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MARYLAND ARTIFICIAL REEF INITIATIVE CREATES 3rd DEEP WATER REEF FOR CHESAPEAKE BAY FISH HABITAT

List of Speakers

Martin Gary, Fisheries Biologist, Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Michael Baker, Environmental Manager, Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project
Evan van Hook, Vice President, Honeywell
David Sutherland/Bill Miles, Chair/Vice-Chair,
Maryland Legislative Sportsman's Foundation & Caucus
Senator John Astle, Senate Co-Chair, Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
Senator Roy Dyson
Bill Goldsborough, Chairman of the Maryland Artificial Reef Committee &
Chief Scientist, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Bill Curry, Coastal Conservation Association of Maryland
Captain Bruno Vasta, Solomons Charter Fishing Association & Maryland Charter Boat Association
Jeff Halka, Bob Conkwright, & Rick Younger, Maryland Geological Survey
Frank Dawson, Assistant Secretary for Aquatic Resources, MD DNR

SOLOMONS, MD - The Maryland Artificial Reef Initiative (MARI) celebrated the expansion of habitat enhancement work as the Honeywell Barge deposited over 2,500 tons of the old Woodrow Wilson Bridge concrete roadway deck to develop the Cedar Point artificial reef site at the mouth of the Patuxent River in the Chesapeake Bay.

Reef creation emulates historic vibrant marine communities, such as oyster beds, critical to supporting diverse species of fish that were once prolific in the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's Atlantic coast. Cedar Point will provide excellent habitat for benthic organisms and fish.

More than 30 partnering entities including the Coastal Conservation Association of Maryland, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Honeywell, Inc., Mitchell-Petersen Foundation, Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project, Shell Oil, and British Petroleum, as well as conservation organizations, businesses, foundations, outdoor recreational organizations, and countless individuals have provided resources to make this program possible.

"Honeywell is committed to supporting creative solutions aimed at enhancing, restoring and protecting our environment," said Evan van Hook, Vice President of Health, Safety, Environment and Remediation for Honeywell. "We are proud to support MARI. Its success draws upon a broad partnership of people and organizations that have joined together with a single goal in mind – making the bay healthier."

"The project will improve habitat in the Chesapeake Bay, as well as benefit fishing, one of the most popular outdoor recreational activities in the region and a significant contributor to local economies," said Captain Bruno Vasta of the Solomons Charter Fishing Association.

By the close of August 2007, the MARI partnership will have placed at least 50,000 tons of concrete and steel from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project to create new fish reefs in Maryland, compared to the 30,000 tons that were placed over the past ten or more years.

“In just one year, this unprecedented approach to building state-of-the-art artificial reefs has accomplished more to enhance habitat on Maryland’s reef sites, than in the previous decade combined,” said Martin Gary, MD DNR Fisheries Biologist.

Individuals can help with reef projects across the State by “buying a ton” via a tax-deductible donation to the Maryland Artificial Reef Initiative.

The Maryland Artificial Reef Initiative was created in early 2007 to raise funds to facilitate development of marine habitat enhancement projects. For more information visit www.ccamd.org/MARI/MARI_home.htm

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The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the state agency responsible for providing natural and living resource-related services to citizens and visitors. DNR manages more than 449,000 acres of public lands and 17,000 miles of waterways, along with Maryland's forests, fisheries, and wildlife for maximum environmental, economic and quality of life benefits. A national leader in land conservation, DNR-managed parks and natural, historic, and cultural resources attract 12 million visitors annually. DNR is the lead agency in Maryland's effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay, the state's number one environmental priority. Learn more at www.DNR.Maryland.gov.