

Cecil County Forest Conservancy District Board

2025 Year-in-Review

Outreach, Community Engagement, and Special Events:

- The Board hosted a Maryland Big Tree Program Centennial celebration at the Donaldson Brown center on March 30th, 2025. The event was widely attended by supporters of the Big Tree program, including former DNR staff. State Delegate Kevin Hornberger attended and presented a Maryland House of Delegates official citation recognizing the 100 years of the MBTP. State Forester Anne Hairston-Strang also presented a similar citation from the Maryland Senate. Additionally, the Comptroller of Maryland also sent an official letter of congratulations to the MBTP.
- The Board ran a Cecil Forestry Board table at the 2025 St. Mary Anne's Garden Market, providing forestry outreach, education, and white pine seedlings to the public.
- The Board made a \$150 donation to the Cecil County 2025 Envirothon.
- The Board discussed the request for public comments on the proposed removal of the Black Hill Ranger Station fire tower.

Tree Planting:

- The Board provided Cecil County Public Schools 1500 bare root white pine seedlings in support of their 2025 Arbor Day program.
- The Board gave away another 100 white pine seedlings at their annual booth at the St. Mary Anne's Garden Market.

- The Board held a free raffle for visitors to the Board's St. Mary Anne's Garden Market booth. Mike Morgan graciously donated 3 red chokeberry shrubs to sponsor the Cecil Board's raffle.
- The Board planted a descendant of a yellow-poplar Liberty Tree. The tree was a gift from the Allegany Forestry Board. The tree was planted behind the Black Hill Ranger Station.
- The Board reviewed the Underserved Areas map of Cecil County and discussed potential tree planting areas and grants.

Natural Resources Career Camp:

- Gabrielle attended the 2025 Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) Conference in Ocean City, MD. At the event Gabrielle ran a booth on behalf of NRCC to promote the camp to teachers who teach natural resources related programs across the state.
- Gabrielle and Matt Spiroff, Secretary (Maryland Forest Service) submitted a NRCC press release for the 2025 camp through DNR channels for approval. DNR approval to use the press release was granted.
- Gabrielle, Chairperson of the Cecil Board, served as the Director of the 2025 Natural Resources Camp (NRCC). Following the 2025 camp, Gabrielle welcomed a new Camp Director and Deputy Camp Director and worked with them to ensure a successful transition of NRCC duties.
- The Board recruited, interviewed, and sponsored 3 campers to attend NRCC 2025. The Board also covered the tuition fee for all three of the campers.

Maryland Big Tree Program:

- Dori, Kathie, and John are active members of the Big Tree Committee, and John continued to serve as the Chair of the Maryland Big Tree Program Committee.
- Board members conducted routine measuring and re-measuring of trees listed on the Maryland Big Tree Program (MBTP) website in Cecil County and offered mutual aid to other county Board's where needed.
- 12 total trees were measured by the Board in Cecil County, of which 4 were new entries into MBTP. One new state champ and one new co-champ are included in the newly measured trees.
- The Board and Emilio Concari (Maryland Forest Service) obtained DNR approval to post the MD Big Tree measuring video highlighting how to measure big trees and how the public can nominate trees.
- John Bennett led efforts by the Maryland Big Tree Program Committee to have a statewide contest for members of the public to find qualifying trees on Maryland State Forest properties.

Routine Board Business:

- The Cecil Forestry Board held a total of 11 regular meetings in 2025.
- The Maryland Forest Service officially recognized Katie Kranich as a Board member and presented Katie with an appointment letter welcoming her to the Cecil County Forest Conservancy District Board.
- Gabrielle, Dori, and Matt attended the October 2025 Association of Forestry Boards meeting. News of the pending changes to Forestry Boards was shared at meetings following the Association meeting. At the meeting, Gabrielle was recognized for her 30 years of effort supporting and serving as the Director of Natural Resources Career Camp with a Directors Commendation.
- Ron continues to serve as the webmaster on the Board's own website. The website provides current meeting agenda, minutes from past meetings, forestry information and educational materials, and listings for Cecil County Big Tree Champions.
- The Board reviewed two Forest Retention Area timber harvest plans. For both plans the Board recommended approval of the plan and included comments regarding the harvest.
- The Board reviewed and discussed new proposed financial requirements and made changes to the Board's financial arrangements in preparation for proposed changes.
- The Board hosted two DNR guest speakers in 2025. The first was Kaitlyn Paulchell, Tree Planting Specialist (Baltimore, Harford, Cecil counties) to discuss the 5 Million Trees Initiative & DNR tree planting programs. Additionally, Daniel Root, Forest Health Coordinator to discuss Forest Health and Forest Legacy Programs in Maryland.