

Natural Places News

December 5, 2022

o In this month's issue:

- a. Legislative Priorities
- b. Good News
- c. Upcoming Opportunities for Action
- d. Upcoming Events: End of Year Natural Places Event, Outings, and More!
- e. Natural Places in the News

2. Natural Places Legislative Advocacy Plans for 2023 Legislative Session starting Jan. 11:

- 30x30 (SC Natural Places Priority bill- Sponsors: Senate Elfreth, House Stein); other priority bills include EMPOWER, Community Solar, Clean Trucks, and Zeo Waste.
 - **Protect 30% of Maryland Lands by 2030, 40% by 2040**, with \$10M Land Trust Rapid Response Revolving Loan Fund; and possible Green Space Equity Component or may be separate bill, A new Maryland Stewardship Fund (to increase stewardship of current lands facing invasive species and/or climate change issues).
 - Possible work on Forest Conservation Act
- Green Infrastructure
 - Prevent stormwater damage through funding for rain gardens, green roofs, rain barrels, retention ponds, etc.
 - Protect Streams by controlling stormwater where it occurs
- Environmentalist representation on Wildlife Advisory Commission on hunting issues
- Work on unpassed bills from last session.
- Climate Resilience through fixing impervious surfaces in jurisdictions
- Bird-Friendly Sustainable Buildings (working with Safe Skies to reintroduce with friendlier legislators now)
- Incentives for nurseries for native plants and Native Plant Month

For more information contact Carolyn.parsa@mdsierra.org

3. GOOD NEWS

Pro-environment team elected in Maryland

<https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/blog/2022/11/results-2022-election-environmental-champions-will-lead-maryland-forward>

4. Upcoming Opportunities for Action

- a. **HAVE YOU VOTED?** If you're a Maryland Sierra Club member, you have until **December 13 to choose your state and local leaders. Here's how: (1) Be sure you have your member ID number. (Don't know it? Email anne.s.odonnell@gmail.com.)**

(2) Go to <https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/club-elections> to “meet” the candidates and cast your ballot. Thanks for voting!



b. **Help establish a Chesapeake National Recreation Area** managed by National Park Service by signing a petition and making comments. 90 day period of public comment (February 11)

- View official CNRA materials here: [Chesapeake National Recreation Area](#)
- View the press conference (which Sierra Club Natural Places attended) video here:
<https://www.facebook.com/people/United4CNRA/100083292671690/>
- SIGN HERE: <https://united4cnra.com/> petition and
- COMMENTS HERE: <https://www.vanhollen.senate.gov/cnra> comments form
- Send letters supporting the CNRA to your US Congress representative, post on social media,

c. **Prevent Future Pandemics through Wildlife Trade Restrictions.** The changes in balance of power in the US and state legislatures are favorable for environmental justice legislation. As Covid-19 and other zoonotic infections continue to threaten humans and wildlife, scientists predict the next pandemic will occur within a decade. **But there's something we can do.** Over the past 40 years, most major infectious disease outbreaks, including SARS, Ebola, avian flu and HIV, jumped from wildlife to people. But the problem isn't wildlife. The problem is wildlife trade and exploitation, which create the perfect breeding grounds for pathogen emergence. That's why the Center for Biological Diversity has urged the Biden administration to ban trade in wild birds and mammals, which poses the greatest threat of the emergence of new disease. [Click HERE Join us in demanding action to prevent pandemics and preserve the natural world — before it's too late.](#)

5. UPCOMING EVENTS:

Mon 12/5/22
1:30 PM

[HoCo Longfellow neighborhood Stream Restoration Walk & Talk](#)

Tue 12/6/22
2:00 PM

[Stream Protection Workgroup Meeting](#)

Tue 12/6/22
7:00 PM

[Natural Places Legislative Work Group Kick-Off 2023](#)

The Maryland Natural Places Legislative Work Group meets regularly for just over 3 months when the General Assembly is in session and considering state bills. During this time, our group reviews and considers legislation to support or sometimes oppose. Legislation of interest includes: forest conservation, bills affecting the Chesapeake Bay, pesticide use, health of streams and waterways, bills affecting wildlife, bills promoting urban farming and more. The Sierra Club has a strong voice in the General Assembly and can be influential in getting good bills passed for protection of wildlife and natural places. Come to the meeting to find out more. Email Carolyn Parsa for more info
Carolyn.parsa@mdsierra.org

Sun 12/11/22
1:00 PM

[Hollies of Watkins Park](#)

Don some warm apparel and get in the holly-day spirit. It's almost winter but the woods is still full of green. On this 3-4 mile walk through fields and forest, we'll visit hollies large and small, and see what else is still green among the fallen leaves. The trail is mostly natural surface with a few paved stretches. It's mostly an easy walk with some uneven areas, and a few fallen branches to step over and possible muddy spots. If we're lucky we'll see some birds in the edge habitat and some interesting fungi. We'll also see some of the park's special agricultural features. This walk is best for adults and children 8 and up who can walk 4-5 miles on a wintry day.

Mon 12/12/22
5:00 PM

[Natural Places Winter Celebration with Talk on Pollinator Meadows!](#)

Join the Natural Places Annual Winter Celebration Featuring a talk on Pollinator Meadows in Utility Right-of-Ways. Attend our hybrid potluck meeting In-person in College Park or Online via zoom. **Your input is needed for 2023 Goals and we need leaders and supporters on the Natural Places Legislative, Farming and Food, Native Trees and Plants, Wildlife Corridors, Federal Issues, and Stream Protection Teams so looking forward to seeing you!**

Thu 12/22/22
8:00 PM

[Native Plant and Wildlife Corridors - Natural Places](#)

Sat 1/21/23
4:00 PM

[Protecting Trees in Maryland](#)

Protecting Maryland forests is vital to mitigating climate change, preventing heat islands, filtering rain water, and preventing stormwater damage, as

well as bringing peace and euphoria to Marylanders. Join us with a panel discussion on the joys of Maryland forests and actions you can take to protect them. Guest speakers to be announced soon. The meeting will be hybrid-- both in-person in College Park and online via zoom.

2/13/2023 6:00 PM [Save the Date! Maryland Sierra Club Lobby Night!](#)

6. N THE NEWS

- Ben Jealous, former chair of the NAACP and People for the American Way as well as longtime environmental leader has been elected as Executive Director of the national Sierra Club.
- Longtime Natural Places Member Gail Landy had a letter the editor about wind energy published.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/letters-to-the-editor/offshore-wind-power-is-a-solid-investment/2021/05/31/dbbaf610-bef7-11eb-922a-c40c9774bc48_story.html

Have a wonderful holiday season and hope to SEE YOU SOON!

Lily and the Natural Places Teams