

2021 MWMC Carl Weber Award – Rupert Rossetti



Rupert Rossetti has more energy and passion than anyone I have met. Researching the details of his evolution from Geologist (College University, London) to land steward and then water steward has been a fascinating and inspiring journey. He has the gift of bringing people together from all walks of life and has spun an extensive web that connects schools (Conowingo Elementary, Rising Sun Middle and High Schools, Solanco HS, North Bay

Adventure Camp and the West Nottingham Academy), large and small watershed groups (Octoraro Watershed Association (OWA), Alliance For the Chesapeake Bay (ACB), Cecil Land Trust, Lancaster County Conservancy, Lancaster Clean Water Partners and PA Scenic Rivers to name a few) and government agencies (Oxford Regional Planning Committee, Department of Natural Resources Stream Waders Project, EPA Office of Water and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)). He is also a key person in the success of Fair Hill International going well beyond his Volunteer Operations Manager position and through this has befriended local foxhunters and landowners who are a source of volunteers for his stream monitoring program and stream clean-up projects with the Octoraro Watershed Association.

Around the year 2000, Rupert joined the upper eastern shore Tributary Team and eventually led the group. Then he joined a land/water stewardship organization that eventually became the Partnership for Cecil County. In addition, he joined the Cecil County economic development board in the land use subcommittee, and he is an active member of the Tourism Board. With the Oxford, PA Regional Planning Committee, Rupert supports their Environmental Advisory Committee and participates in outreach events such as First Fridays. He is the president of the newly formed Head of the Chesapeake Watershed Alliance (HCWA) which is a group committed to educating the public and creating increased visibility of the issues at stake.

During his work with Phyllis Kilby to improve land use and water quality in the Susquehanna Valley, it became obvious that work upstream in Pennsylvania was critical for continued improvement of Maryland's waters. He joined the OWA as a board member in 2005, served as secretary for several years and became president in 2019. The OWA is a volunteer organization dedicated to cleaning up and restoring the extensive watershed of the Octoraro River both in PA and MD. He was instrumental in the workshops that led to the first OWA Strategic Plan in 2012 and subsequent Plans in 2014 and 2019. Rupert has always been fascinated with mapping and learning about Geographical Information Systems (GIS) which led to work with LIDAR technology. With help from the Chesapeake

Conservancy's Conservation Innovation program, he and the OWA are using the GIS analysis to identify which stream catchments and adjacent farms, are most in need of improvements. This helps prioritize the outreach effort to educate and help the farmers with their conservation plans.