



Magothy River Association

Saving our river for future generations

WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER



MRA @ 80!

In 1946 the Navy decided that it would like to build an air station and seaplane base near Cape St Claire. Fearful of how disruptive the noise of jet and seaplane take offs and landings would be, the Magothy River communities organized to take on the US Government. That organization put up such a fight that the Navy abandoned the Magothy site and built the Patuxent River Naval Air Station. That was the birth of the Magothy River Association.

This year, the Magothy River Association (MRA) celebrates its 80th anniversary, marking eight decades of unwavering service and stewardship. As an all-volunteer, non-profit 501(c) (3) charitable organization, MRA represents over 300 individual members and 30 Magothy community associations. The MRA was chartered with the mission to preserve, conserve, protect, defend and improve the quality of life along the Magothy River and its watershed. The organization's initiatives are driven by passionate volunteers who work tirelessly to make a positive impact.



Among MRA's major accomplishments are litigation efforts to protect the watershed from harmful development, oyster restoration projects that help improve aquatic habitats, the planting of submerged aquatic vegetation to support marine life, and ongoing water quality analysis to monitor and address environmental concerns. The association also places a strong emphasis on education, including two AACC scholarships and also offering opportunities for community members to learn about the river's flora and fauna and the importance of environmental stewardship.

MRA's work has also led to improved public access to the Magothy River, enabling more people to enjoy and appreciate this valuable natural resource. The organization encourages individuals to get involved by becoming members, making donations, or volunteering. For more information about how you can support the Magothy River Association and its mission, visit our website at:

www.magothyriver.org, or our Facebook page.

Stay tuned as the MRA's 80th year celebration plans are underway!



State of the Magothy

Mark your calendars for one of the most important events of the year. On **March 27, 2026**, the Magothy River Association will once again provide the annual State of the Magothy update. The event will be held at the **Anne Arundel Community College Health and Life Science Building (HLSB) 100**. The program will start at 6:00pm with activities and information available in the entrance lobby. Jeff Horne, a Fisheries Biologist at DNR, will also provide information on his fin fish survey work on the Magothy River. Please be SOM advocates and help get the word out to your community. This is a "must attend" event for anyone living in or around the river who is as passionate about the health of the river as we are.



Osprey Woes

Residents all along the Magothy noticed a significant reduction in the population of Osprey chicks this past year. Apparently, this situation has been reported in many of the traditional Osprey nesting locations around the Bay. A survey around the Chesapeake Bay this past year found that the Ospreys failed to produce enough chicks to sustain their numbers, with fewer eggs being laid and many hatchlings dying in the nest. "We will absolutely see a broad population decline if the pattern continues," according to Brian Watts, director of the Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William and Mary.

The lead theory is "food stress" caused by the aggressive harvesting of, and the resulting depletion of the Menhaden fish population. Menhaden are also a main food source for Atlantic striped bass, whose population decline is also a source of concern. The influence of the heat and rainfall over the past two years is also being investigated.



The Center for Conservation, scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey and other monitoring organizations will continue to gather information. For more details, follow the link to the Bay Journal Article.

https://www.bayjournal.com/news/fisheries/chesapeake-osprey-woes-worsen-with-debate-about-cause-still-centered-on-menhaden/article_e8931f0d-f3a8-4108-9d7b-b166fde493db.html

Lake Waterford Dredging Begins

Discussions between the Magothy River Association and Anne Arundel County have been ongoing for several years now about the challenging condition of Lake Waterford.

This body of water is the critical headwaters of the entire Magothy River. Over the years, erosion due to stormwater runoff has progressively deteriorated the water quality. As a result, this condition has become a health hazard to park visitors, and to the Magothy watershed as well. In addition, this condition has adversely affected the vital spawning areas of yellow perch, and other fish species just downstream.



Commencing in the Fall of last year, dredging and restoration work has finally started. The work requires careful execution as not to be destructive to the natural habitat and its wildlife. The MRA volunteers will be monitoring the water quality downstream, carefully measuring turbidity and other potentially challenging conditions resulting from the dredging work.

While the project is estimated to take as long as two years to complete, actual dredging will be suspended starting this February 15th through June 15th, to avoid interfering with the annual Yellow Perch spawning window.

It is exciting to see this critical project finally underway!





SAV Monitoring in Cattail Creek

As mentioned in our Summer 2025 Newsletter, interns Zoe Philip and Spencer Woodbury undertook the challenge of documenting the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in the Cattail Creek restoration area last summer. This habitat remains under attack from a number of environmental stressors including invasive species, increased water temperatures and increased salinity levels caused by road run off from local roads. Zoe and Spencer assisted Paul Spadaro in measuring and monitoring the biodiversity levels of SAV in the creek's headwaters.



The good news is that a diversity of species were recorded, such as Redhead and Wild Celery and various types of Pondweed. Zoe developed a unique visualization technique to display the results of the data capture. Monitoring the SAV in this area will ensure that native species and vital fish spawning ground are protected.



Pistachio Tide Monitoring

Have you ever seen the water take on this milky green color? It is a sign that hydrogen sulfide is in the air and a sign that too many nutrients are being added to the waterway. Once nutrients are added and eutrophication sets in, algal blooms occur and algae then falls to the bottom sediments to decompose.



During decomposition, dissolved oxygen at the bottom is used up and then, only a specific type of sulfur bacteria that can grow in the absence of oxygen and will continue to decompose. These bacteria produce Hydrogen Sulfide, which then rises up into the surface water. Once at the surface, another type of sulfur bacteria, uses the Hydrogen Sulfide in their photosynthesis. These are the green sulfur bacteria and they produce the pistachio color in the water.

Hydrogen Sulfide is a toxic and stinky gas smelling like rotten eggs. This pattern of pistachio tides is something that the MRA would like to disrupt in our creeks. We are submitting a proposal in conjunction with AACCC and Johns Hopkins University faculty, to find ways to predict this occurrence and to help residents stop the eutrophication.

To report an algal bloom or fish kill contact (866) 633-4686. Or you can report algal blooms on **DNR's Eyes on the Bay website**.

4 Million More Oysters!



Hot off the Grille; the MRA has just inked an agreement with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to purchase and deliver 4 million oyster spat. These baby oysters will be delivered and distributed in the summer of 2026 as optimized conditions allow. The new oysters will be added to the 3 million oysters added in the summer of 2025.

A significant amount of this year's \$27k purchase price will be covered by last Fall's auto auction donation of the vintage 1974 Triumph by Arnold resident Charles Dankmeyer.

First Day Hike - Stepping Into 2026!

The traditional First Day Hikes hit the trail on New Years Day 2026. Anne Arundel Park Rangers and MRA Volunteers assisted passionate hikers at Lake Waterford Park and the Magothy Greenway. For those inspired hikers, the winter weather cooperated and provided an enjoyable start to the new year. Knowledgeable Park guides and hot chocolate added to the great experience.



The MRA, Who we are...



The Magothy River Association (MRA) is an all volunteer, non-profit 501-(c)(3) charitable organization, driven by the dedication and commitment of its members.

Established in 1946, MRA was chartered with a mission to preserve, conserve, protect, defend, and improve the quality of life in the Magothy River watershed.

The organization's enduring commitment focuses on maintaining and enhancing water quality, supporting the rich diversity of plants and wildlife, and safeguarding the ecosystem functions.

Become a MRA Member-Get Involved!

Becoming a member of the Magothy River Association is a great way to stay informed and discover opportunities for volunteering for action that fit your passion. Please consider joining this dedicated group of Magothy River lovers at whatever level of involvement that works for you.

Individual and Family membership are easy to complete, either online:

<https://www.magothyriver.org/get-involved/become-a-member/individual-and-family-memberships/>

or by mail using this link to a printable application form:

<https://www.magothyriver.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/mramembershipform.pdf>

All additional information can be found on our website or Facebook page.