



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact:
Tony Friedrich (CCA MD), 888-758-6580
Mark Trice (DNR), 410-260-8649

September 10, 2009

Dominion Awards \$200,000 Grant for Monitoring Buoy at the Gooses

Annapolis, MD -- The Dominion Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Dominion Resources, has awarded a \$200,000 grant to the Coastal Conservation Association Maryland (CCA MD) to purchase an open-water monitoring buoy for placement over the Dominion Reef at the Gooses, an artificial reef in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay.

The effort is a partnership with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Chesapeake Bay Office, the Maryland Artificial Reef Initiative (MARI), the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail and other Chesapeake Bay organizations.

CCA MD has placed the grant funds with MARI.

"The buoy at the Dominion Reef at the Gooses offers something for everyone who loves and values the Chesapeake Bay," said William C. Hall Jr., a vice president for Dominion Resources and president of the company's Dominion Foundation. "It provides educational opportunities for students, vital data for scientists working to restore the Bay, and weather, wave and water information for boaters and anglers. As part of the Capt. John Smith Chesapeake Trail, it even has something for the history buff. Dominion is honored to be a partner in this important project."

The buoy will monitor the health of local Bay waters and help assess benefits to fish populations that are created by the Dominion Reef. A wide variety of environmental measurements important to scientists, students and anglers will be collected during the coming years. The buoy also will be part of the Captain John Smith Trail, the nation's first national water trail covering 3,000 miles of the historic route Smith took in 1607-08.

"Maryland is pleased to continue to have Dominion as a partner in our efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay," said DNR Secretary John Griffin. "In addition to providing critical water quality data, this project will aid anglers and promote boating safety by providing real-time water and weather conditions."

"Partnerships such as this harness the strengths and creativity of corporations, government agencies and non-profit organizations to address the bay's restoration," said David O'Neill,

President of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail. "We are very pleased that the Dominion Foundation has asked that the buoy be tied into the country's first all-water National Historic Trail."

As part of the Maryland Artificial Reef System (MARI), the Dominion Reef at the Gooses covers a 320-acre site with approximately 80 acres of concrete that serves as habitat for fish and other Bay life. Dominion provided a \$250,000 grant in 2008 to pay for building the reef and seeding it with oysters and oyster shell. It is located about 10 miles southeast of Chesapeake Beach and northwest of Lusby, Calvert County, where Dominion's liquefied natural gas storage facility is located.

The buoy, which will be installed by next spring, will provide real time data through DNR and NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS) websites: www.eyesonthebay.net and www.buoybay.org, respectively. Additionally, up-to-date data and interpretive information will be available via the CBIBS 877-BUOYBAY telephone service.

The buoy system will be similar to those currently used by NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS) and water quality, waves, currents, and meteorological sensor packages and a telemetry package to relay the data to websites in real-time.

"We appreciate this opportunity to augment observing capabilities in Chesapeake Bay, particularly to serve an area where we don't currently collect such measurements" said Peyton Robertson, Director of NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office.

Both DNR and CCA believe this collaboration will benefit thousands of Maryland citizens.

"This grant will allow a broad cross section of Marylanders to become aware of current information through easily accessible websites," said Tony Friedrich, CCA MD executive director. "Not only will recreational anglers and boaters find information such as wind conditions, but any citizen will be able to learn about the life on this reef. Monitoring results will lead to greater public awareness of the value of projects such as oyster restoration to improve water quality in the Bay."

Participants in this project include: Dominion – www.dom.com; DNR- www.dnr.maryland.gov; NOAA - www.noaa.gov; CCA MD - www.ccamd.org; MARI - www.ccamd.org/MARI; The Chesapeake Bay Foundation - www.cbf.org; Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail - www.friendsofthejohnsmithtrail.org; Chesapeake Bay Observing System – www.cbos.org. Many of these groups and others will use their websites to communicate data from the buoy to their members and the general public.