



Congratulations to the 2026 Keep Maryland Beautiful Grant Recipients!

This year, 20 grants totaling \$205,134 were awarded for environmental education and stewardship, community cleanup, tree planting and capacity building projects through the [Keep Maryland Beautiful program](#). These grants were awarded to nonprofit groups, communities, schools, and land trusts in Maryland. Learn more about this year's grant recipients below.

Community Stewardship Grants

Total amount awarded for the Community Stewardship Grants: \$47,000

Organization	Project	County	Grant Amount
3200 Carlisle Block Association	Parks and Community Environmental Maintenance	Baltimore City	\$5,000
Berwyn District Civic Association	Berwyn Neighborhood Park Rain Garden	Prince George's	\$3,000
Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church	Rock Rose Food Justice Project: Growing Food, Feeding Communities, and Teaching Children	Baltimore City	\$5,000
Charles Village Community Benefits District	Clean & Green Alleyways Initiative	Baltimore City	\$4,500
Community Food Forest Collective	Community-Led Food Forest Education at Montgomery College	Montgomery	\$4,500
Deep Creek Watershed Foundation	WaterWise Kidzone Kits	Garrett	\$3,400
Friends of Gwynn Falls Leakin Park	Stewards for a Partnership Park	Baltimore City	\$4,500
Historical Society of Charles County	Historic Rich Hill Cabin Site: A metamorphous from Enslavement to a Community Pollinator Garden	Charles	\$2,600

Living Classrooms Foundation	Watershed Stream Studies	Baltimore City	\$5,000
Patapsco Heritage Greenway	Engaging Communities in Patapsco Stewardship	Howard	\$5,000
Rock Creek Conservancy	Rock Creek Resilience: Building Community Capacity for Environmental Stewardship	Montgomery	\$4,500

Land Trusts Assistance Grants

Total amount awarded for the Land Trusts Assistance Grants: \$55,000

Organization	Project	County	Grant Amount
American Chestnut Land Trust	Strengthening ACLT's Land Stewardship Capacity: Supporting the Assistant Land Manager Position	Calvert	\$10,000
Baltimore Green Space	Baltimore Green Space Organizational Support for Financial Resilience	Baltimore City	\$10,000
Conservancy for Charles County	Support to Implement the Conservancy's Plan for Leadership Succession	Charles	\$9,909
Gunpowder Valley Conservancy	Time May Change Me...: A Land Trust's Evolving Needs to Adapt to Perpetuity	Baltimore	\$8,500
Land Preservation Trust	Expanding the Staffing Capacity of Local Land Trusts in Furtherance of Monitoring and Stewardship Efforts in Baltimore County	Baltimore	\$8,500
Scenic Rivers Land Trust	Growing Capacity for a Growing Easement Portfolio	Anne Arundel	\$8,091

Aileen Hughes Grants

Total amount awarded for the Aileen Hughes Grant: \$5,000

2026 Honoree	Grant Amount
<p>Greg Bowen, American Chestnut Land Trust (Calvert County)</p> <p>Greg Bowen set out early in his career to make a lasting impact, ultimately serving as the Deputy Director and Director of Calvert County Planning and Zoning for 33 years. He dedicated his career to safeguarding Calvert’s working lands and its ecological and cultural assets, advancing initiatives such as the Transferable Development Rights program. Through his work on this program, Greg contributed to protecting more than 23,000 acres of land – an achievement that shaped the county into what it is today.</p> <p>Greg Bowen served as Executive Director of the American Chestnut Land Trust (ACLT) from September 2015 until his passing in February 2025. Greg oversaw the permanent preservation of several key properties within these watersheds, acquiring 674 acres and increasing ACLT’s fee simple lands by 70% during his time as Executive Director.</p> <p>One of Greg’s most influential achievements was helping to establish the Southern Maryland Conservation Alliance (SMCA) in 2021. SMCA created a unified regional network of non-profit land trusts, other non-governmental environmental organizations, and governmental agencies across multiple counties. Through Greg’s leadership and vision the alliance has grown to include more than 50 partner and affiliate organizations, forming a strong regional network that continues to advance shared conservation goals. Greg’s leadership at ACLT and in SMCA was central to the successful completion of a major conservation project: the official establishment of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Southern Maryland Woodlands National Wildlife Refuge in 2024.</p> <p>From the beginning, Greg demonstrated exceptional leadership and innovation in building lasting partnerships. Whether he was engaging landowners, working with state and county agencies, helping to form SMCA, or uniting partners to support the Refuge, Greg brought people together around a shared commitment to the land. His legacy at ACLT endures through his contributions to land preservation, his success in strengthening countywide partnerships, and his guidance in safeguarding the ecological health of Calvert County’s vital landscapes, all of which continue to shape the organization’s conservation efforts.</p>	\$5,000

Tree Planting on Agricultural Lands Grants

Total amount awarded for the Tree Planting on Agricultural Lands Grants: \$98,134

Organization	Project	County	Grant Amount
Howard EcoWorks	Holly Hills Forest Expansion and Enhancement Phase II	Howard	\$48,134
Land and Cultural Preservation Fund	Reforestation on Elbow Ridge	Washington	\$50,000

Grants through the [Keep Maryland Beautiful program](#) are awarded to volunteer-based and nonprofit groups, communities, schools, municipalities, and land trusts in Maryland. The grants are designed to support environmental education projects, litter removal, community stewardship, and to help protect natural resources in urban and rural areas.

Presented annually since 1986, the grant program is managed by the Maryland Environmental Trust – a unit of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources – and administered on the department’s behalf by the Chesapeake Bay Trust. The grants are funded by the [Maryland Environmental Trust](#), [Maryland Department of Transportation](#), and the [Maryland Department of Agriculture](#).

