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For Immediate Release...

Public Meeting on Hudson Branch Restoration Project

Berlin, MD - The Town of Berlin and the Maryland Coastal Bays Program are hosting a public meeting to provide information on the design of a stream restoration project in Hudson Branch along Bottle Branch Road and receive public comments on the project. The meeting will be held on April 29 at 5:30 pm at the Berlin Library with an option for virtual attendance. All members of the public are welcome to attend and comment.

“The goal of this stream restoration project is to reduce the flood risk in the Flower and Bay Street neighborhoods and improve the health of water flowing from Berlin into the Newport Bay watershed,” the Newport Bay Project Coordinator Jessica McIntosh said. The project will include construction activities in the Hudson Branch stream along Bottle Branch Road in Berlin.

This restoration effort is part of a larger effort to address flooding in the Town of Berlin and water health in the Newport Bay watershed.

“Newport Bay is one of five bays on Maryland’s coast and the least healthy,” McIntosh said. Newport Bay’s overall health was given a C- on the Maryland Coastal Bays 2023 Annual Report Card due to the very poor levels of seagrass and hard clams, indicator species that reflect the health of the bay.

“Over the next few months, our plan is to re-establish a more natural stream channel and floodplain through elevating and widening the stream. This will create a more natural flow to absorb and slow stormwater, reducing flood risks and filtering stormwater from the streets and yards, taking out pollution and sediment, on its way to the bay.”

Part of the restoration effort will include planting native plants and trees along Hudson Branch to help stabilize the stream banks and provide vital cooling shade for animals living in the stream. Deeper pools will be created to provide habitat for fish and other aquatic life.

This is one of a number of restoration efforts along feeder streams into the Newport Bay watershed to address flooding issues, improve water quality, restore natural habitats, and strengthen the overall health of the watershed for the future.

Ten million dollars in funding over five years for these projects has been provided by the State of Maryland through the Whole Watershed Act. This grant is helping to build an environmental coalition of organizations being led by Maryland Coastal Bay Program that includes the Lower Shore Land Trust, Assateague Coastal Trust, the Town of Berlin and Worcester County.

During the public meeting, there will be presentations about the newly established Newport Bay Partnership, Hudson Branch stream restoration project design, and next steps. After the presentations, members of the public are welcome to make comments and ask questions. Please direct questions to Kate Daub, kdaub@berlinmd.gov.

When: April 29, at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Berlin Library, 13 Harrison Avenue, Berlin, MD 21811

Attend virtually at: www.facebook.com/townofberlinmd/

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