



Background

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The Chesapeake Bay Partner Community Award program recognizes local governments throughout the Bay watershed that demonstrate a commitment to protecting and restoring their local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. Since the program's inception, 73 localities from across the Bay watershed have been selected as Bay Partner communities. Sixteen communities have been selected as the recipients of the 2005 awards.

Chesapeake 2000, the most recent Bay protection and restoration agreement, recognizes that active partnerships with the 1,650 local governments in the Chesapeake Bay watershed are critical to the restoration and protection of the Bay and its rivers.

2005 Chesapeake Bay Partner Community Award Recipients

Chester County, Pa.

Silver Partner

Chester County has been a leader in promoting innovative stormwater management practices. The County adopted two documents that the County's 73 municipalities can use: "Ten Principles of Comprehensive Stormwater Management" and a model stormwater management ordinance that meets the NPDES Phase II requirements. Chester County's Comprehensive Plan, Landscapes, also presents innovative visions for the County in land use management. Seventy-two municipalities have committed to work toward implementing goals in landscapes related to concentrating growth in appropriate areas, promoting mixed use development and promoting infill and redevelopment. The County's open space plan identifies lands worthy of permanent protection and offers grants to ease or acquire important lands.



Plymouth Township, Pa.

Gold Partner

Plymouth Township is a small, rural township with a strong coal mining history. Though little has changed in this region over the past 34 years, Plymouth Township has taken advantage of regional partnerships and educational opportunities to improve stewardship of its land and water. The Township is working with the County Conservation District and Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation to develop a GIS map of all storm drains, so it can clean out blocked storm drains that have aggravated flooding problems. The Township's road department purchases anthracite coal ash cinders from other local communities to use as an anti-skid material during the winter months. The alkaline ash cinders are more environmentally friendly than the calcium and sodium salts traditionally used on roadways. The Township partners with various groups to conduct streamside cleanups and an annual River Fest along the Susquehanna River, as well as to preserve a large tract of wooded ridge top land in the Township. The Township publishes a community newsletter, the PT Express, which has a strong focus on environmental protection, community involvement and land use protection.

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Clarke County, Va.*Gold Partner*

Rural Clarke County has recently taken significant measures to protect its agricultural and forested lands. In 2005, the County updated its Mountain Land Plan and passed more stringent regulations on site clearing and open space requirements on mountain sites. It also implements an Agricultural Open Space Conservation District, which covers 75 percent of the County. The County created an Easement Authority in 2002 to acquire and/or receive conservation easements; the Authority has purchased easements on 219 acres and had accepted donated easements on 174 acres. In 1999, Clarke County adopted a Stream Protection Overlay District that requires a 100-foot buffer on each side of perennial streams and adjacent wetlands.

Town of Hampstead, Md.*Silver Partner*

In 2003, Hampstead updated its Comprehensive Plan, which proposes a growth area boundary that is strengthened by farmland and open space preservation in surrounding Carroll County. Hampstead passed a Resource Protection Overlay Zone in 2003 to provide for the protection and conservation of endangered and threatened animal species and wildlife and fisheries habitat that appear on state or federal lists of endangered or threatened species. The overlay zone includes a 300-foot buffer around defined habitat areas. The ordinance establishes a process for acquiring an exceptional use permit for any land use that might impact the natural habitat. The Town actively reuses of downtown properties and in maintaining and acquiring parks and open spaces. Hampstead also recognizes the value of landscaping in improving air and water quality and requires that trees be planted in all residential lots. A Landscape Manual, adopted in 1996, provides guidance on developing landscape plans.

Falls Church, Va.*Gold Partner*

Under a grant from Virginia DCR, Falls Church installed rainwater runoff collection systems at the municipal property yard. The water is used to irrigate the on-site plant nursery and is pumped into mobile irrigation trucks; the water is also used in the sanitary sewer pumping trucks. At City Hall, 2000 square feet of an impervious parking area was converted to a rain garden and grasspave parking area for police vehicles. In 2003, 55% of the residential solid waste collected was recycled. A mixed-use redevelopment ordinance provides density bonuses and structured parking while requiring 15% open space. Financial incentives are

provided to employees who carpool or use public transportation to get to City Hall. A neighborhood tree planting program, Adopt-a Stream month, the Stream Stewards program and a spring and fall citywide cleanup help to engage the community. Falls Church requires developers and homeowners to install BMPs on their property and sign maintenance agreements.

City of Lancaster, Pa.*Gold Partner*

Lancaster's storm water management ordinance encourages the use of innovative methods, such as rooftop storage, seepage trenches, grassed channels, vegetated strips and subsurface facilities. The Parks Department practices nutrient management and prevents runoff by applying fertilizer sparingly at only one location in the city and only one application in late fall, aerating the ground and fertilizing during periods of no rain. Lancaster's Comprehensive Plan promotes infill development and reuse of downtown spaces, including a tax abatement program for using deteriorated downtown residential and commercial properties. Keystone Opportunity Zones have been created in the city to promote reuse of existing brownfield sites by offering unique state and local tax incentives. In 2000, a fish ladder was added to the Conestoga Water treatment Plant Dam to aid migratory fish passage. Residents and businesses are provided with recycling containers, and citizens who carpool and use public transit are given more flexible parking opportunities.

College Township, Pa.*Gold Partner*

College Township adopted the Spring Creek Watershed Management Plan, requiring that post development rates of runoff may not exceed the peak release rates prior to development. Recycling is mandatory for residents and businesses who use curbside pickup. As part of the Centre Regional Planning Agency, regional growth boundaries have been established around College Township, which surrounds Penn State University. The comprehensive plan promotes preservation of existing agricultural operations along with development of mixed-use neighborhoods. An overlay zoning district is being created to protect hydric soils. The township is in the process of creating an Official Map outlining acreage to be preserved for active and passive recreation. The map and calling for 50-foot stream buffers. Recycling of wastewater through the newly approved Beneficial Reuse project will pump wastewater generated by the plant upstream beyond municipal wells and treat it in man-made wetlands instead of releasing it into Spring Creek.

Lewisburg, Pa.*Silver Partner*

Lewisburg is a community of 5,620 residents in Union County, PA. Its zoning ordinance addresses impervious surfaces based on lot size and zoning district. Recycling is mandated by ordinance one day per month at curbside. Mixed-use development is supported through use of the Traditional Neighborhood Development zoning codes. Infill development and reuse of downtown areas are encouraged by the Lewisburg Downtown Partnership and the Neighborhood Investment District Committee. Fifty acres of open space are maintained in local parks, recreation areas and a scenic riverwalk along the Susquehanna River. Borough staff, along with Bucknell University students, monitor and conduct stream clean-ups along Limestone Run.

Arlington County, Va.*Gold Partner*

As part of its goal to improve water quality, Arlington County requires septic tank owners to have the tank pumped out every five years. A postcard reminder is sent to residents with a return postcard that must be returned by the company who pumps the tanks. Alternative fueled vehicles in the county fleet include diesel equipment using B20 biodiesel fuel. More than 36 hybrid sedans have begun to replace the county's automotive fleet. In 2005, Arlington County will get underway on a major regional stormwater wetland BMP retrofit. Fifty-three miles of bike trails used for commuting and recreation encourage the use of alternative transportation along with a car-sharing program and commuter programs such as WALKArlington, Arlington Transit and Specialized Transit for Arlington Residents. The county parks department is working to enhance streamside buffers by creating a "no-mow" zone along Four Mile Run. In efforts to educate the public, the county has conducted water quality education campaigns, led volunteer programs such as stream monitoring, clean-ups and storm drain marking as well as established a Water Steward Team focused on helping residents make behavioral changes to improve the environment.

Rockville, Md.*Gold Partner*

The City of Rockville's Environmental Guidelines, adopted in 1999, provide additional protection for wetlands beyond those required by state or federal law. The guidelines require that stream buffers, wetlands and wetland buffers be identified on the Natural Resource Inventory for all new or redevelopment. Stream buffer widths range from 125-175 feet, depending on slope.

Minimum buffer widths for wetlands adjacent to third and higher order streams is 25 feet; and 40 feet for wetlands adjacent to first or second order streams. The "Growing not Mowing" program encourages reforestation of stream buffers that are being mowed. A Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance requires tree save and on-site reforestation or afforestation. Recently the city completed a fish barrier removal project in the Cabin John Creek watershed. To engage the community, nine Rockville residents were appointed to an Environment Commission to recommend policies and programs to the city government.

Carroll County, Md.*Gold Partner*

Carroll County exceeded the 2000 Maryland Stormwater manual requirements and adopted a Water Resource Management Ordinance that requires additional levels of stormwater control in designated water resource management areas. These surface water management zones are required to provide for maximum on-site infiltration of stormwater. In 2003, the county adopted an ordinance titled "Environmental Management of Storm Sewer Systems" that regulates discharges and treats the stormwater management system as an entity. An integrated pest management program limits preventative use of pesticides inside schools, minimizes need for pesticide and herbicide through regular scouting for invasive plants and pests, and currently uses no restricted-use chemicals for plant or pest control. The county has adopted a process that will assess the condition of each watershed in the county and systemically propose improvement and restoration projects. In 2000, the County Master Plan was adopted with a goal of preserving "100,000 acres of tillable agricultural land for the production of agricultural products;" this represents over 60% of the total land in the county used for agricultural production. The Forest Conservation Ordinance requires a 1-1 replacement ratio when forest removal is anticipated during development.

Aberdeen, Md.*Gold Partner*

To improve water quality, Aberdeen's Department of Public Works has implemented storm water management requirements to reduce 10% of impervious surfaces for redevelopment projects utilizing best management practices. The curbside recycling program has a 75% participation rate with incentives offered each year. In 2005, electronics were accepted in the weekly recycling program. In 1997, scrap lumber was collected at curbside to obtain wood for birdhouses. The birdhouses were sold and the proceeds used to

purchase trees for planting in Aberdeen. Motor oil and antifreeze are collected 24 hours a day at a drop off point. The Aberdeen Forest Conservation Ordinance requires reforestation or afforestation at all residential, commercial or industrial developments. In 2004, Aberdeen received the "Tree City, USA" award from the national Arbor Day Foundation. To educate the public, Aberdeen embarked on a storm drain awareness campaign in 2004 that promoted the slogan "Storm drains are a Grate-way to the Chesapeake. Please keep your butts off the road." Scouts and schools have been engaged in stenciling the city's 700 storm drains. No pesticides are used in Aberdeen to control weeds or invasive plants.

Greenbelt, Md.

Gold Partner

Greenbelt has compiled a priority list of water quality improvement projects to reduce existing impervious surfaces on city property, including retrofitting a number of residential roads with landscaped medians and retrofitting parking lots with rain gardens or bioretention areas. A recycling site was established for used oil and antifreeze, and electronics recycling events are held four times per year. In the ten years since an integrated pest management program was implemented, staff estimates that Greenbelt's use of fertilizers has been reduced by 30-50%. An extensive trail system runs throughout the city, which has aggressively pursued the acquisition of undeveloped properties to achieve its long-term goal of preserving open space. Greenbelt has worked closely with private developers to place environmentally sensitive lands in easements or in public ownership. To promote alternative transportation, bike lanes were created; in some cases bike lanes were added by eliminating travel lanes. The city implemented one of the first car share programs on the east coast for residents and employees of Greenbelt. As an active member of the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Program, the city has been designated as one of the first Target Investment Zones—designed to use heritage tourism to build local economies while preserving, developing and promoting the resources of the area. Greenbelt advocates on-site woodland preservation and mitigation. Its urban forestry program includes a tree and shrub nursery to grow native species not commonly available. To educate the public, a water quality brochure was published that advises homeowners on the reduction of non-point source pollution.

South Middleton Township, Pa.

Gold Partner

South Middleton Township upgraded its 2000 Silver Partner award to Gold this year. The township's zoning ordinance contains provisions for preserving agriculture and conserving land through transfer of development rights, sliding scale density limitations and cluster development. Their Open Space Preservation Research Committee, formed in 2004, has prioritized a list of properties needing conservation easements. Criteria for the list is that preserved land provide one of the following benefits: working farm that sustains the agricultural economy of the township; land that provides water or other natural resources or wildlife habitat; land that provides recreational opportunities for current and future generations; or linear space corridors that may serve recreational or natural resource purposes. In 1998, a Wellhead Protection Ordinance was enacted to protect the water quality of the township's three municipal wells, which are the only sources of public water in a predominantly karst topography.

Alexandria, Va.

Gold Partner

In 2005, the City of Alexandria was awarded a grant from the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation to retrofit the Alexandria Health Department with a green roof. Recycling is offered to all single-family homes within the city and 99% of residents take advantage of this program. One day per week the city offers a S.T.O.P (stop throwing out pollutants) program for residents to safely dispose of hazardous waste. An integrated pest management program, utilizing parasite releases and pheromone disruption, is used to control gypsy moths reducing the need for pesticides. Alexandria works cooperatively with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and the Metropolitan Washington Council of governments to resolve growth and development issues. They are currently working to restore lower Four Mile Run, an urban waterway. In 2003, an open space plan was adopted, with a framework of 15 goals. An Urban Forestry Steering Committee has been established to guide the city through development of an Urban Forestry Plan. Alternative transportation is encouraged through requiring new developments to provide bike racks, metro subsidies for city employees, free bus fares when air quality is at code red status and creation of a coordinator position to promote walking and biking in the city. To engage the community, Alexandria sponsors an annual Earth Day stream clean up event and a Youth Summit and participates in the Livable Neighborhood Watershed Stewardship Program.

Montgomery County, Md.*Gold Partner*

Montgomery County has completed watershed assessments in 40% of its developed areas. It has identified, built and planned retrofit opportunities for existing developments including construction of low impact retrofits to address impervious runoff at three public facilities. Hazardous waste is collected at a permanent waste collection site at the transfer station. The Legacy Open Space program has identified and protected more than 2,800 acres on 17 properties in the last four years. To promote agriculture as a prime land use, the Rural Density Transfer Zone protects farmland and open space in the designated Agricultural Reserve. The zoning provides for transfer of development rights in non-rural areas identified in the Master Plan. The county has worked with partners to remove fish blockages in the Anacostia River and Rock Creek and adopted guidelines to build environmentally sensitive stream crossings to maintain natural stream channels. To engage the public, Montgomery County offered family-oriented opportunities to help create rain gardens, plant trees, restock fish, monitor streams and participate in clean-ups.

Prince George's County, Md.*Gold Partner*

Prince George's County has been a leader in stormwater management technologies and policy. In 2002, the County revised its Stormwater Management Ordinance and Design Manual to reflect the latest state requirements managing both the quantity and quality of stormwater. Three wastewater treatment plants in the County have Biological Nitrogen Removal, and three more are under planning and design to implement BNR. On sound land use, the County's General Plan, updated in 2002, uses a system of designated centers, corridors and growth tiers to guide future land use and development. The plan, used as a guide for smaller planning areas, is a tool to better manage growth by linking growth policies, capital improvement, economic development and environmental protection. The County's Woodland Conservation Ordinance was the first of its kind in Maryland and was used as a template for the State Forest Conservation Act. Woodlands are preserved and land reforested on-site and off-site throughout the County in all zoning categories. In support of the Anacostia Fish Passage Working Group, the County has partnered with other agencies in removing nearly all of the 26 fish barriers in Prince George's County. The County also provides grants to communities for tree planting and landscaping projects under its ReLeaf Grant Program. The County's Stream Team program engages local schools, scouting groups, and civic and environmental groups in volunteer stream monitoring and Adopt-a-Stream activities such as trash removal, tree planting and invasive plant removal.

For additional information about programs restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay visit www.chesapeakebay.net.