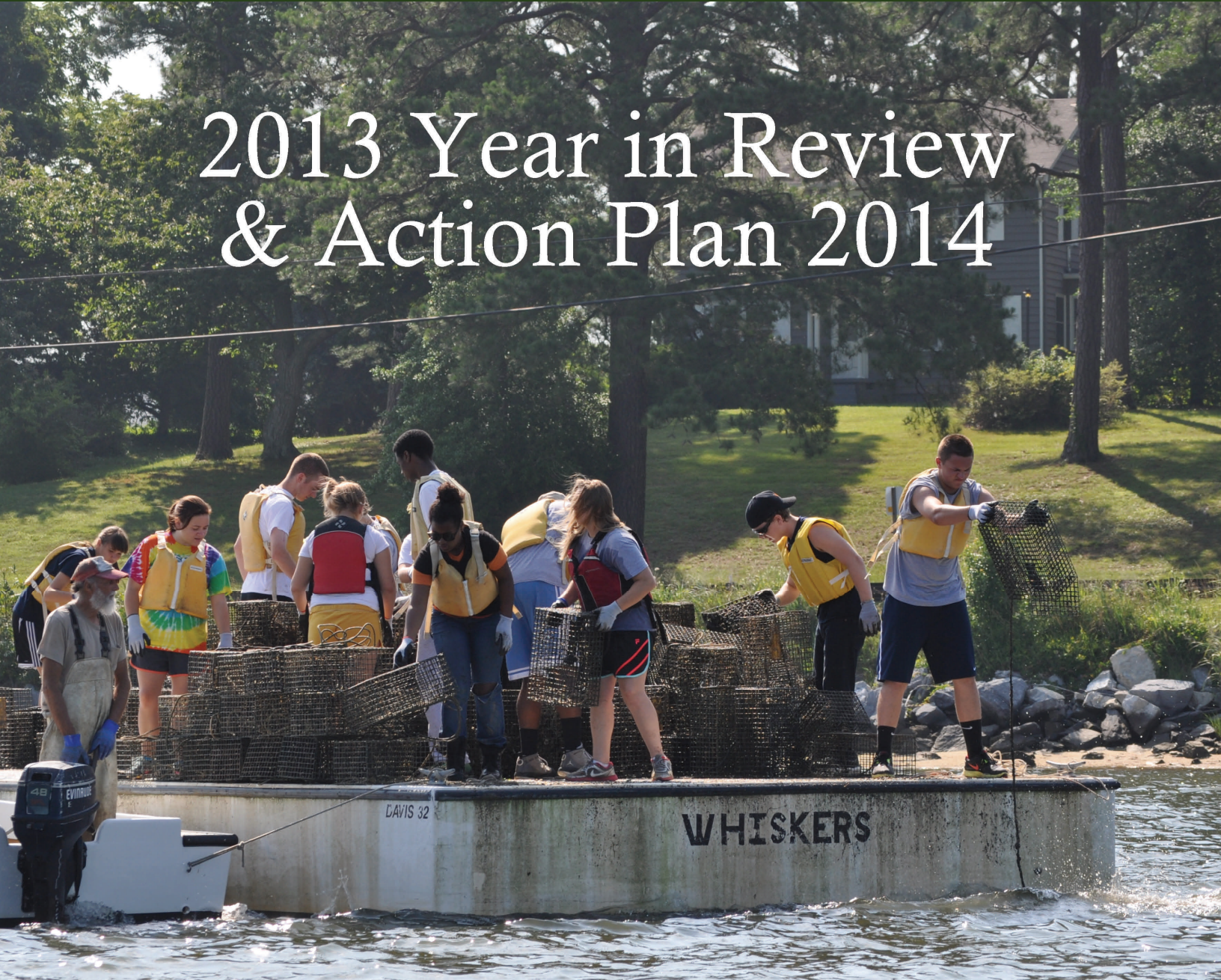


ST. MARY'S RIVER
Watershed Association

2013 Year in Review & Action Plan 2014



Our Mission: To **Protect, Improve, and Promote** the sustainability of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.

Our 2013 Successes

Thanks to members like you, the St. Mary's River Watershed Association was able to expand programming, credibility, and effectiveness in 2013. We stood firm in our belief that healthy waterways and a clean environment are essential to a high quality of life today and a fundamental right of future generations. Our successes are your successes because it is you who provide the moral and financial support that make this all possible. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Three-Dimensional Oyster Reef

- In March and August our contractor Colliflower & Peterson built twelve three-dimensional reef mounds.
- Volunteers, including the Forrest Tech Center National Honor Society, the College's Rotaract club, the summer environmental ethics class, and the Leadership Southern Maryland Class of 2014 built three more mounds and applied treatments, either oyster shell or spat-on-shell veneers, to ten mounds.
- In the fall, Capt. Dave Howe and the Institute of Marine History volunteered their services and installed seven reef mounds made of 280 reef balls stacked two and three high bringing our project total to twenty-two mounds.
- The Oyster Reef Project is a partnership project of local Rotary Clubs & Rotary District 7620, St. Mary's College of Maryland, and the St. Mary's River Watershed Association.
- Major funding partners—Rotary, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Carruth & Son Inc., Boeing Global Corporate Citizenship, Colliflower & Peterson, and importantly, donors like you.



River Friendly Neighborhoods

- Volunteers and professionals worked together to install four rain gardens in our first pilot neighborhood on South Snow Hill Manor Road resulting in a bronze certification as a River Friendly Neighborhood.
- We launched the second pilot neighborhood along St. Inigoes Creek.
- Program criteria and evaluation guidelines were refined with input from pilot neighborhoods.
- We drafted an endorsement program for new residential subdivisions.



Watershed Implementation Plan

- We continue to work with county officials and staff to refine the county's watershed implementation plan (WIP).
- We strongly supported the expansion of public sewer service areas within the development district.
- We partnered with Great Mills High School and the Center for Watershed Protection to retrofit the stormwater devices at the school.



Reef Ball Manufacturing

- We partnered with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation who loaned us thirty reef ball molds for the summer months.
- In July and August, we manufactured 390 reef balls at the Carruth & Son concrete plant in Lexington Park.
- We recruited Y-Corps to assist with making 30 reef balls, and recruited 27 St. Mary's County teachers to make another 30 reef balls. (it was 98 degree that day!) And we partnered with the Forrest Technology Center to make 30 reef balls.
- Intern Levi Willett recruited co-workers from Bert's Diner who help us build 120 reef balls.
- We recognized Rotarian Bob Parkinson as the most dedicated volunteer—he only missed three days out of twenty-six days making reef balls. Second place went to volunteer John Giusti who assisted with moving 280 reef balls to the banks of the St. Mary's, then installing them in the river.

Monitoring Oysters and Water Quality

- We worked with senior college students to develop a baseline water quality assessment for the oyster reef project.
- We launched a sedimentation rate study to evaluate the effects of three-dimensional structures.
- We continued to survey our restored and natural oyster bars in the upper St. Mary's.

Future Bay Leaders

- This summer we recruited four high school student interns and one college intern and challenged them to become future Bay leaders.
- Each intern took on a summer project and learned how to recruit volunteer help, organize the work day, provide oversight with worker safety in mind, and evaluate the occasion.
- Our projects included River Friendly Homes—David Wood; reef ball manufacturing—Levi Willett; sedimentation rates—Ken Gill; oyster bar surveys in the river—Jared Kimmey; and spat-strike on various substrates—Matthew Mitchell.
- Interns learned teamwork while installing rain gardens, operating the oyster nursery, installing reef structures and veneers, as well as helping each other on individual projects.
- Our exhibiting and outreach events provided additional experience and leadership skills.
- All workers received certification for boater safety and operated the 15-foot *Nancy McAllister*, named after our founding president.
- Stipends to each intern were provided by a generous grant from the Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust.



Outreach and Education

- Our field trip programming was rewarding for students at the Chesapeake Charter School, Forrest Tech Center, DC Charter School, LSM Teen Leadership, Rotaract, and others.

Top Challenges for 2014

Certifying New Friendly Neighborhoods

- Next year will be a pivotal year as we formalize the River Friendly Neighborhoods and recruit new areas into the program.
- More recently built neighborhoods will provide challenges for on-site mitigation practices such as rain gardens and swales.
- Boundary signage certifying qualifying neighborhoods will be aesthetic and unobtrusive in our landscape.

No-Impact New Development

- We will continue to seek grant funding for cost-sharing enhancements in new residential and commercial development.
- Our partnerships with developers will continue to provide the added incentive for industry to market greener homes to a more demanding consumer.

Oyster Reef Project & Partnership

- Completing the three-dimensional oyster reef project and instituting a long-term monitoring and evaluation program will be key to sustainable and economical oyster restoration around the Bay.
- Placement of signage at the college waterfront will be key to recognizing the partners and contributors to this project.

Future Bay Leaders

- Our paid student summer internships will continue to develop into additional structured programs requiring individual responsibilities and commitments.

WIP Implementation

- Maintaining a strong relationship with county officials will be key to implementing the clean-up of our county waterways.

Establishing Habitat Restoration Sites

- Establishing new oyster restoration sites will be necessary in order to continue this popular program. Due to our past success and natural recruitment, our focus will move away from planting spat to river bottom restoration.

Sharing Our St. Mary's River

- Our education and outreach programs are integral to our mission and provide a greater understanding of our dependence on clean and healthy waterways.
- Field trips for children provide opportunities to developed interest in and concern for our natural resources. And they are fun!

Thank you for your support and dedication as a member of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association.