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Environmental Concern joins Talbot Chamber of Commerce

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ST. MICHAELS Environmental Concern (EC), the all about wetlands non-profit, located at the head of San Domingo Creek in St. Michaels, announced that it has joined the Talbot County Chamber of Commerce. The company invites members of the Chamber and the general public to come for a visit and to share in the exciting things taking place on EC's 13-acre campus and at its sites around the region.

EC promotes public understanding and stewardship of wetlands through outreach and education activities, native species horticulture and the physical creation, restoration and enhancement of wetlands, both locally and nationally.

EC was founded in 1972 by Dr. Edgar Garbisch, fondly called the Grandfather of Wetlands. Garbisch, a pioneer in the wetland field, committed his life to plant propagation research, wetland construction and enhancement efforts, and authoring numerous publications and articles about wetlands. When Garbisch stepped down as president in 2002, after 30 years, he passed the torch to Suzanne Pittenger-Slear, who accepted the responsibility to move the organization forward, continuing the important work started by Garbisch.

With this new generation of leadership, came a metamorphosis in both operations and facility upgrades at the campus in St. Michaels. EC has opened its doors to the public, creating a facility where people, young and old, are welcome to experience the wonders of wetlands. With three constructed wetlands on the property and a recently restored shoreline, on any given day you can observe different species of dragonflies, frogs, shorebirds, songbirds and beautiful butterflies.

In addition, EC has tripled its wetland plant growing space. We now have 19 greenhouses and numerous outdoor growing beds. Last year, EC was responsible for the propagation and planting of more than 500,000 native herbaceous grasses, and upland trees and shrubs as part of the Poplar Island restoration project in the Chesapeake Bay. EC also sells native species for both the wholesale and retail markets.

Since 1972, EC has restored or constructed more than 30 miles of shoreline using wetland vegetation and currently has many restoration projects under way.

EC is also a national and international leader in wetland education. Last year, 60 courses were offered in 25 states. EC distributed more than 2000 books and other educational materials. Among EC's most popular education programs are WOW! The Wonder of Wetlands and POW! The Planning of Wetlands.

To handle the increased workload, EC has more than doubled its staff and now employs more than 30 full-time and seasonal staff.

To view EC's on-site wetlands, stop by any time or visit www.wetland.org.