

CONSIDER THE ELEMENTS

Maryland is no stranger to the challenges of Mother Nature. We weather droughts, blizzards and the occasional earthquake. We withstand hurricanes and tropical storms. Whatever forces of nature are thrown at us, we do what is necessary to protect ourselves, our loved ones, our neighbors and our homes. It is during times like these that we best work together toward a common goal — our spirit, compassion and instinct for self-preservation propelling us to unite and do what needs to be done.

While the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may not be the first place citizens think of during an emergency, our workforce was, as usual, front and center during the two recent storm events that lashed at the Eastern Seaboard.

With nearly a half-million acres of public land and 17,000 miles of waterways under our purview, preparation and response are key to our mission. Across our agency and across our State, DNR teams mobilized — before, during and after Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee — to protect citizens and resources, and to get programs and services back to normal as quickly as possible.

While strong winds whipped and a deluge of rain fell, our first concern was the safety of our fellow citizens.



Lt. Robert Kersey, NRP

Prior to Hurricane Irene, NRP Patrol Boat *Chesapeake* took Smith Island evacuees to safety in Crisfield, . A total of 75 people were evacuated.

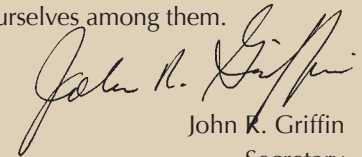
Once the storm clouds cleared we hit the ground running to repair, restore and recover.

From the Natural Resources Police to the Maryland Park Service... from boating services to resource assessment... from forestry to engineering & construction and everywhere in between... staff joined forces to tackle all manner of storm-related activities head on.

They kept watch over the Conwingo Dam. They evacuated citizens from Smith Island. They monitored water quality in the Bay and its tributaries. They alerted citizens to dangerous water levels. They cleared debris from land and water (and provided emergency grants to hard-hit local governments to do so). They provided vital information to citizens through social media. They began reparations to property and buildings even before the storms departed. And they got our State Parks back up and operating in time for Labor Day, summer's last holiday weekend.

Of course there are countless other Marylanders — both public and private sector employees who leave their own homes and families for days at a time to help the rest of us come through emergencies like these safely. Our police, fire and rescue personnel, doctors and nurses, those who work the power lines, the chain saws and the snow plows, all come together as One Maryland in times of crisis.

All of us at DNR are extremely grateful for their efforts, and are honored to count ourselves among them.


John R. Griffin
Secretary



Brandon Linton