



MONOCACY scenic river

SUSTAINABLE MONOCACY COMMISSION

2023 annual report

FREDERICK COUNTY MARYLAND



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SUSTAINABLE MONOCACY COMMISSION

The Monocacy River was one of the first rivers in the state to be studied and designated as a Scenic and Wild River. It was added to the Maryland Scenic and Wild River system in 1974.

State law requires that each designated Scenic and Wild River must be supported by a corresponding local advisory board. The Monocacy Scenic River Board was formed in 1978 as a joint board between Frederick and Carroll Counties to provide “counsel and advice on the stewardship of the Monocacy River Watershed” to elected officials of both counties. In 2019, the Board of Carroll County Commissioners voted to form a separate board. The **Sustainable Monocacy Commission** was created in Frederick County to replace the former joint board by Council Bill 19-17, adopted on January 21, 2020.

This annual report is organized around four focus areas: monitoring and reporting; collaboration; regulatory overview; and education, outreach, and advocacy.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIONS

The highlights of the Commission’s activities in 2023 are as follows:

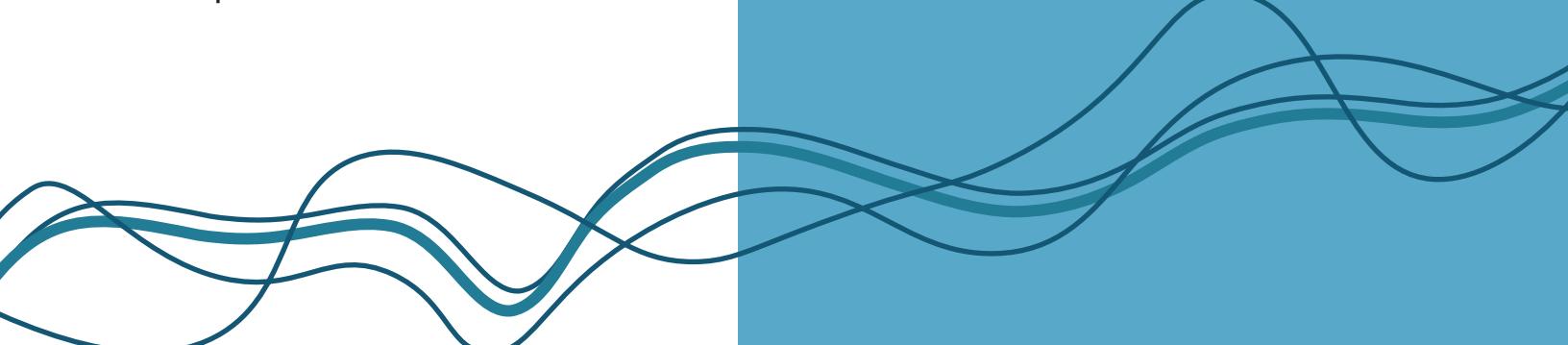
“Scenic” or “Wild” rivers “possess outstanding scenic, geologic, ecologic, historic, recreational, agricultural, fish, wildlife, cultural and other similar resources values.”

EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND ADVOCACY

- Partnered with Frederick County Video Services to produce "[The Meandering Monocacy: Our Own River](#)" a four-minute video about the Monocacy Scenic River and how to protect this valuable resource. The video is available online and will be broadcast on FCGTV (Channel 19).
- Released the 2023 Monocacy River Report discussing the significance of the river and the status of the watershed.
- Developed two informational brochures about the Monocacy Scenic River for distribution at events.
- Updated a map of Public Access Points on the Monocacy River and the Monocacy River Scenic Water Trail Map.
- Staffed a booth during the City of Frederick's "In the Streets" festival in September 2023.

REGULATORY OVERVIEW

- Voted to expand the Sustainable Monocacy Commission to add one seat for a student (high school or university) and one for an individual who owns property contiguous to a Monocacy River tributary. County Council legislation is pending.
- Prepared for the FY 2025 operating and capital budget process by identifying County programs and initiatives that advance the Commission's purpose to conserve and protect the natural, cultural, and scenic character of the Monocacy River and its tributaries.



MONITORING AND REPORTING

- Assessed twelve Public Access Points on the Monocacy River. Commission members conducted a visual and photographic assessment. Findings were summarized and distributed to each facility's managing agency.
- Investigated incidents of potential dumping and excessive litter along the Monocacy River in cooperation with the City of Frederick Parks and Recreation Department.

COLLABORATION

- Commission members reached out to organizations such as the Sierra Club of Maryland, Frederick County Farm Bureau, and Catoctin & Frederick Soil Conservation Districts to learn about their activities and how the Sustainable Monocacy Commission can partner with them.

- Participated in three river clean up events hosted by partner organizations.





The Sustainable Monocacy Commission also hosted guest speakers, including representatives from Frederick County Government, the City of Frederick, and the State of Maryland working in conservation, stormwater management, sustainability, and historic preservation as well as a local non-profit organization focused on removing trash and other debris from the Monocacy River. Speaker topics included floodplain regulation, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), stream restorations, the role of the conservation districts and nutrient management plans, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS-4) Permits and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) compliance, streamside clean-ups, and archaeological sites near the river.



Division of
Planning and Permitting
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