



July 2006

## **Update: Corsica Restoration from the Corsica River Conservancy (CRC) Board**

Hello to all of our CRC members and to everyone else living and playing in our Corsica River Watershed. This is the first of periodic updates that we plan to send out when we think there is information of significance to communicate about the watershed. For those of you who responded to our various outreach efforts, we thank you for your support. We look forward to your continuing interest in the state of the Corsica watershed along with your support and participation in CRC restoration actions. For those of you just finding out about us, we ask that you read on and decide to join us in our mission to restore and preserve our beautiful watershed.

### **Water Quality and Safety**

CRC members are in the midst of their second season of weekly testing of the water all along the main stem of the river. Among the more troubling problems that we have observed and continue to see :

1. Low Levels of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) - This is especially true at the lower levels of the river where DO is critical to sustaining healthy habitat for fish, crabs, and the tiny critters they eat. Low DO is the result of too much nutrient content (nitrogen and phosphorous from fertilizer and waste) running into the river and producing too much algae that periodically die off and use up the available DO. Correcting this problem will require further reductions in nutrients flowing from various sources throughout the watershed.
2. Low Water Clarity – Besides being nice to swim in and look at, clear water is important for the growth of underwater grasses that support habitat and improve water quality. Clarity is reduced by excessive sediment flowing into the river as well as algae growth referred to above.
3. Excessive Bacteria - We continue to find unhealthy levels of bacteria at the Centreville wharf area on up to Sycamore point, and sometimes as far as the river's mouth. We are working with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to determine the source(s).

### **Restoration**

The targeted watershed restoration program announced by Governor Ehrlich in September 2005 is continuing. Specific efforts are following the plans described in the Corsica Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) ([www.dnr.state.md.us/watersheds/tw/corsica/wrasreports.html](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/watersheds/tw/corsica/wrasreports.html)). Our Action Strategy was recently cited by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the best in the nation.

CRC members regularly participate in the monthly Restoration project management meetings with State and local representatives. CRC members are also taking part in or sponsoring several restoration initiatives including shoreline restoration, buffer planting, monitoring fish spawning, reducing residential stormwater runoff, and reducing nutrients from septic systems. If you are interested in participating, please see the contacts listed at the end of this update.

CRC members view the restoration as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get it right! It is occurring at a critical time in the development of our watershed.

## **Education and Public Outreach**

For the Corsica restoration to succeed, people living in the watershed and affecting its health on a daily basis must become informed about what they can do to improve its condition. CRC members are taking the lead in working toward this goal by helping to educate adults and youth about how they can help the watershed. One such effort was the Water Festival held at Kennard Elementary School this spring. Another is the tree growout and planting program at Queen Anne's High School that has been going on for two years. CRC members are reaching out to adults by making presentations to community groups, meeting with residents and providing exhibit booths at various community events.

## **Raising Our Voice for Our Watershed**

One of the most important things we all can do is to speak up about our desire for a healthy Corsica River and watershed – one that will continue to be a jewel among the county's natural resources and a legacy for our children and future generations – a river that is healthy and safe to be in and around.

The plain truth is that this will not occur if certain practices in our watershed continue on their course. We simply have to do a better job of reducing sediment, stormwater and nutrient runoff. We must stop impairing critical shorelines. There are techniques for doing this, but they must be implemented and enforced by those who manage at the State level, Queen Anne's County and the Town of Centreville. Please let your elected officials know how you feel and how you want them to act. As the next election approaches, this is also a great opportunity to ask candidates how they will support restoration of the Corsica.

## **WEBSITE (COMING SOON!!!)**

In addition to our email address ([corsicariverconservancy@verizon.net](mailto:corsicariverconservancy@verizon.net)), CRC soon will have a website with information about the overall restoration project and what the Conservancy is doing to advance it ([www.corsicariverconservancy.org](http://www.corsicariverconservancy.org)). Our CRC site will also link you to the State's Targeted Watershed Restoration Program site. We expect this website to be up and running by late August.

## **Please Join Us in Helping to Restore and Preserve the Beautiful Corsica Watershed**

If you are not yet a member, please fill out the attached membership form. Also, please share this form with others you know who should be interested in the restoration of the Corsica. We encourage you to participate in the activities of one or more of the following four groups that have been established to help carry out our mission:

### **Water Testing Group**

This group conducts weekly water quality testing at five key locations along the river. A regular schedule is followed with captains, first mates and crew having specific duties. Training is provided based on a state-approved protocol. Contact: Myron Richardson ([richarmf@yahoo.com](mailto:richarmf@yahoo.com); 443-262-9779)

### **Restoration Group**

This group gets involved in a range of hands-on activities including tree growouts, buffer planting, fish spawn monitoring, underwater grasses and shoreline restoration. Many of these activities are carried on in conjunction with scientists and other professionals from the state. Contact: Steve Sharkey ([stevesharkey@verizon.net](mailto:stevesharkey@verizon.net); 410-758-8756)

### **Education and Public Information Group**

This group develops and presents educational materials to various groups, and individuals who live in the watershed or affect its quality, and carries out other educational activities such as working with school children. Contact: Jim Malaro ([jmalaro@intercom.net](mailto:jmalaro@intercom.net); 410-758-6563)

**Outreach Group**

This group develops communication with residents through correspondence and exhibits at various community events. Members help develop and staff exhibits. Contact: Debbie Pusey ([debbiep@dapelectric.com](mailto:debbiep@dapelectric.com); 410-758-8623)

All of these activities are fun and very rewarding. Most of all, your efforts will help to make a difference in whether the Corsica is restored and preserved or continues to deteriorate.

Thanks again for your support.

Corsica River Conservancy Board of Directors

\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank DiGialleonardo, President

Myron Richardson, Vice President

Barbara Sharkey, Secretary/Treasurer

Lew Gayner

Jim Malaro

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**Corsica River Conservancy**  
**PO Box 235, Centreville, MD 21617**  
E-mail: [corsicariverconservancy@verizon.net](mailto:corsicariverconservancy@verizon.net)  
**Membership Form**

Join today to be part of the restoration and preservation of the Corsica River.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (if different) \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested membership donation is \$25, or your contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_. Please make checks payable to Corsica River Conservancy.

Are you interested in volunteering with CRC?  YES  NO

If yes, please indicate areas you want to volunteer in:

Water Testing  Restoration  Education/Public Information  Outreach

*Membership contributions are tax-deductible under the Foundation for Community Partnerships, a 501c(3) non-profit organization, of which Corsica River Conservancy is a member.*