

# SHORE RIVERS ADVOCATE

CHESTER | MILES, WYE, & EASTERN BAY

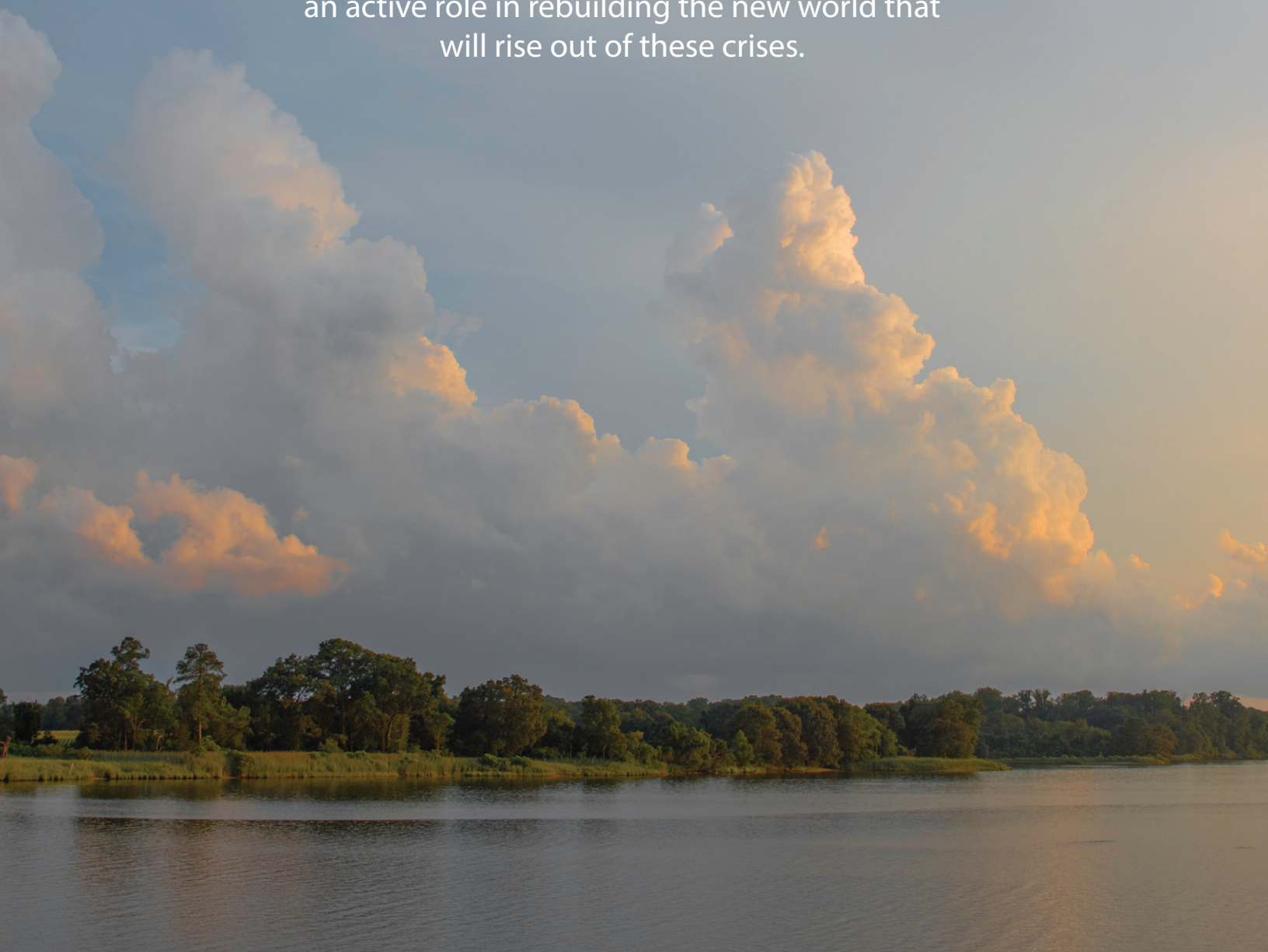
CHOPTANK | SASSAFRAS & BAYSIDE CREEKS

FALL 2020



## WHAT IS ESSENTIAL?

Our world is being reshaped by climate change, the coronavirus, and the movement for racial justice. We are all reevaluating and recommitting to what is essential. Let's take an active role in rebuilding the new world that will rise out of these crises.





# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear ShoreRivers members and supporters,

***In this edition of the Advocate we explore the question: What is essential?*** This simple inquiry is especially relevant in our currently challenging times. We examine how it relates to our mission to achieve healthy rivers on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

***Clean water is essential.*** In the pages ahead, read about our efforts to monitor bacteria in our waterways, alert the public about potential health issues, and develop projects to reduce bacteria in our rivers. Learn how our expanded engineering capacity will enable us to put more projects in the ground to reduce pollution from agricultural practices.

***Including diverse voices in the environmental movement is essential*** for long-term, lasting success. Read about our partnership with Interfaith Partners of the Chesapeake to engage with Eastern Shore faith communities. ***Environmental social justice for communities and people of color is essential.*** Read about our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and access.

***Strong environmental regulations are essential.*** We face new threats as the federal administration rolls back foundational environmental regulations protecting water, air, and endangered species. Government agencies charged with protecting the environment are actively working to make it easier to pollute. Learn how we're using our rights as citizens under the Clean Water Act to hold our government accountable.

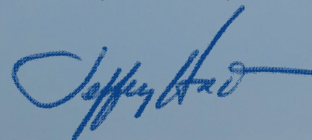
***Participating in democracy is essential.*** We must elect leaders—from the local level to the federal level—who will prioritize environmental restoration and uphold citizen rights to clean water, soil, and air.

Our world is being reshaped by climate change, the coronavirus, and the movement for racial justice.

***We are all reevaluating and recommitting to what is essential. Let's take an***

***active role in rebuilding the new world that will rise out of these crises.***

We appreciate your continued support as we work for healthy waterways for all. We *will* clean these rivers.



Jeffrey Horstman



Cover photo by Beth Horstman

This photo by Beth Horstman

All photos, unless otherwise noted, are courtesy of ShoreRivers staff





**DARRAN WHITE TILGHMAN**  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT

## SHORERIVERS INVESTS IN DEEPER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*This year, we have been reminded of a small, astounding truth: human beings do have the capacity to change our behavior for the collective good.*

People across the globe quickly made drastic adjustments in their daily lives to protect one another from a pandemic; we can respond in equally significant ways to the crises of racial injustice and climate change. We can make the changes we need to keep one another safe, build just communities, and restore our planet. We have shown that we are willing to protect vulnerable people we may never even meet: a stranger to whom we give safe distance in the grocery store; a person of color struggling on the other

side of town or the world; our own great-grandchildren living with the results of our actions on climate change.

*As ShoreRivers' newly established Director of Community Engagement,* I will lead our efforts to expand and deepen our community engagement programs to develop a strong and diverse ambassador base for our work, mobilize grassroots behavior change, and inspire civic engagement. People of color are disproportionately affected by this pandemic just as they are most threatened by climate change. We see that we have to be better allies, and that is a hopeful truth and a creative opportunity. More than ever, we need to collaborate for solutions to crises that are both local and global.

ShoreRivers believes that diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in our staff, board, supporters, and programs is critical to achieving our mission of clean water. *We believe that access to waterways fuels environmental stewardship, inclusion of diverse communities is essential to long-term success, and diverse representation on our staff and board makes us stronger.*

To achieve this vision, ShoreRivers staff and board members are joining conversations and building networks with culturally competent partners in our communities. We are taking the time to show up and to listen purposefully, and there is more we can and will do. I am proud of ShoreRivers for turning toward the urgent work of cleaning our waterways with and for our communities. *Every one of us has a right to clean water, and our rivers need all of our voices.*

**WENDELL BERRY**, ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST,  
FARMER, AND ESSAYIST, WROTE IN 1969:

*"[T]he movement to preserve the environment [is] not a digression from the civil rights and peace movements, but the logical culmination of those movements. For I believe that the separation of these three problems is artificial. They have the same cause, and that is the mentality of greed and exploitation. The mentality that exploits and destroys the natural environment is the same that abuses racial and economic minorities... The mentality that destroys a watershed and then panics at the threat of flood is the same mentality that gives institutionalized insult to black people and then panics at the prospect of race riots."*



# NINA RODALE HOUGHTON FUND

## ENDOWING THE RIVERKEEPERS OF SHORERIVERS

Earlier this spring, Nina Houghton, a passionate Chesapeake Bay environmental advocate, died peacefully at her home in Chestertown, Maryland. Much beloved and respected, Nina's friends and family have decided to perpetuate her passion for the Eastern Shore and a clean Chesapeake Bay watershed by establishing the Nina Rodale Houghton Fund at ShoreRivers.

*This endowment will support in perpetuity the ShoreRivers Riverkeepers, who serve as the voice for the Sassafras, Chester, Wye, Miles, Choptank, Bayside Creeks, and Eastern Bay watersheds of Maryland's Eastern Shore. The four Riverkeepers are the heart and soul of ShoreRivers' mission of science-based advocacy, restoration, education, and community engagement to protect and restore the health of our rivers.*



**NINA WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT BRINGING TOGETHER THE AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITIES TO RETAIN MARYLAND'S WORKING LANDSCAPES AND THE INDUSTRIES THEY SUPPORT, WHILE PROTECTING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.**

Nina helped found the Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro Ecology and was the initial funder of the Harry R. Hughes Endowed Scholarship Fund. She served as an advisory group member to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and as a Trustee of the Wye Institute. Equally invested in educational improvement and innovation, Nina served in leadership board roles with the University System of Maryland, the Columbus Center in Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Medicine, University of Maryland College

Park, Washington College, Goucher College, and the Aspen Institute. *Most dear to our hearts, Nina was instrumental in providing startup funding for the first Miles-Wye Riverkeeper program in 2010.*

Nina lived her passion for connecting environmental, agricultural, and educational initiatives for the betterment of the Chesapeake Bay. ShoreRivers was built on this same tenet. *Please help us sustain Nina's legacy by contributing to the Nina Rodale Houghton Fund.*

### **GIVE ONLINE:**

[Shorerivers.org/houghton-fund](https://shorerivers.org/houghton-fund)

### **SEND A CHECK:**

ShoreRivers Nina Houghton Fund  
114 South Washington Street, Suite 301  
Easton, MD 21601

### **FOR GIFTS OF SECURITIES, CONTACT:**

Rebekah Hock, [rhock@shorerivers.org](mailto:rhock@shorerivers.org)



Special Thanks to the Committee Members of the Nina Rodale Houghton Fund

MICHAEL J. BATZA JR.  
META BOYD  
D. KEITH CAMPBELL  
EDWIN R. FRY

GOV. PARRIS N. GLENDENING  
JOHN R. GRIFFIN  
AMY HAINES  
VERNA HARRISON  
JEFFREY H. HORSTMAN

ROBERT H. HORSTMAN  
TIMOTHY D. JUNKIN  
SEN. FRANCIS X. KELLY JR.  
JOHN KELLY  
RICHARD MARKS

REBECCA W. RIMEL  
DR. HENRY F. SEARS  
BRENNAN STARKEY  
PHILIP J. WEBSTER





**SUZANNE SULLIVAN**  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

# ESSENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES IN HIGH SCHOOL

In 2011, Maryland was the first state in the nation to require every graduating high school student to meet environmental literacy standards, defined as: “advancing

students’ knowledge, confidence, skills, and motivation to make decisions and take actions that create and maintain an optimal relationship between themselves and the environment, and preserve and protect the unique natural resources of Maryland.”

I recently sat down with Dorchester County Public School teacher and Eastern Shore native James Stewart to reflect on the essential environmental experiences our students should be exposed to and how ShoreRivers can support these goals.



James and students learn how to fly a drone during an environmental investigation project to emulate how scientists use technology for data collection.

## **Suzanne: What experiences were essential in guiding your career in environmental science and teaching?**

**James:** I was exposed to nature as a kid through fishing, hunting, and just being outdoors. I was told to follow my passion and my passion was nature. Then it was my experiences in college: my relationships with professors and my internships at the Virginia Institute for Marine Science, Hampton University, and the Environmental Protection Agency. For me, it was all about real-world application. Even at a college level you just don’t see that when you’re in the classroom.

After I graduated, I was working in the business sector where I didn’t feel like I was making a difference. I wanted to make a personal difference and a difference for the environment. For me, that was teaching. I would attribute my career in education to my mother who had an education career for 48 years.

## **SS: What high school experiences help students graduate with environmental literacy?**

**JS:** Our schools need to challenge and prepare students using research projects or issue investigations. Not just “Googling” answers but being able to search for and decipher facts. Through environmental issue investigations, students apply their reading, writing, and math skills to find out what is going on in their community and the world and how it affects their daily lives.

I still vividly remember my defining moment as a student. It was a summer program that my middle school science teacher led. We canoed, did water quality testing, and learned how to use nautical charts. All the activities involved math, science, and reading. It was exciting and that stayed with me.

## **SS: What changes should we make to support students becoming more interested in environmental careers?**

**JS:** It only goes so far to talk about an environmental career in the classroom. Students need environmental internship opportunities to gain work experience and become passionate about the environment. Internships need to be paid. The financial component not only makes internships enticing, it makes them possible.

We also need to connect environmental work to students’ communities. There are so many stressors in our communities, how could students have time to focus on the environment? We need to show them it’s all connected.

## **SS: Yes! A clean environment and healthy rivers are essential for all of us.**

**I extend a heartfelt thank you to all the teachers and school system employees for their commitment to our students. Despite all the recent obstacles due to COVID-19, we know that teachers will continue to teach, and ShoreRivers is committed to supporting teachers in engaging students in meaningful experiences that prepare them to be the next generation of river stewards.**



**TIM TRUMBAUER**  
CHESTER RIVERKEEPER

# CHESTER RIVER FEDERALLY DESIGNATED AS A “NO DISCHARGE ZONE”

Until this summer, discharging semi-treated sewage into the Chester River from boats was perfectly legal. Thankfully, *the Chester was recently designated as only*

*the second No Discharge Zone (NDZ) in Maryland's Chesapeake watershed.* (The first NDZ, established in 2002, is on Herring Bay in Anne Arundel County.)

The NDZ application, prepared by ShoreRivers on behalf of and with the support of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, was recently approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Some background: under the United States Clean Water Act, any vessel equipped with a toilet operating in U.S. navigable waters is required to use a marine sanitation device (MSD). Importantly, *MSDs do not remove any nutrient pollution from discharges and treat some, but not all, of the bacteria and other pathogens that can lurk in human waste.*

There are three types of MSDs—types I and II macerate and treat boat sewage for disinfection before discharge. Type III MSDs are simply holding tanks that store sewage until it is able to be pumped out at a marina or other facility furnished to appropriately handle waste. (If you ever need a pumpout, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources maintains a list of facilities on its website and ShoreRivers is very proud of our very own pumpout boat that operates on the Miles and Wye rivers—more info at [shorerivers.org/pumpout-boat](http://shorerivers.org/pumpout-boat).)

So why do we need a No Discharge Zone? *At ShoreRivers we believe it is essential to address all pollution sources.*

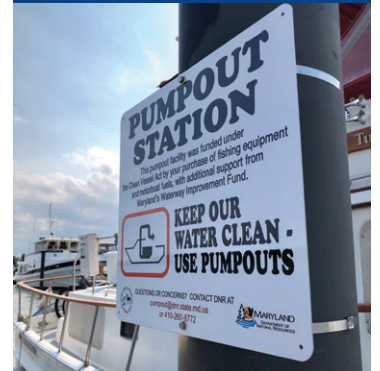
Boat discharges, especially in marinas or other areas with a high congregation of vessels (e.g., Conquest Beach on any given weekend), can lead to nutrient pollution hotspots and pose health risks from bacteria or other infections caused by a high concentration of waste, even if that waste has been treated. And of course, to function properly, MSDs must be maintained. I know that many boat owners are conscientious and meticulously maintain their devices, but not all do...and if one is not functioning properly, the result is raw sewage pumping directly into the river.

All of us at ShoreRivers are pleased to see the No Discharge Zone movement growing, as the Severn River Association recently prepared an application for all Anne Arundel County waters and other environmental advocates are exploring the option as well.

Next time you are on any of our scenically spectacular rivers, remember: *pump it, don't dump it!* I hope you all enjoy a cleaner, healthier Chester.

For more information on the Chester River No Discharge Zone and the status of other waterways in Maryland, visit: [dnr.maryland.gov](http://dnr.maryland.gov), search “No Discharge Zones.”

A special thank you to Jenny Lee Freebery, who started this project more than 6 years ago as a Chesapeake Conservation Corps volunteer with the Chester River Association (now ShoreRivers).



Look for these Pumpout Station signs at local marinas to appropriately discharge your boat waste.

**MARYLAND SWIM FOR LIFE**  
**Saturday, September 19**  
**7:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Rolph's Wharf Marina, Chester River**

ShoreRivers is the proud beneficiary of the 29th Annual Swim for Life hosted by the District of Columbia Aquatics Club (DCAC). Athletes have the choice of swimming several different routes along the scenic Chester River. Proceeds also support a number of small, local organizations assisting individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

**Register at [shorerivers.org/event/swim-for-life](http://shorerivers.org/event/swim-for-life)**





**MATT PLUTA**  
CHOPTANK RIVERKEEPER &  
DIRECTOR OF RIVERKEEPER  
PROGRAMS



**WHITLEY GRAY**  
LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE  
COORDINATOR

# SEEKING AGRICULTURAL PARTNERS FOR WATER QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

share programs. *The incentives developed by Envision the Choptank are designed to thwart existing challenges and accelerate pollution reduction.*

## ENVISION THE CHOPTANK INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Throughout these trying times, Eastern Shore farmers continue to work and maintain our local and national food system. As stewards of the land, their farming practices can also support cleaner water downstream. With many people spending more time outside and on our rivers, clean rivers are especially important.

*Supporting farmers in maintaining productive farms that also promote clean water is essential to achieving our shared goals of food production and environmental protection.*

ShoreRivers is a member of *Envision the Choptank*, a partnership that works to find collaborative solutions to restore fishable, swimmable waters to the Choptank River while working to meet the needs of local communities. Grant funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation aids *Envision's* effort of supporting the implementation of agricultural practices that accelerate water quality improvements. *This is especially important given that agriculture accounts for 60% of the Choptank watershed's total land use.*

Earlier this year the *Envision* partnership completed a detailed landscape analysis to identify locations in the Choptank watershed where practices would be most effective at increasing water quality benefits. The *Envision* partnership then developed an incentive program designed to alleviate common financial and logistical hurdles to implementation by providing more flexible payments, opportunities to reduce wait-times, assistance with landowner costs associated with cost-share programs, and options to install practices outside of cost-

The **grass buffer** program provides a flexible width option (10-50 feet), no mowing restrictions, and a shorter time commitment (three years). Participants receive \$900 –\$1,300 per acre. This program offers a great opportunity for landowners to try out a buffer before having to make a long-term commitment with a cost-share program.

The **forest buffer** program is similar to state and federal programs but expands the opportunity to include upland farm areas that are no longer operational due to the installation of other conservation practices, irrigation challenges, or the squaring-off of fields. Participants receive \$2,000 per acre.

The **wetland restoration** program offers \$3,000 per acre to use flexibly. Funds can cover an engineering design that helps expedite the project through the soil conservation district. Alternatively, funds can offset the landowner portion of state or federal cost-share programs. And finally, funds can support both design and construction if cost-share programs are not being used.

**Bioreactors** are now an approved cost-share practice through the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program. To further incentivize this farm- and water-friendly practice, *Envision* is offering to cover the landowner portion of the cost-share—12.5% of the total cost.

For more information, contact Whitley Gray, Landowner Assistance Coordinator, at [wgray@shorerivers.org](mailto:wgray@shorerivers.org).

## SHAW BAY RAFT-UP CONCERT

Saturday, September 12, 4:00–6:00 p.m.

Shaw Bay along the Wye River

This **FREE CONCERT** is held each year to raise funds and awareness for clean water efforts on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Bring your dinghy, paddle board, kayak, or sailboat and relax with music from the Eastport Oyster Boys. Donations support the ShoreRivers pumpout boat for the Miles and Wye rivers.







ELLE BASSETT  
MILES-WYE RIVERKEEPER

# PARTNERING WITH FAITH COMMUNITIES IN “CREATION CARE”

ShoreRivers’ mission of restoring and protecting Eastern Shore waterways can only be accomplished through community partnerships and shared values. Every roof, lawn, parking lot, and farm

2020-2021, *ShoreRivers will engage a minimum of ten congregations from Queen Anne’s County in safely-distant environmental activities such as spiritually reflective guided walks or kayak paddles and stewardship-focused reading groups.* Interfaith Partners will provide support to faith leaders as they build a stewardship plan with their community that ShoreRivers will help execute.

field is an opportunity for stewardship to improve local water quality. Data that our Creekwatchers and I have collected indicate the Wye River has some of the poorest water quality and highest bacteria loads of any Eastern Shore river, making Queen Anne’s County a priority for restoration projects and outreach.

*Together, we will also design and install four restoration projects at places of worship to capture stormwater runoff, increase native habitat, and create personal stewardship connections. These restoration projects, which might include rain gardens, meditation spaces, or native meadows, are fully grant funded.* Faith communities contribute to each project by collaborating on design and committing to ongoing care.

*To expand our collaborative work with diverse communities across the Miles and Wye watersheds, ShoreRivers recently extended our Stewards for Streams program to Queen Anne’s*

*County.* Nearly every world religion includes a call for “Creation Care,” the stewardship of our shared earth, as well as a belief in the golden rule. *Stewards for Streams* is a partnership between ShoreRivers and Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, a nonprofit that has engaged over 300 congregations across Maryland in caring for local watersheds. This program, funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, offers congregations and places of worship in Queen Anne’s County opportunities to experience sanctity in nature, learn about their local environment, and implement real change on their properties.



*Congregation members from Waugh Methodist Chapel in Cambridge (left) and St. Marks United Methodist Church in Easton (right) gather to create a more natural landscape on church grounds. These river-friendly plantings help slow and filter stormwater, create habitat for native species, and beautify the church.*

ShoreRivers has previously implemented *Stewards for Streams* with ten congregations in Dorchester and Talbot counties, with great success. Throughout

We are now seeking interested congregations of any denomination to become *Stewards for Streams*! To learn more, please contact Suzanne Sullivan, Director of Education, at [ssullivan@shorerivers.org](mailto:ssullivan@shorerivers.org) or 443-385-0511 ext. 214.

Faith organizations are often pillars of our communities. Working together with the common value of stewardship for our neighbors and the natural world we share, *Stewards for Streams* will help mobilize community action and improve our local water quality.



Our Riverkeepers email monthly newsletters with information on projects, events, and volunteer opportunities. If you would like to opt in or opt out of certain Riverkeeper emails, email **Courtney Leigh** with your preferences, [cleigh@shorerivers.org](mailto:cleigh@shorerivers.org).





**ZACK KELLEHER**  
SASSAFRAS RIVERKEEPER

## SWIMMABLE SHORERIVERS: MONITORING WATER QUALITY AND BACTERIA IN OUR RIVERS

“Is the water safe?” As Riverkeepers, this is one of the most common questions we receive from community members. In order to answer that question, we monitor

several water quality parameters, test for bacteria levels, and sample toxins in algal blooms to ensure that people can be informed in real time about what is going on in their local waterways. *Clean water is an essential right for everyone, and everyone deserves to know if the water is safe for them and their families to access.*

Over the last few months, the four ShoreRivers Riverkeepers have expanded and improved our water quality monitoring programs so they are more scientifically rigorous and consistent across our regions. Our tidal water quality monitoring program usually runs from April through October, and even with some pandemic-related setbacks this year we were able to begin sampling in May. This season marks the first official monitoring of the Bayside Creeks region and is the first time these creeks have been consistently monitored.

The Swimmable ShoreRivers bacteria monitoring program tests 28 sites from Memorial Day to Labor Day. *Riverkeepers post results on social media accounts and the Swim Guide app and website so the public can make educated decisions about their contact with the water.*

This spring, a grant from the Cornell Douglass Foundation funded the purchase of bacteria processing equipment for the Sassafras, Bayside Creeks, and Chester watersheds. Through a partnership with the Center for Environment & Society at Washington College, this equipment is housed in a lab in the new Semans-Griswold Environmental Hall. Along with the processing equipment in our office at the Eastern Shore Conservation Center in Easton, ShoreRivers is now able to process samples entirely in-house. This significantly reduces our turn-around time and allows us to get bacteria information to the public much faster.

The professionalism and scope of our program led to an invitation from the Maryland Department of the Environment to present at a conference this past February, where we worked with county and state employees to develop a statewide standard for bacteria monitoring programs.

Once the 2020 monitoring season wraps up this fall, we'll begin analyzing the data collected to prepare the River Report Card, which will be released next spring during our State of the River events. Make sure to follow ShoreRivers and your Riverkeepers on social media, sign up for your Riverkeeper's monthly email blasts, and check the SwimGuide app to receive information about the latest bacteria tests and make informed decisions when you head out to enjoy these beautiful waterways.

Virtual  
**WILD & SCENIC** FILM FESTIVAL  
where activism gets inspired

(re)GENERATION

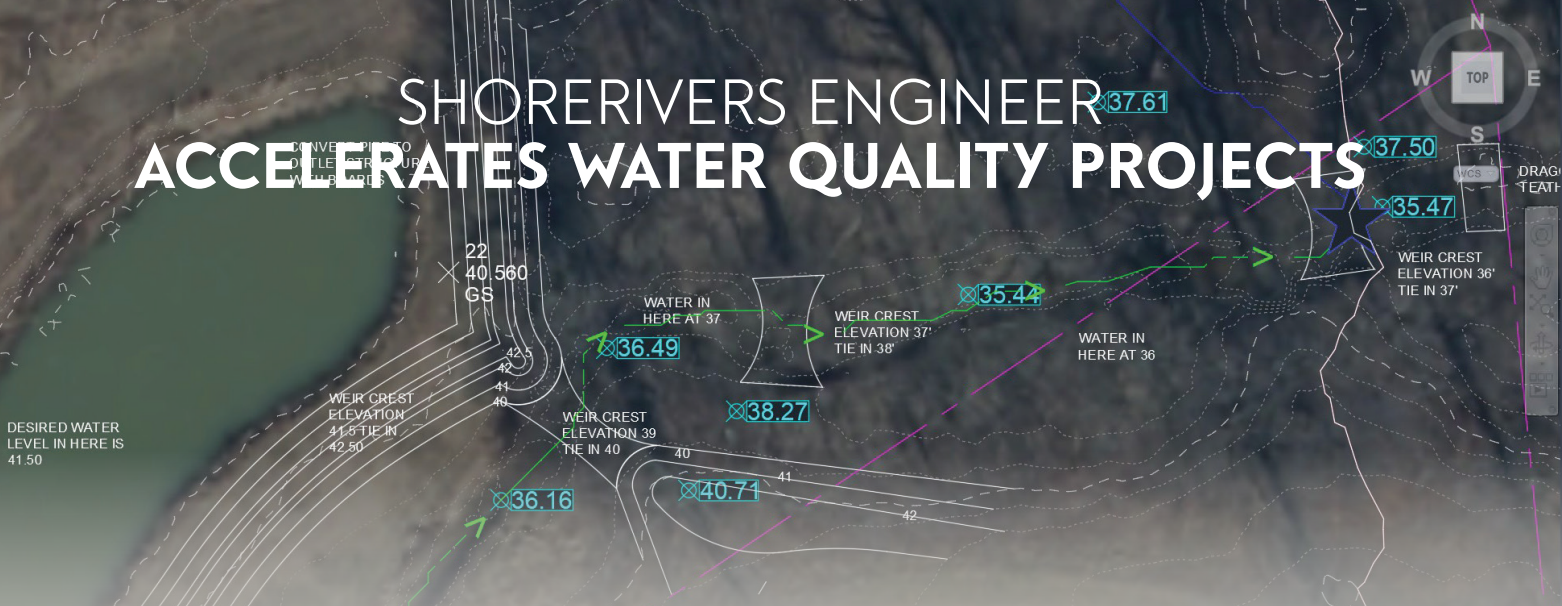
friday,  
november 20

Featuring award-winning conservation films from around the world, this event is all about celebrating the long-term health and beauty of our vibrant rivers. FREE with registration!

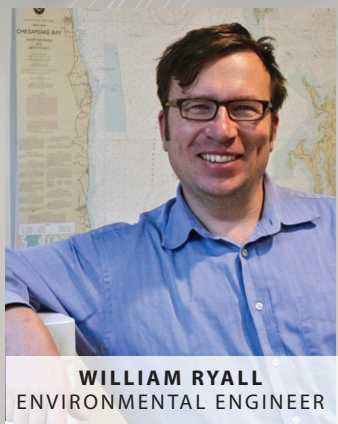
Look for details as they become available at  
[shorerivers.org/event/film-festival](https://shorerivers.org/event/film-festival)



# SHORERIVERS ENGINEER ACCELERATES WATER QUALITY PROJECTS



An example of a stream restoration design in progress. The end goal is to get water to flow in the stream and adjacent wetland while not altering water elevations enough to damage the drainage patterns of the adjacent farm field, flood the nearby roadway, or drastically change the natural floodplain.



**WILLIAM RYALL**  
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

ShoreRivers has identified no shortage of opportunities to implement restoration projects that improve water quality, natural habitat, and stormwater management. Examples range from wetland restorations and conservation drainage projects on farmland

to stream restorations in wooded gullies, parking lot retrofits, and holding pond redesigns in towns.

But all too often, we are faced with the problem of having to tell a landowner that restoring a wetland or stream on their property will take a lot longer than they imagine.

***It isn't just that these projects can be complicated to design, tricky to permit, and labor intensive to construct, but there are also a limited number of environmental engineers who are available to design such practices.*** ShoreRivers sometimes has had to contract with design firms from out of state or across the Bay in order to get practices in the ground. The local soil conservation districts also have a large backlog of projects, with conservation practices sometimes taking years to design and install.

In order to design a functioning restoration project, it is often essential to find someone who can design a housing development but is just as much at home in a marsh. Without the proper engineering expertise the project might not have the correct hydrology, might wash away in a rainstorm, or might be rejected by the contractor as unbuildable. Without the ecological understanding, plants might not take hold and thrive, habitat might be the wrong type for the area, or the site might soon be

taken over by invasive species. ***Restoration projects that improve water quality and natural habitat require both man-made and natural engineering expertise.***

Last fall, ShoreRivers began the process of setting up its own engineering design department. First, we needed to find an engineer who knew the difference between *Spartina cynosuroides* and *Spartina alterniflora* (both are native grass species common in Chesapeake Bay marshes and shorelines, but *cynosuroides* is more tolerant of freshwater and can be planted farther upstream—an important characteristic when selecting appropriate plant species for shoreline restoration projects). And second, we established partnerships with Maryland Department of Agriculture and The Keith Campbell Foundation to provide funding for the position and the necessary technical equipment.

***This environmental engineering expertise has streamlined the project design process, enabling ShoreRivers to accelerate putting practices in the ground. Our goal is to design 20–30 projects in the next two years, including agricultural drainage practices, wetlands, stream restorations, living shorelines, and urban stormwater practices.*** With design expertise in-house, our staff can focus on identifying funding for construction of these projects.

ShoreRivers is a certified Natural Resources Conservation Service Technical Service Provider and can assist with whole-farm planning and receiving cost-share funding for conservation practices.

ShoreRivers intends to grow its expertise in environmental engineering design and become a major restoration resource on the Eastern Shore. Incorporating engineering capacity has considerably strengthened our agricultural outreach and restoration program and we look forward to completing more projects to improve the health of our rivers.



# SHORERIVERS AND CBF SUE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION FOR WEAKENING THE CLEAN WATER RULE

The Trump administration's attempt to repeal and replace the Clean Water Rule will remove protections from up to 51% of streams and wetlands on the Eastern Shore, leaving them susceptible to development and increased pollution loads. *This is why ShoreRivers, with support from our members and in partnership with Chesapeake Bay Foundation and other clean water organizations, is participating in two lawsuits against the administration over their unlawful and unscientific attempt to weaken clean water protections.*

The first lawsuit targets the newly proposed definition of "waters of the United States," which excludes ephemeral streams—streams that only run after rainfall—and wetlands that do not have a hydrological surface connection to a jurisdictional waterway. *Science tells us that the pollution impacting our rivers comes from upstream sources, and ephemeral streams and wetlands are the best opportunity to treat nutrient*

*and sediments before washing downriver.* The administration provided no scientific evidence to support lessening the protection of these waters.

*The second lawsuit addresses the process by which the administration repealed the prior Clean Water Rule.* It addresses the administration's violation of the Administrative Procedures Act by issuing a pre-determined decision to repeal the prior Clean Water Rule without providing a reasoned and scientific explanation, without evaluating the environmental impacts of the new rule, and without providing adequate notice and public comment.

When laws that are designed to protect our rivers, streams, and wetlands are being weakened or rescinded, ShoreRivers is ready to act to ensure that decades of hard work from our communities in restoring water quality is not reversed.

## VOTE FOR OUR RIVERS

In the past three years, the federal administration has rolled back or revoked numerous environmental regulations that once protected our rivers and streams. Among other acts, the administration:

*Scaled back pollution protections for certain tributaries and wetlands regulated under the Clean Water Act,* making it easier to develop land around previously protected streams. On the Eastern Shore, this increases the threat of development on rural farmland and reduces water quality protections required when development does occur.

Weakened the Clean Water Act to make it easier for federal agencies to issue permits for federal projects over state objections if the projects don't meet local water quality standards, including for pipelines and other fossil fuel facilities. This means that *federal agencies can overrule our state's decisions to protect our local rivers and streams.*

Withdrew a proposed rule aimed at reducing pollutants, including air pollution, emitted from sewage treatment plants. Scientists say one-third of nitrogen loads impacting the Bay and its rivers come from air pollution. *Allowing sewage treatment plants to continue to emit air pollution impacts the health of our rivers.*

In addition to these actions that directly affect Eastern Shore waterways, the administration has also made numerous revisions and proposals to federal laws that make it easier for power plants, coal companies, and mining operations to dispose of toxic waste and discharge into streams, groundwater, and air.



Photo by Brenda Holloway, Langford Creek

*Fighting for clean water, air, and soil is essential work.* ShoreRivers partners with regional and national organizations to advocate for clean water laws and to hold our government accountable. *Give your voice to this effort. Vote in the November election in favor of clean water. Vote for our rivers.*

A complete list of environmental rollbacks can be found in a *New York Times* analysis based on research from Harvard Law School and Columbia Law School, among other sources. Visit [nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trumpenvironment-rollbacks.html](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trumpenvironment-rollbacks.html) for the list.





# SHORE RIVERS

Eastern Shore Conservation Center  
114 S. Washington St., Suite 301  
Easton, MD 21601



16<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**RIDE** *for*  
**CLEAN RIVERS**

**20, 35, or 62 miles**  
*Featuring Rude BBQ and  
SAG support from Bike Doctor*

Now offering a  
Ride-On-Your-Own option!

All participants will be required to follow  
state and federal safety protocols.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2020**  
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD

**REGISTER NOW!**  
[shorerivers.org/events](http://shorerivers.org/events)