

Magothy River Reef Ball Project

The Magothy River Association (MRA) is developing fishing reefs at multiple locations in the Magothy River in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Maryland Environmental Service (MES). Funding is being provided by grants and in-kind services from reef partners. The project includes diver training and environmental monitoring by divers.

The Reef Balls are being deployed under the terms and conditions of DNR's oyster sanctuary permit for the Magothy River. The fishing reefs will be developed near existing oyster reefs using more than 100 Reef Balls. DNR is providing technical advice and coordination with sportsfishing groups. MES is providing planning and technical advice for Reef Ball acquisition, local production and deployment.

The Reef Balls can be up to 400 pounds apiece and are several feet high. Each Reef Ball provides complex reef structure for attachment by marine organisms including filter feeders and vegetation. The modules will be placed in clusters to magnify their biological effectiveness relative to use by fish populations. Reef performance will be monitored through MRA's longstanding diver and diver training program.

Acquisition and deployment of Reef Balls is being funded through a grant to MRA from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and Fish America Foundation with supplemental in-kind volunteer support from MRA, MES, Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) and others. Additional Reef Balls are being funded through a grant to MES by the Abell Foundation.

MES provided 4 Lo Pro Reef Balls for the Magothy River project. MES and MRA held two demonstration pours with volunteers from MRA, MES, AACC, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Naval Academy Oceanography Club, and others. AACC and Ferry Point Marina graciously hosted the pour events. The goal of the pours is to provide hands-on opportunities for individuals to help with environmental restoration in the Magothy River watershed and to supplement the quantity of Reef Balls that will be available for use.



**Demonstration Reef Ball pour
Anne Arundel Community College
April 2004**



Bay Ball with disease-free, hatchery-set oyster spat that was installed at Memorial Oyster Reef

Organizations and individuals interested in assisting the Magothy River fishing reef project through contributions for habitat development and volunteer opportunities are welcome contact the MRA at 410-647-8772 or the MES Artificial Reef Coordinator at 410-974-7261, Ext. 315, for additional information.

Check the MES website at www.menv.com for additional information about the Maryland Environmental Service and the agency's environmental restoration work involving oyster recovery, the Poplar Island Environmental Restoration Project, Hart-Miller Island South Cell Habitat Development and artificial fishing reefs. Information about Reef Balls can be found at www.reefball.com.

MES previously installed 225 medium sized Reef Balls at 5 oyster reef sanctuaries under DNR's sponsorship. These modules are field testing the technology's capability to support the oyster recovery program. MES, with assistance from the Reef Ball Development Group, and Reef Ball Foundation are working cooperatively to bring Reef Balls to the artificial fishing reefs in support of reef and oyster restoration activities. MES has established a modest local production capability to support introduction of the technology for developing and enhancing fish habitat and to provide sport fishing opportunities.

Grant support for the development of fish habitat and fishing opportunities using Reef Balls has been graciously provided by the Chesapeake Bay Trust and Abell Foundation, Exxon-Mobil Foundation, Fish America Foundation, and Reef Ball Foundation. In-kind support is being provided by various reef partners.

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Demonstration Pour, Anne Arundel Community College, April 3-4, 2004



Earth Day Diver Reef Ball Training and Demonstration Pour Magothy River Association and Maryland Environmental Service Ferry Point Marina, April 24-25, 2004

