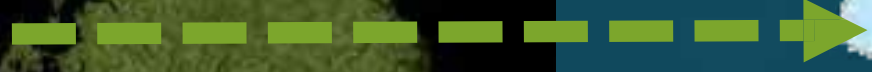
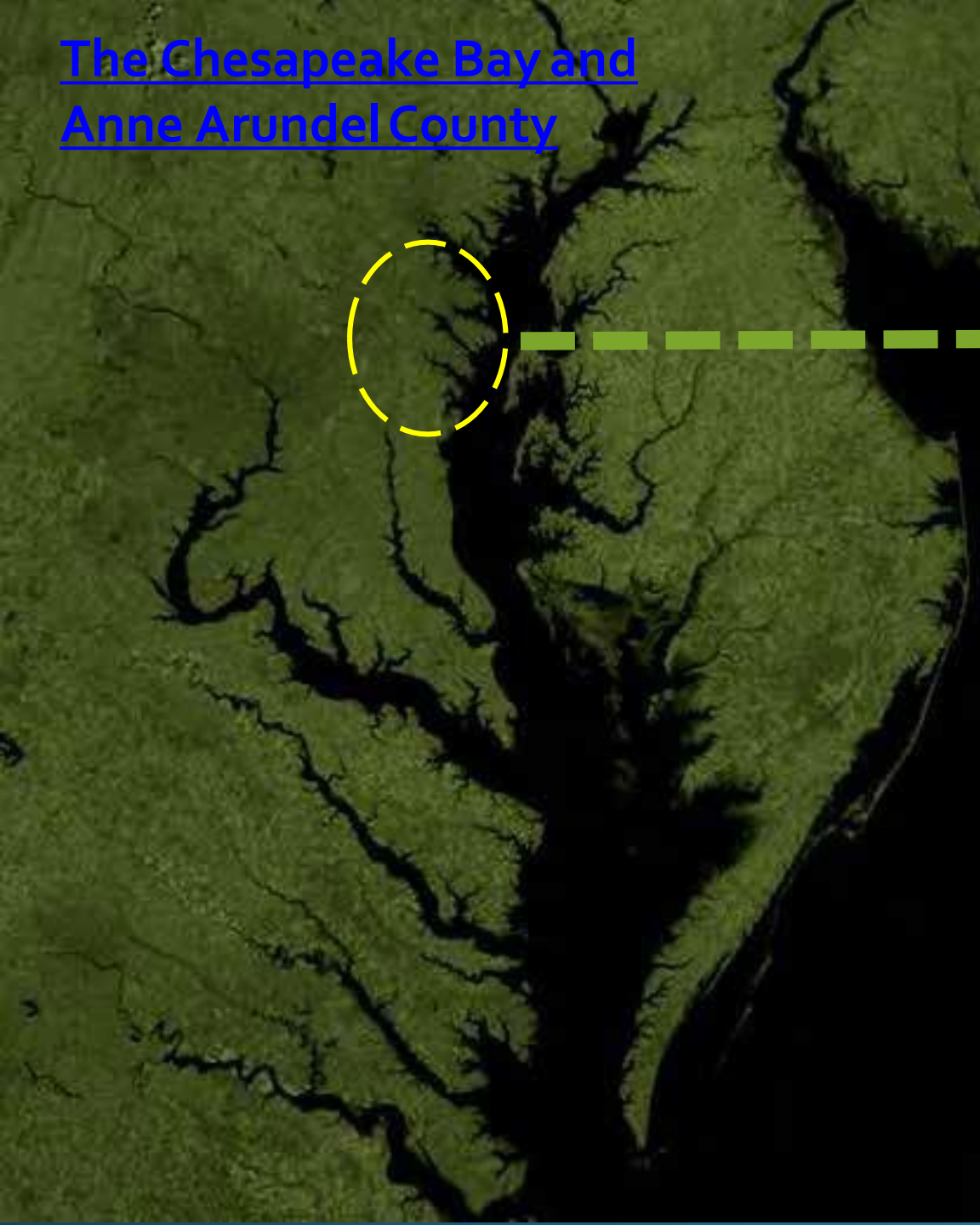


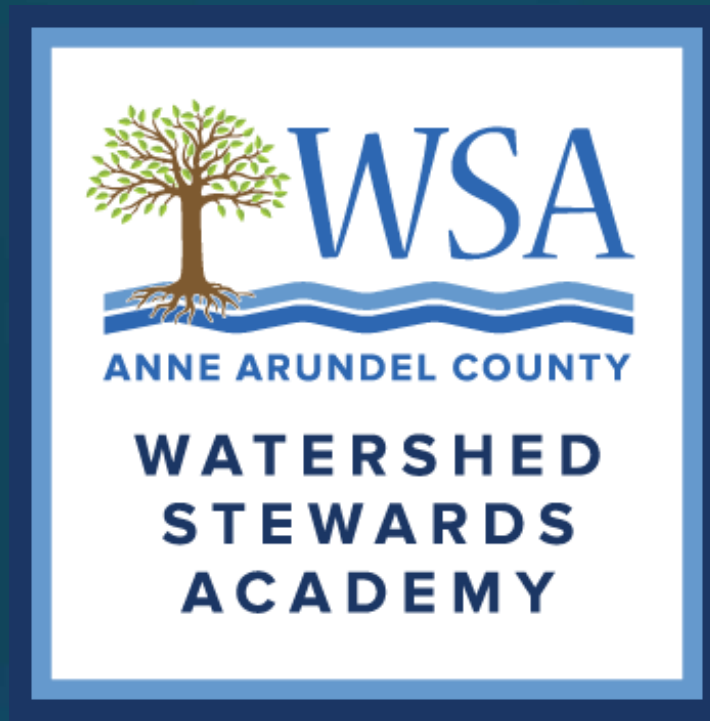
Noelle Chao, Watershed Stewards Academy

# Congregational Engagement in the Chesapeake Bay

The Chesapeake Bay and  
Anne Arundel County



**We can only restore the Bay  
by restoring each local waterway.**



*Training and mobilizing community leaders to drive change  
for sustainable landscapes and clean waters*

[aawsa.org](http://aawsa.org)



# WSA's Certification Course





# RiverWise Congregations: An Overview of the Early Years



Two Grants from 2014 – 2018, Funded by MD DNR and NFWF

## Program Goals:

- Mobilize faith communities to embrace an ethic of Creation Care
- Bring stormwater BMPs to congregational properties
- Engage underrepresented communities in action for clean water

# RiverWise Congregations: Phases One and Two

## PHASE ONE – Funded by DNR

- 25 Congregations Engaged
- From each house of worship, 1-2 congregants were trained as Master Watershed Stewards
- Congregations received up to \$50,000 for large-scale projects to fight stormwater

## PHASE TWO – Funded by NFWF

- 4 New Congregations Engaged
- Congregational Stewards Trained in a four-session Short Course
- Residential Projects installed at Congregational Stewards' homes

# RiverWise Impact: 2014 - 2018

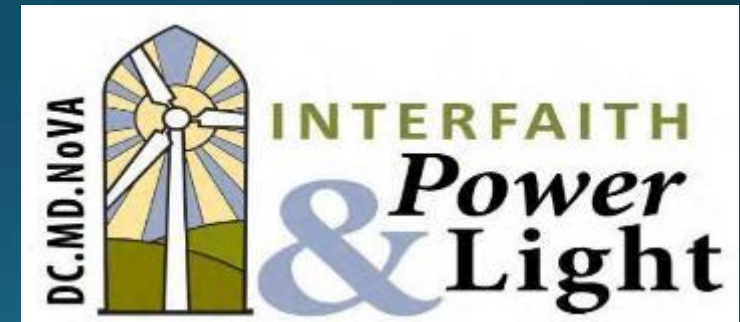


- 30 Master Watershed Stewards Trained
- 70 Congregational Stewards Trained
- 21 Congregations have projects, mid to large-scale BMPs installed on their grounds
- More than 30 residential-scale practices installed on Congregational Stewards' properties
- About half of the congregations engaged are Black Churches; 1 synagogue and 2 mosques have also been engaged

# Challenges Moving Forward?



# New Opportunities: 2019 – 2021





# Empowering Believers Church









# Roz Davall: A New Steward for Empowering Believers











***Words of Wisdom from Roz***  
***Don't panic, relax and breathe.***  
***I was so stressed and nervous because***  
***of the unknown and unexpected,***  
***but everything went as planned!***



***Project Stats***  
***150 native plants***  
***Replanting a 2400 sq ft project***  
***Installed by 16 congregants and 2 Steward Classmates***



# When engaging communities . . .

Listen with an open heart and mind.

Be patient: it takes time to build trust.

Let the community guide the action.

Keep your word.



ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

**WATERSHED  
STEWARDS  
ACADEMY**

Noelle Chao

Program Coordinator

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