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Partnership conserves 438 acres in Wicomico County

From Chesapeake Conservancy

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The Taylors Trail Sand Ridge Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) in Wicomico County is home to an additional 438 acres of conserved land at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, thanks to a partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, and Chesapeake Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy and the Service collaborated to identify the property's natural attributes and worked with the landowner to include it as an important addition to the national refuge system.

"This parcel includes 95 acres of forest and is located just downstream from a previously protected corridor of more than 19,000 acres that was made possible through a partnership with Mt. Cuba Center, Chesapeake Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, the Department of Defense, and other partners, said Joel Dunn, Chesapeake Conservancy's president and CEO.



The property, now part of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, is comprised of upland forest, over 275 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands, a stand of mature Atlantic white cedars, and a unique dune habitat that will be restored to native short-leaf pine.

In addition to its location in the heart of the Taylors Trail Sand Ridge ESA, it is proximate to the Barren Creek ESA, and more than 200 acres of protected Chesapeake forest land.

“The Department of Defense celebrates this conservation achievement. While not directly involved in this project, it complements the Navy’s conservation projects in the Middle Chesapeake Sentinel Landscape, ensuring that Atlantic Test Ranges and Naval Air Station Patuxent River can continue to develop, test, and evaluate safe and effective aircraft for our nation’s service men and women,” said Kristin Thomasgard, director of the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program.