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Green Infrastructure Project Connects Human Health and Environmental Health, Reducing Runoff at MedStar Harbor Hospital and Providing Green Space for Patient Rehabilitation

Baltimore, MD,— Today the Chesapeake Bay Trust (the Trust), Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Chesapeake Bay Program, MedStar Harbor Hospital, Blue Water Baltimore, and Plisko Sustainable Solutions announced plans to design nine green infrastructure facilities with funds awarded from the Watershed Assistance Grant Program, a program jointly supported by the Trust, DNR, and EPA Chesapeake Bay Program that will be providing local on-the-ground solutions to water quality issues through 15 grants this year. This project at MedStar Harbor Hospital is the next step in a long-term plan to reduce runoff and flooding on the hospital's grounds. The facilities will treat 18 acres of the hospital's impervious surface, which currently discharges stormwater into the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River. The project will also create green spaces that can be used by patients and even be prescribed by doctors to allow recovering patients to get outdoors and get fresh air.

“MedStar Harbor is thrilled to be able to offer both benefits to its community: stormwater and outdoor patient care,” said Brian K. Gray, Director, Clinical Engineering & Environment of Care, MedStar Harbor Hospital. “If we can solve stormwater issues by installing green spaces that also help our patients, we are achieving great efficiency.”

This project is a component of a new initiative led by the Trust that highlights the positive connection between human and environmental health. In recent years, the value of getting outdoors to both maintain human health and rehabilitate in case of illnesses has become a topic of discussion in the medical field, with some programs developed in which outdoor time has been actually prescribed. An example is a grant made by the Trust to support “Docs in the Park,” an effort to combine efforts of physicians and the resources of urban parks to combat health problems.

“These facilities on MedStar Harbor’s campus will help to restore and preserve part of the Patapsco River watershed *and* will create natural green space that will improve the physical and mental health of hospital patients,” said Dr. Jana Davis, executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Trust. “We hope this project can serve as a model for other organizations.”

Blue Water Baltimore, in collaboration with Plisko Sustainable Solutions, will be expanding this effort to address similar issues at other hospitals in the area.

“This project in Baltimore is a prime example of our partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to direct knowledge and support to address our shared environmental priorities,” said Maryland Natural Resources Secretary Mark Belton. “Through financial and technical support, we seek to enhance and improve the health of

the community and the watershed.” The department provides expertise and resources through its Watershed Assistance Collaborative.

The other 14 projects awarded through the Watershed Assistance Grant Program will support design assistance, watershed planning and programmatic development associated with protection and restoration projects that lead to improved water quality in the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the Maryland portion of the Youghiogheny watershed, and the Maryland Coastal Bays and, specifically, progress towards goals of the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) process in other areas of the region, and are listed below.

2016-2017 Watershed Assistance Grant Program Awards

1. Carroll Soil Conservation District, *Carroll County, MD*, \$120,500, for designs and permits for the Wilt Road stream restoration project.
2. Catonsville Presbyterian Church, *Baltimore County, MD*, \$10,700, for the design of stormwater best management practices.
3. Cecil County, *Cecil County, MD*, \$75,000, for design of stormwater retrofits at Bohemia Manor Middle/High School and Charlestown Elementary School.
4. Cylburn Arboretum Association, *Baltimore City, MD*, \$29,477, for the development of a master plan for stormwater management and water quality improvements, as well as the design of priority stormwater practices.
5. Environmental Concern Inc., *Caroline County, MD*, \$29,620, for the design of stormwater best management practices and wetland enhancement on Chicken Bridge Road.
6. Harford County Soil Conservation District, *Harford County, MD*, \$49,500, for the design of the Old Level Road stream restoration project.
7. MedStar Harbor Hospital, *Baltimore City, MD*, \$70,066, for the design of nine stormwater best management practices.
8. Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy, Inc., *Dorchester County, MD*, \$35,994, for designs of a stream restoration project in the Choptank River watershed.
9. Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy, Inc., *Talbot County, MD*, \$53,319, for an assessment of the Cambridge Creek Watershed.
10. Peoples' Community Lutheran Church, *Baltimore City, MD*, \$41,785, for design of stormwater best management practices.
11. South River Federation, *Anne Arundel, MD*, \$128,940, for design and permits for the Gravely Community stream and wetland restoration project.
12. South River Federation, *Anne Arundel, MD*, \$21,200, for the design of stormwater best management practices and a living shoreline at Turnbull Estates.
13. St. David's Church, *Baltimore City, MD*, \$22,506, for the design of stormwater best management practices.
14. St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Congregation, Inc., *Baltimore City, MD*, \$45,058, for design of sand filters and rain gardens.
15. Town of Templeville, *Caroline County, MD*, \$15,000, for the design of a stormwater pond restoration project.

For more information on the Watershed Assistance Grant Award Program and detailed project descriptions, please visit www.cbtrust.org/watershed-assistance

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 waterways and other natural resources of the region. 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 and state agencies. The Trust has received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for fourteen years: 92 percent of the Trust's expenditures are directed to its restoration and education programs.

