plants and animals.

Conservation Education Matrix Team



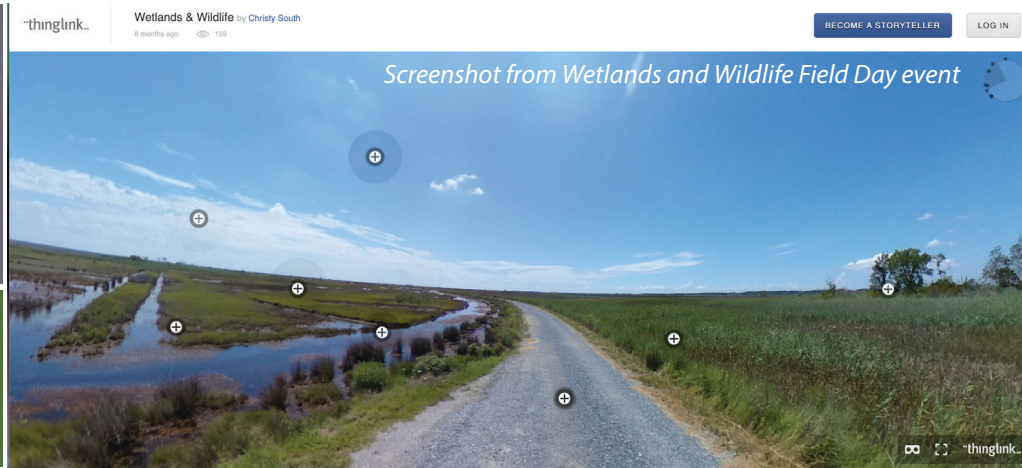
Keeping Up With Education

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Teachers and DNR educators worked in tandem to support virtual learning. One example: a Somerset County Public School fourth grade teacher (Christy South) created a virtual field trip so students could safely participate in the annual Wetlands and Wildlife Field Day while learning from home. DNR staff assisted in supporting the project with digital content and through assembling and delivering to the county hands-on materials for 200 students.

The Conservation Matrix Team, in cooperation with the Office of Communications, initiated "Keeping up with Education," a quarterly email newsletter highlighting environmental education opportunities at DNR. The newsletter currently has **more than 3,100 subscribers**.

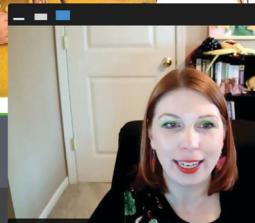
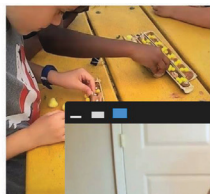
Created **six new videos** for training high school students for the aquatic portion for the Maryland Envirothon competition (mdenvirothon.org/training/aquatics).



A total of 96 staff from the department and partner organizations participated in the Conservation Education Team's 2020 annual Professional Development Meeting.

Bee at Home (Wild at Schools)

- Build a mason bee home relay
- Mud, pollen, egg
 - ~25 trips for mud
 - ~15-35 trips for pollen



Supported development of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) strategy signed by the Bay partners to increase participation and engagement of underrepresented communities in our Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts.

Education staff shared **21 presentations** throughout the state on how to have Courageous Conversations around Climate Change, reaching over **600 individuals**.

Licensing and Registration Service



706,427 unique customers in COMPASS licensing system.

610,748 unique transactions in COMPASS licensing system.

1,282,745 products sold via COMPASS licensing system.

165 products available via licensing system.

\$48,626,672.85 collected in revenue from DNR's licensing and registration services.

Eight Service Center locations throughout the state.

The Licensing and Registration service manages **400 Licensed Boat Dealers** and **187 Sport License Agents**.

