





RIVER RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

Michael's Mill

The Monocacy River Corridor is a critical environmental area that requires conservation and protection measures to ensure its health, resiliency, and ecological function today and for the long term. Our legacy will be judged by our commitment to and stewardship of the River and determined by the River's condition and vibrancy 100 years from now. Or, as the Iroquois Indians thoughtfully stated, "in our every deliberation, we must consider the impact on the next seven generations."

As discussed throughout this plan, enhancement and protection of the River corridor has multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. From maximizing ecosystem services (water quality and flood protection, nutrient uptake, and habitat provision) to a display of community stewardship and pride, or natural 'asset' management, with its accompanying economic return, the Monocacy River has stature and standing and deserves a prominent place in land use decisions.

The maps contained in the Appendix delineate the proposed Monocacy River Resource Protection Area (MRRPA) and include multiple environmental resources and sensitive landscape elements, as included in Maryland's Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (§8-401, Natural Resource Art., MD Code Ann.)—habitat, fisheries, rare, threatened, and endangered species, scenic and natural areas, ecological/hydrological features, historic and archeological sites, and lands suitable for future open space and recreational opportunities.

The goal of the proposed MRRPA is to:

"Protect, conserve, and enhance significant Monocacy River Resources and their ecological functions and values that provide environmental, social, and economic benefits to Frederick and Carroll County residents."

The MRRPA identifies sensitive landscape features, River-related resources, and acknowledges the River's scenic and aesthetic qualities. The boundary for the proposed MRRPA includes all or portions of the following resources:

- FEMA 100-year floodplain
- Nontidal wetlands linked to the River and its floodplain
- Critical woodlands adjacent to the River's banks
- Moderate and steep slopes adjacent to the River
- Ecological Significant Areas (ESAs) contiguous to the River
- Rare, threatened and endangered species habitat
- Scenic and aesthetic River viewsheds

Separate measurement was made of each discrete resource component within the proposed MRRPA. For example, the amount the FEMA 100-year floodplain within the MRRPA was calculated as was the amount of forest cover within the MRRPA. However, there are multiple areas of resource 'overlap,' e.g., locations where the river's floodplain contains forestlands, and where wetlands are present within the ESAs in the MRRPA. The total land area within the proposed MRRPA comprises 7,605 acres.

**River Resource
Component within**

MRRPA	Acres	% of MRRPA
FEMA 100-year Floodplain	5,898.91 ac.	77.5%
ESAs	2,474.56 ac.	32.5%
Slopes (moderate & steep)	757.12 ac.	9.9%
Wetlands	254.72 ac.	3.3%
Forest Cover	3,230 ac.	42.4%

The proposed MRPPA is designed with a minimum width of 300 feet from each bank of the Monocacy River, a distance described in the scientific literature as an adequately protective corridor---if in a forested condition---for riparian wildlife migration, nesting, and movement. The maximum width is 500 feet, except where the FEMA 100-year floodplain extends beyond 500 feet from the River's banks. In these instances, the River Resource Protection Area boundary line matches the FEMA 100-year Floodplain boundary.

Where environmental resources are present at the River's banks and extend continuously beyond the 300-ft. minimum, the proposed MRRPA boundary line ranges from 300-500 feet from the banks of the River, determined by the extent of the contiguous River resource analyzed through Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology. In no instance does the proposed MRRPA boundary extend past 500 feet, except in numerous locations where the FEMA floodplain is wider than 500 feet.

The proposed MRRPA includes sensitive River front land where ecological restoration activities such as reforestation, wetland enhancement, and habitat improvements would be targeted. The MRRPA encompasses portion of Frederick County's Community Growth Areas, the municipalities of Frederick and Walkersville, as well as agricultural and rural areas in both Carroll and Frederick Counties. The River Board supports the continuation of active agricultural uses within the proposed MRRPA, which would also serve as areas for voluntary reforestation initiatives, environmental restoration, implementation of enhanced agricultural best management practices (BMPs), or Forest Conservation Act 'banking' sites (in Frederick County).

The proposed MRPPA could also function as a setback line whereby the Scenic Monocacy River is separated or 'buffered' from land development activities, including grading and construction. This functional application would eliminate, minimize or mitigate impacts to the Monocacy River, its water quality, resources, wildlife habitat, and scenic qualities, as described throughout this Plan. The adoption of regulations to establish a River setback line that corresponds to the MRRPA boundary would require future legislative action by Frederick County, Carroll County, the City of Frederick, and the Town of Walkersville. A regulatory setback line along the River would be similar to other zoning regulations in all the Monocacy River's jurisdictions that address the location of land development and placement of structures on the landscape.

The creation of a Monocacy River Resource Protection Area is fully consistent with State law, as contained in Maryland's Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (§8-401, NATURAL RESOURCES ART., MD Code Ann.): The policy of the State is to preserve and protect the natural values of these rivers, enhance their water quality, and fulfill vital conservation purposes by wise use of resources within their surrounding environment.