

Giving Props to Hunting Creek

By Mary Hoover and Ron Klauda

A major Calvert County stream flows under Rts. 2/4 just north of the Plum Pt. Rd. intersection and then meanders west for about 6 miles to the Patuxent River. Hundreds of motorists cross this stream every day. Most may not even notice it. If they do, how many know its name?

The name of the stream is Hunting Creek. Until recently, this important Calvert stream went largely overlooked, as it lacked signage to denote its existence. This all changed in October 2022 when two Hunting Creek signs were installed by the Maryland State Highway Administration in response to a request from the watershed advocacy group known as the Friends of Hunting Creek (FOHC).

This signage, although a seemingly minor achievement, is no small accomplishment for the FOHC, who had been waiting for over nine months to see their beloved creek acknowledged. The request was submitted in early January 2022, with the hopes that highway signs would help raise awareness--if even subconsciously--for the ecological environs of our everyday commutes.

Despite Calvert County's abundant wildlife and unique ecological diversity, it is surprisingly easy to live on the peninsula and remain largely detached from its astounding nature. With the County's main road running through its center, many commuters drive back and forth each day without appreciating the intricate network of forests and streams interlaced among the plentiful strip malls and subdivisions. Just as highway signage denotes which town center you are entering or which neighborhood you are passing, should there not also be signs indicating the county's significant environmental features? The FOHC believes that our natural environment deserves the same recognition as our built environment, and the installation of Hunting Creek signposts is just one of the many efforts the group has made to advocate on behalf of the watershed.

Since its formation in early 2020, the FOHC has been active in the community, pursuing a range of stewardship tactics to promote the health of the watershed. Notably, the group has taken the initiative in monitoring stormwater management infrastructure in the area and reporting observed failings to the county. The FOHC has also been monitoring water quality in the watershed for the past couple of years and writing extensive reports on their findings. Furthermore, FOHC has testified at many planning commission meetings regarding the Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan Update, and their strong testimonies on the environmental implications of the Phase II expansion may have contributed to its eradication from the plan.



Awareness is a necessary steppingstone for environmental change. By bringing environmental awareness to the county, the planning commission, Hunting Creek residents, and now anyone who notices the new sign on route 2/4, the FOHC is helping to affect positive environmental change in Calvert. So, next time you find yourself passing this little green sign, remind yourself of the stream it signifies, and know that this stream is not only highly important to the FOHC who steward it, but also to all Calvert residents. Because even the most seemingly minor natural features of our landscape play a critical role in the larger, shared ecosystem that ultimately sustains us.

Interested in joining the FOHC or learning more about watershed stewardship in Calvert County? Visit acltweb.org or contact mary@acltweb.org.



FOHC members Kyle Greene (and children), Ron Klauda, and Bob Estes; along with Greg Bowen, ACLT Executive Director, and Mary Hoover, SMCA coordinator, admire the new sign along the northbound lanes