

Sanctuary Celebrates Expansion

By Elaine Friebele

If ospreys, turtles, and striped bass could read newspapers, they'd likely rejoice over the news that Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary has just doubled in size. Standing at historic Pig Point, where Patuxent River steamboats once took on passengers and cargo, Governor Parris N. Glendening announced the state's purchase of a 615-acre tract of land adjacent to Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary. The property, which is home to a diversity of plants and animals and the remains of a Native American fishing village, extends from Wrighton Road to Maryland Route 4 and from Plummer Lane to the Patuxent River (see map). With the addition of the \$4.3 million purchase, all the land on both sides

of the river—from Route 4 to the Calvert County line—is protected from development. Hundreds of acres of wetlands within the preserved land parcel are crucial to improving water quality of the Patuxent River and, combined with woodlands farther inland, provide essential habitats for many important species.

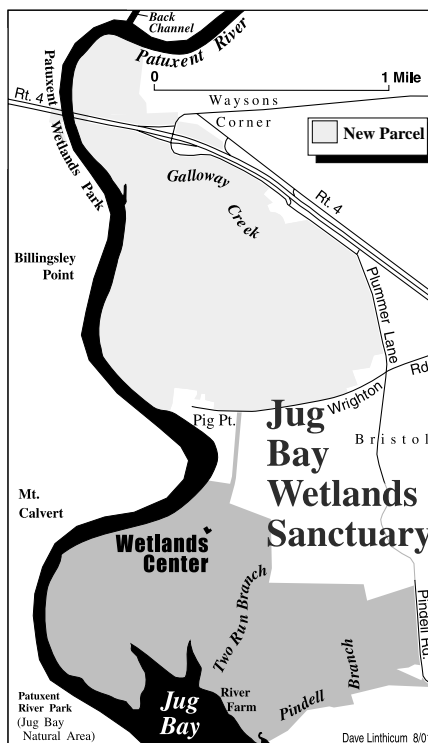
The land, owned by Georgia developer Jim Jacoby, could have become an expanse of manicured lawns punctuated with large homes and crisscrossed by suburban roads. A planned retirement home bordered by an asphalt parking lot would have housed hundreds of occupants. However, Jacoby was willing to consider greener options. "This land is a gem," said Jacoby. "I am pleased to be able to work with the state and local government to make [preservation] happen."

For several years, Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens negotiated with the state to obtain funding to buy the property and enlarge the Sanctuary. Last year, Owens pledged that the county would pay

one-third of the cost of acquiring the land if the state paid the remainder.

Fortunately, state officials ranked the land among the state's most environmentally sensitive parcels under the governor's new Greenprint program, approved and funded by the legislature this year. Within the Greenprint system, "hubs" of 100 acres or more are connected with "links," stretches of green space at least 1,100 feet wide to provide habitat for wildlife migrating among the larger parcels

Eventually, the land will be turned over to Anne Arundel County, which will manage the property as part of Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary. Until public meetings are held and the county develops a plan for the property, its uses remain to be determined.



Near-future Look of Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary (Map by David Linthicum)

In the meantime, Sanctuary friends, volunteers, and staff are celebrating this conservation victory. (See Founders and Futures Celebration on Sunday, October 27, page 8).



Del. George Owings, Gov. Parris Glendening, and County Executive Janet Owens (standing, from left) take a boat ride following announcement of the state's purchase of 615 acres adjacent to the Sanctuary. Seated with sunglasses is Jim Jacoby, who sold the property to the state.

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