



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2023





A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

If my first year as president was spent learning the lessons of past presidents, my second year was one standing on the shoulders of our great board and staff. Together the staff—Aaron Shapiro, Diana Devers, Mandy DeLeo, Kyla Cools, Rachel Pierson, and Gaelyn Mitchell—completed the following landmark reports:

- Patapsco Valley Heritage Area Five Year Plan (FY2024-FY2028)
- Patapsco Heritage Greenway Environmental Portfolio
- Non-Tidal Patapsco River Report Card

Each report highlights key accomplishments during the past year, while also looking ahead, setting goals, and planning for the future. I encourage everyone to review these reports on the Publications tab of our website:

www.patapsco.org/about/publications

PHG has also undertaken development of a short film—*A Watershed in Time: Exploring the Past, Present, and Future of the Patapsco Valley*. We have secured a grant for the planning of the film from the Kahlert Foundation and are pursuing additional funding. This film will use the unique history of our heritage area to illustrate the importance of watershed processes to sustainable human communities.

While these products are critical to achieving our mission of preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring the environment, history, and culture of Maryland's most dramatic river valley for all, true success will come by expanding and deepening our engagement with the entire community.

We also made great strides in engagement over the year—adding new partnerships with schools, scout groups, companies, organizations focused on Spanish speaking communities, and many more. In just one week this summer, I personally witnessed PHG staff and board members engaging with two very different partners:

- Young African Leaders Initiative (by hosting river sampling and exploring Patapsco Valley State Park)
- Under Armour (by discussing joint sustainability opportunities and touring the Baltimore campus)

I believe it is only by working together that PHG can meet its ultimate goals.

Mark Southerland
President
Patapsco Heritage Greenway

PHG BOARD & STAFF

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Diana Devers, Environmental Program Manager
Kyla Cools, Heritage Program Coordinator
Mandy DeLeo, Water Quality Program Coordinator
Gaelyn Mitchell, Marketing Coordinator
Rachel Pierson, Community Programs Coordinator

*deceased

OUR MISSION

As the non-profit managing organization for the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area, Patapsco Heritage Greenway is dedicated to preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring the environment, history, and culture of Maryland's most dramatic river valley for all.

PHG PARTNERS

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Howard County Arts Council
Baltimore County Arts Guild	Howard County Center for African American Culture
Baltimore County Commissions on Arts and Sciences	Howard County Chamber of Commerce
Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks	Howard County Conservancy
Baltimore County Green Alliance	Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks
Baltimore County Office of Tourism and Cultural Arts	Howard County Historical Society
Baltimore County Public Schools	Howard County History Day
Benjamin Banneker Foundation	Howard County Poetry and Literary Society
Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum	Howard County Public School System
Boy Scouts of America (Howard and Baltimore County)	Howard County Tourism and Promotion (Visit Howard County)
Catonsville Arts and Entertainment District	Howard County Truth, Lynching and Reconciliation, Inc.
Catonsville Chamber of Commerce	Howard Ecoworks
Catonsville Middle School	Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake
Catonsville Rails to Trails	Izaak Walton League of America (Save Our Streams and Salt Watch)
Catonsville Recreation and Park Council	Latino Conservation Week Partnership (Baltimore Area)
Catonsville Restaurant Association	Lurman Woodland Theatre
Catonsville Tree Canopy Project	Manor Hill Tavern
Chesapeake Conservancy	Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership
Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative/RiverTrends	Maryland Civil Air Patrol, Nike Missile Site BA-79
Choose Clean Water Coalition	Maryland Off-Road Enthusiasts
Community College of Baltimore County	Maryland Ornithological Society- Baltimore Bird Club
Community Ecology Institute	Maryland State Parks
Defensores de la Cuenca	Natural History Society of Maryland
Diggs-Johnson Museum	Nature Forward
EC250, Inc.	Oella Historical Society
Elkridge Heritage Society	Patapsco Valley State Park
Elkridge Rotary Foundation	Patterson Park Audubon
Ellicott City Partnership	Restoring Bull Branch
Ellicott City Sunrise Rotary Club	Robinson Nature Center
Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park	Rotary Clubs of Howard County
Girl Scouts of Central Maryland	Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery and Arboretum
Granite Historical Society	Spring Grove Arboretum
Great Kids Farm	University of Maryland Baltimore County (Choice Program)
Greater Arbutus Business Association	University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Integration and Application Network
Greater Baltimore Wilderness Association	Upper Patuxent Archaeology Group
Greater Patapsco Community Association	
Historical Society of Baltimore County	

PHG'S FOUR FOCUS AREAS



HERITAGE



ENVIRONMENT



ARTS & CULTURE



RECREATION

MHAA GRANT FUNDS

The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) awarded matching grants totaling **\$232,857 for Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA) non-profits**. The grant funds support heritage tourism projects and activities that draw visitors and expand economic development and tourism-related opportunities in the Patapsco Valley.

Funded projects in the PVHA include:

Catonsville Rails to Trails, Inc. Creating the Catonsville Short Line Art and History Trail	\$31,000
Community College of Baltimore County Foundation, Inc. Preserving Historical Artifacts and Illuminating the Rich Heritage of Catonsville	\$58,037
Howard County Conservancy, Inc. Outdoor performances to attract new visitors	\$6,820

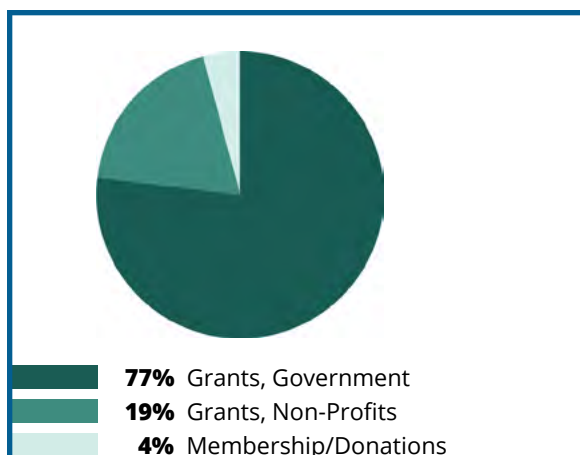


In addition, Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) received a management grant for \$100,000, a block grant for \$25,000, and a marketing grant for \$12,000. PHG's management grant supports organizational operations and staffing. The marketing grant will help promote and highlight heritage tourism opportunities for visitors to the PVHA. All funds from the block grant will be used to support mini-grants to PVHA partners and stakeholders.

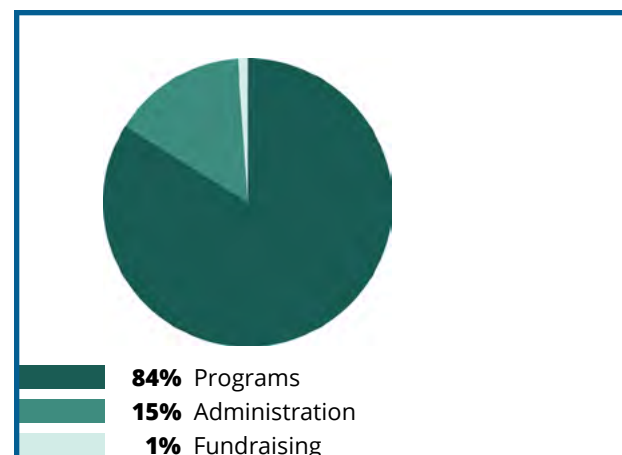
FUNDING

Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) Management Grant	\$100,000
Memberships, Donations, Sales, and Fundraising	\$97,405
Howard County Government Community Service Partnership Grant	\$80,000
Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (DEPS)	\$60,000
Baltimore County Government Arts and Sciences Operating Grant	\$60,000
Howard County Office of Community Sustainability PREP Grant	\$48,000
Chesapeake Bay Trust Outreach and Restoration Grant (CY22)	\$26,000
MHAA Block Grant (to distribute as mini-grants)	\$25,000
Maryland DNR Tree Planting (Multiyear)	\$13,000
MHAA Marketing Grant	\$12,000
Forever Maryland Keep Maryland Beautiful Grant	\$2,000
Baltimore County Project Grant	\$1,020
MUCFC Grant	\$892

FY23 REVENUE*



FY23 EXPENDITURE*



* Unaudited

PARTNERSHIPS

PHG provided \$34,350 to partners in the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.

MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

Patapsco Heritage Greenway's (PHG) Mini-Grant Program is designed to assist heritage-related sites, organizations and municipalities to develop new and innovative programs, partnerships, exhibits, tours, events, and other initiatives consistent with the regional goals and objectives stated within our state and county approved management plan. The program encourages proposals that include collaborative partnerships, enhance preservation, encourage stewardship of natural resources, and promote heritage tourism.

This year, PHG received nearly \$37,000 in grant requests for the Mini-Grant Program. The Program is funded by a \$25,000 grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. This year's awardees were chosen through a competitive process.

FY 2023 Patapsco Valley Heritage Area Mini-Grant Awardees:

Baltimore County Arts Guild <i>Musical Traditions Performance and Program Series</i>	\$3,600
Catonsville Tree Canopy Project <i>Neighborhood and School Campus Tree Planting</i>	\$5,000
EC250 <i>Old Courthouse Marker</i>	\$1,500
Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park <i>Adaptive Programs</i>	\$3,327
Greater Patapsco Community Association-Small Watershed Community Committee <i>Supporting Habitat and Stream Health of Patapsco River Tributaries</i>	\$1,948
Howard County Conservancy <i>Interpretive Signs for Historic Farmhouse</i>	\$3,375
Howard County Historical Society <i>Howard County Farmstead Exhibit</i>	\$5,000
Music City Maryland Association <i>Music City Maryland</i>	\$1,250

All PVHA mini-grants require a 1:1 match, with any mix of cash or in-kind match. We look forward to continuing our efforts to make our grants accessible to a wide range of partners doing work in the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.

SPONSORSHIPS

In addition to mini-grants, we provided the following event sponsorships totaling \$9,350 to local non-profits.

Baltimore County Arts Guild <i>Arts and Drafts Festival</i>	\$1,000
Catonsville Chamber of Commerce <i>Frederick Road Fridays</i>	\$500
Catonsville Tree Canopy Project <i>Society of American Foresters Conference Reception</i>	\$250
Civil Air Patrol <i>Nike Missile Site Restoration Work Days</i>	\$500
Ellicott City Partnership <i>OEC Holiday Bucks</i>	\$750
Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park <i>Cocktails for Trails/Patapsco Trail Fest</i>	\$1,000
Howard County Arts Council <i>Paint It! Ellicott City</i>	\$500
Howard County Tourist Council (Visit Howard County) <i>Historic Funeral Homes in Ellicott City Exhibit</i>	\$1000
Howard Ecoworks <i>Soak It Up!</i>	\$750
Lurman Woodland Theatre <i>Summer Concert Series</i>	\$500
Maryland Interscholastic Cycling League <i>The Pursuit at Pickall</i>	\$750
Music City Maryland Association <i>Sun Scape Live Festival</i>	\$750
OEC Pride <i>OEC Pride Day</i>	\$100



HERITAGE

During this year's Earth Day Cleanup at the Oella Cemetery the community got involved to help preserve a historic landmark ▲

During FY23, the Heritage Program's accomplishments fall into three different categories. These categories include event planning and facilitation, program building, and program partnerships.

We planned and hosted a variety of in-person events during FY23 including: a garden tour and archaeology talk at the Patapsco Female Institute, multiple Patapsco Days lectures, and the Second Annual Wagandt Memorial Lecture. We also helped coordinate various cemetery cleanups at both the Oella Cemetery and Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery with the Environmental Program Manager and the Community Programs Coordinator.

Regarding program building, one of the Heritage Program's largest accomplishments for FY23 has been developing an exhibit consultation and development program that has successfully completed one exhibition at Visit Howard County and helped to redesign and reopen Howard County Center for African American Culture's (HCCAAC) three gallery spaces. Additionally, we are currently finishing up work on three interpretive banners for Great Kids Farm.

In terms of program partnerships, the Heritage Program connected with new and existing stakeholders such as the Natural History Society of Maryland, HCCAAC, and Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery (among others) which has resulted in collaborative programming and/or

new audiences who may be interested in participating in PHG initiatives (such as PaSNAPsco, Patapsco Stories, and/or volunteering). It is our goal in FY24 to encourage some of these new program partners to apply to both PHG's sponsorship and mini-grant programs, as well as the broader MHAA grant program.



PHG helped develop "A Brief History of Historic Ellicott City's Undertakers and Funeral Homes" exhibit with Visit Howard County in October 2022 ►



ENVIRONMENT

As part of our mission to preserve and protect the natural resources of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area, volunteer events are held throughout the year to help clean up trash, remove invasive species, and plant trees. We greatly appreciate the effort of our volunteers to make an impact in the health of the Patapsco River Valley and help us achieve our goals.

In FY24, we look forward to continuing to grow and expand our partnerships with both local organizations and the community. We invite you to read more about PHG's Environmental Program in our [Environmental Portfolio](#).

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

1,672
volunteers

3,600
volunteer hours

25 new Stream Watchers

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

28,770
pounds of trash removed

560,813
sq. ft. of invasive plants removed

101
trees planted

233
trees maintained

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

patapsco.org/connect-with-us/volunteer

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

In May 2023, we released our first **Non-Tidal Patapsco River Report Card**, issuing a C grade for the non-tidal portion of the river based on four parameters measured from April 2021 to April 2022. The parameters were biology, conductivity, clarity, and e. coli bacteria counts. We use Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative's (CMC) protocols and quality assurance procedures, allowing these are scores and data to be compared across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and stored in the CMC's Data Explorer database, which is accessible for public and agency use. Additionally, Maryland Department of the Environment has reported that our data are used to support their Clean Water Act reporting.

During FY23, we continued our bimonthly water quality sampling at eleven sites in the watershed. Parameters monitored include temperature, pH, conductivity, nitrite, phosphorous, dissolved oxygen, water clarity and e. coli bacteria. We have quality checked and entered that data into the CMC's Data Explorer. We look forward to releasing a year two Report Card in FY24.



BIOLOGICAL MONITORING

Using stream invertebrates for biological assessment, we completed two more seasons of biological monitoring in FY23. A Izaak Walton League/Save Our Streams Trainer was invited to conduct training sessions for ten local residents in methodology for bioassessment of streams. Additionally, one staff member became a certified trainer in these techniques, allowing us to now conduct training sessions in-house. We collected data at ten of the eleven sites, where we also monitor water quality, and have a plan to collect data from more sites in FY24. Data will be available in the next Report Card.

We provided over 170 hands-on, in-depth volunteer opportunities to learn about water quality, monitoring water quality and potential threats to water quality. We engaged hundreds in less formal opportunities to learn about water quality, land use and residential yard management through hands on educational experiences at schools, streamside community events, and educational workshops, including workshops at the local community college.



COMMUNITY & CORPORATE PROGRAMS



Tree Planting at Edmondson Heights Elementary School with third grade students in May 2023 ▲

In the current year, our organization witnessed remarkable growth in both our community and corporate programs, buoyed by the addition of a community programs coordinator to our team. Collaborating with 75 organizations encompassing general partners, local community and neighborhood groups, corporate organizations, and schools, we orchestrated a range of engaging events. These included bilingual family days and cross-cultural programming at Patapsco Valley State Park, educational workshops in partnership with afterschool programs and summer camps, tree planting and maintenance initiatives involving elementary and middle school students, and much more. Through our programs, PHG actively strives to cultivate a palpable sense of place and belonging within the neighborhoods we serve.

Expanding our reach into underserved areas, namely Milford Mills, Owings Mills, Lansdowne, and Elkridge communities, has been a significant stride. Our concerted efforts in these regions are aimed at fostering safer, healthier, and cleaner environments for all Baltimore and Howard County residents. This endeavor has been made possible through impactful collaborations with our many dedicated partners. One spotlight event was a tree planting at Edmondson Heights Elementary School, a school in an underserved community in Baltimore County. The event would not have been a success without the support of dedicated school staff, community members and families, BCPS Facilities and Maintenance Teams, and partnerships with Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (DEPS), Catonsville Tree Canopy Project (CTCP), and Urban Zink. Ten months of planning and coordination culminated with a gorgeous, sunny, fun planting day with over 100 third grade students and their families. Together, we planted 51 native trees on school grounds, positively impacting the community by providing green space. Educational workshops and maintenance events are planned for the next two years and we are eager to continue relationships with these students and the greater Edmondson Heights community.

In addition to amplifying our community engagement, our corporate partnerships have also flourished during FY23. We proudly introduced a corporate stewardship program, a testament to our dedication to environmental responsibility. In partnership with Manor Hill Tavern, PHG now offers a donation-based program that seamlessly blends environmental stewardship with a social ambiance. This initiative allows organizations to engage in meaningful volunteer activities followed by a delightful social gathering at Manor Hill Tavern. Our goal is to implement this program in FY24. The program not only empowers businesses and organizations to actively contribute to preserving the Patapsco watershed but also fortifies relationships among team members, the local community, and the environment. Key features of this program include fostering a profound sense of community through environmental stewardship, providing an introduction to heritage and nature tourism within the PVHA, actively contributing to enhancing the Patapsco River's health and its tributaries, and supporting local small businesses.

Learn more at patapsco.org/stewardship/environmental-programs



ARTS & CULTURE

2022 PaSNAPSCO People's Choice Winner chosen via social media: "Piebald Deer" captured by Andrew Gosden ▲

Patapsco Heritage Greenway is passionate about the important role arts and cultural activities play in enhancing the Heritage Area experience. Whether it is live musical performances, art competitions, or local festivals, PHG is committed to enhancing the Valley's appeal to a diverse audience through art and cultural experiences. We are always excited to find new ways to support, promote, and develop new opportunities and partnerships with local artists and the district's cultural arts scene.

PASNAPSCO

Patapsco Heritage Greenway's fifth annual PaSNAPSCO photo contest encouraged both amateur and professional photographers to capture the region's unique history, landmarks, and nature. Photos are entered into one of six categories. A winner is selected for each category, in addition to Best of Patapsco, determined by the judges, and People's Choice, chosen via social media. The winning photographs appeared in PHG's calendar to both promote the work of local photographers and highlight the unique character of the Patapsco Valley.

"Playing Hooky" by Dana Enders: Paint It! Ellicott City Winner of Best Depiction of the Patapsco ►

Learn more at
patapsco.org/plan-your-visit/arts-culture

PAINT IT! ELLICOTT CITY

Howard County's annual Paint it! art competition brings artists and spectators to the Ellicott City historic district and the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area. For the past seven years, Patapsco Heritage Greenway has sponsored a prize for Best Depiction of the Patapsco. This year Dana Enders took the prize for *Playing Hooky*. The painting resonated with our jury as a compelling depiction of two children enjoying a moment of solace along the Patapsco and a reminder of the connections we make with each other and the natural world to build community.





RECREATION

The PHG Recreation Committee serves as a hub and facilitator, connecting individuals to existing groups that appreciate and utilize the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA) for recreational activities. Our primary goal is to bolster and advance recreational events and opportunities in collaboration with our PVHA partners. To achieve this, we welcome new members to the committee who can bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm. We extend an invitation to anyone interested in or actively engaging in recreational activities within the Patapsco watershed to join our committee.

A standout moment for the Recreation Committee this year was our active participation in planning the 2023 Patapsco Trail Fest, organized by our esteemed partner, Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park. Notably, PHG took the lead in organizing the Family Fun Run tailored for children and families during the event. We aspire to continue this event or similar ones in the years ahead, contributing to the vibrant recreational landscape of the PVHA. For comprehensive information regarding existing outdoor recreational opportunities within the PVHA, we encourage you to explore the outdoor activities section of our recently revamped webpage.

A PHG-led guided hike to Cascade Falls in Patapsco Valley State Park with the Young African Leaders Initiative ►

*“Disc Golf at Rockburn Park” taken by Michael Worth, 2022 ▲
PaSNAPsco Winner of the Get Out category, which encourages participants to capture recreational activities in the PVHA.*



Learn more at patapsco.org/plan-your-visit/outdoor-activities/

ADDITIONS TO THE TEAM



Rachel Pierson
Community Programs Coordinator

In FY23, PHG welcomed two additional staff members to the team. Rachel Pierson joined PHG in September 2022 as our Community Programs Coordinator. Most days, you will find Rachel exploring nature or on the water. Growing up in the South River watershed near Annapolis, she spent much of her childhood investigating tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. Her academic journey includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a B.S. in Geography from Salisbury University, where she also played collegiate volleyball. Furthering her studies, she earned an M.S. in Natural Resources from the University of Vermont, researching the behaviors of volunteer stream monitors, a passion she shares with Mandy. Rachel finds joy in bringing people together and cherishes time spent with her friends and family. When she's not hiking or kayaking, Rachel enjoys live music, watercolor, and baking.



Gaelyn Mitchell
Marketing Coordinator

Gaelyn Mitchell joined PHG as a marketing intern in January 2022 and in January 2023, she transitioned to PHG's Marketing Coordinator. Gaelyn is a lifelong Marylander, spending a significant portion of her childhood and adult life exploring places and trails within the Patapsco Valley. She is passionate about art, history and being surrounded by the natural world. She has both a B.S. in Graphic Design and Digital Communications from Stevenson University and a B.A. in Art and Archaeology with a focus in ancient art and culture from Hood College. Gaelyn's interest in design and communications stems from her background in early childhood education and the need to create engaging and accessible educational materials. She hopes to translate that passion to projects with PHG to help showcase what makes the Patapsco Valley a special place to both visitors and the local community. In her spare time, she enjoys drawing, creative projects, hiking and spending time with her three cats.

As we move into FY24, we are excited to welcome Hannah Emmons as PHG's Chesapeake Conservation Corp Member. Hannah will spend the next year with PHG assisting with the environmental and water quality monitoring programs.

THANK YOU

A big THANK YOU to all of our members, donors and volunteers for your support during the past year. We are grateful to all of you who contributed your time to help us improve the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area as a place to live, work and play. **Thank you for helping to steward the environmental, historical, recreational and cultural resources of the Patapsco Valley for all.**

