



RMC
Rural Maryland Council



Quarterly Newsletter



Photo: The Rural Maryland Council exhibiting at the Delmarva Chicken Association's BBQ Booster event alongside the Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation on June 18, 2021.

Message from the Chair

Greetings!

Summer is upon us and State buildings have currently reopened to the Normal Level II of the state's Pandemic Flu and Other Diseases Policy for COVID-19. State employees were expected to return back to the office by July 1, 2021. We are very excited to be back to a sense of normalcy. For any updates on state-building COVID -19 policies, please visit the website [here](#).

On May 14, 2021, we hosted a roundtable discussion with Peter Franchot, State of Maryland Comptroller. The topics discussed were the state's fiscal and economic outlook, continued economic recovery in Maryland's rural areas, and the American Rescue Plan Act. We appreciated the Comptroller's recognition of the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund's value of helping to improve the quality of living in rural areas. A question and answer session for attendees with Comptroller Franchot followed the roundtable.

Our 2021 Rural Summit "Redefining Resilience and Recovery" will be held on Wednesday, December 1 and Thursday, December 2, 2021, at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland. We are currently looking for sponsorships, if interested please fill out the forms at the bottom of this newsletter. Also, if you would like to pay by credit card, please visit our [Rural Maryland Foundation](#) website to fill out our electronic sponsorship form. Registration will be open for the Summit soon!

On Wednesday, December 1, 2021, we will host our annual meeting during the Summit from 7 pm - 9 pm. Highlights of the meeting will include the election of our board members, sharing of our annual report, a recap of our activities from the past year, and announcements for our events for the upcoming year. We

will also be hosting the Rural Impact Awards during the meeting. The awards ceremony is an opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations that have performed extraordinary acts of service to communities throughout rural Maryland. Nomination submissions will be available to submit soon! Please join us! Registration for the meeting will be open in the Fall.

As always, we strive to continue to improve the quality of life for our rural Maryland communities. Please take the time to complete our 2021 Rural Issue Survey. Your voice is important to us as it will help guide our legislative and funding priorities for our two grant programs. Take the survey [here](#).

Sincerely,



John Hartline
Chair

Message from the Executive Director

The Rural Maryland Council held a successful 2021 Legislative Session with 60 position statements submitted to the legislators in support of bills. Over 200 bills were monitored throughout the session. The Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget and bills include the concerning police reform, tenant evictions, COVID relief, broadband, telehealth, and telework. The RMC is grateful for the hard work of its Legislative Committee and rural advocates who made the 2021 session a success. View our 2021 Legislative Review [here](#).

On April 9, 2021, we hosted our Spring Executive Board meeting on Zoom. Highlights from the meeting included RMC committee updates and an announcement of upcoming RMC events. Senator Chris Van Hollen was our featured guest speaker. Senator Van Hollen shared an update on the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic including the American Jobs Bill, the American Rescue Plan, and the broadband resources available for students learning virtually in rural areas.

Save the date! Our Fall Quarterly Executive Board meeting will be held on Friday, September 24, 2021, 12 - 2 pm. A location is still yet to be determined, we hope to be able to meet in person. Registration will open closer to the meeting date. Secretary Kelly Schultz from the Maryland Department of Commerce has been confirmed as our featured guest speaker. Register to attend [here](#).

During the warmer months of the year, we do outreach events at fairs and festivals around the state of Maryland to let people know about the great work that the Rural Maryland Council does for Maryland's rural communities. The upcoming outreach events that we will be attending are Delfest (Cumberland, Maryland), Tawes Crab and Clam Bake (Crisfield, Maryland), Autumn Glory (Oakland, Maryland), In the Streets (Frederick, Maryland), Maryland Association of Counties Conference (Ocean City, Maryland), National Folk Festival (Salisbury, Maryland), and the Maryland State Fair (Timonium, Maryland). If you are going to be near any of these events, please stop by and see us!

At the bottom of this newsletter, we have compiled what we think are the most useful rural-focused COVID-19 links and resources for you and your business. I hope everyone is staying healthy and

Events

[Grant Review Board Meeting](#)
8/10/2021
9 am - 5 pm

[Maryland Association of Counties Conference](#)
8/18/2021- 8/21/2021
All Day

[Maryland State Fair](#)
8/27/2021
9:30 am - 9 pm

[RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee Meeting](#)
9/2/2021
10 am - 12 pm

[National Folk Festival](#)
9/10 - 9/12/2021
All Day

[RMC Executive Committee Meeting](#)
9/10/2021
12 pm - 2 pm

[RMC Executive Board Meeting](#)
9/25/2021

productive!

If the Council or I can ever be of any assistance, please contact me at charlotte.davis@maryland.gov or (410) 841-5774.

Sincerely,



Charlotte Davis
Executive Director

Committee Updates



RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee

The RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee will meet on Thursday, September 2, 2021, 10 am - 12 pm via zoom. Learn more about the meeting [here](#).

To learn more about the RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee, please contact the RMC at rmc.mda@maryland.gov



RMC Legislative Committee

The RMC Legislative Committee will meet in the Fall to discuss the upcoming 2022 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session.

To learn more about the RMC Legislative Committee, please contact the RMC at rmc.mda@maryland.gov.

RMC In the News

[RMC opens grant programs](#)
April 20, 2021

[Montgomery County teens take top honors at 2021 Maryland Envirothon](#)
May 12, 2021

[Historic St. Mary's City Launches New Virtual Learning Platform Allowing Distance - Learning Field Trips for Students](#)
May 25, 2021

[Betamore & FITCI Expand Founder City Pitch Competition Deadline Extended & Final Celebration Moved to Fall 2021](#)
May 26, 2021

[Maryland Optimistic for Improved Rural Broadband](#)
June 3, 2021

Community Links

Check out what's happening in rural Maryland...

Training Opportunities & Conferences

Rural Maryland Foundation

- [Tech at the Gap](#) - Rocky Gap Casino Resort - October 14, 2021



**Rural Maryland
Foundation**

Awards and Grants

- [Rural Energy for America Grants](#) - United States Department of Agriculture - Applications due by January 31, 2022

Programs & More

- [Emergency Broadband Benefit Outreach Toolkit](#) - Federal Communications Commission
- [Indicators of Broadband Needs Map](#)- Broadband USA
- [Internships](#) - U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen's Office
- [Maryland Forest Products Industry Report](#) - Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- [Lower Eastern Shore Maryland New Website](#) - Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore

The Rural Maryland Foundation will meet on Thursday, October 7, 2021, 10 am - 12 pm via zoom.

To learn more about the Rural Maryland Foundation or to become a member, please visit the website at ruralmdfoundation.org.

Email: rmc.mda@maryland.gov to share links to your events and programs.

COVID-19 Resources

The links below are for general and specific rural COVID-19 information. The following resources can also be found on our regularly updated [website](#).

- [COVID-19 Resources Useful for Rural People and Communities](#) - The Aspen Institute
- [COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide](#) - United States Department of Agriculture
- [Opioid Treatment Program Guidance for Patients Quarantined at Home with the Coronavirus](#) - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- [Mental Health during the Coronavirus Pandemic](#) - Maryland Health Connection
- [COVID-19 Health Crisis: Financial Relief Guide for Marylanders](#)- Maryland Department of Labor
- [Maryland COVID -19 Crisis Support Program](#) - Maryland Department of Health

2021 Forever Maryland Conference

Over July 13th and 14th, the Rural Maryland Council participated in Forever Maryland's 2021 Maryland Land Conservation Conference, at Ripken Stadium, in Aberdeen, MD. The two-day conference attracted more than 240 attendees, 25 sponsors, and 50 speakers -- bringing together land trusts, landowners, academic leaders, government leaders, heritage organizations, members of the agricultural community, and other partners for a comprehensive discussion about the present and future challenges and opportunities facing Maryland's land.

The conference included an opening presentation from Martha Williams, Principal Deputy Director of the US Fish & Wildlife Service, a federal question & answer session with U.S. Senators Cardin and Van Hollen, an "Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice within Conservation" panel, a presentation on the latest conservation & restoration mapping tools, a special Chief Sustainability Officers Roundtable, a farm tour and much more.

Presentations, pictures, the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) Conduit Street Podcast recording, and other resources are located on the Forever Maryland website.

Forever Maryland is a new statewide 501(c)(3) organization with the purpose of advancing conservation through statewide education, advocacy, and outreach. Please visit www.ForeverMaryland.org for more information.

MAERDAF Spotlight - Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report



The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) received a total of 73 awarded grants totaling \$6,010,510 for Fiscal Year 2021. MAERDAF provides capacity-building grants to rural serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges that promote statewide and regional planning, health care, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education. Due to COVID-19 and with guidance from the Department of Budget and Management, the Rural Maryland Council allocated grant funds in two disbursements for the Fiscal Year 2021. View the Fiscal Year 2021 MAERDAF annual report [here](#).

2021 Rural Summit "Redefining Resilience and Recovery", Accepting Sponsorships

Sponsorship opportunities are currently available for our 2021 Rural Summit "Redefining Resilience and Recovery". Thanks to our early sponsors: Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, Upper Shore Regional Council, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore, Angel Flight East, and the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation. Hurry now, as we intend to include sponsors on our invitations and marketing materials.

Our one-day conference will feature presentations on topics such as

- Agriculture, Aquaculture, Forestry
- Health Care
- Workforce and Economic Development
- Community Development

The 2021 Summit provides a unique opportunity for public and private sector leaders to get together to learn about innovative ways organizations approach these subjects in rural Maryland.

Our audience includes stakeholders in State and local government; members of the for-profit community, nonprofit organizations that work in rural communities; professionals representing health care, economic development, agriculture, and community development, and individual rural citizens interested in the welfare and growth of their communities.

To become a sponsor, please view the list of [Sponsorship Opportunity Levels](#) and fill out the [Summit Sponsorship Form](#).

We hope you will support our efforts!

Rural Maryland Council is an independent state agency and Maryland's federally designated State Rural Development Council under the United States Department of Agriculture's National Rural Development Partnership. Our mission is to bring together federal, state, county, and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to develop and implement policy solutions. As a collaborative partnership, the RMC operates under the guidance of a 40-member Executive Board, in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner.

Rural Maryland Council | 410-841-5772 | rmc.mda@maryland.gov | <http://www.rural.maryland.gov/>
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