



# Coastal & Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)

## Maryland's Chesapeake & Coastal Service

The NOAA CELCP program is a nationally-competitive land conservation grant program that helps to conserve important lands in the coastal zone and leverage our limited state and local land conservation resources. Through this program, Maryland's Chesapeake & Coastal Service (CCS) works with DNR's Land Acquisition and Planning Unit, coastal counties and non-governmental organizations to identify and protect important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses. Each year, Maryland submits up to three project proposals each with a requested funding of up to \$3,000,000 per project with 1:1 non-federal match. Maryland identifies projects that support the state's CELCP plan and DNR land acquisition goals.

### CELCP Project Summary

Since 2005, Maryland has received approximately \$16,482,100 from the CELCP program. Maryland is using CELCP funding to protect important coastal and estuarine areas that protect our state's valuable coastal habitats and the living resources that depend upon them and offer additional public access and recreation opportunities.

### Current Activities

#### Ayers Creek – Holly Grove Swamp Phase II

FY 2009 – Received \$1,375,000 from NOAA, to be matched with \$500,000 of non-federal funds and \$875,000 of donated land value.

**Partnership:** The Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Chesapeake & Coastal Service, The Maryland Coastal Bays Program, The Trust for Public Land, and Worcester County.

This approximately 431 acre property along Ayers Creek in Worcester County was acquired in fee simple for conservation in perpetuity. This project will protect a highly functional estuarine and palustrine forested wetland complex. The property is envisioned as the publicly-accessible portion of a multi-phase conservation effort to protect the Holly Grove Swamp – a 4,000 acre



Photo by Catherine McCall

Martin O'Malley, Governor  
John R. Griffin, Secretary





## Coastal Zone

### Counties:

Anne Arundel

Baltimore

Calvert

Caroline

Charles

Cecil

Dorchester

Harford

Kent

Prince George's

Queen Anne's

Somerset

St. Mary's

Talbot

Wicomico

Worcester

and

Baltimore City

contiguous coastal plain forest block – the largest unprotected wooded area in northern Worcester County. This area is critically important to the water quality of the Maryland Coastal Bays, and serves as an important remnant habitat for dozens of species of reptiles, amphibians, and neotropical migrant birds. Protection of this property may provide direct habitat resource benefits to 11 state and/or federally-listed rare, threatened, and endangered species.

### Who can participate in the Maryland CELCP program?

CCS implements the CELCP project proposal process for the state of Maryland. Anyone interested in nominating a property for state consideration in the annual project review process should plan to provide tax map information; a property description; and a brief summary of project status and known conservation, ecological, historic and recreation values on the property. Any Maryland state agency, coastal county local government,

or the sites of the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (CBNERR-MD) is eligible to receive funds for CELCP projects. Properties must be consistent with the Maryland CELCP plan and be located in the coastal zone. CCS works with the applicant and DNR's Land Acquisition & Planning Unit to evaluate and score the properties, select up to three projects, prepare the proposals and submit the proposals to NOAA.

### Future Direction

CCS is currently working with county and state partners to identify potential CELCP projects. In addition, staff is working to finalize the state CELCP plan and incorporate the results of several coastal habitat targeting initiatives. Over the next year, CCS will continue to work in the Coastal Bays region to complete the acquisition of the Ayers Creek – Holly Grove Swamp CELCP project. This project would preserve 431 acres of critical forest and swamp land not only for wildlife, but also for water quality protection for the Coastal Bays.

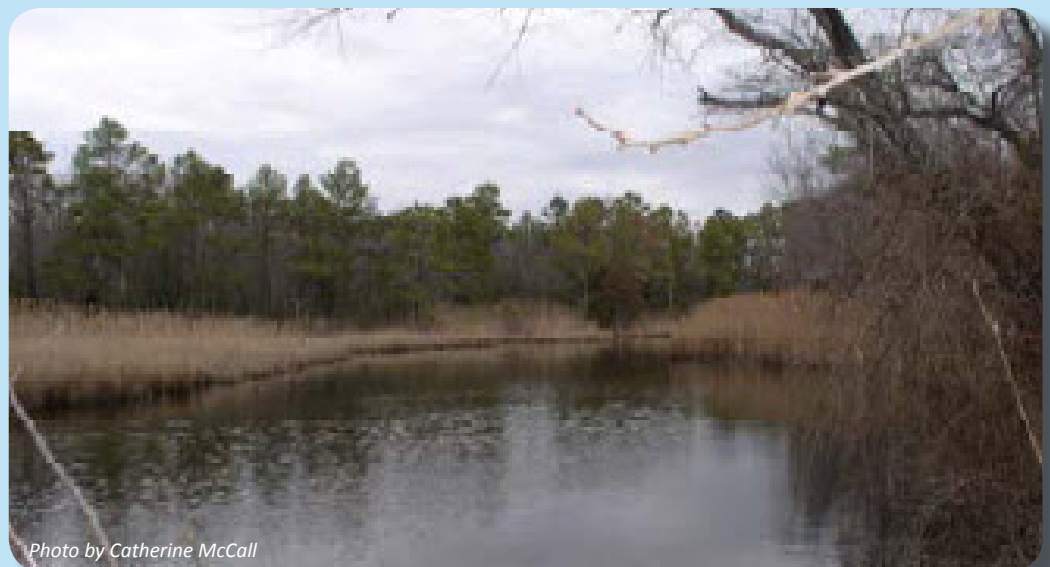


Photo by Catherine McCall

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