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For immediate release
April 30, 2012

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Relentless River Advocate Bernie Fowler to be Toasted May 20

A River Affair will not be held on the second Sunday in June, Bernie Fowler Day. That day the former state senator will be busy leading his signature event—the Broome Island Wade In.

“Senator Fowler is relentless. He is driven by his desire to again witness clean, healthy waters and thriving fishing communities. His legacy will be a healthy Chesapeake Bay for our future generations,” said Joe Anderson, president of the St. Mary’s River Watershed Association.

Honors for Fowler’s life accomplishments in stopping pollution and changing the expectations for the Chesapeake Bay’s clean up will anchor, A River Affair, the afternoon brunch which will be held at Woodlawn Farm overlooking Calvert Creek in Ridge, Maryland.



Born in Baltimore before the Great Depression, a youthful Fowler ran through the woods, fished in the creeks, and treasured nature’s bounty. A decorated World War II veteran, Fowler returned to the Chesapeake Bay to try his hand at fishing. In the ’60s and ’70s, Fowler noticed something was gravely wrong. The waters were cloudy, crabs were no longer plentiful, and the underwater grasses were disappearing. As he waded through the water, he knew something had to be done. The rest is history—in 1970 he was elected to Calvert County Board of Commissioners where he led a successful lawsuit against upriver counties and the EPA; he served as state senator from 1983 to 1994; and in 1988 he founded and has since led an annual Wade In at Broome’s

Island. His service on advisory boards is exemplary and the numerous awards that he has received during his 88 years could fill a small cottage.

“Bernie is all about the future,” said Bob Lewis, who serves as the Association’s executive director. “He thrives on his desire to leave this world in the condition it was when he came into it—clean waters, healthy fish stocks, and lush underwater grasses. That’s what Bernie is all about. We all need to be a little more like Bernie Fowler.”

Festivities at A River Affair will run 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, May 20 and will feature a toast to Bernie Fowler, brunch prepared and served by Michael & Lisa Kelley, the Gretchen Richie Jazz Cabaret, silent auction items, and libations highlighted by Slack Wines’ award winning 2009 Petit Manseng under the signature label “A River Affair.” Proceeds from this ticketed event will support the restoration of the St. Mary’s River and the Chesapeake Bay. To learn more or to make reservations, call 301-862-3517 or email <mailto:info@stmarysriver.org>. Tickets can be purchase online at <http://www.SMRWA.org>.

Caption: Former Senator Bernie Fowler leads the 2011 St. Mary’s River Wade In.

