

Press Release

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GARRETT COLLEGE PROFESSOR RECEIVES CONSERVATION AWARD

HAGERSTOWN, MD: Peter Skylstad, Associate Professor of Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology at Garrett College received the Western Maryland Conservation Award from the Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council (WMRC&D) at its quarterly meeting held in Keedysville, Maryland, on Wednesday, December 21st. Professor Skylstad was recognized for his five years of innovative research on the condition and recovery of the North Branch and Laurel Run Wetlands located at the abandoned Kempton Coal Mine Complex in Garrett County, Maryland and for inspiring students to pursue careers related to conservation. Skylstad's research has documented the condition of the wetlands and the effects of remediation projects done on these sites which have been severely impacted by years of acid mine drainage. Every year, beginning in 2001, Professor Skylstad and his students have quantified the plant, mammal, amphibian, fish and avian species in the wetlands. State-of-the-art

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technologies such as Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) have been used to ensure that data are collected from the same locations each year so that chronological comparisons are accurate. Skylstad is the third recipient of this annual award. Professor Skylstad was also presented with a letter of appreciation for his work at the wetlands from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Power Plant Research Program.

The Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. is a non-profit organization comprised of representatives from the Boards of County Commissioners, Soil Conservation Districts, several municipalities, grassroots organizations, and interested private individuals from Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick and Carroll counties. The mission of the WMRC&D is to build and sustain resource conservation programs to raise the quality of social, economic, and environmental development in the five-county region.

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Associate Professor Peter Skylstad, left, is presented the Western Maryland Conservation Award by Craig Hartsock, right, President of the Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council.

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