

GREEN TEAM QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023



I. Green Team

The goals and activities of the Green Team are based on Bahai Faith's principles of unity, oneness of humanity and nature, universal faith, spiritual teachings of equity and justice, community service, and civic responsibility for the protection of the natural environment and Care of God's Creation. The following Bahá'í Faith teachings, universal faith principles, scientific and indigenous knowledge concepts are guiding principles for the achievement of Green Team and the Sustainable Environment, Climate Resilience and Care of Creation goals of our local communities in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed region;

- Unity of Human/Plant/Animal Life
- Individual and Community Responsibility for Care of God's Creation
- Saving the Earth – Home for All Peoples
- Science in the Public Interest-Unity of Science and Religion
- Sustainable Human and Natural Environments, Climate Resilience in the Matrix of Nature



The Green Teams are created in partnership with the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC) member congregations and faith communities, Interfaith Power & Light (MD/DC/VA) and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay to help build knowledge, environmental steward leadership skills and community service capacity tools to protect clean water in the Chesapeake region. Through this cooperation, we can help to build public knowledge, environmental steward leadership skills and community service capacity tools to restore the waters, forests and native marine and wildlife ecosystems of the Chesapeake Bay Region. In this process, we can participate in sustainable environment, climate resilience and Care for Creation volunteer community service activities for individuals and local communities in our counties and states in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Area.

Green Team Members

Montgomery County, Maryland

Reba Carruth - LSA Bethesda, Maryland /Green Team Leader
Soraya Greiser – Silver Spring Community/Bee – Pollinator-Nature Conservation
Resource Person
Dave Feldman – Bethesda, Maryland, Green Team Advisor

Rockville, Maryland

Joe Assisi - LSA Rockville/ Energy Efficiency/Homes and Building Resource Person

Gaithersburg, Maryland

Fred Samandani – Maryland Agriculture Land Management Resource Person
Robert Rogers/LSA Gaithersburg

Fairfax County, Virginia

Farideh Abbasi - Native Tree/Invasive Weed Removal Resource Person - LSA of Fairfax
County - Northwest Community
Tara Tavakoli – Chesapeake Stream and River Clean Up/Clean Water Resource Person- LSA
of Town of Vienna, Virginia
Mahvash Amini – Green Living Resource Person - Fairfax County - Northwest, Virginia

Baltimore City/County, Maryland

Peter Gottert – Green Team Advisor, Baltimore County, Maryland
Marjorie Clarke - Lead and Clean Water Resource Person/Baltimore City, Maryland



II. Goal of Green Team Quarterly Newsletter

The goal of the Green Team quarterly newsletter is to provide information and resources on the following areas of Faith Community Service, Nature Conservation and Public Education for Care of God’s Creation in our local communities and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed area;

- Protection of Clean Drinking Water
- Restoration of Chesapeake Bay Watershed Streams and Rivers
- Native Chesapeake Tree Planting, Invasive Weed Removal and Forest Conservation
- Green Living
- Sustainable Environment
- Sustainable Agriculture and Land Management
- Clean Renewable Energy Transition and Energy Efficiency
- Climate Change Mitigation, Adaptation and Resilience

The specific areas of Green Team and Working Group engagement in Montgomery County, Fairfax County,

Baltimore City/County and their Chesapeake states are as follows; protection of clean drinking water, stormwater management, native plant and tree species planting, invasive weed removal and forest restoration in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The local Green Teams work to encourage and support sustainable community conservation efforts, Green Living, clean renewable energy transitions and energy efficiency for climate change resilience and "Care of God's Creation." To achieve these goals, the Green Team and Working Groups work in cooperation and collaboration with the following local community, county and state government, inter-faith, civic, business and industry and non-profit environmental organizations;

- Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake Bay
- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
- Interfaith Power&Light (MD/DC/VA)
- My Green Montgomery/Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Fairfax Office of Environment and Energy Coordination
- Friends of Accotink Creek
- State of Maryland/ Chesapeake Bay Watershed Region and Communities
- Montgomery County, Maryland Government Faith Community Advisory Council
- Bethesda Green
- Rock Creek Park Conservancy- Bethesda, Maryland – Washington DC
- Gunpowder Falls Conservancy – Baltimore County, Maryland
- Potomac Conservancy - Maryland
- Brookside Gardens



III. Green Team Actions and Community Service Activities for Clean Water

In the Chesapeake Bay Watershed area, streams and rivers provide the water we drink, the food that's grown on our farmlands, protect our health, and provide well-being and peace from nature. The streams and river network flows across more than 380 miles and connects local communities and states to forests, farms, cities and the Atlantic Ocean through the Chesapeake Bay. In light of the local, regional and greater national and world community service goals of the Universal House of Justice 9 Year Plan, the Green Team invites adults (of all ages), youth and families to volunteer for upcoming Chesapeake stream/river/watershed clean ups.

The Green Team cooperates with local community groups, civic environmental/climate change/conservation organizations, public-private Chesapeake Bay conservation groups, and Interfaith partners for the Chesapeake Region to help protect clean drinking water. Since the Fall season in 2022, Green Team members and friends in Montgomery County, Maryland, Fairfax County, Virginia, and the Baltimore, City/County areas participated in local community stream and park clean up activities.

1. Chesapeake Stream/River and Park Clean Up Community Service Activities

In local communities, cities and heavily urbanized counties surrounding Montgomery County, Fairfax County and



Chesapeake Stream/River and Park Clean Up

Washington, DC, polluted stormwater runoff is the greatest threat to drinking water quality in our area. The polluted stormwater runoff is the only growing source of pollution to the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. Trash and plastic are major sources of stormwater pollution in local streams and rivers that flow into the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Pollution from trash and plastic is now a major threat to water quality and public health in Montgomery County, Fairfax County, Baltimore City/County and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed region. Our participation in volunteer community service and conservation activities sponsored by civic groups, environmental organizations, local/county/state governments and nature conservancies protects local streams, rivers and parklands - and makes them cleaner, safer, and more beautiful for all.



VA-Chesapeake Stream and River Clean Up

2. Fairfax County, Virginia – Tara Tavakoli, Chesapeake Stream and River Clean Ups/ Clean Water Resource Person – Fairfax County, Virginia

**Contact Information: tavakolitara@gmail.com
703 255-1703**

In Fall 2022, Tara coordinated and participated in volunteer Chesapeake stream and river clean up activities in Fairfax County, Virginia. The local volunteer community activities were organized by Friends of Accotink Creek at the following locations; Fullerton Road, Chain Bridge Road, Braddock Road and Woodburn Rd. Her efforts are very much appreciated by the Friends of Accotink Creek and our community!!!

3. Bethesda - Montgomery County, Maryland – Joe Aissi and Reba Carruth Rock Creek Park Conservancy Stream Clean Up January 14 -16, 2023

In honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy of social action and Beloved Community, the Rock Creek Conservancy hosted an annual MLK Weekend of service.

To serve the common good of our community, Rock Creek Conservancy, the National Park Service, and the Stream Team Leaders of Parkside GREEN and the Rosemary Hills-Lyttonsville Local Park hosted litter removal and stream clean up restoration events.



MD-Litter and Removal Restoration



IV. Green Team Community Service for Chesapeake Native Tree Planting, Invasive Weed Removal and Forest Conservation

1. Native Tree and Forests

Trees and forests naturally filter out toxins, improve water quality and reduce air pollution. The native trees and forests across the Chesapeake region provide the cleanest waters to the Potomac River. For climate

resilience, trees cool our cities, and provide homes and food for wildlife. The tree leaves produce life-giving oxygen required for human and animal life, and their roots reduce soil erosion and absorb pollutants that would otherwise pollute our Chesapeake Bay rivers and streams. Finally, tree branches and trunks are a fundamental component of natural habitats and homes for birds and animal wildlife including the Great Blue Heron and American bald eagle.

2. Invasive Plant and Weed Management

The Green Team works with local community and civic organizations, local county and state governments to reduce invasive plants that destroy native trees and forests across the Chesapeake region. Non-native, invasive plants pose a serious threat to the clean drinking water and human/plant/animal and environmental health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Oriental bittersweet is one of dozens of non-native weeds, trees, shrubs and grasses that are aggressively invading the Chesapeake Bay watershed's delicate ecosystems. Non-native weeds are not originally from this region, and do not have any predators, parasites or pathogens here to limit their spread. Invasive weeds now threaten, Chesapeake native ecosystems, wildlife, sustainable environment and clean water for the following reasons:

- Out-compete beneficial native plants and trees across the Chesapeake region
- Replace native food and habitat that birds and other wildlife depend upon
- Eliminate host plants for native insects such as butterflies
- Disrupt plant-pollinator relationships, which allow native plants to reproduce
- Aggressive and rapid growth accelerate water pollution and climate related damage to Chesapeake communities, natural resources and economies.

Plants and trees that were historically imported from other parts of the nation - and the world - bring unintended harm to the Chesapeake Bay watershed and natural ecosystem. As a result, clean water, local native trees, forests, plants, animals and marine life are now at risk from non-native invasive species.

3. Native Tree and Forest Protection/ Invasive Plant Species Removal

In the Chesapeake Bay region, native trees and plants are now required for clean water, sustainable environment and climate resilience. The native trees and forests are adapted to local soil, rainfall, and temperature conditions, and have developed natural defenses to withstand many types of insects, diseases - and thrive with minimal maintenance. For these reasons, native tree and forest restoration goals set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan call for 900 miles of streamside forests - also called riparian buffers - to be planted each year until 70 percent of all streams in the Bay region are lined with trees.

Fairfax County, Virginia – Farideh Abbasi Motamedi
Native Tree Planting/Invasive Weed Removal Resource Person
Contact Information: fabbasi2@yahoo.com – 703 727-9409

In Fall 2022, Farideh Abbasi Motamedi volunteered with the Fairfax County Parks Department to remove invasive weed species that kill native trees and forests. The volunteer community service was given in September and October 2022 in the following local parks in Fairfax County, Virginia; Lakeside Park Habitat Restoration Fairfax, Lake Fairfax Park Habitat Restoration Reston



VA-Native Tree Planting/Weed Removal

and Justice Park Habitat Restoration Falls Church. Farideh pulled many invasive plants especially beefsteak, Japanese stilt grass, porcelain berry, carpet grass, Japanese honeysuckle, and long-bristled smartweed. Farideh was recognized and greatly appreciated for her volunteer community service!!

**Baltimore County, Maryland – Peter Gottert, Gunpowder Falls Conservancy
Native Tree Planting Resource Person
Contact Information: pgottert@yahoo.com**

Peter Gottert is a long time volunteer and volunteer coordinator for native tree planting programs of the Gunpowder Falls Conservancy in Baltimore County, Maryland. In this capacity, Peter is leading the Green Team education and capacity building efforts to recruit individuals, youth, families and adult volunteers for local community, county wide native tree planting and forest restoration service projects in our area!



Native Tree Planting - MD



V. Green Living for Care of God's Creation: Sustainable Environment, Renewable Lifestyles, Climate Resilience in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Community – and the World

The Green Team is developing information and resources for Green Living as a foundation for Care of God's Creation. The compilation of information and resources for individual, household and community transitions to Green Living combines spiritual, public policy and scientific information and recommendations. Green Living means practicing our faith through Care for God's Creation. Each of us has the power to make lifestyle choices – and take decisions as a Faith Community - that reflects our spiritual responsibilities to protect nature and the natural environment. The Green Living guide is designed to support individual lifestyle and community action changes - and offers resources and ideas to assist in greening our lives and sharing God's love with the world.

The Green Team and its Clean Water and Native Tree/Forest Restoration Working Groups will review the latest U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of Energy recommendations and standards for energy efficient and water efficient household appliances and consumer products for Green Living. For renewable clean energy transition to reduce carbon emissions, the Green Team is researching public information and resources available for the transition to electric vehicles and transportation and – the phase out of gas fueled appliances and HVAC systems in homes and buildings. The information will be combined with current Care of Creation protocols for individuals and Faith Communities and presented to our LSAs, communities and clusters. The ultimate goal of the Green Living information and resource document is to increase and strengthen our participation in public education, community service and engagement for the common good of our local Chesapeake community, states, the nation and the world.

Youth Activity-Garrett Park, Maryland: Call for Service - Green Team Youth Night Presentation Saturday, January 21, 2023 -Dave Feldman and Reba Carruth

The Green Team was invited to give a Youth Night presentation for discussion of global climate change, environmental sustainability in the local Chesapeake Bay area - and the world. The monthly youth night event is hosted by **Saba Medhane and Navid Nekoui**. The presentation was given by Dave Feldman, Green Team Advisor and Reba Carruth – Green Team Leader. The presentation and youth discussion topic was “**Climate Change and Sustainable Environment: Roles for Youth Service for Sustainable Communities in the Chesapeake Region and the World**”. The Youth Night event was very well attended by youth and parents. The program discussion focused on climate threats to the Chesapeake Bay communities, sustainability and emerging new business models for society. Dave Feldman led a lively discussion of actions we can take to support sustainability in the world. Reba Carruth invited youth to arise and serve our local Chesapeake communities. The meeting concluded with a **Call for Youth Community Service and Conservation Volunteers**, and participation in upcoming Green Team activities for native tree planting, invasive weed removal and Chesapeake Bay stream/river clean up.



VI. Green Team Policy and Care for Creation Advocacy News: Sustainable/ Renewable Environment and Climate Resilience

Across the Chesapeake Bay watershed region, local communities, county and state governments, interfaith groups and civic organizations are working to restore and protect clean water, native trees and forests, and wildlife ecosystems. In Montgomery County and Baltimore, Maryland, Fairfax County and Northern Virginia, the District of Columbia and the Chesapeake Bay area, utility companies, municipalities, cities, counties and states are working in cooperation to implement standards for sustainable environment, clean renewable energy transition and climate change resilience. To achieve these goals for the common good of Chesapeake Bay communities and states, science based water quality, stream and river pollution removal, native tree planting, forest conservation and land preservation require volunteer service for conservation. In the State of Maryland, the 5 million native tree planting program for climate resilience is now underway. In Fairfax County, Virginia, an urban tree and forestry plan is now implemented. In the Baltimore area, urban and county wide native tree planting programs are underway to protect clean drinking water in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. For more information about volunteer service and advocacy please visit the Local/County/State Information Resource Website Links:

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

<https://www.cbf.org/about-the-bay/>
<https://www.cbf.org/issues/climate-change/>
<https://www.cbf.org/issues/>

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake

<https://www.interfaithchesapeake.org>
Bay Journal
<https://www.bayjournal.com>



VII. Green Team Calendar of Events

The Green Team calendar of events and volunteer community service activities are planned in cooperation with local communities, Local/County/State Governments, Local/National Park Services, Rock Creek Park-Potomac-Gunpowder Falls Nature Conservancies, and Interfaith, Civic and Community Organizations. The volunteer community events cover the following areas of service

and civic responsibility; Sustainable Environment, Renewable Clean Energy Transition, Energy Efficiency, Climate Resilience, Green Living, Native Tree Planting and Invasive Species Removal for Trees/Forests Conservation, Clean Drinking Water, Stream/River Cleanup and Plastic Removal.

January 2023

January 30, 2023

Montgomery County Parks Speaker Series:

Maryland Natural Heritage Program

“On the Brink: Maryland’s Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species”

Kerry Wixted – Speaker

Monday, January 30, 2023 11:00am -12pm

Over 1,200 species have been listed as rare, threatened, or endangered in Maryland. This Maryland Natural Heritage Program session will cover a few ways to help with the conservation of rare species and their habitats.

Register Online:

<https://montgomeryparks.org/events/montgomery-parks-virtual-speaker-series-on-the-brink-marylands-rare-threatened-and-endangered-species/>



February 2023

February 23, 2023

**Gunpowder Falls Conservancy 2050 Roundtables
Baltimore, Maryland**

Thursday, February 23, 2023/3:00pm – 5:00 pm

FREE event to encourage discussions among organizations and individuals within the Gunpowder Watershed. Light refreshments will be provided.

<https://www.gunpowdervalleyconservancy.org/gunpowder2050/>

**February 25, 2023 - Potomac Conservancy,
Potomac River Clean Up
Saturday, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Jones Point Park - 100 Jones Point Drive,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Online Registration Link:

<https://potomac.org/pc-events/2023/2/25/potomac-river-cleanup-at-jones-point-park-alexandria-va>

March 2023

March 9, 2023

Gunpowder Falls Conservancy 2050

Roundtable: Baltimore, Maryland

Thursday, March 9, 2023 / 5:30 – 7:30 pm

FREE event to encourage discussions among organizations and individuals within the Gunpowder Watershed. Pizza will be provided.

<https://www.gunpowdervalleyconservancy.org/gunpowder2050/>

March 2, 9, 16, 2023 -Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake Green Team Training

Faithful Green Leaders Training -Thursday Evenings, Registration Link:

https://www.interfaithchesapeake.org/march_2023_fgl

March 9th and 16th / 2023 Wild & Scenic Film Festival – 5th Annual Chesapeake Environmental Event Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival is designed to inspire a love for nature and activate audiences to take action in their communities through film and art. There are 10-15 short films that highlight topics related to nature, community activism, adventure, conservation, water, energy and climate change, wildlife, environmental justice, agriculture, Native American, and indigenous culture. The event will be held at unique theater or theater-like venues across the watershed; Virginia and Pennsylvania on March 9, 2023 and in Maryland and Washington, DC on March 16, 2023 with In-Person Wild & Scenic Film Festival Venues at these locations:

- March 9, 2023/Virginia - Science Museum of Virginia IMAX
- March 16, 2023/ Maryland - Stage & Screen Studios Washington D.C. -The Miracle Theater

Ticket Purchase Information/Reservations Available
<https://www.allianceforthebay.org/event/wild-scenic-film-festival/>

March 18, 2023 - Potomac Conservancy Potomac River Cleanup at Parklawn Local Park, Rockville, Maryland
Saturday, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Cleanup Parklawn Local Park, 13000 Veirs Mill Road, Rockville Maryland 20853
Online Registration
<https://potomac.org/pc-events/2023/3/18/potomac-river-cleanup-at-parklawn-local-park-rockville-md>

March 23, 2023 - Rock Creek Park Conservancy: Women Who've Made a Difference in Rock Creek: Race, History, and Rock Creek Series
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM (Virtual Zoom Event)

This program will explore the ways in which notable women, including Rachel Carson and Elizabeth Proctor Thomas, have shaped Rock Creek and left a wider legacy - and the ways Rock Creek shaped them. Kym Elder of the National Park Service and Rebecca Henson of the Springsong Museum will speak on a panel moderated by Rock Creek Park botanist Ana Chuquin. Please register;

<https://www.rockcreekconservancy.org/calendar#event=75486578;instance=20230323173000?popup=1>



April 2023

April 8th, 2023

**Rock Creek Conservancy: Extreme Cleanup
TBD**

Montgomery County, Maryland/District of
Columbia

**April 8, 2023 - Potomac Conservancy: Potomac
River Clean Up**

Saturday - 9:00 AM -11:00 AM

Turkey Run - Turkey Run Loop Road, McLean,
Virginia , 22101

Online Registration: <https://potomac.org/pc-events/2023/4/8/potomacriver-cleanup-at-turkey-run-mclean-va>

**April 14 – 15, 2023 – American Horticultural
Society’s Annual Spring Garden Market
Friday – Saturday 10:00am – 4:00pm**

\$5 per walk-up/\$20 per car parking fee per family
The two-day native plant sale and garden product marketplace is held at the organization’s headquarters at River Farm in Alexandria, Virginia. The event is one of the largest fundraisers for River Farm, and has local and national horticultural and historical relevance. River Farm is one of George Washington’s original five farms. River Farm showcases the American Horticultural Society’s vision of a nation with sustainable gardens for the public to enjoy, appreciate and learn about nature and gardening.

April 22, 2023 - EARTH DAY

**April 22, 2023 Potomac Conservancy Earth
Day Matthew Henson Trail Cleanup
Saturday 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Matthew Hanson Trail- 12326 Dewey Road, Silver
Spring, MD, 20906

On-Line Registration: <https://potomac.org/pc-events/2023>

May 2023

May 18, 2023

**8th Annual Mountain Maryland Native Plant
Festival: Maryland Native Plant Society
Saturday, May 18, 2023 – New Germany State
Park: Garrett County, Maryland
10:00am – 3:00pm**

Discover the important connection between native
plants, people, & wildlife!

- A large variety of native plants & nature-themed artisan items for sale!
- Scheduled programs & activities highlight native plants & biodiversity!
- Local experts answer questions on native plants & other conservation topics!

<https://mdflora.org/event-5125121>

