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CALL ISSUED FOR GRAPHIC ARTISTS TO EXPLORE A REDESIGN OF THE BAY PLATE

New ideas sought for “Treasure the Chesapeake” vehicle license plates

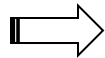
Annapolis, MD – We might be seeing a different “Bay Plate” on Maryland’s roads next year, according to the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA), which today invited graphic designers to try their hand at a new design of the Bay Plate. New ideas will be compared to the current very popular design, and should one test better, it could be on our roads as early as next summer.

The Bay Plate, or more fully named the “Treasure the Chesapeake” license plate, is a popular choice among Maryland drivers, with 5 percent of all vehicles displaying them and 15 percent of households across the state reporting that they have at least one set of Bay Plates in the family. Close to 300,000 of the plates are on the roads today.

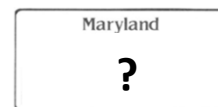
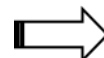
The current design, boasting a heron named Wade and a crab named Clawdia, was introduced in 2004 and has been on the roads for 13 years, following the initial design introduced in 1990 that also graced roads for 13 years.



(December 1990)



(January 2004)



(summer 2018?)

Funds generated by the Bay Plate are distributed as grants for K-12 environmental education projects to get students outside, for on-the-ground watershed or habitat restoration projects, and for community engagement in natural resources issues. Grants are made to support work in all of Maryland’s counties and regions, from the Youghiogheny in Western Maryland to the Coastal Bays in east. The grants are managed by the Chesapeake Bay Trust (the Trust), a non-profit grant-making organization established by the Maryland state legislature in 1985.

The Bay Plate is one of two background scene plates available to Maryland vehicle owners. The other is the “Ag Tag,” which supports agricultural education.

“MDOT MVA is proud to partner with the Chesapeake Bay Trust and supports its efforts to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay through the Bay Plate and the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation through the Ag Tag to protect our natural resources,” said MDOT MVA Administrator Christine Nizer, whose department administers the Bay and Ag plate programs and transfers funds to the Trust and Foundation.

The Trust provides approximately 400 grants per year with Bay Plate funds - from as small as \$100 to over \$200,000 - to schools, faith-based organizations, civic associations, homeowners associations, watershed groups, environmental organizations, research entities, and more. About 100,000 students and 60,000 volunteers per year are engaged through the Bay Plate and Trust grants; and grantees plant thousands of trees, terrestrial plants, marsh grasses, and oysters each year.

About the Chesapeake Bay Trust

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (www.cbtrust.org) is a nonprofit grant-making organization dedicated to improving the natural resources of Maryland and the Chesapeake region through environmental education, community engagement, and local watershed restoration. The Trust engages hundreds of thousands of individuals annually in projects that have a measurable impact on the region’s waterways and other natural resources. The Trust is supported by the sale of the Treasure the Chesapeake license plate, donations to the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund on the Maryland State income tax form, donations from individuals and corporations, and partnerships with private foundations and federal, state, and local agencies. The Trust has received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for 14 years: 92 percent of the Trust’s expenditures are directed to its restoration and education programs.

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