

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact

Katie Lautar, Baltimore Green Space

Katherine@baltimoregreenspace.org

443-608-0353

Masonville Cove Urban Wildlife Refuge Protected for Generations to Come

Baltimore, MD — Masonville Cove Urban Wildlife Refuge has been protected with a formal conservation easement ensuring that communities will always be able to explore the wildlife refuge. *In total this easement will conserve, in perpetuity, 46.845 acres of the restored Masonville Cove property.*

"Maryland Environmental Trust is grateful for the opportunity to have worked with the Port Administration and Baltimore Green Space to permanently conserve and ensure public access to this truly wonderful shoreline property in the City of Baltimore." John Turgeon, Director of Maryland Environmental Trust.

For over a decade the Masonville Cove Urban Wildlife Areas has been serving countless community members young and old through a partnership of neighborhood organizations, The Port of Baltimore, Living Classrooms Foundation, The National Aquarium, and US Fish and Wildlife. As part of a larger mitigation project, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) restored the area, re-establishing it as a wildlife sanctuary to be enjoyed by all. Last year alone this partnership served over 10,000 visitors, documented over 251 birds, and provided countless hours of enjoyment for those visiting the cove.

As a final protective measure, MDOT MPA worked with Maryland Environmental Trust and Baltimore Green Space to secure an easement on the entirety of the waterfront property covering 70 acres of water and 46.8 acres of restored wetlands and nature trails. The conservation easement process was led by Maryland Environmental Trust in partnership with Baltimore Green Space as the local anchor land trust and ensures that the land must be used for conservation purposes into perpetuity.

"Baltimore Green Space is overjoyed to assist with securing this wetland through easement for children and the eaglets that the Masonville Partnership Team continues to nurture. All community members should have access to water and wildlife. This team is making that a reality, Masonville Cove serves as an example to other cities," says Katie Lautar, Executive Director of Baltimore Green Space.

MDOT MPA entered this easement with Maryland Environmental Trust, a division of MD Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and its local land trust agent Baltimore Green Space. The Masonville Cove Easement was approved at the April 27, 2022 Board of Public Works meeting and filed on September 27, 2022.

The Conservation Easement is intended to prevent Masonville Cove from being used for any purposes except for environmental education, preservation of open space and the protection of natural habitat. The jurisdiction to mandate mitigation requirements falls to the US Army Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. The mitigation requirements are upheld by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) via the Water Quality Certification and the Tidal Wetlands License issued by the Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW).

Masonville Cove Wildlife Refuge Partnership's mission is to inspire all people to explore, discover and respect nature, growing the next generation of environmental stewards. The refuge partnership is a leader in urban conservation, known for superior educational programs and as a community asset and recreation destination where everyone has equal opportunity to benefit from meaningful outdoor and stewardship experiences. This project is a partnership of the Maryland Port Administration, Living Classrooms Foundation, National Aquarium, US Fish and Wildlife Service and several community groups. Find us on our website at masonvillecove.org or here at [Facebook](#).

Baltimore Green Space is Baltimore's only environmental land trust protecting community-managed open spaces created and cared for by the community for the community. Founded in 2007 we protect more green spaces than any other land trust in the city. We protect 17 spaces covering 61 acres of land: 8 food gardens, 5 pocket parks, 2 forest patches, 1 horseshoe pit, and 1 wildlife refuge. We are awaiting the acquisition of 2 more food gardens or farms totaling an acre of food. We also work at the intersection of science, conservation, and community toward policy that protects the natural world and supports the community that cares for the natural world. Our website is baltimoregreenspace.org. You can also find us here at [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#)