

GOING FORWARD

## OIL SLICK FIRE DAMAGES TWO RIVER SPANS

A burning oil slick floating on the Cuyahoga River caused \$50,000 damage to two key railroad trestles at the foot of Campbell Road Hill S.E. about noon yesterday, closing one to traffic.

Battalion 7 Fire chief Bernard E. Campbell said the fire was reported at 11:56 a.m. and was under control by 12:20 p.m. The burning slick floated under the wooden bridges and set them on fire. Cause of the blaze was undetermined, said Campbell.



A fireboat battled the flames on the water while units from three battalions brought the fire on the trestles under control. Campbell said a bridge belonging to Norfolk and Western Railway Co. sustained \$45,000 damage, closing both of its tracks.

The other, one-track trestle is open. The fire did \$5,000 damage to the timbers of this Newburgh & South Shore Railroad Co. crossing.

Flames climbed as high as five stories, said Campbell. Campbell pointed out a fireboat patrols the Cuyahoga River daily checking for oil slicks and clearing them away. He said waterfront industries are responsible, dumping oil wastes into the river rather than reclaiming them.

-Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) 23 June, 1969 page 33



1972-2022  
The Next 50 Years



We should be so lucky. Having your river catch fire is one of those things that tends to grab the public's attention. Unfortunately, the death of a water body is usually far slower, far less attention grabbing and far more insidious. Instead it might be a headline grabbing, but soon forgotten, death of a resident from exposure to waterborne toxins on a crab pot. It might be the evacuation of a family from a residence in Florida as their canal became choked by a toxic green algae fed by agricultural nutrient rich fertilizer runoff into the nearby river. It might be the collection of stories from commercial and recreational fisherman who notice the multi year decline in certain fisheries as a result of too much construction sediment carried by rain water into a favorite fishing hole, obscuring sunlight and killing off submerged vegetative habitat.

In the 1960's states and counties struggled to enact local pollution control laws to stop the abuse of important waterways that provided drinking water and sustenance to communities, both human and animal but it wasn't until 1972 when the nation's first major environmental protection law, the Clean Water Act, was passed and implemented that the tide turned and our waterways finally had the law on their side across the United States.

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Local Waterways

175

Square mile Watershed

300

Volunteers

1

Earth for Us to Protect



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is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization

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*Thank you! Thank you!*

**CLEAN WATER PATRON - Up to \$249**

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Assateague Coastal Trust, a member of the global WATERKEEPER Alliance movement, hosts the Assateague COASTKEEPER, working to assure our communities have access to swimmable, fishable and drinkable water. For over 50 years ACT has been working arm in arm with diverse community partners to protect and defend the health of Delmarva's coastal waters through advocacy, education, science and the enforcement of just and equitable clean water laws.

# YOUR NEW ASSATEAGUE COASTKEEPER LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

I was driving down to Snow Hill in the early hours of the morning reflecting about everything that has happened since starting as the new Coastkeeper on October 4th, 2021. I've dug through countless files, poured through Kathy's old email inbox, and have immersed myself in all of ACT's current programs and projects only to be met with a multitude of issues that are impacting our coastal bays.

**The area has changed so much in the last few years, we are seeing an unprecedented amount of development and an influx of folks moving down to the shore.** While that is going on, we've been battling a multitude of zoning issues- from a text amendment allowing slaughterhouses in the A-1 zoning district, to piecemeal zoning changes allowing development in critical area zones and resource conservation areas. In a few instances our community organizing and assistance to neighborhood associations has caused several cases for zoning changes to be withdrawn as we urge Worcester County to take a more comprehensive look at county planning and zoning.

**ACT and your Coastkeeper is engaged in the Reclaim The RPS (Renewable Portfolio Standard) coalition-** working on the Reclaim Renewable Energy Act (HB11) in the 2022 Maryland legislative session. Currently, the state of Maryland allows for many polluting, greenhouse-gas-emitting fuel sources to qualify as renewable energy. Dirty energy technologies like poultry litter incineration, biogas, municipal trash incineration, woody biomass incineration, and the burning of dangerous landfill gases pollute our environment and threaten public health and should have no place in Maryland's clean energy plan.

Inclusion of these sources is particularly troubling because they cause disparate impacts on low-income communities and communities of color, such as the EarthCare LLC proposed biogas facility in Wicomico County next to a predominately African American neighborhood. ACT and its partners were able to raise enough awareness and concern of the project the Maryland Department of Agriculture pulled its promised 2.2 million dollars in funding to this facility.

**As we gear up for the summer season and all of the impacts that come with it, one item that Worcester County citizens need to start thinking and talking about is the Worcester Comprehensive Plan.** For those that are not familiar, the comprehensive plan was written in 2006, and has not been rigorously updated since 2011. The 10-year review was delayed because of COVID, and now county officials are beginning to talk about the process to update. What the commission has failed to mention, is if they will be allowing public stakeholder participation through this process and if the update will include climate resiliency planning.

We need to start discussing what the 'Vision' for Worcester County looks like going forward. Do we want to be another coastal community that ignores the inevitability of climate change until it's too late? Do we want to let piecemeal development planning trample over our most precious of landscapes and resources? Are we going to leave the most vulnerable communities behind? The time for public involvement is now. We need to be demanding accountability from our elected officials as well as those that serve on the county level in the planning and zoning commissions. *continued to page 5*

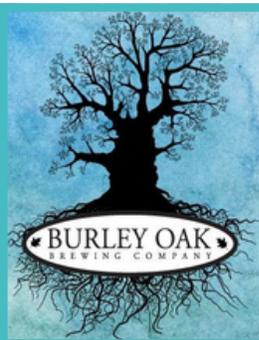
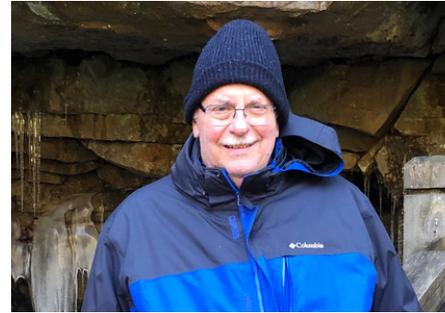


# ACT WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

**Lisa Tossey** currently serves as the assistant director of communications and outreach for Maryland Sea Grant. A longtime resident of the Eastern Shore, she has spent over two decades working in environmental education, outreach, and communications in higher education, NGOs, and state agencies, including Salisbury University, the National Marine Educators Association, Delaware State Parks, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. She enjoys spending her free time hiking, beachcombing, and kayaking throughout Delmarva as well as helping run her family art gallery, Wooden Octopus, in the heart of Berlin, Maryland.



**Charles Brown**, President and co-owner of Charles Brown Glass Company in Salisbury, MD, graduated from Wicomico High School and Gettysburg College. As a lifetime Eastern Shore resident he enjoys boating, biking and frisbee golf. He served as a Boy Scout leader in Snow Hill for many years and is actively involved with his church. "My hope is to preserve the special quality of this area for our grandchildren and future generations" he states.



**CLEAN WATER MAKES GREAT BEER!**  
**BURLEY OAK FUNDRAISER FOR THE ASSATEAGUE COASTKEEPER**  
**MONDAY 4/11 6-9PM**  
**GUEST BARTENDERS:**  
**MIKE SHOTT OF SHOTTI'S / LORI PUGH OF SHAKA BAR**  
**RAFFLES / MUSIC BY OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS**  
**PORTION OF BEER SALES AND TIPS BENEFIT ACT**



# OIL SLICK FIRE DAMAGES TWO RIVER SPANS

*continued from page 1*

The Clean Water Act wasn't passed because a few environmentalists wanted it. It was passed because of a vast public outcry that needs to be renewed if we are to protect our waterways in the future. It is the Clean Water Act that protects our waterways by requiring any person, business, or facility that must discharge waste water or storm water into a local waterway to apply for a Clean Water Act permit to do so, and the holder of this permit is limited to a certain level of pollutant contaminated discharges in order to not further impair the local waterway.

It is the Clean Water Act that allows Assateague Coastal Trust to monitor the government agencies responsible for enforcing this law and hold them accountable if they are not doing their job.

We take our work as the Waterkeeper Alliance licensed organization on the Lower Eastern Shore seriously by holding the nation's Clean Water Act close to our hearts and use it as needed to guide our efforts in keeping the Coastal Bays, its creeks and rivers, protected so they remain swimmable, fishable and safe for all who live or visit this watershed.

So cheers to 50 years of the Clean Water Act and here's to another five decades of using the law and citizen engagement to stop pollution and hold polluters accountable.

# coast kids



**COME EXPERIENCE THE  
NATURE THAT  
ABOUNDS IN THE  
COASTAL WATERHSEED  
OF DELMARVA!**

**PROGRAM INFORMATION & MEMBERSHIP SIGN-UP**

**[WWW.ACTFORBAYS.ORG/COASTKIDS](http://WWW.ACTFORBAYS.ORG/COASTKIDS)**

ACT's Coast Kids program gives families the opportunity to get outside and explore the many diverse environments across Delmarva. Utilizing the outdoors as a classroom to bring hands on science to area youth, Coast Kids summer camps and monthly events are developed to motivate and encourage students to investigate the natural world with inquisition and passion. Check us out online at [actforbays.org/coastkids](http://actforbays.org/coastkids) to learn how to sign up and receive Coast Kids event updates!

## **EARTH DAY AT THE SALISBURY ZOO**

There is a most pleasant aurora at the Salisbury Zoo. A rejuvenating experience with each visit. Coast Kids will be set up Saturday, April 23rd from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm for Earth Day 22'!

Earth Day represents a time to celebrate environmental progress. This year, the Coast Kids booth will be set up to discuss the many benefits of pollinators! Activities include games, demonstrations, food, giveaways, and special exhibitors. Details and directions at [actforbays.org/coastkids](http://actforbays.org/coastkids).

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## **YOUR NEW ASSATEAGUE COASTKEEPER LOOKS TO THE FUTURE**

*continued from page 3*

ACT's commitment to clean, equitable water is ever-pressing as we wrangle non-compliance permits through Maryland Department of the Environment, which has been a hot topic this winter. The enforcement of our federal laws, such as The Clean Water Act has been a challenge that all waterkeepers are currently facing in the state. Clean water impacts us all. From the water we drink, to the showers we take, and the waters we recreate in through swimming, boating, fishing, kayaking and surfing. The repercussions of not making clean water our first priority is limitless. Our tourism would take a deep plunge (pun intended), taking down all of the restaurants, businesses and real estate with it. As we celebrate World Water Day on March 22, and recognize the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, this country's most important environmental law, it is my hope that we can start anew with a deep appreciation and understanding, and start to give clean water the recognition it deserves.

*Gabby Ross - Assateague Coastkeeper*

# REAL TIME DATA COLLECTION THROUGH ENVIRO DIY

The power of real time data is significant. A strong data set supports inferences made about particular subjects of interest as it can reveal key temporal and spatial patterns.

In October 2021, ACT assisted Stroud Water Research Center with the deployment of data stations that span the upstream and downstream portions of the Pocomoke River. These data stations collect critical water quality data parameters every 10 minutes and report the observations to the online data portal Monitor My Watershed (MonitorMyWatershed.org).

Aside of gathering data that is giving an extensive temporal picture of the Pocomoke River's character ACT's watershed specialist, Billy Weiland, explains "in just a couple months of the stations being online, we've been able to identify conductivity spikes at the Snow Hill data station. These conductivity spikes we believe are a result of salt runoff that occurred during the daytime melting of snow and ice from impervious surfaces within the watershed."

As part of Stroud's study, which aims to better understand sediment connectivity between rivers and estuaries using microbial signatures to source track particles, a total of 8 data stations were deployed on the Pocomoke and Choptank Rivers in October, 2021.

The ability to capture data in this way helps produce a powerful dataset that can lend significantly to further study of water quality.

If you would like to learn more about the project, please email Billy Weiland at [billy@actforbays.org](mailto:billy@actforbays.org).



From Shelltown to Snow Hill, ACT and Stroud Water Research Center Make a Mid Winter Sampling Run.

# WATER QUALITY MONITORING RETURNS THIS SPRING

We're excited to get back on the water this Spring when our water quality monitoring "season" begins May 26! ACT currently collects water quality data and samples at 12 locations throughout the coastal bays from Isle of Wight Bay, Assawoman Bay, Herring and Turville Creeks, and the St. Martin River. These samples are processed in our lab and analyzed for the presence of enterococci bacteria. Occasionally, enterococci can be found at harmful concentrations in waterways, posing a health risk to those that come into contact with the bacteria. Just as it is important to be aware of forecasted weather, knowing the condition of our waterways is essential for our health, and that of the ecosystems dependent on the health of these waterways.

**All weekly water quality data parameters and sample results are available to the public at ActForBays.org.** Quick glance conditions are available through the Swim Guide app, which identifies water bodies that are safe to recreate in and those with elevated bacteria readings based on our weekly sample results.

Be part of the ACT Team and help us monitor our waterways for pollution sources and monitor Clean Water Act permits for compliance this summer! Your donation will keep the Coastkeeper boat on patrol and our Coast Kids experiencing the outdoors!

Scan the QR Code using your phone camera or use the enclosed donation envelope to send a check!



# The Marsh

Bringing People Back To Nature Through Literature, Adventure, And The Arts

## Our Story

Fauna to remind us that we are but just another guest,  
and the trail before us to show us the rest.  
Rocks for us to gaze upon and wonder, how many stories came before our own,  
and the time it will take before we read ours in the stone.

Like concentric rings of a tree that we've discovered can be dated,  
and Nature a teacher to show us how it's all created.

-W.R.Weiland



Herbs  
veggies

## Assateague Coastal Trust's 23rd Annual Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 7th!

Native Sun & Shade Pollinators

Online Store Coming Soon!  
ActForBays.org



ACT is excited to bring our annual Native Plant Sale back to the community for the 23rd year on Saturday, May 7th from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm. In addition to pre-orders for pick up, our outdoor retail plant shop is back! We'll have a selection of natives, herbs and veggies available for sale at our new office location 10959 Worcester Hwy, Berlin, MD.

An eclectic mix of native sun and shade pollinators will be offered, including some new additions like culver root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*), eastern wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*), and tall larkspur (*Delphinium exaltatum*). We'll also have lots of herbs, and tomato and pepper varieties grown by local organic guru, Dave Wiley of Herbs, Spice, and Everything Nice.

To place online pre-orders and to view our full inventory of available plants, visit ACT's online plant sale store at [ActForBays.org/plantsale](http://ActForBays.org/plantsale)

To ensure the best selection of plants being offered, we highly recommend placing *online orders*. All online orders will be available for *pickup on May 7th at the ACT office*.

**The ACT office moved! We are now located at  
10959 Worcester Highway, Berlin, MD next to the Rt 90 overpass.**

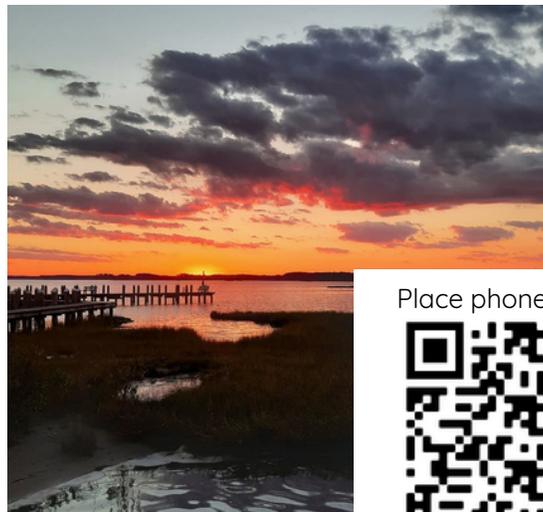


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1972-2022  
The Next 50 Years



Place phone camera here!



Donate today, every \$ helps!

