



ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Jenna Guzman, Communications Director

SMCG TV 95 Station Manager

Media Inquiries: 301-475-4200, ext. 1342, or PIO@stmaryscountymd.gov

COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY

James R. Guy, President

Mike Alderson, Jr., Commissioner

Eric S. Colvin, Commissioner

Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner

Scott R. Ostrow, Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

No. 2023 – 040

March 20, 2023, 4 pm

St Mary's County Recognizes Sustainability Award Winners

LEONARDTOWN, MD – The Commissioners of St. Mary's County and the Commission on the Environment are pleased to announce the winners of the 4th annual St Mary's County Sustainability Awards:

- The Southern Maryland Sierra Club
- The Environmental Division, Department of Public Works, Naval Air Station Patuxent River (NAS Pax River)

The Sustainability Awards recognize outstanding students, restaurants, businesses, non-profits, and farms in St Mary's County for their environmental stewardship, resource conservation, innovative best practices, and pollution prevention efforts. All nominees for the 2022 calendar year demonstrated impressive commitment to improving local environmental impacts.

The Southern Maryland Sierra Club has continued their *1,000 Trees* initiative that began in 2018. In 2022, Club volunteers planted 162 native trees in local parks and sports complexes to rebuild the native tree canopy. Additionally, they planted 27 shrubs at Lexington Manor Passive Park in a 7,500 square foot Native Exhibition Garden, showcasing information on native plants and alternatives to invasive species. The Club also demonstrated a commitment to sustainable and healthy foods by completing buildout of 36 gardens at eight locations. These pollinator-friendly gardens provide vegetables to local food pantries and opportunities to teach the benefits of sustainable, local gardening. Get involved at: sierraclub.org/maryland/southern-maryland-group.

The Environmental Division of NAS Pax River's Public Works Department completed a shoreline restoration project along their Fishing Point shoreline. This project stabilized 960 linear feet of shoreline from further erosion. Rather than merely restoring the shoreline, the Environmental Division worked to create a living shoreline that offers protection and provides habitat for several aquatic organisms using structural materials (rip rap, cobbles, etc.) and vegetative materials (grasses, shrubs, and wetland plugs). Additionally, low marsh, high density plantings of *Spartina alterniflora* will accelerate the establishment of the marsh vegetation. High marsh and coastal species were planted for further sediment stabilization, and to encourage establishment and future resilience of shoreline habitat.

– MORE –

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Jenna Guzman, Communications Director

SMCG TV 95 Station Manager

Media Inquiries: 301-475-4200, ext. 1342, or PIO@stmaryscountymd.gov

COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY

James R. Guy, President

Mike Alderson, Jr., Commissioner

Eric S. Colvin, Commissioner

Michael. L. Hewitt, Commissioner

Scott R. Ostrow, Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

Living shorelines have several benefits to aquatic organisms, including the Diamondback Terrapin, which have a large presence at NAS Pax River. Living shorelines allow aquatic organisms to adapt to rising sea levels resulting from climate change and shift their habitats inland as sea levels rise. Living shorelines help limit erosion, provide habitat for native species, purify water, buffer floods, store carbon, protect community infrastructure, and they perform better in major storms when compared to hardened shorelines, as they can adapt to changing water levels and intense storms.

Selection of the Sustainability Award winners was based on outstanding demonstrated efforts to improve the environment and for initiatives and projects exceeding business norms and requirements. For more information on the Commission on the Environment, please visit stmaryscountymd.gov/coe.

###