

CHARLES COUNTY LANDSCAPES

Newsletter of the Conservancy for Charles County, Inc.
www.conservecharles.org 301-932-5714

Summer 2016
Volume 8, Issue 1

Steve Bunker Receives Conservancy's Heritage Award



Hal Delaplaine, Conservancy President, presents the Heritage Award to Steve Bunker. Photo and text courtesy of Hal Delaplaine.

The Conservancy was pleased to honor Steve Bunker with the Heritage Award at the September 2015 Annual Meeting. An environmental scientist and conservationist who resides in La Plata, Mr. Bunker was cited for "balancing the competing needs of land conservation and development over an exemplary career as biologist, policy advocate for conservation, and volunteer land use planner".

A Georgia native, Mr. Bunker arrived in Southern Maryland in the early 80's to take a job as an environmental scientist at Tri-

Heritage Award continued on p.4

Thank You to Conservancy Supporters in 2016

Although the Conservancy for Charles County is a non-profit, all-volunteer effort, funds are still needed for the basic functions of a land trust, such as insurance, maintaining an office space, and costs associated with outreach and stewardship. We are very grateful for the support of our members through their donations and memberships, and we sometimes receive grants to further our work. The fall Annual Dinner Meeting provides a critical source of funds as well with the support of the Waldorf Jaycees.

In 2016, the Conservancy received a generous gift from the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and fundraisers were held with the support of the Port Tobacco Players and the Greene Turtle. A special thank you goes out to these organizations for their assistance in furthering the work of the Conservancy.

Next Annual Meeting Sept. 30-Featuring Award-winning Comedian Brian Malow

The 2016 Conservancy Annual Meeting will be held on **Friday September 30th** at the Waldorf Jaycees. Invitations for dinner reservations have been mailed and reservations must be **received by September 23**. Plan now to attend—this is our only meeting for the membership and our only fundraiser. It is a great opportunity to spend time with fellow Conservancy supporters.

For our entertainment this year, we have a new comedian, Brian Malow—“Earth’s Premier Science Comedian”. He has been featured on The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson, co-hosted shows on The Weather Channel, and has been profiled in Nature, the San Francisco Chronicle, the Washington Post, and the New York Times.

For more information on the Annual Meeting, contact Lloyd Bowling, Event Coordinator, at 301-934-4130.

Conservancy Welcomes New and Returning Board Members

During the September business meeting, Conservancy members elected two new members-- Cindy Greb of Leonardtown and Millie Hamman of Nanjemoy. Ms. Greb was recently named Executive Director of Southern Maryland Resource Conservation and Development and brings many years of experience managing environmental aspects of residential and commercial development. She also serves on various Southern Maryland boards and committees.

Ms. Hamman is a retired federal civil servant and long-time Nanjemoy resident and civic leader. She is President of Nanjemoy Vision, Inc. and serves on the Nanjemoy Community Center Council. In addition, she is President of Senior Services of Charles County, Inc. and serves on the board of the Historical Society of Charles County.

Three incumbent directors were re-elected—Lloyd Bowling of Charlotte Hall, Secretary Ellen Cline of Indian Head, and President Hal Delaplane of La Plata. Other directors returning to the 10-member board include vice president Gwen Brewer of Lothian, Brian Clark of Waldorf, treasurer Richard C. Viohl, Jr. of Nanjemoy, Nancy Schertler of Newburg, and Lynne Wheeler of Indian Head.



CCC welcomes Cindy Greb (left) and Millie Hamman (right) to the Conservancy Board.

What Has Your Conservancy Been Doing?

- Easement monitoring
- Hollman Award was renewed
- Provided testimony at a number of public hearings
- ArtsFest and County Fair booths
- Sponsorship and booth at S MD Crop Conference
- Preserve, Plant, and Play event: tree planting with Port Tobacco River Conservancy and County
- Board member attendance at several workshops and the Maryland Land Conservation Conference
- Renewed the cooperative agreement with Maryland Environmental Trust
- Participated in Indian Head Joint Use Land Study
- Presentations at Nanjemoy Community Meeting and SMADC agricultural summit
- Organizing fundraising events

Federal Tax Incentive Made Permanent

In late 2015, Congress enacted one of the most powerful conservation measures in decades: the enhanced federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations.

The permanent incentive increases the benefits to landowners by:

- raising the deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation easement to 50%, from 30%, of his or her annual income;

Federal Tax Incentive continued on p.4



Statewide Eyes: You Can Help Map Invasive Species

Have you noticed an alien invader in your back yard or favorite state or county park? Well, they are there! Not aliens from space, but plant species that are not native to our area and that are considered to be “invasive”. An invasive species is a species that is not native to the area; has or can have negative environmental, economic, or human health effects; shows a tremendous capacity for reproduction and distribution throughout its new environment; and was introduced to its new environment by people either accidentally or on purpose. Invasive animal species in our area include northern snakehead, emerald ash borer, Asiatic clam, and virile crayfish. Plant species falling into this category include Japanese stiltgrass, English ivy, garlic mustard, and mile-a-minute vine.

Invasive species cause a variety of negative impacts to our native species and habitats. Early detection and rapid response are key to stemming the spread of an invasive species before it becomes too costly or too difficult to control. A new program, Statewide Eyes, has been established to enlist citizens as scientists to assist with finding and documenting the locations of target invasive species. Volunteers (like you!) use a free mobile application called the Mid-Atlantic Early Detection Network to identify, photograph, and map the location of invasive plants, focusing on ecologically significant sites. After attending a training session, you will be ready to help with this important effort. Some of the target species for southern Maryland include mimosa, white mulberry, heavenly bamboo, Chinese silvergrass, wavy-leaf basketgrass, and water hyacinth.

For more information and to sign up, go to:
http://dnr2.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/statewide_eyes.aspx

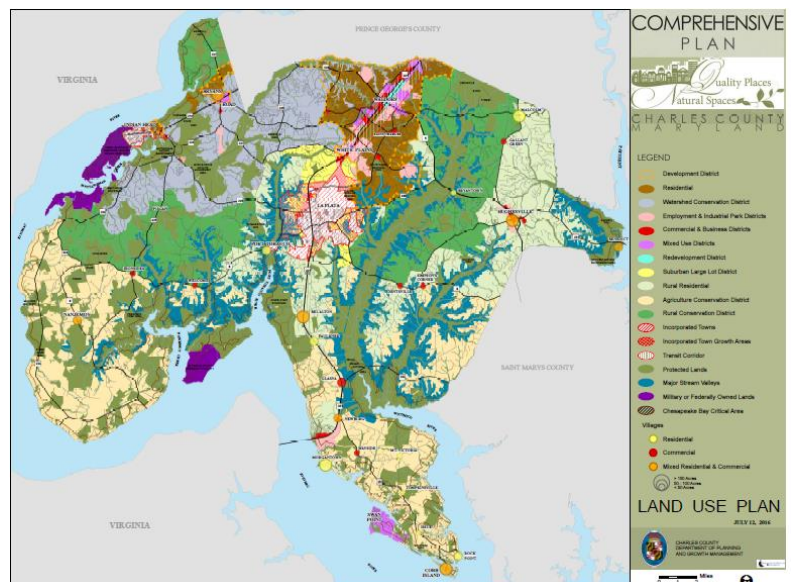
2016 County Comprehensive Plan Approved

On July 16, the County Commissioners adopted the revised and updated 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan (Plan), the culmination of a process that started with a public kick-off meeting in March 2011. The Conservancy played an active role in the development of the Plan through the years by providing written comments and sharing them at public meetings, attending related meetings, and by partnering with other organizations in the Smarter Growth Alliance for Charles County. Thanks to this sustained activity and support from many citizens, the 2016 Plan represents a marked improvement over previous plans.

The Plan will guide land use development in the County for the next 25 years, primarily through the zoning ordinance and other policies that address land use, growth management, rural/agricultural policies, water resources, public facilities, economic development strategies, and environmental protection. Next, the zoning ordinance and water and sewer plans will be updated so that they are consistent with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

The general theme of the Plan is that the growth should continue according to a “Smart Growth” philosophy:

County Comprehensive Plan, continued on p.4



An important element of the Charles County Comprehensive Plan is the Land Use Plan, pictured here. It provides a future vision of the location, distribution, and scale of future development and preservation.

Heritage Award, continued from p.1

County Council. Following a research project at Chesapeake Biology Lab in Solomons, he took a position as Senior Staff Scientist with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation working on land use, critical areas, forest conservation, and rehabilitating damaged ecosystems. In 1992, Mr. Bunker moved to The Nature Conservancy, Maryland Chapter where he spent the rest of his career in various senior policy positions. Recently, Mr. Bunker completed two terms on the Charles County Planning Commission where he presided for a time over the on-going update of the Charles County Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Bunker's past service to the Conservancy for Charles County is also very noteworthy. He was a founding member of the Conservancy after serving on the initial exploratory committee and was an officer for several years. Thanks to connections with both environmental and development communities, Mr. Bunker had a role in the preservation of the Mudd Farm in Waldorf.

Since his retirement this past summer, Mr. Bunker has helped promote establishment of Mallows Bay National Marine Sanctuary and pursued his interests in hiking and paddle boarding.

In addition, outgoing Conservancy Board member, Al Stewart of Leonardtown, was recognized for his service to the organization during the business portion of the dinner.

Federal Tax Incentive, continued from p. 2

- extending the carry-forward period for a donor to take a tax deduction for a conservation agreement to 15 years from 5 years; and
- allowing qualifying farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of their income, increased from 50%.

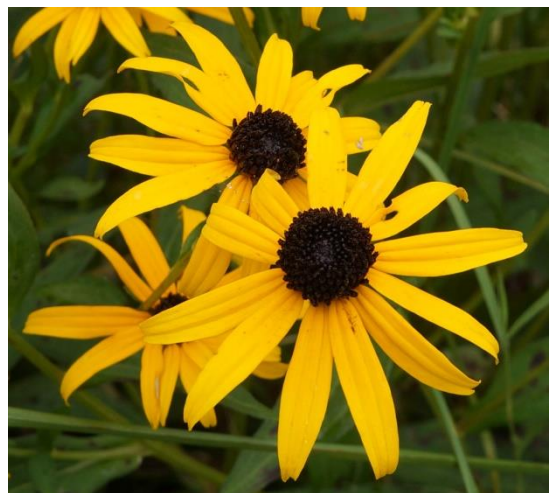
The Land Trust Alliance, who, since 2000, has led the team effort to make the tax credit permanent, has prepared a helpful brochure and other resources to assist landowners with understanding and using the conservation tax incentive. For more information and these materials go to: <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/issues-action/take-action/tax-incentives>

County Comprehensive Plan, continued from p. 3

balancing growth with strong environmental protection measures in order to preserve resource benefits and quality of life for the County's citizens into the future. The 2016 Plan differs significantly from previous plans by reducing the Development District by 30,000 acres, concentrating growth, providing greater protection for our natural resources, promoting historic village revitalization efforts, and supporting light rail transit for long term development. Fifty percent of the County will be protected as open space, including habitats that support rare species and large tracts of remaining forest lands.

The Plan includes increased protections for the watersheds of Mattawoman Creek, Port Tobacco River, Zekiah Swamp, and other waterways. Policies are put in place to preserve the agricultural industry and the land base necessary to support it, and forestry, fisheries, agritourism, and ecotourism are identified as opportunity areas for sustainable economic development. In addition, several changes have been made to improve the contribution of Transfer of Development Rights to natural resource conservation.

Check out the full Comprehensive Plan, including the Land Use Plan, at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/pgm/planning/comprehensive-plan-2016>

***Editor's Note:***

Please contact me by November 15 if you have a story, photos, or announcement to share for the winter newsletter, due out in December 2016.

Gwen Brewer

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There's still time- please renew or join for 2016!

Please indicate payment of your membership dues only, donation only, or both when you send in the form below. Remember that your dues and donations to the Conservancy are tax deductible. Your dues and donations are critical to continue our work.

You can also renew or join from our website using PayPal at conservecharles.org!

Don't let your membership lapse- we need your help to preserve the natural and historical landscapes of Charles County!

Please join us to help preserve Charles County's natural and historic landscapes. Fill out the form below to become a member or otherwise contribute.

Annual dues—

___ individual \$35 ___ family \$50 ___ student \$15 ___ organization \$100

Dues and contributions are tax deductible. The Conservancy is listed as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt organization with the State of Maryland.

Name(s): _____

Organization (if organization membership): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please send the Newsletter by e-mail only to conserve resources _____

Annual dues enclosed \$ _____

Added contribution \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Please make your check out to "Conservancy for Charles County, Inc." and mail with this form to:
Conservancy for Charles County, P.O. Box 1358, Waldorf, MD 20604

**Conservancy for Charles
County, Inc.**

P.O. Box 1358
Waldorf, MD 20604

Phone:
301-932-5714

E-Mail:
info@conservecharles.org

**Quiet forests.
Green and golden fields
crisscrossed with streams.
Historic homes, silvery
cedar barns, scenic roads.
All worth preserving for
today and forever.**



CONSERVANCY for Charles County, Inc.

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.conservecharles.org

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In this issue:

- Steve Bunker Receives Heritage Award
- Annual Meeting Sept. 30
- New Board Members
- Tax Incentive Permanent
- Statewide Eyes Project
- County Comprehensive Plan Adopted

