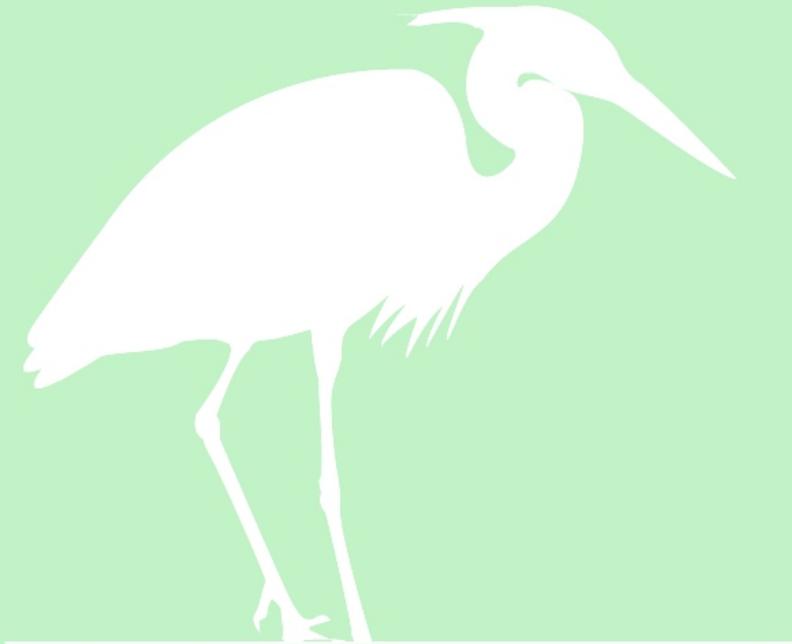


St. Mary's River Watershed Association

**FUNDRAISING PLAN**

2007 – 2010



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St. Mary's River Watershed Association

## FUNDRAISING PLAN 2007 – 2010

*A good fundraising plan is*

- *a plan,*
- *within a plan,*
- *within a plan.*

### Fundraising Committee Members

Richard Holden, Chairperson  
Joe Anderson  
Bob Lewis  
Roger Stone  
Joan Poor

With the help of Dr. Salvatore Meringolo

Adopted by the Fundraising Committee      September 19, 2007  
*Date*

  
*Signature*

Richard Holden, Chairperson

Adopted by the Board of Directors      October 6, 2007  
*Date*

  
*Signature*

Joseph F. Anderson III, President

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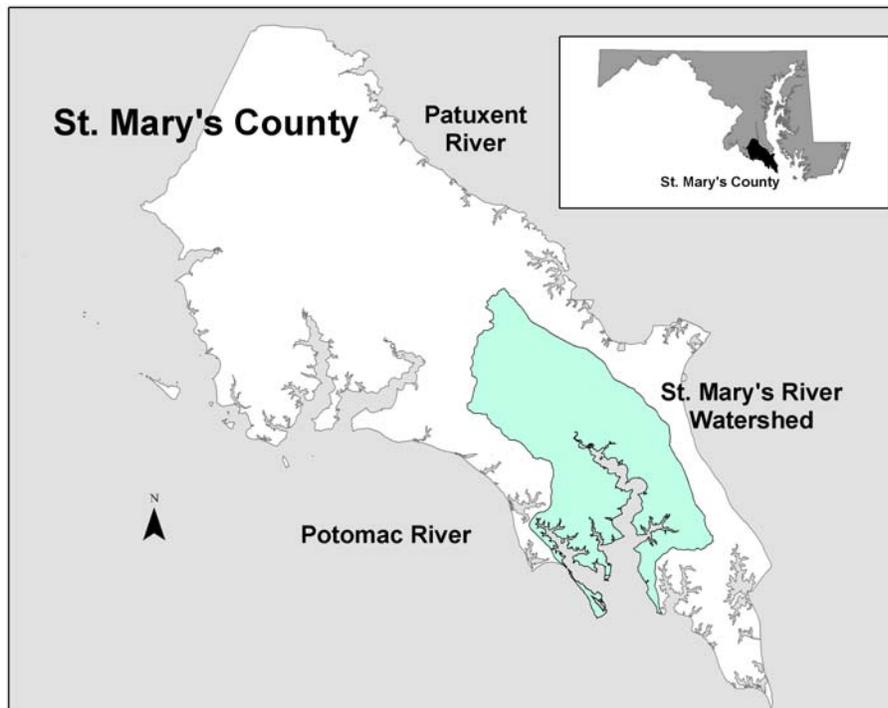
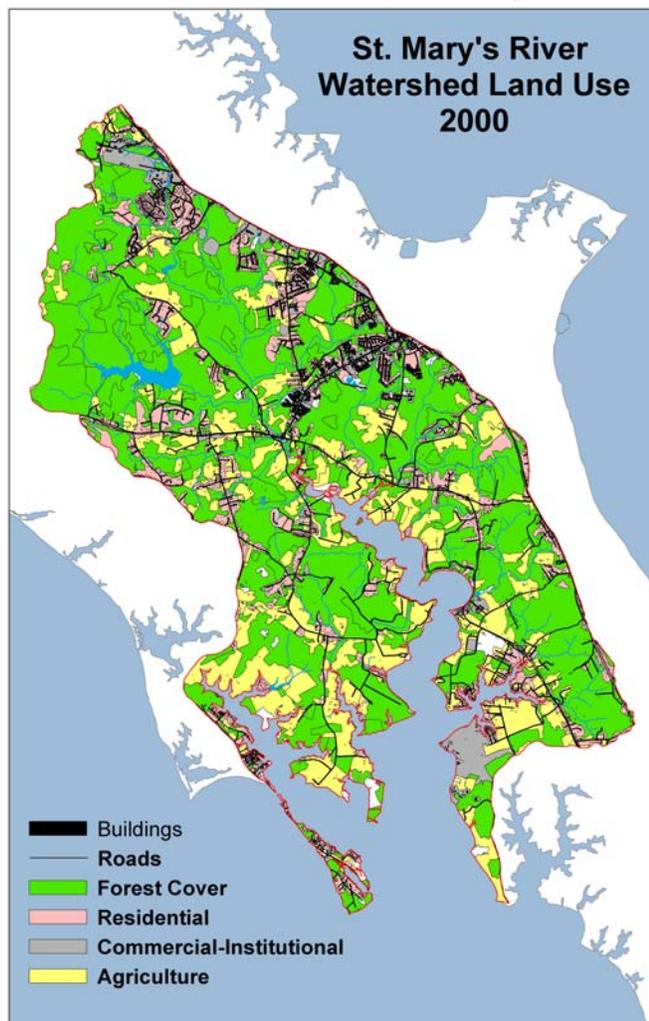


Fig. 1

Fig. 2



*Maps courtesy of St. Mary's College of Maryland and the St. Mary's River Project.*

## Summary

### Overview of Process

The Fundraising Committee met four times in the development of this plan. The process was launched in the winter of 2007 with an initial meeting with Dr. Salvatore Meringolo, Vice President of Development for St. Mary's College of Maryland. Dr. Meringolo is well versed in fundraising and he is a founding member of the Association. He provided the committee with fundamental principles of a good fundraising plan and with unwavering support for the Association's strategic planning thus far.

Beginning with the choice of two simple models from which to build the foundation of the Association's plan, the committee weighed the positive and negative aspects of each model with particular attention being paid to the predictability of funding.

After choosing a model, the committee developed a list of potential activities for the Association to pursue, again with attention being paid to the predictability as well as the productivity in terms of funding. Activities, such as membership (dues) recruitment and retention, were then prioritized by predictability in funding and by labor requirement for execution—with membership dues and member donations winning the committee's unanimous support as the most important activity for all Board members to become engage in over the next three and a half years.

Recognizing the value of outside scrutiny, the committee debated the pros and cons of soliciting help with the plan prior to submittal to the Board. Weighing the urgency for a fundraising plan and the need to begin immediately on execution of a plan, the committee chose to recommend to the Board the contracting of consultant services in late 2007 for the purposes of further refining the Association's Strategic Plan, developing a companion implementation plan, and further refining the Fundraising Plan.

A strategic plan is an organization's blueprint for carrying out its mission statement. It is initiated, implemented, and periodically reviewed by an organization's staff and board. The Executive Committee just completed the first review of the Strategic Plan (July 6). Likewise, the fundraising plan provides the means for the organization to fund the execution of its strategic plan—hence carrying out the mission statement.

### Mission Statement

To **Protect, Improve, and Promote** the well-being of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.

## Readiness & Budgetary Goals

The committee's first step was to evaluate the organization's readiness to receive funding. In March of 2005, the Association was duly incorporated in the State of Maryland; and in March of 2006, the Association's received Internal Revenue Service designation as a 501 (C) (3) non-profit. These two steps are fundamental to becoming recognized as a charitable organization—an organization lawfully suited to seeking charity. This past spring, the Association filed with the Secretary of State of Maryland for certification to solicit up to \$100,000 annually. Prior to 2006, the organization had filed a request and received exemption from this formality since its anticipated revenues were less than \$25,000 annually.

As part of the Association's readiness to receive funding, on February 3, 2007, the Board of Directors adopted a budget for 2007. As a part of this plan, the committee submits a three-year revenues-only budget (Appendix A), which is meant to be a living document in concert with the Strategic Plan. The drafting and adoption of this Fundraising Plan thereby follows on the heels of the readiness evaluation and designation of the Association as "ready" to receive funding.

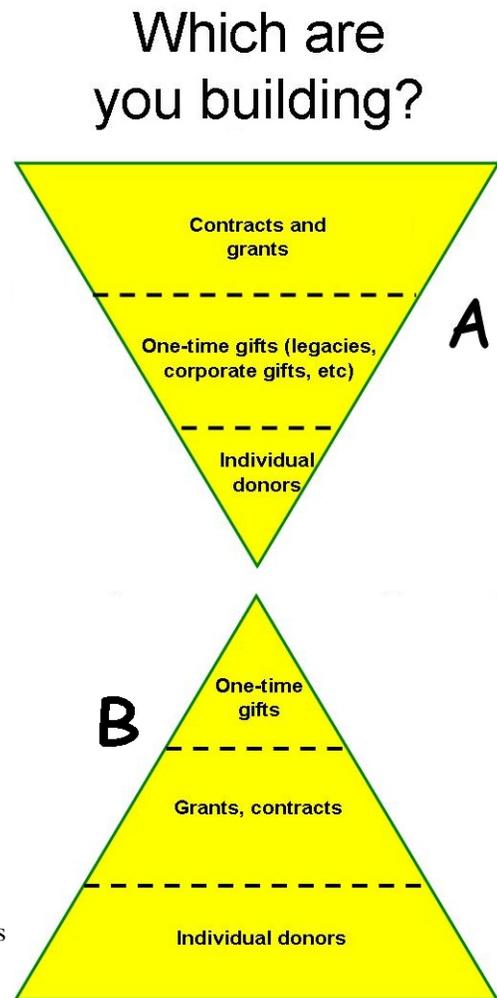
## Ideology

The committee addressed two opposing models for consideration as the foundation of the fundraising plan. In Figure 3, model A depicts an organization relying on a substantial part of their funding coming from foundation and public grants and service contracts. Model B represents the organization relying on membership donations as the principle funding means.

All committee members, as well as Dr. Meringolo, felt that Model A would not be suitable for the Association for several reasons including the need for more staff to research, apply, and track grants; the restricted nature of funding from grants; and the lack of predictability of funding from grants.

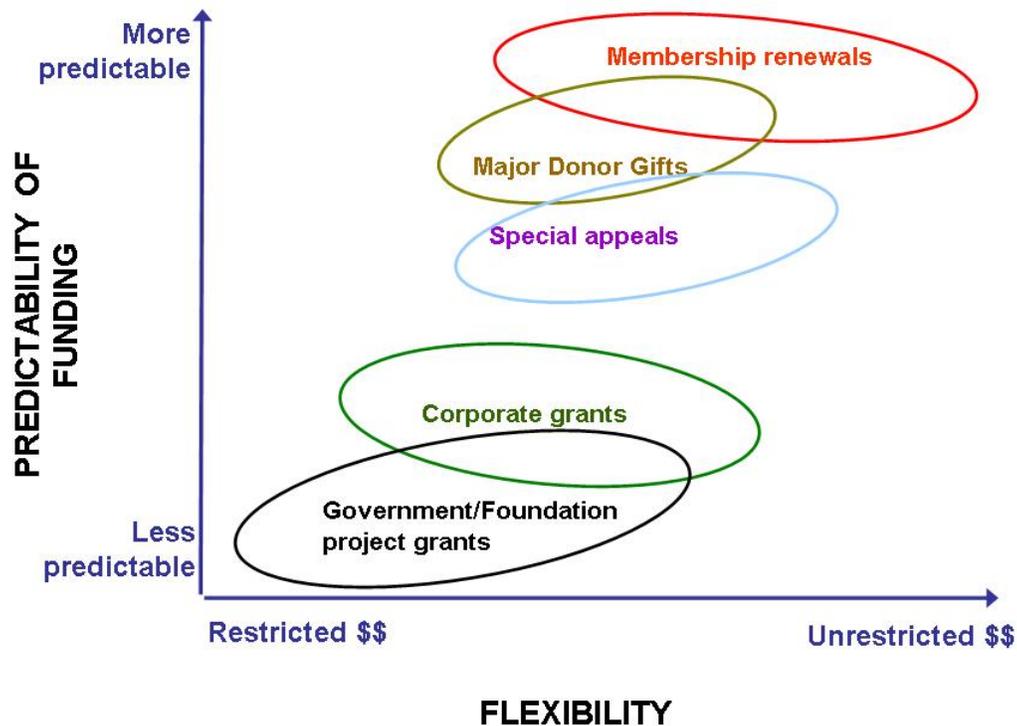
Predictability of funding and freedom in spending are unquestionably preferred. It should also be noted that tracking memberships and a volunteer base is also quite labor intensive and will require significant financial resources.

Fig. 3 – Model of funding sources



Recognizing these two importance features, the committee took an in-depth look at the major funding sources with regards to the level of restrictions that funders and donors placed on funding and the predictability of funding from the major sources. Charted below on the vertical axis is reliability, or predictability, of each major funding source. Note that membership renewal dues are the most predictable funding source. On the horizontal axis, the chart depicts the flexibility in spending. Unrestricted funding is most beneficial to the Association’s pursuit of its mission. Figure 4 below concurs with the committee’s findings.

Fig. 4 – Predictability vs. Flexibility  
 Courtesy River Network.



The predictability of funding combined with spending flexibility form the basis for the following action plan and hence the priority activities that this plan will outline.

The committee’s research on organizational fundraising success tells the story of Board member dedication and significant Board member contributions—both in service and monetary. To be a successful individual at soliciting funds, one must be willing to set an example for others to emulate. In light of this the committee has adopted the following creed:

*There is no greater strength in a fundraising campaign than a Board ready and willing to lead.*

*There is no greater weakness than one that sees fundraising as someone else’s responsibility.*

## **Action Plan with Objectives and Milestones**

### **Basic Strategy**

1. Create a board of directors able and willing to make significant contributions and to solicit others for major contributions.
2. Maximize the amounts contributed by donors.
3. Create the largest possible effective base of individual donors, corporate donors, and foundation donors.
4. Create the largest possible effective base of volunteers.
5. Expand RiverFest fundraising potential.
6. Formulate new ideas and pursue additional fundraiser events.
7. Create a line of merchandize for sale.
8. Augment these programs with grant funds.

### **Tactics**

1. Establish and maintain a development committee of the Board of Directors—consider renaming the committee from Fundraising Committee to Development Committee.
2. Institute programs to identify, rate, evaluate, and prioritize prospects, especially those who have the ability to make major contributions, both within the ranks of current support constituencies and from lists of prospective donors.
3. Identify major prospects that may find it attractive to underwrite or sponsor a specific program, service, or department on an annual, ongoing, or one-time basis.
4. Encourage Directors to maximize their donations.
5. Encourage Directors to solicit prospects with which they have influence and leverage.
6. Assist Directors in developing a volunteer network of community leaders and executives who will solicit for the organization.
7. Establish and maintain a development staff and/or train existing Directors and staff to help direct and staff all fund-raising initiatives.
8. Develop compelling written materials that effectively communicate the organization's funding requirements to the board, other volunteers, and the public.

### **Initiatives**

1. Plan, initiate, and produce an endowment campaign and deferred giving program to provide income in perpetuity to support programs and services.
2. Plan, initiate, and produce other appropriate campaigns: i.e., annual, capital, underwriting and sponsorship.
3. Institute a communication program to maximize awareness of the organization's value to the community.
4. Institute a recognition program to honor major donors or to utilize recognition ceremonies as fundraisers.



### **Critical Input Milestones**

1. Strongly encourage every Board member to donate financially every year in an amount that stretches their charitable capacity.  
Beginning: 2007 Completion: Ongoing
2. Each year, provide financial support and send a minimum of four Board members and staff to attend the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network (CBFN) fall watershed forum—as well as other training opportunities—having at least two people focus on the fundraising track.  
Beginning: Fall 2007 Completion: Ongoing
3. For each CBFN event, at least one Board members and one staff attend and at least one person focus on fundraising training opportunities.  
Beginning: 01/2008 Completion: 06/2010
4. Provide biannual reports on Board member fundraising initiatives, successes, and failures with the goal of enhancing Board willingness and effectiveness.  
Beginning: 06/2008 Completion: Ongoing

### **§ Membership Recruitment and Retention**

Predictability in generating funding and flexibility in spending of member donations underlies the importance of membership recruitment. While studies indicate that environmental organization can attain a membership up to 1% of the resident population, current trends may indicate that an increasing percentage of people are willing to make environmental matters a household priority hence setting the stage for recruiters to meet goals greater than 1%. The St. Mary's River watershed is home to approximately 45,000 residents, therefore a realistic goal for membership is 450, possibly higher.

### **Objectives with Assessment Metrics**

1. All Board members to participate actively in recruitment of new members one-on-one, volunteering tabling events, and ad hoc— and by carrying one or two brochures with them at all times.
2. All Board members, in teams of two or three, to hold membership recruitment house parties with the support of staff and the membership committee, and funded by the organization.
3. Membership Committee and staff to provide resources to Board members for fulfillment of the above two objectives.

### **Critical Input Milestones**

1. Encourage Board members to work individually and collaboratively to recruit four new members on average each year.  
Beginning: 08/2007 Completion: Ongoing
2. Strongly encourage each Board member to collaborate in membership recruitment such as house parties.  
Beginning: 08/2007 Completion: 12/2010



Currently, the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network provides funding for operations, planning, and training—through a three-year funding program Capacity Building Initiative. This funding is essential to the Association’s continued growth.

**Objectives with Assessment Metrics**

1. Continue to research and identify opportunities for programmatic funding from foundations and trusts whenever funding is compatible with Association programming and mission, such as the WRAS.
2. Continue to meet the goals and objectives of the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network Capacity Building Program.

**Critical Input Milestones**

1. Encourage Board members and staff to research grant opportunities on an ongoing basis with the goal of getting one or two grant awards annually.  
Beginning: 08/2007 Completion: Ongoing
2. Comply with Chesapeake Bay Funders Network contractual requirements by applying, reporting and executing contractual deliverables.  
Beginning: 06/2007 Completion: 06/2010

**§ Events & Activities**

Fundraising events can provide a substantial percentage of the overall organizational budget. RiverFest 2007 is being approached as an informative and celebratory event—and as a major fundraiser. This year a raffle program will provide a venue for Board members, staff, and members to become involved in the Association’s overall fundraising.

While fundraising events are labor intensive, there is great need for a second major annual fundraising event. Opportunities to partner on fundraisers abound and could serve the Association ways other than funding.

**Objectives with Assessment Metrics**

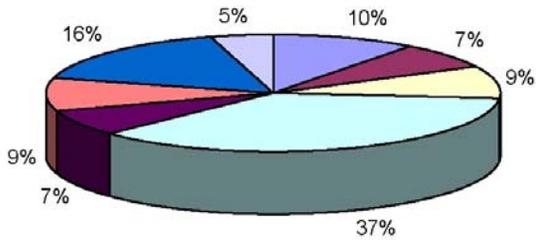
1. Grow the RiverFest event annually and move it to a venue that will accommodate a larger attendance.
2. Retain raffle prize donors with effective recognition and praise, and seek to sell more tickets each year.
3. Research and evaluate the possibility of adding a second major fundraising event each year.



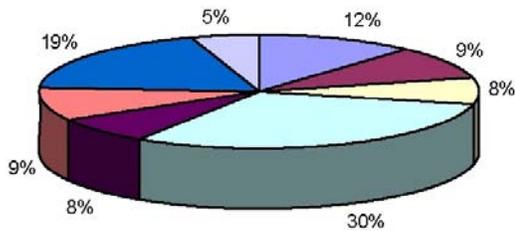
**Appendix A - Revenues Budget Goals 2008-2010**

<b>BUDGET - YEAR 2008 - 2010</b>			
<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Individual Membership Dues (320, 440, 500)	11,200.00	15,400.00	17,850.00
Individual Donations	8,000.00	12,500.00	17,850.00
Government Grants	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Foundations and Trusts (mostly program funding)	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00
Corporate Donations (16, 20, 24 - ave. \$500/ea.)	8,000.00	10,000.00	12,000.00
Fundraiser RiverFest Raffle	10,000.00	12,500.00	15,000.00
Other Fundraisers	18,000.00	25,000.00	30,000.00
Sales	5,000.00	6,500.00	8,000.00
	<b>110,200.00</b>	<b>131,900.00</b>	<b>150,700.00</b>

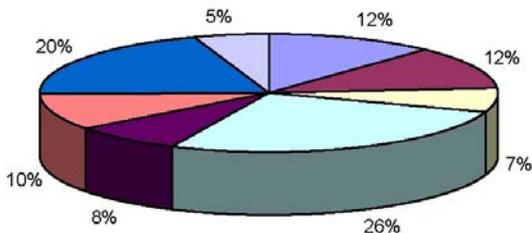
**Planned Funding Profile 2008**



**Planned Funding Profile 2009**



**Planned Funding Profile 2010**



- Individual Membership Dues (320, 440, 500)
- Individual Donations
- Government Grants
- Foundations and Trusts (mostly program funding)
- Corporate Donations (16, 20, 24 - ave. \$500/ea.)
- Fundraiser RiverFest Raffle
- Other Fundraisers
- Sales