



Magothy River Association

Saving our river for future generations

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



MRA 80th Celebration Picnic

By any standard, turning 80 is a significant milestone. The MRA, founded in 1946, is planning to celebrate BIG at this year's annual picnic gathering. Mark your calendars for Sunday, September 20th. The location will be the Cape St. Claire Clubhouse and all are welcome.

Now that we are turning 80, we're allowed to get a little "Crabby" once in a while. Plans are underway to celebrate with a traditional Magothy crab feast, as well as other traditional summer picnic delights. Details are being finalized, such as specifics on ticket prices and how to reserve. Communications to follow.

State of the Magothy

More than 130 attendees gathered at the Anne Arundel Community College Health and Life Sciences Building for this year's presentation of the State of the Magothy. At this event, held on March 27, 2026, Dr. Sally Hornor once again provided the latest assessment of the health of the Magothy River. Bob Royer presented his update on best practices for restorative shoreline successes and challenges.

Guest speaker, Jeff Horne, Fisheries Biologist from the MD Department of Natural Resources, also presented on the finfish assessment in the Magothy.



Magothy Greenway Major Expansion



Drone Photo taken by Charles Germain, 2024

The Magothy River Land Trust is very happy to announce that an additional 240 acres of undeveloped land will soon become a part of the Magothy Greenway, thanks to a generous donation from the Looper family. This addition to the Greenway stretches from the current Greenway to waterfront on Broad Creek, as shown in the map. It consists almost entirely of woodland, plus 11 acres of coastal marsh and 3 acres of bog habitat. The house on Eagle Hill, seen in the photo, is included in the donation. We hope to use the house as a nature center.

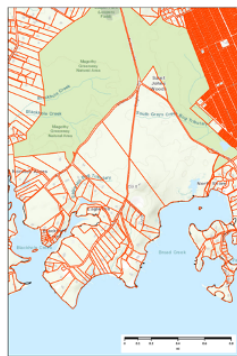
>>>>>

Magothy Greenway Expansion

>>>>> Last month, the Anne Arundel County Council formally accepted this gift with a signing at the Greenway. In the photo we see, left to right, Jim Crafton, president of the Magothy River Land Trust, Jessica Leys, Director of AA Co Recreation and Parks, Steuart Pittman, County Executive, Allison Pickard, AA County Council, and Sally Hornor, Magothy River Land Trust



Photo courtesy Tom Caperna.



Map supplied by AA Co Dept. of Public Works



The Jolly Dolphin's Captain volunteers his time and boat to help the MRA raise funds to protect this unique ecosystem. The race this year starts on **Wednesday, August 12th, 12 Noon** and goes until **Saturday, August 15th, 3:00pm**. Please visit <https://gcbsr.org/about-virtual/> and select the Magothy River's entry, the **JOLLY DOLPHIN**. Donate generously! Every contribution makes a difference.

Earth Day 2026



Critical Yellow Perch Egg sacks

Earth Day activities this year included several events. Seventeen employees from **Vision Technologies**, based in Glen Burnie, did an incredible job removing 19 bags of trash and three tires from the Yellow Perch spawning corridor, as well as six large bags of invasive plants from Lake Waterford Park.

Clearing and maintaining the fish spawning corridor is critical to allow the Yellow Perch to successfully navigate up stream to their spawning site just below the Lake Waterford dam. >>>>>



The Virtual Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race 2026

The Magothy River Association (MRA) is proud to team up once again with the Jolly Dolphin for the Virtual Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race. Thanks to the generous support of residents who cherish the Magothy River, MRA has made an impact in restoring oyster habitats, improving the water quality and preserving the river's natural and historic treasures. Over the last three years, race contributions supporting the JD and the Magothy totaled \$20,378!. (That's lot of oysters!)

Earth Day 2026 (Continued)



Additionally, Severna Park Middle School borrowed our life-size Magothy River Water Trail trivia game on Thursday night to celebrate Earth Day. This one of a kind game produced by us continues to be a unique educational tool and effective ambassador for the MRA and the water trail. MRA volunteers logged another 20 hours and let's not forget the hours put in this week for our water and construction monitors.



Mark your calendar for a visit to the JOLLY DOLPHIN in Baltimore's Inner Harbor June 26 - 28th for the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence.

This spectacular SAIL250MD event <https://www.sail250md.org/schedule-of-events> is sponsored by Sail Baltimore. <https://sailbaltimore.org/index.html> and includes docked classic tall ships, Naval vessels from around the world and Air Show Events & Inner Harbor Flyovers.

The Jolly Dolphin expects to be berthed at Browns Wharf in Fells Point.

For visitors who pledge a minimum donation of \$750 to the Virtual Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race <https://gcbssr.org/about-virtual/> on behalf of the MRA oyster program, Captain Zuraw will offer a waterside tour of the vessels in port during the event. Details such as number of passengers, times of tours, weather dependencies, and directions of the Captain of the Port to be arranged.



Magothy River Day - June 12th



Once again, we will have the opportunity to celebrate Captain John Smith and Magothy River Day on June 12th. Donnelly's Dockside Restaurant will again be the hub of celebratory zeal, with great food and drink with a percentage of the tabs being donated to fund the MRA Oyster Reef restoration projects for 2026. Please plan on joining the fun and enjoy a meal on the shore of Deep Creek and visiting the historic Jolly Dolphin Schooner visiting the Dockside.

Magothy Osprey Watch: Volunteers Needed

Do you love to watch ospreys raise their young each summer? Ospreys are closely tied to water quality and fish availability, making them excellent indicators of change in the Bay ecosystem. Lately, however, many have noticed that there are fewer pairs of ospreys that are building nests and fewer still that are able to raise chicks successfully. Our goal is to gather information from residents about osprey reproductive success in our watershed. If you have a favorite spot where you know ospreys nest, we would like to learn about their well-being. Of course, it's important not to disturb the birds so we ask you to observe from a safe distance.



If you would like to be a part of in this participatory science program, this is the information that we would like to receive from participants:

- Name and Email of observer
- Location of nest preferably noted by GPS lat/long , e.g., 39.073115, -76.518043 or location of nest by channel marker number or nearest street address
- Date you first saw the nest occupied by an adult pair
- Date you first saw one adult bringing food to another adult on the nest
- Date you first saw chicks. How many chicks did you see altogether?

- Date you saw chicks practicing flight? How many chicks were able to fly away from the nest?
- If the nesting activity doesn't go smoothly, please report other dates, such as when nest was abandoned or destroyed or when chicks were no longer seen begging for food.

Send your reports to
MagothyOspreyWatch@gmail.com

Even if you haven't started making observations yet, please report what you see now. MRA volunteers will gather this information and pass it on to Greg Kearns of the Patuxent River Park, who will be giving a talk on ospreys hosted by the MRA on October 21st.



MRA Community Meetings

The first community meeting of 2026 was held on Monday, May 18 at the Whitehurst Community Center, 360 White Cedar Lane in Severna Park. MRA President Paul Spadaro introduced attendees to the organization with some MRA history and proceeded to update our many projects and ongoing activities.

MRA member Bob Royer then spoke about last summer's "pistachio tides," and described MRA's partnership with Johns Hopkins University to identify the conditions contributing to these hydrogen sulfide gas emissions. Bob also presented information on how individual homeowners can improve the Magothy's health by modifying their landscaping practice.

MRA Community Meetings

>>>>> The MRA's next community meeting will be held on **Thursday, July 16th** (time TBD) at the **Hunters Harbor (HH) community pavilion**, Hickory Point Road in Pasadena. An update on MRA activities will be followed by a discussion about Hunters Harbor's upcoming shoreline restoration project. HH was successful in obtaining a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) for the restoration of their eroding beach. A representative from BayLand Consultants & Designers will be there to talk about their plans for the site.

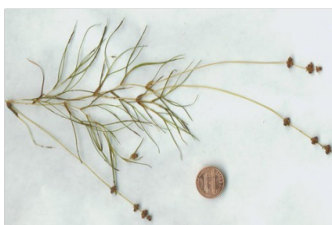
Kayaker Volunteers Needed to Hunt of SAV's



The Magothy River Assn. is recruiting volunteers who enjoy paddling around our shoreline and looking for submerged aquatic grasses. We can provide training in the form of an introduction to the importance of these grasses and ways to identify them and report their presence in a Powerpoint as well as hands on training if desired. We ask volunteers to look for grasses in areas they are familiar with at least twice during the growing season: once in the May-June period and once in the July-October time frame.



Horned Pondweed



Wideongrass

We have already spotted lots of horned pondweed all over the watershed; this is our usual early season grass. By the end of June, most of this cool season grass will be gone but the later mid-season grasses like redhead and wideongrass will hopefully show up. Grasses provide important habitat for fish and crabs, they produce oxygen and they help hold sediments in place. Indeed, one third of our annual index is based on the presence of these grasses. If you are interested in helping us with this key indicator of river well-being, please contact Sally Hornor at sally.hornor@gmail.com.



Safe Swimming

Now that Memorial Day has come, it's time to look forward to jumping in the river for a cool dip. But how do we know if the water is safe for swimming and how can we help keep it safe?

The main concern for safe swimming is the absence of pathogenic bacteria in our rivers that generally come from fecal waste (poop) from birds and mammals. They wash into our waterways off yards and streets through storm drains. Many communities have their river water tested through Operation Clearwater, a program run by Dr. Tammy Domanski of the AACC Environmental Center. The MRA is paying for sampling to be done this summer at the Spriggs Farm Park kayak launch site. Also, the County Health Dept samples at many sites on the Magothy; you can sign up for their alerts at AAHealth.org. >>>>>

Safe Swimming

>>>>> If the bacterial testing shows fewer than 104 bacteria (CFU) per 100 ml, then the water is considered safe for swimming. If the number is higher, wait until conditions improve.

Bacteria that normally live in the intestinal tract of warm-blooded animals can't reproduce in river water and die off within 48 hours. This is why it is best to wait a full two days after we get at least ½ inch of rain. If we do swim in water with a high count of enterococci, we run the risk of getting an ear infection or GI tract discomfort or an infected cut. This is why it's always good to take a shower after swimming in the river.

What can we do to keep our water clean enough for swimming? Try to keep rainwater on your property instead of having it flow into storm drains by building a rain garden or by planting native plants between your house and the street. Always pick up pet waste and dispose of it properly. Don't feed waterfowl such as ducks or geese. If algae does pile up on the beach, rake it up and remove it so it doesn't attract waterfowl.

Remember to check the Op.Clearwater website:

<https://sites.google.com/view/aaccecoperationclearwater/2026-data-tables>

Our May 20 count at Spriggs Farm was **9!** Happy swimming!

Meeting Congresswoman Sarah Elfreth



On March 10, the Magothy River Association met with Congresswoman Sarah Elfreth. Paul and Sandy Spadaro discussed establishing a national grading system for community oyster spat purchases. The discussion also explored details regarding a national mussel restoration program that the MRA could support, particularly in the yellow perch spawning corridor.

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.

