



Dominion Smart Buoy to Aid Chesapeake Bay Research, Recreation

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SOURCE Dominion

- Buoy funded by \$200,000 grant from The Dominion Foundation
- Provides real-time data on weather, water conditions for research, recreation
- Located along Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

LUSBY, Md., June 22 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The Dominion Foundation has provided a \$200,000 grant to Coastal Conservation Association Maryland for an open-water monitoring buoy at the Dominion Reef at the Gooses, an artificial reef in the Chesapeake Bay. The foundation is the philanthropic arm of Dominion Resources, which owns and operates the Dominion Cove Point liquefied natural gas facility on the Chesapeake Bay in southern Maryland.

The buoy will provide real-time data on water quality, waves, currents, and other information useful to boaters, fishermen, students, researchers and others who want to protect, restore and enjoy the bay. The buoy is scheduled to be placed at the Dominion Reef within the next two weeks. Data will be available on the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Web site: www.eyesonthebay.net and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System Web site: www.buoybay.org.

"Dominion is honored to be a partner in this important project, which will help scientists assess the health of local Chesapeake Bay waters and measure the ecological benefits created by the Dominion Reef," said William C. Hall Jr., a Dominion vice president and president of The Dominion Foundation. "Scientists, students, boaters and anglers will find this information useful, and history buffs will appreciate this addition to the nation's first national water trail, the Capt. John Smith Chesapeake Trail."

The John Smith historic trail runs about 3,000 miles in the Chesapeake and its tributaries along routes taken by Smith in 1607 and 1608 to chart the land and waterways of the Bay. The Dominion smart buoy will join eight others now marking the trail. It shares the ability to transmit interpretative information about the trail via mobile devices such as cell phones or computers. Trail travelers or others can learn about the history of the region around the buoy by calling 1-877-Buoy-Bay or visiting the website.

The monitoring buoy effort is a partnership that includes the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office and the Maryland Artificial Reef Initiative. MARI is a partnership created to advance efforts to improve and enhance habitat in Maryland's waters of the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Coast.

"Thanks to the generous contribution of the Dominion Foundation, a key addition to the network of high tech Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System will be enabled," said Maryland DNR



Secretary John Griffin. "This will provide valuable environmental information for scientists, researchers, teachers and their students, anglers and the public. We deeply appreciate this contribution from The Dominion Foundation."

"I am delighted that this partnership has enabled us to place the ninth buoy in the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System at Gooses Reef -- a great fishing spot on the Bay," said Eric Schwaab, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries. "This buoy includes a new sensor that will allow scientists to monitor bottom dissolved oxygen to better understand the environmental challenges facing our recreational and commercial fisheries."

"Thousands of recreational anglers are looking forward to the placement of this buoy," said Tony Friedrich, executive director, CCA MD. "Tides and conditions are crucial to successful fishing, and by reviewing information from this buoy anglers will be able to plan their trips to increase the likelihood of more productive fishing. This buoy also will make boating safer for everyone since it's providing real-time data. Dominion and the other partners are creating a tremendously valuable resource for all of us."

"The Dominion Foundation's generous grant demonstrates a unique public private partnership to conserve and restore the Chesapeake Bay and implement the John Smith Trail," said David O'Neill, president of the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail. "As people fish and explore the Bay and the Bay's historic landscapes they become stewards for this national treasure, so we deeply appreciate the Foundation's support." The Friends have been key advocates for the buoy program.

Participants in this project, and their Web sites, include: Dominion, www.dom.com; DNR, www.dnr.maryland.gov; NOAA, www.noaa.gov; CCA MD, www.ccamd.org; MARI and its more than 60 partners, http://www.ccamd.org/MARI/MARI_home.htm; The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, www.cbf.org; Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail, www.friendsofthejohnsmithtrail.org; and the Chesapeake Bay Observing System, www.cbos.org. Many of these groups will use their Web sites to provide data from the buoy to their members and the public.

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers and transporters of energy, with a portfolio of more than 27,500 megawatts of generation, 12,000 miles of natural gas transmission, gathering and storage pipeline and 6,000 miles of electric transmission lines. Dominion operates the nation's largest natural gas storage system with 942 billion cubic feet of storage capacity and serves retail energy customers in 12 states. For more information about Dominion, visit the company's Web site at www.dom.com.