

**2023 Water Warrior Award Winner: Richard Dolesh**  
***Nominated by Patuxent Riverkeeper Fred Tutman***

This year's winner of the Water Warrior Award, given to a grassroots community group or individual who has made a significant and long-lasting contribution to clean water advocacy in their community, is given to **Richard Dolesh** for his efforts to protect and restore the Patuxent River watershed.

Mr. Dolesh has served the river from his early years teaching in Piscataway and working as a naturalist at the Patuxent River Park in Upper Marlboro, to eventually becoming Park Director who helped ospreys return to Jug Bay. He was Director of the Forest, Wildlife, and Heritage Service of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Chief of Natural and Historical Resources for Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, and Chief of Public Policy at the National Recreation and Park Association, later Vice President of Conservation and Parks and finally Vice President of Strategic Initiatives. Through his efforts, the watershed has become more resilient, with the cleanup of Chalk Point Oil spill in April 2000, where a leak at the Pepco Chalk Point electric generating facility in Aquasco, Maryland spilled approximately 140,000 gallons of oil into Swanson Creek, contaminating 80 acres of wetlands and shoreline in the Patuxent. Mr. Dolesh was essential in ensuring that this damage was properly addressed and that the impacted watershed was restored as much as possible. In addition, he was an early proponent of the initiative at Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning to protect lands from the interior of the Patuxent tributary down to the Chesapeake Bay.

But we are here today to recognize not just his professional efforts, but also his personal leadership as a member of the community, serving as a board member to the Maryland Ornithological Society, the Black Swamp Creek Land Trust, Friends of the Patuxent Research Refuge, and of course Patuxent Riverkeeper. He is described by Patuxent Riverkeeper Fred Tutman as a "a perennial volunteer, known by nearly everybody in the Patuxent conservation community, but so modest that recognition for his contributions is long overdue." We are honored to celebrate Mr. Dolesh' tireless devotion to the watershed.

**2023 Waterkeeper Outstanding Win Award: Ted Evgeniadis, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper**

We are pleased to award the Waterkeeper Outstanding Win (WOW) Award to a Waterkeeper who has deserved recognition for many years: **Ted Evgeniadis**, the Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper. The Susquehanna provides a third of the water flowing into the Chesapeake Bay, yet has only two Waterkeepers patrolling 444 miles - the longest river on the East Coast of the United States.

Ted, an avid fisherman, has been a resident of York, Pennsylvania since 2008, and started volunteering with the Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association as a student at York College. He became a board member and treasurer before becoming the Executive Director

and Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper in 2017. As a partner with Waterkeepers Chesapeake on joint litigation around the relicensing of Conowingo Dam, Ted has been a relentless force for cleaner water, pursuing a fair federal license that protects the waters below the dam and restores fish populations above the dam without forcing Maryland and Pennsylvania taxpayers to pay for Constellation Energy's pollution. In December 2022, Ted and WKC had an historic and precedent-setting victory when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit issued an opinion vacating the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) licensing of the Conowingo Dam and remanded it back to FERC. In its decision, the court agreed with Waterkeepers Chesapeake, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper, and ShoreRivers' argument that [FERC exceeded its authority when it approved a 50-year license without including the Water Quality Certification that Maryland issued in 2018.](#)

Ted has had a string of clean water victories. In 2019 Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association announced a historic agreement to reduce toxic pollutants leaking from a power plant's coal ash dumps into groundwater and the Susquehanna River. The consent decree requires Talen Energy, owner of the Brunner Island Generating Station in York Haven, to close and excavate one ash pond, monitor and address leakage of pollutants from other waste sites, pay a \$1 million civil penalty, and contribute an additional \$100,000 to fund supplemental projects to reduce local water pollution, according to the agreement.

In 2021, Ted and Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, represented by Environmental Integrity Project, filed a complaint against Harrisburg and the water authority for uncontrolled CSO (Combined Sewer Overflow) events. This year, the EPA and the state filed a consent decree in federal court that will require Capital Region Water to create an effective long-term control plan by Dec. 31, 2024, to reduce sewage overflows. For the last five summers, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association has been monitoring fecal bacteria levels along the Harrisburg waterfront.

In 2022, he settled a lawsuit against Keystone Protein Company, a poultry rendering facility in Fredericksburg, PA, which was discharging wastewater into a tributary of the Susquehanna River. The settlement requires \$1 million for restoration and remediation of Pennsylvania streams.

In January 2023, he filed a lawsuit against Modern Landfill that discharges to Kreutz Creek for continuous permit violations and discharging dangerous levels of PFAS, health-harming so-called "forever chemicals," after his monitoring efforts first identified the contamination.

He worked to have the Lower Susquehanna River listed as impaired on the state 303(d) list and implement a plan to revive the collapsing Smallmouth Bass population. Ted's efforts resulted in a cleaner, safer Susquehanna, and Ted has truly become a respected and effective advocate for the river and its communities. Ted has also provided leadership for Waterkeepers Chesapeake, serving on our Board for the last 6 years. Learn more about Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Ted Evgeniadis here <https://lowersusquehannariverkeeper.org/>.