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Wading Into Maryland's Otter Point Creek

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Photo by John Paul Tolson

Working with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, National Ocean Service volunteers recently waded into Maryland's Otter Point Creek to plant Wild Celery (*Vallisneria americana*), a local bay grass. Organized to help restore habitat in the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Reserve and Research Site, the planting had helping hands from NOAA's offices of Special Projects, Response and Restoration, and Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services. Plants were grown in special tanks at NOAA/Silver Spring and nurtured by staff to maturity, a 15-week growth process.



Photo by Julia Brownley

(from left) Aurlei Shapiro, planting organizer Allsion Hammer, Jill Bieri, and Dan Farrow prepare to plant. Twenty volunteers carried trays of grass to the site, then one person held the tray down while two others broke the clump free from beneath the tray. The grass was then tucked into mud and sediment. The process immersed everyone in waist-deep, sometimes neck-deep, water.



Photo by Dan Farrow

David Kennedy and Alyssa Wilson plant a clump of Wild Celery and Carl Cecere directs. Since 1972, the National Estuarine Reserve and Research initiative has established more than one million acres in federal coastal reserve. In Maryland, the reserve is administered by NOAA and managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with local agencies and landowners.

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