

The Chesapeake Bay Trust Awards \$225,000 to Increase Urban Tree Canopy and Promote Community Greening

13 organizations statewide receive funding to green local communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(May 28, 2009) The Chesapeake Bay Trust announced the award of \$225,000 in grants to enhance local tree canopy and reduce pollution from entering the Chesapeake Bay. Mayor Sheila Dixon was on hand to present the thirteen awards at a ceremony held at Perkins Homes, an Urban Greening site in Baltimore, Maryland.

Five of the 13 awards were made to organizations in Baltimore City. The projects are designed to engage local citizens in community based restoration efforts that enhance environmental quality and improve the quality of life in urban neighborhoods. They are also noteworthy because they target funding to low and moderate income communities which are often overlooked by traditional environmental restoration programs.

“Greening is one of the foundations of my plans to make Baltimore a more livable and attractive City,” said Mayor Dixon. “When people are taking the initiative on their own to make their communities cleaner and greener, we need to support them in every way possible.”

Funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the Abell Foundation, this initiative seeks to aid communities in implementing “greening” plans that will increase tree canopy, reduce storm water runoff, and improve air quality in urban areas. The program provides much needed funds to communities interested in integrating trees and natural areas into stormwater management strategies and connecting green spaces in order to maximize community and environmental benefits.

“Trees are absolutely fundamental to improving the well-being of communities and the health of the Chesapeake Bay,” said Allen Hance, Executive Director of the Chesapeake Bay Trust. “Urban greening projects are a powerful way to engage citizens at the local level, build stronger and more sustainable neighborhoods, and help to improve water quality in local rivers and ultimately in the Chesapeake Bay.”

The Chesapeake Bay Trust, in cooperation with TreeBaltimore, the USDA Forest Service, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service Division has opened the FY 2010 Urban Greening Grant Program and is accepting applications

for grants up to \$35,000 to support neighborhood greening and tree canopy enhancement. Specific details on the program, including eligibility requirements, can be found at www.cbtrust.org

In the last 30 years, urban tree cover throughout the country has declined as much as 25 percent, according to a study by American Forests. In addition to reducing storm water runoff that carries pollutants into local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, increased urban tree canopy also results in reduced energy costs, and can save homeowners as much as 30 percent on their air conditioning bills.

About the Chesapeake Bay Trust:

The Chesapeake Bay Trust is a nonprofit, grant-making organization. Funding provided through the Chesapeake Bay Trust is sparking on-the-ground change in communities throughout Maryland and developing Bay stewards in classrooms across the state. The Trust is supported by the sale of the Maryland *Treasure the Chesapeake* license plate, donations to the *Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund* on the Maryland State income tax form, and donations from individuals and corporations. Fully 90 percent of the Trust's expenditures are directed to Chesapeake Bay restoration and education programs.

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