

HARFORD COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

FINAL APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY – May 18, 2021

Members Present: Sally LaBarre, Jackie Koehn, Paul Gartelmann, Roland Beckman, Dennis Kirkwood, Tami Imbierowicz, Lynn Davis, Michael Charlton

Ex-officio Members Present: Paul Magness, Jeff Schoenberger, John Resline, Matt Kropp

Review / Approval of February 16, 2021 Meeting Summary

A motion to approve the February 16th meeting summary was made. The motion was seconded; the Board unanimously approved the meeting summary.

Harford County Agricultural Protection Easements – Mr. Dennis Kirkwood and Mr. Gabriel Foley, Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas (MBBA)

Mr. Kirkwood opened the presentation with the historical background of the MBBA. The MBBA began in 1983 and has been conducted twice since 1983. The purpose of the MBBA is to document breeding patterns for multiple species of birds. This enables scientists to track species population changes, nesting times and locations, species at risk, etc. Mr. Foley is the Director of the third MBBA, currently taking place.

Mr. Foley described how the data is documented based on the location of one's observations. Sections of land are mapped into "blocks", spanning 3x3 miles each, and volunteers or "atlasers" document the breeding patterns observed in each block. There are approximately 1,300 blocks of land mapped in Maryland. Harford County currently has 184 active atlasers. If each atlaser spends 20 hours surveying for breeding behaviors, then an estimated 70 species of birds should be identified in each block.

During a survey, atlasers are looking and listening for signs of breeding evidence. Breeding evidence may include sightings of courtship behavior, nests, chicks or fledglings, or sounds of courtship singing. Each observation is recorded in a database using one of 22 MBBA breeding codes that are classified into three categories: possible; probable; or confirmed sighting or sound of breeding behavior.

Most birds breed during the Spring and Summer, but migration patterns are observed year-round. Recently, a White Ibis was nesting in Maryland, which has never been documented before. Also, within the past three years, Ravens and Trumpeter Swans were observed nesting or paired right here in Harford County for the first time!

Departmental Updates

Mr. Magness announced that beginning in May, the National Wildlife Service will be recording birdsong at Mariner Point Park for six weeks.

Mr. Schoenberger announced that Saturday, May 22nd is the annual Poker Run for Harford County, which kicks off their Summer Adventure activities. He also stated that the County's second Hazardous Waste Day, held on May 1st, collected 7.21 tons of hazardous waste.

Mr. Kropp stated that the Chesapeake Conservancy started an analyzation of Harford County's tree canopy change and restoration opportunity in March. The EAB will likely be getting a presentation on the project.

New Business

None.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm