

\*\*\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*\*\*

For immediate release  
June 27, 2014

Contact: Bob Lewis  
301-737-2903

## Conservationist of the Year Award

Southern Maryland Audubon Society (SMAS) awarded the Conservationist of the Year Award to St. Mary's River Watershed Association (SMRWA) at their annual meeting on June 1, 2014 at the Clearwater Nature Center.

The mission of the SMAS is “to promote appreciation, conservation, and protection of birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitats through education, research and outreach.”

Normally given to an individual, this is the first year that SMAS has given the Conservationist of the Year Award to a group. SMRWA has been noted for its outstanding work in oyster restoration, river clean up, and promoting rain gardens to soak up excess stormwater runoff.

In addition to the award, SMAS donated a reef ball to be placed in the sanctuary of the St. Mary's River, where it will become habitat for oysters, crabs, and many more sea creatures.

The mission of SMRWA is “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.” Since 2004, the St. Mary's River Watershed Association has stimulated new efforts to protect and enhance the watershed in ways that also revitalize the economic, social, and cultural health of the community.

To find out more about SMRWA or become a member, please visit our website at [smrwa.org](http://smrwa.org).



*Left to right: Bob Kukinic, Conservation Committee Chairman; Ernie Willoughby, Director of SMAS; Bob Lewis, Executive Director of SMRWA; Ken Gill, Program Director for SMRWA; and Mike Callahan, President of SMAS.*