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WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

December 20, 2013

PO Box 94

St. Mary's City, MD 20686

Need a Last Minute Christmas Gift?



A satisfying gift to a healthier St. Mary's River - one Reef Ball will be etched with the giftee's name and installed into the St. Mary's River where up to 1000 oysters will make it their home. [Download form](#): or [purchase online](#): Download and print this graphic for under your tree.



To:

With Love,



[Please email](#) us today!

Governor Appoints Lewis to Interstate Commission on Potomac River Basin

Last month, Governor Martin O'Malley chose local advocate Bob Lewis to serve a two-year term as alternate member of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin.



Lewis, who serves as the executive director of St. Mary's River Watershed Association, spearheaded many successful projects this year, including building a two-acre oyster reef in front of St. Mary's College, launching a certification program for river-friendly neighborhoods and working with the county on its watershed implementation plan.

Last June, the Governor bestowed on Bob the title of Chesapeake Bay Ambassador. Through his "unparalleled commitment to restoring our waterways, Lewis's creativity, focus, and leadership have yield great results, as the St. Mary's River Watershed Association stands as one of the most effective and influential organizations in the Chesapeake Bay region," O'Malley wrote in a statement for the occasion.

Founded in 1940, the Interstate Commission's mission is to enhance, protect, and conserve the water and associated land resources of the Potomac River and its tributaries through regional and interstate cooperation. Considered the "Nation's River," for more than five million basin residents, the river plays an important role in the lives of all. Through regional cooperation and partnerships, the Commission is protecting the river and improving the quality of life in the watershed.

Major accomplishment of 2013

Oysters are key to the health of the Chesapeake Bay. The oyster population has been decimated over the



past decades, reduced to a fraction of what was once a thriving number of oysters that were able to filter all the water in the Chesapeake Bay in less than a week. Now, it takes a year or more. Increasing the number of oysters is part of the vital work performed by St. Mary's River Watershed Association.



The five-acre oyster restoration site is bordered on the offshore side with three Coast Guard-approved navigation buoys (boaters need to beware, as the reef structures are just underneath the river's surface), and will provide area schools with a living laboratory, as well as a water cleaning system capable of filtering tens of millions of gallons of water each day. The project began in 2012, and continued this year with 15 mounds and 280 reef balls - where millions of spat (baby oysters) were planted.

This project could not have happened without our many volunteers, donors, and major funding partners - The Rotary Club of Leonardtown, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Carruth & Son, Inc. Boeing Global Corporate Citizenship, Colliflower & Peterson. We are grateful for all your help.

What's in store for 2014

When there's an issue as large as cleaning up our waters, attacking the challenge from every angle makes sense. While the oyster restoration project cleans up the water, cleaning up the watershed BEFORE that water gets to the rivers and Chesapeake Bay is another angle. The River Friendly Neighborhoods is just such an effort. We will work to formalize the RFN and recruit new areas into the program.

Of course, 2014 will see another River Clean-Up, a River Affair, and Riverfest. Stay tuned for more details on these and more upcoming events.

So how can you help?

Become a member of St. Mary's River Watershed Association. Your membership fee and donations enable us to carry out projects that help the environment. Come out and volunteer and help us do the work that needs to be done. Attend the events throughout the year, and bring your family and

friends. This helps to spread the word about the work we are doing! Thank you for your continued support. Without it, we would cease to exist.



OUR MISSION

To protect, improve, and promote the well-being of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.

We're on the web!
www.smrwa.org



Upcoming Events:

- St. Mary's River Clean Up
April 5, 2014
More info 301-904-2387.
- Earth Day on the Leonardtown Square -
12:30 to 4 pm Sunday, *Likely* April 27
- A River Affair
Date TBD
State House - Historic St. Mary's City. More info 301-904-2387.
- *SAVE THE DATE* RiverFest
Saturday, Sept 27, 10-4 pm
State House - Historic St. Mary's City. More info 301-904-2387.

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