

[USGS Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Water Science Center](#)  
[Seminar Series](#)

**Tuesday, November 22, 2016 11:00 a.m.**

**Increasing Salt Marsh Acreage and Resiliency for  
Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge**

**David R. Curson, PhD, Audubon Maryland-DC**

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Maryland lies at the heart of one of the largest tidal marsh complexes in the northeastern United States, which is recognized as an Important Bird Area (Southern Dorchester County IBA) supporting globally important populations of Black Rail and Saltmarsh Sparrow. Rapid sea level rise threatens the survival of this ecosystem during the current century. Strategies to increase resiliency of Blackwater's marshes are being implemented by a nonprofit-public agency partnership as part of a larger climate adaptation project that was established in 2011. Current projects underway include the sediment enhancement of 30 acres of disintegrating high tidal marsh using sediment dredged from the Blackwater River, and a detailed study of hydrological issues that are causing erosion of a nearby tidal marsh that has recently transitioned from former agricultural uplands. These projects are being undertaken by a diverse partnership including the National Audubon Society, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Conservation Fund, USGS MD-DE-DC Water Science Center, and Sustainable Science LLC.



David Curson has worked as Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon Maryland-DC, since 2004, overseeing the Maryland-DC Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program and designing and implementing conservation projects for birds and their habitats in Maryland and DC. These have included using IBAs to influence land use planning, mostly in southern Maryland and the Lower Eastern Shore. Recently, Dave's work with Audubon has focused on tidal marsh conservation in the Chesapeake Bay, and he is implementing a number of projects to increase marsh resilience to climate change and sea level rise.

*This presentation will also be available remotely via Webex:*

<https://usqs.webex.com/usqs/j.php?MTID=mb734cea1e5a595c32a72eef50e98c93d>

Phone: 703-648-4848 Code 39026#

For directions to the USGS MD-DE-DC WSC: <http://md.water.usgs.gov/directions/baltimore.html>.