



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY NEWSLETTER

January 2022

[Chesapeake Bay Trust Mission](#) | [Grant Programs and Opportunities](#) | [Rain Check Rebate Program](#) | [Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program](#) | [Newsletters](#)

News



Meet the New Rain Check Rebate Team

The [Prince George's County Rain Check Rebate Program](#) (RCR) is a partnership between [Prince George's County Department of the Environment](#) and the [Chesapeake Bay Trust](#). This program offers incentives to homeowners, businesses, and others to install practices that will reduce stormwater runoff, reduce pollution, and improve the water quality of local streams and rivers.

Kathy Somoza is your new Rain Check Rebate Coordinator and she's passionate about increasing awareness of the environmental issues around the Bay region and sharing resources to address these issues. We recently talked to Kathy to learn more about her background and her experience thus far as the RCR Coordinator. Here's a quick look into our conversation:

Can you tell us about yourself?

I grew up and still reside in Annapolis, Maryland, though my family and I originally hail from El Salvador. As a longtime Annapolitan, I have been lucky to have access to and enjoy the beautiful resources of the Chesapeake Bay region through kayaking and hiking! I graduated from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with a bachelor's degree in Biology. I originally came to the Chesapeake Bay Trust as the Intern for the Rain Check Rebate Program, and I am so proud to now be administering this program.

What is your favorite story or project from the Rain Check Rebate program?

The stories and projects that stick out most in my mind are the ones that, for a multitude of reasons, do not follow a straightforward or linear process. These are the projects that encounter unexpected hurdles or delays, yet what impresses and inspires me is the perseverance that I see applicants demonstrate in getting their project to the finish line. This program is completely voluntary, so the commitment applicants demonstrate to their projects highlights just how dedicated these Prince George's residents are to the protection, improvement, and beautification of their local natural resources.

What have you most enjoyed so far about your new role as the Rain Check Rebate Coordinator?

I have enjoyed seeing how the program has evolved since the time I spent as an intern, and I'm looking forward to working closely with our Prince George's County Department of the Environment partners to bring the best and most accessible program to County residents, businesses, and nonprofits.

[Read more about Kathy and our Rain Check Rebate intern, Oliver, on our blog.](#)

New Year, New Resolutions

This new year, make one of your resolutions to be more sustainable!

- Familiarize yourself with what items are [acceptable for recycling](#) and reduce litter on the streets
 - Learn how to compost
 - Read your Department of Environment's ["10 Tips to Help Keep Our County Clean and Green"](#) Brochure
 - Use reusable grocery bags and water bottles
 - Consider reducing stormwater runoff by installing a rain garden, permeable pavement, and/or rain barrel
-



Mother Nature reminded us this year that significant snowfall is possible in this area. The real question is, will Punxsutawney Phil see his shadow on February 2nd, Ground Hog's Day? According to folklore dating back to 1887, if Phil does see his shadow, we will have another six weeks of winter. If Phil doesn't see his shadow, we will have an early spring. The winter season generally runs from December 1st through March 8th in this area.

According to the Farmer's Almanac, Spring will officially arrive with the Vernal Equinox on March 20, 2022. We have already started thinking about Spring activities and all the wonderful events that take place during that time. **Save the Date, Saturday, April 23, 2022, for the Spring 2022 Growing Green with Pride** cleanup event, details to follow.

The Trust is deeply saddened by the passing of Mayor Kevin Ward. He was a wonderful advocate for the City of Hyattsville and will be greatly missed. Our thoughts are with the Mayor's family and the Hyattsville community.

Be Featured in Our Newsletter!

Send us any news, photos, project success stories, and upcoming events to Whitney Vong at wvong@cbtrust.org to be featured in an upcoming newsletter.



Events and Opportunities

Saturday Hike at Greenbelt National Park

Saturday, February 5th from 1pm to 4pm
Prince George's County Group Outings
Team Sierra Club, Greenbelt National Park

Explore greenery, fungi, and wildlife at the newly renovated Greenbelt National Park. The hike will be about 2 to 3 miles along the

Monthly Bird Walks

Dates vary depending on location
Prince George's Audubon Society and
Patuxent Bird Club

The Prince George's Audubon Society and Patuxent Bird Club have resumed their monthly bird walks in Fran Uhler Natural Area, Governor Bridge Natural Area, and

Azalea and Dogwood Trails. There is a limit of 20 participants. [Learn more](#)

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Maryland Conservation with James McCann

Tuesday, February 8th from 7pm to 9pm
Prince George's Audubon Society, Virtual

According to recent records, Maryland is home to 128 species of dragonflies and 57 species of damselflies. Collectively known as odonates, dragonflies and damselflies have attracted the attention of many birders because of their beautiful forms and identification challenges. Associated in general with water environments, many odonate species have extremely particular microhabitat requirements. James is an expert on Maryland's rare, threatened and endangered species and on the habitats that support them. The event is free, but pre-registration before February 6th is required. [Pre-register here.](#)

Lake Artemesia. Dates for these walks vary depending on the location. Learn more about these monthly bird walks [here](#). Want to explore new outdoor spaces and birding sites, [click here](#).

Greenscapes Symposium

Friday, February 18th from 9:30am to 4pm
GreenScapes, Virtual

Join for a fascinating day of presentations highlighting design strategies that make it easier and more effective to integrate native plants into a variety of landscapes. Learn exciting and novel uses of plants, planting design, and application of ecological principles to overcome these roadblocks and achieve high-impact, environmentally sustainable designs. Registration fee is \$55 per person. [Learn more](#)

Due to COVID-19's impact on our region, many in-person events have moved to remote meetings, were postponed, or were cancelled. As information becomes available, the County's updates and resources are [here](#).

Stay safe and healthy, Prince George's County!

ABOUT THE CHESAPEAKE BAY TRUST

The Chesapeake Bay Trust is a nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to improving the streams, rivers, and other natural resources of the Chesapeake region through environmental education, community outreach, and local watershed restoration.

Since 1985, the Trust has awarded more than \$140 million in grants and projects that have engaged over 2 million dedicated individuals in efforts that are making a difference for all of our local systems—Chesapeake, Coastal Bays, and Youghiogheny.

For nearly two decades, the Trust has received a "4-star rating" from Charity Navigator, the nation's leading independent evaluator of nonprofit organizations.

[Chesapeake Bay Trust](#) | [Contact](#) | [About Us](#) | [Giving](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

[Chesapeake Bay Trust](#)
108 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403