



2012 MWMC Carl Weber Award – Charlie Conklin

Charlie has been involved in Maryland's water monitoring community for at least 20 years. He has worked tirelessly as a volunteer for the Bay, and has assumed many leadership roles in various programs and projects.

A retired Bethlehem Steel engineer and manager, Mr. Conklin has headed projects and organizations aimed at land preservation and cleaner waterways. In each of these roles, Charlie strove to advance many goals of the MWMC, including better communication, advocacy, monitoring and assessment of his local waterways and

the Chesapeake Bay.

Charlie chaired the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay for several years. He guided the Alliance in their efforts to promote restoration and protection of the Bay and its tributaries. He advocated for the Alliance's initiatives of healing the land, connecting people and engaging local communities. While with the Alliance, he also headed a number of programs to improve the environment, including RestoreCorps, which attracts volunteers to local watershed groups; Builders for the Bay, which is focused on changing local codes and ordinances to reduce storm-water runoff; and Forestry for the Bay, which promotes forest management to improve water quality.

Charlie served as Baltimore County's Citizen Representative to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Coastal and Watershed Resources Advisory Committee, and was appointed to the Baltimore County Council Environmental Advisory Committee.

In 2000 and 2002, Charlie assumed a leadership role in an exchange program involving several Marylanders and Russian citizens. Charlie was successful at getting the LaMotte Corporation to donate several water quality test kits that were used during trips to Russia and later donated to the Russian members of the

exchange. Under his leadership, Charlie led field expeditions in both Russia and in Maryland – canoe trips, eco tours and sampling expeditions. His involvement in the exchanges not only benefitted the Russians,, the Maryland “water” community also benefitted from his involvement in the exchange through tech transfer and shared experiences.

Charlie served as Chair of the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy (GVC). He organized and oversaw several riparian buffer tree plantings that involved thousands of students, and many teachers, neighbors and members of the general public. His largest project involved reforestation of Dulaney Valley Branch – a Gunpowder River tributary. As a volunteer environmental educator for the GVC, Charlie has conducted numerous presentations to schools educating hundreds of students about the state of the Chesapeake Bay and on the GVC and our mission of conservation and watershed restoration throughout the Gunpowder Watershed. The GVC reforestation program has grown substantially through his service. As President of the GVC, Charlie oversees all aspects of the GVC Its emphasis is on land preservation, restoration, stream cleanups and education.

Charlie volunteered with the now-defunct Maryland Save our Streams for over 10 years. He was a regular monitor with SOS’ Project Heartbeat in Baltimore County. As a volunteer, Charlie “adopted” freshwater streams and monitored them for benthic macroinvertebrates per standard protocols. This effort required many hours of planning in advance of the actual sampling and data analysis.

Charlie is a good advocate and leader. He is outgoing, diplomatic, forward-thinking and inspires others to not only think about environmental issues but to take action. Charlie has been a wonderful mentor to many, and is widely respected.