

# ***PARKS AND OPEN SPACES IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY***

*This Chapter contains information on existing parkland and open spaces in Montgomery County, including the M-NCPPC park system, municipalities, State and Federal parkland, greenways, and other public open spaces. Additionally, a description of existing techniques for protection of natural and cultural resources is also included.*

## **A CHRONOLOGY OF THE M-NCPPC PARK SYSTEM**

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission was created in 1927 – seven decades ago – to preserve stream valleys and coordinate development in the suburbs north and east of Washington, D. C. The Commission was conceived as a regional agency that would acquire, develop, and maintain a system of stream valley parks and parkways, oversee development of adjacent lands, and assure the provision of adequate roads and schools. It was one of the nation's first regional planning agencies, and its bi-county authority over Montgomery and Prince George's Counties made it unique at the time.

The first two properties acquired by the Commission, in 1928 and 1929, were both less than an acre in size. One was in the heart of Silver Spring, the other in the Little Falls Stream Valley. Concerns about stream valley preservation in the context of suburban development prompted the passage of the Capper-Crampton Act in 1930, which made federal funds available for cost-sharing on stream valley land purchases. The system began to take form as acreage in several stream valleys was acquired. Initial acquisition of stream valley park land was targeted for down-County areas where population was beginning to spread out from Northwest Washington – first, Sligo Creek in

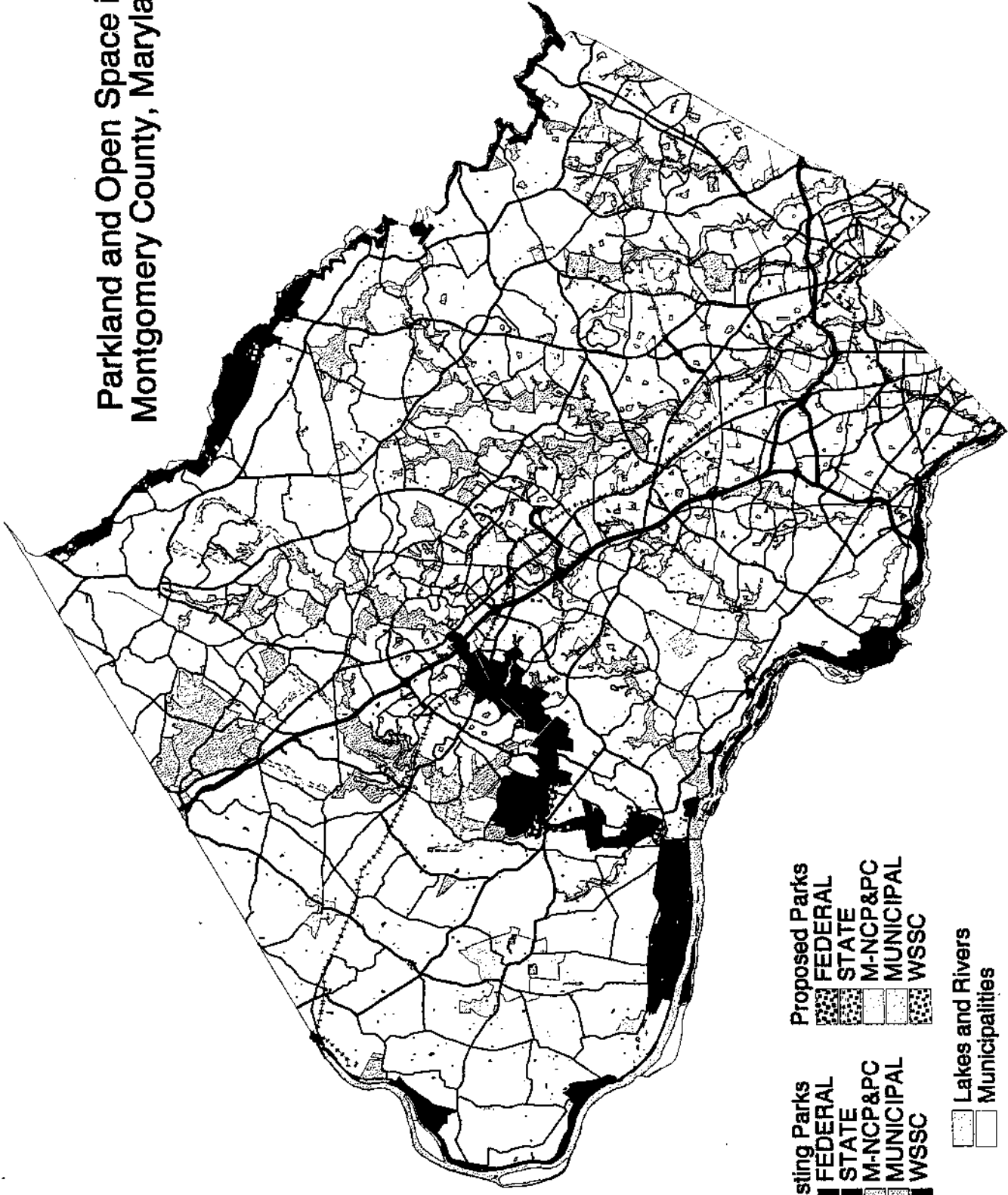
1930, followed by Rock Creek, Little Falls, and Cabin John Creek. Jesup-Blair became the County's first local park, when in 1933, 14-1/2 acres were conveyed by an estate for a park.

The explosive growth of the suburbs taxed the Commission's ability to respond to public need for open space during the post-war growth boom of the '50's and '60's. Vast new subdivisions appeared almost overnight on former farmland. The County's population increased over 300% between 1940 and 1960 – from 84,000 to 341,000 residents. In order to meet the recreation and open space needs of this growing population, the Commission began a dramatic effort to increase County parkland. From 1962, through 1971, the System's acreage grew four-fold – from approximately 4,000 acres to over 16,000

Since 1970, the park system has received much needed funds for park acquisition and development through Program Open Space State grant funds. The system has continued to grow through the addition of local and County-wide park acquisition and development to meet the needs of County residents.

Today, the Commission has approximately 28,350 acres of parkland in Montgomery County, including 344 park and open space areas, 242 of which are developed. The system encompasses the entire County with the exception of several

# Parkland and Open Space in Montgomery County, Maryland



**Existing Parks**  
 FEDERAL  
 STATE  
 M-NCP&PC  
 MUNICIPAL  
 WSSC

**Proposed Parks**  
 FEDERAL  
 STATE  
 M-NCP&PC  
 MUNICIPAL  
 WSSC

Lakes and Rivers  
 Municipalities

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING  
 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
 Research and Technology Center



Research & Technology Center

Figure 4.1

**M-NCPPC  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK SYSTEM SUMMARY\***

PARK TYPE	NUMBER DEVELOPED	OF PARKS UNDEVELOPED	TOTAL PARKS	TOTAL ACRES
<b>COUNTYWIDE PARKS</b>				
STREAM VALLEY	---	30	30	11,983
REGIONAL	5	---	5	7,827
RECREATIONAL	6	4	10	2,709
CONSERVATION AREAS	---	9	9	2,167
SPECIAL	13	0	13	879
<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>25,565</b>
<b>COMMUNITY-USE PARKS</b>				
URBAN	19	3	22	22
NEIGHBORHOOD	74	9	83	595
LOCAL	125	15	140	1928
NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION AREA	---	32	32	244
<b>COMMUNITY-USE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>2,789</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>28,354</b>

\* As of December 5, 1997  
Figure 4.2



*Woodside Urban Park*

municipalities, the largest of which are Rockville and Gaithersburg. The variety of parks within the County includes those developed for active use, and undeveloped areas for passive recreation use and conservation. They provide thousands of acres of woodlands and many miles of trails; contain numerous athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, and playgrounds; and offer other recreation opportunities for ice skating, boating, fishing, golfing, horseback riding, nature observation, etc.

While they may vary dramatically in size, shape and focus, all of the parks interrelate as a unified system serving urban, suburban, and rural areas of the County, and most provide some type of active or passive recreation.

## **M-NCPPC PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

The M-NCPPC park system is categorized into different park "types" for budgeting and planning purposes. The park types are based in part on the service area of each park, its physical size, natural features, and the kind of facilities it contains. This section will describe and help define the distinctions between different types of parks. The table "M-NCPPC Montgomery County Park Classification System" contains a summarized description of each type of park, including approximate park size and typical recreation facilities.

### ***County-wide Parks***

Larger parks that serve regional recreation needs or conservation needs are called County-wide Parks. Over 90% of the total County park acreage, more than 25,000 acres, is in County-wide parks. There are five types of County-wide parks: regional, recreation, special conservation, and stream valley. Of these, the regional, recreational, and special park categories are recreation-oriented parks, while the conservation and stream valley

parks belong to a sub-category of County-wide Parks known as conservation oriented parks.

### **Recreation-Oriented Parks**

Regional, recreational and special parks are large parks serving County-wide recreation needs. They provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, but also generally contain areas without facilities that serve conservation purposes.

**Regional parks** are large, typically over 200 acres, and contain a wide range of recreation opportunities and facilities, while retaining 2/3 of the park for conservation. Regional parks are the most popular of the County's parks. In 1995, surveys of developed portions of regional parks indicated visits by several million people annually. Many other informal users enjoy the undeveloped portions of the park.

Montgomery County has five developed regional parks offering a variety of recreation opportunities within a reasonable driving time of most County residents. Three of these parks serve the lower and mid-County areas. Wheaton, the System's first regional park, was opened to the public in 1961 and is easily reached by southeastern County residents. Cabin John Regional Park is accessible to southwestern County residents, and Rock Creek Regional Park by people living in the middle and upper-County areas. Many recreational facilities are provided including lighted tournament quality athletic fields, year-round tennis courts, ice rinks, trains, and a carousel. Rock Creek offers golf, boating and other water oriented recreation activities. Additionally, each of these parks furnishes other recreation opportunities, such as nature centers, playgrounds, trails, and picnic areas, and Wheaton has a large botanical garden.

The two regional parks that serve the northern Area of the County have large acreage of open space and conservation area. Little Bennett has a golf course and a large campground, while Black Hill offers opportunities to enjoy picnicking and water-related recreation as well as a many miles of trails.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

PARK TYPE	PARK TYPE DESCRIPTION	TYPICAL FACILITIES*	APPROXIMATE SIZE
<b>COUNTY-WIDE PARKS - Parks in this category serve all residents of Montgomery County.</b>			
<b>Recreation Oriented Parks</b>			
Regional Parks	Large parks that provide a wide range of recreational opportunities but retain 2/3 of the acreage as conservation areas.	Picnic /playground areas, tennis courts, athletic fields, golf course, campgrounds, water-oriented recreation areas	200 acres or more
Recreational Parks	Parks larger than 50 acres in size that are more intensively developed than Regional Parks, but may also contain natural areas.	Athletic fields, tennis courts, multi-use courts, picnic/playground areas, golf course, trails, natural areas.	50 acres or more
Special Parks	These parks include areas that contain features of historic and cultural significance.	Vary, but may include agricultural centers, garden, small conference centers, historic structures, etc.	Varies
<b>- Conservation Oriented Parks</b>			
Stream Valley Parks	Interconnected linear parks along major stream valleys providing conservation and recreation areas.	Hiker-biker trails, fishing, picnicking, playground areas.	Varies
Conservation Area Parks	Large natural areas acquired to preserve specific natural archaeological or historic features. They also provide opportunities for compatible recreation activities.	Trails, fishing areas, nature study areas, informal picnic areas.	Varies
<b>COMMUNITY USE PARKS - Parks in this category serve residents of surrounding communities.</b>			
Urban Parks	Very small parks, serving highly urban areas	Landscaping, sitting/picnic areas, play equipment courts, and shelters.	1 Acre
Neighborhood Parks	Small parks providing informal recreation in residential areas.	Play equipment, play field, sitting area, shelter, tennis and Multi-use courts. (Does not include regulation size ballfields)	2.5 Acres
Local Parks	Larger parks that provide ballfields and both programmed and unprogrammed recreation facilities	Ballfields, play equipment, tennis and multi-use courts, sitting/picnic area, shelters, buildings and other facilities	15 Acres
Neighborhood Conservation Areas	Small parcels of conservation oriented parkland in residential areas, generally dedicated at the time of subdivision.	Generally undeveloped, may include a storm water management pond and related facilities.	Varies

**Figure 4.3**

\* This list is not all inclusive, but includes facilities typical of each park type.

**Recreation Parks** is a category that includes parks with intensive development similar to that found in the ballfield and tennis court complexes at regional parks; however, they differ from regional parks in that they do not limit 2/3 of their development to conservation uses. Small picnic/playground areas are also included in this category. Presently, Montgomery County has three such developed parks – Olney Manor, Martin Luther King and Damascus. Fairland Recreational Park is under construction, and there are several other undeveloped recreational parks which are planned for future development including Ovid Hazen Wells, Ridge Road, Muncaster, Gude and Northwest Branch Recreational Parks.

**Special Parks** preserve historic or culturally significant features and have distinguishing characteristics that set them apart from other park classifications. McCrillis Gardens, Woodlawn Manor House, Rockwood Manor Park, and the Agricultural History Farm Park are good examples of special parks in the County. They are often used for small conferences, social events, specialized education, and art exhibits. Important historic sites are preserved in all types of parks. Examples of these are the Silver Spring in Acorn Urban Park, Woodlawn Manor House with its smoke house, and the Needwood Mansion.

## **Conservation-Oriented Parks**

There are two types of County-wide conservation oriented parks: stream valley parks and conservation area parks. Both protect important environmental areas; however, they differ in that stream valley parks are linear parks acquired to protect stream valleys and conservation parks are large natural areas acquired to preserve specific natural, archaeological or historical features. Both types of parks are managed to provide stewardship of sensitive areas, but may include trails and other low impact recreation areas when carefully designed to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate environmental impacts.

**Stream Valley Parks** form the foundation of the park system, extending as greenways throughout the urban areas and into the countryside, putting the natural environment within close reach of all Montgomery County citizens. They separate communities with green open space buffers and provide easy access to nature for adjacent residents. Just as they were seventy years ago, stream valley parks today are acquired primarily for conservation purposes. They hold the key to watershed protection throughout the County by reducing flooding, sedimentation, and erosion, and they furnish valuable habitat for many species of wildlife. Some stream valleys, such as the Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley, are also designated as special protection areas. These areas are so sensitive that they are subject to a special set of regulations designed to protect them.

Stream valley parks also preserve some of the County's most beautiful and interesting terrain, providing long, interconnected greenways of parkland that provide corridors for trails and wildlife. There are 30 such parks in the County, which include nearly 12,000 acres of parkland. In urban areas, clusters of active recreation facilities in parks adjacent to stream valley parks were developed many years ago to serve as local parks for nearby residents. More recent environmental regulations now limit or prevent intensive development along stream banks to reduce sedimentation and erosion and environmental degradation caused by urban runoff.

**Conservation Area Parks** are generally large areas that preserve specific natural, archaeological, or historical features; are typically located in upland areas; and are acquired specifically for environmental preservation purposes. Conservation area parks may include outstanding examples of natural communities, self sustaining populations of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, or unique archaeological and historical resources. Given the sensitive nature of the resources in conservation parks, development is very limited and generally restricted to passive recreation areas and

opportunities such as trails, fishing and picnic areas, and nature study. Opportunities for interpretation of the protected environmental, historic, and archeological elements should be maximized through self-guided nature trails, interpretive signage, and naturalist programs. There are nine conservation parks in the County, which include over 2,160 acres of parkland.

### Community Use Parks

Smaller types of parks that are primarily used by local residents and nearby areas are group in the classification system under the category of community use parks. These parks are sometimes referred to as local parks, and provide everyday recreation needs for residents close to home.

Currently there are over 200 developed community use parks. Many are located in the

downcounty area where they were placed to serve County development in the 1950s and 60s. As new park construction tries to keep pace with an ever expanding County population, more parks are now being developed in rapidly growing upcounty areas.

The classification system presently includes four types of community use parks: urban, neighborhood, and local parks, and neighborhood conservation areas.

Urban Parks serve central business districts or other highly urban areas, providing green space in an often otherwise concrete environment. These parks serve as a buffer between adjacent residential, office and commercial districts, and contain landscaped sitting areas, walkways, and in several cases, play equipment, handball and paddle ball courts. Urban parks serve an important role as

<b>M-NCPPC INVENTORY OF MAJOR PARK FACILITIES*</b>				
<b>Community Use Parks</b>				
	<b>Ballfields</b>	<b>Tennis Courts</b>	<b>Basketball Courts</b>	<b>Playgrounds</b>
Urban Parks	0	4	2.5	10
Neighborhood Parks	7	55	38	76
Local Parks	207	181	86	116
Neighborhood Conservation Areas	0	0	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>126.5</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>County-wide Parks</b>				
	<b>Ballfields</b>	<b>Tennis Courts</b>	<b>Basketball Courts</b>	<b>Playgrounds</b>
Regional Parks	12	21	3	6
Recreational Parks	20	20	6	4
Special Parks	3	0	1	3
Stream Valley Parks	3	2	1	6
Conservation Oriented Parks	0	0	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>137.5</b>	<b>221</b>

\* as of April 2, 1998

Figure 4.4

gathering places for the community and accommodate activities such as concerts and performances, celebrations, fairs, and outdoor spaces for area employees to have lunch. Nearly all of the County's 19 developed urban parks are located in the down-County with concentrations in the Bethesda and Silver Spring areas.

Neighborhood Parks are small, walk-to parks providing informal leisure opportunities and recreation in heavily populated areas. They often provide about five acres of open space developed with a sitting area, playground, informal play field, and tennis and/or basketball courts. There are 74 developed neighborhood parks in the County, with the largest number found in the Wheaton, Silver Spring, and Bethesda areas where they were developed to serve early concentrations of single-family housing.

Local Parks provide both programmed and informal recreation opportunities within reach of all area residents. Typically about ten to fifteen acres in size, these parks contain athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, picnic and playground areas, and sometimes recreation buildings and other facilities.

The major difference between neighborhood and local parks is that the local parks provide regulation size athletic fields that can be reserved for game play. Over 40% of the people visiting local parks in 1996 were either league players or league game spectators. Ballplayers attend games on fields near their homes, or travel to other parts of the County to challenge opposing teams. Therefore local parks often have large service areas. Many people drive to local parks, while many neighborhood parks are within walking distance.

Many down-County local parks include small recreation centers that are used for classes, social events, and other similar activities. Some local parks also include other facilities as swimming pools that serve large areas of the County. Some of these parks, such as Sligo-Dennis, are located adjacent to stream valley park areas and provide both active and passive recreation opportunities.

The Commission cooperates with other agencies in order to use tax monies as wisely as possible. Parks provide facilities for many of the programs sponsored by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Many local parks are adjacent to schools and give school children more room to play during the day and families more recreation spaces on the weekend.

Neighborhood Conservation Areas are small pieces of parkland preserved in residential areas. They are generally conveyed to M-NCPPC during the subdivision process and frequently contain streams or drainage areas and adjacent wooded slopes. They remain undeveloped and benefit the neighborhood by providing open space, reducing storm water runoff, and bringing nature into an urban environment.

## **COMPARISON OF THE M-NCPPC PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM WITH THE STATE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

The Maryland Office of Planning has developed a new park classification system that is outlined in the 1998 Guidelines for the Local Land Preservation and Recreation Plans, and differs substantially from that used for the Montgomery County park system. It divides recreation and natural resource land into five groups: Non-Resource Based Recreation Land, Natural Resource Based Recreation Land, Historic/cultural Resource Land, Natural Resource Land, and Agricultural Land.

The M-NCPPC classification system is not directly comparable with the State's. The primary difference is that some County parks include both natural resource land and non-resource based recreation land. In order to provide as close a

**COMPARISON OF M-NCPPC PARK ACREAGE BY STATE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK SYSTEM SUMMARY\***

MD. Office of Planning/Dept. of Natural Resources CLASSIFICATION	TOTAL ACRES	M-NCPPC CLASSIFICATION
NON-RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND NATURAL RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND NON-RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND HISTORICAL/CULTURAL NATURAL RESOURCE LAND NATURAL RESOURCE LAND	2,709 11,983 2,583 879 2,167 5,244	<b>COUNTY-WIDE PARKS</b> RECREATIONAL STREAM VALLEY REGIONAL** SPECIAL CONSERVATION AREAS REGIONAL**
	<b>25,565</b>	<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>
NON-RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND NON-RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND NON-RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND NATURAL RESOURCE LAND	22 595 1,928 244	<b>COMMUNITY-USE PARKS</b> URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION AREA
	<b>2,789</b>	<b>COMMUNITY-USE SUBTOTAL</b>
<b>TOTALS BY STATE CATEGORY</b> NON-RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND NATURAL RESOURCE BASED RECREATION LAND HISTORICAL/CULTURAL NATURAL RESOURCE LAND	7,837 11,983 879 7,655	
<b>PARK ACREAGE TOTAL</b>	<b>28,354</b>	<b>PARK ACREAGE TOTAL</b>

\* As of December 5, 1997

\*\* Regional Parks are both Natural Resource Land and Non-Resource Based Recreation Land as 2/3 of the Regional Park acreage is undeveloped. Some Regional Park acreage could also be considered Natural Resource Based Recreation Land, but this acreage total can not be differentiated.

NOTE: The State categorization scheme does not coincide with the M-NCPPC categories. The above table compares the park facility types as closely as possible.

Figure 4.5

comparison as possible the following table, "Recreation and Open Space Acreage By State Classification System," contains the 'crosswalk' between the State classification system for open space resources and the M-NCPPC Park classification system.

These state categories are described in more detail below:

Non-Resource Based Recreation Land is generally more dependant than Resource Based Recreation Land on physical improvements for recreational opportunities, and includes basketball courts, softball fields and swimming pools. M-NCPPC parks in this category include: Recreational, Regional, Urban, Neighborhood, and Local. The M-NCPPC development policy states that active use areas in regional parks should generally not exceed 1/3 of total park acreage. Therefore, 1/3 of the regional park acreage is classified as Non-Resource Based Recreation Land.

Natural Resource Based Recreation Land is primarily dependant on the presence of natural resources and examples include beach swimming, backpacking, camping in the woods, and hiking in the woods. M-NCPPC park areas devoted to holdings in this category include Stream Valley Parks.

Historical/Cultural Resource Land includes cultural resources, historical structures, and archaeological sites which are important for protection, preservation, and education. M-NCPPC holdings in this category include Special Parks.

Natural Resource Land focuses on land and/or water areas for which protection or preservation of one or more natural resources is of primary importance. This land may support recreational, economic, or other uses to the extent that does not conflict with protection or preservation of that resource. M-NCPPC holdings in this category include Conservation Areas, Neighborhood Conservation Areas, and those areas of Regional Parks that do not have active recreation facilities.

The M-NCPPC development policy states that active use areas in regional parks should not exceed 1/3 of total park acreage. Therefore, 2/3 of the regional park acreage is classified as Natural Resource Land.

Agricultural Land refers to land and/or related water areas that support, or have the potential to support, farming as a private, profitable, and predominant use. This land may also support other economic, natural resource, and recreational uses incidental to the agricultural purpose.

## **FEDERAL, STATE, MUNICIPAL AND OTHER PARKLAND AND OPEN SPACE**

Montgomery County also benefits from parkland and recreation areas provided by other jurisdictions. These are the National Park Service, the State of Maryland, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and various municipalities.

### ***National Park Service***

The principal Federal park in Montgomery County is the C&O Canal Historical Park, which provides 3,146 acres of parkland. The park includes 3.67 miles of the old towpath for hiking and biking, and opportunities for picnicking, fishing, and bird watching. In addition, a limited number of primitive campsites are located along the towpath. The major access point and the area of highest use in the C&O Canal Park is the Great Falls recreation area. In addition to a historic tavern, canal locks and towpath, there are sixteen miles of hiking and natural trails available in the Great Falls area. The Carderock area of the canal below Great Falls provides opportunities for rock climbing enthusiasts. Access to the C&O Canal above Great Falls occurs primarily at the old canal lock sites. There is a boat ramp and parking at the Pennyfield Lock site, which provide boat access to

**M-NCPPC - MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK SYSTEM \*  
OTHER PARKLANDS AND OPEN SPACE HOLDINGS**

<b>STATE OF MARYLAND</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
DIERSSEN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA	40
ISLANDS OF THE POTOMAC WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA	515
MATTHEW HENSON STATE PARK	100
McKEE BESHERS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA	1,971
MONOCACY NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AREA	5
PATUXENT RIVER STATE PARK	3,179
SENECA CREEK STATE PARK	6,290
STRIDER WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA	267
<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>12,367</b>
<b>NATIONAL PARK SERVICE</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
C&O CANAL	3,146
<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>3,146</b>
<b>WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
TRIADELPHIA WATERSHED	1,300
T. HOWARD DUCKETT WATERSHED	1,800
<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>3,100</b>
<b>PRIVATE OPEN SPACES</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - DAMASCUS	93
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - GAITHERSBURG	63
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - GAITHERSBURG	56
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - GAITHERSBURG	50
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	33
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - POOLESVILLE	365
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE - ROCKVILLE	8
SYCAMORE & RUPERT ISLANDS - POTOMAC RIVER	75
AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY - CHEVY CHASE	40
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - C&O CANAL	16
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - SUGARLOAF MT. AREA	1,127
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - SUGARLOAF MT. AREA	437
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - SUGARLOAF MT. AREA	286
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - POTOMAC	14
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK	16
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - PATUXENT STATE PARK	63.7
MD. ENV. TRUST EASEMENT - POTOMAC RIVER ISLAND	3.4
<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2,746</b>
<b>UTILITY CORRIDORS</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Potomac Edison Power Company (PEPCO)	2,553
<b>COUNTY-WIDE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2,553</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>23,912</b>

\* As of December 5, 1997

Figure 4.6

the Potomac. Parking is also available at Violets and Swains Locks.

Other national park sites in Montgomery County include the Clara Barton National Historical Site and the Glen Echo Park, both located in the Glen Echo area of the County.

## ***State of Maryland***

As of 1997 State parkland in Montgomery County had risen to 12,367 acres. Approximately 6,300 of these acres are in the Seneca State Park which extends from the Potomac river to Germantown. A significant portion of this park is developed with picnic, boating, and trail facilities. The area also contains the 90-acre Clopper Lake, an archery range, and provisions for horseback riding.

The second largest State holding is the undeveloped Patuxent State Park, which lies along the Patuxent River on the Montgomery and Howard County boundary. This park, which primarily serves conservation purposes, also includes opportunities for hiking, fishing, and horseback riding. Future development of this park is in the planning stage.

The McKee-Bershers Wildlife Management Area encompasses 1,971 acres and is adjacent to the C&O Canal in the western portion of the County. This area is managed for wildlife and is significant because it is one of the few public sites available for hunting in the County. During the off-season, this area is also used for bird watching and ice skating.

## ***Municipalities***

A number of municipalities in Montgomery County have their own park systems. The chart "Municipality Inventory of Park and Recreation Facilities" shows the park acres and facilities located in each municipality. Municipalities provide a significant amount of recreational facilities, and the cities of Gaithersburg, Rockville,

and Takoma Park also provide recreational programs for their citizens.

## ***Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)***

The WSSC owns 3,100 acres of open space land in Montgomery County along the Patuxent River. The Triadelphia Watershed comprises 1,300 acres with a reservoir containing 576 acres. The T. Howard Duckett Watershed contains 1,800 acres including a 259-acre reservoir. Although the primary purpose of the WSSC land is for water supply, recreational use of the land is permitted and encouraged. The activities allowed include fishing, boating, picnicking, hiking, and horseback riding on an established trail system.

## ***Large, Private Open Spaces***

Conservation-oriented groups in Montgomery County have privately preserved a total of 2,746 acres for open space purposes. This land is listed on the table "M-NCPPC - Montgomery County Park System, Other Park Lands and Open Space Holdings." In addition, the Maryland Environmental Trust preserves land through the donation of conservation easements which allow the property to remain under the ownership of the easement donor.

## ***Summary***

Montgomery County has a total of 55,811 acres of parkland, recreation space, and open space. As indicated on the following table summarizes the information presented in the previous section, showing that there is a total of 47,412 acres of local, County, State and Federal national parkland available to County residents. Additionally, public school and municipal open space provide another 3,545 acres bringing the total public park and recreation acreage to nearly 50,000. There is also over 8,000 acres

MUNICIPALITY INVENTORY OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES \*

Municipality	Total Acreage	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Total Fields	Tennis Courts	Play-grounds	Basketball Courts	Hiker/Biker Trails (miles)
City of Barnesville	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
City of Brookeville	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Town of Chevy Chase	0.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Chevy Chase Village	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Town of Garrett Park	0.83	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.13
City of Gaithersburg	405.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	11.00	15.00	20.00	7.50	6.50
Town of Glen Echo	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
Town of Kensington	6.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	1.00	0.00
Town of Laytonsville	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Town of Poolesville	32.00	0.00	4.00	2.00	6.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	3.00
City of Rockville	799.30	0.00	25.00	8.00	33.00	35.00	45.00	43.50	0.00
Town of Somerset	20.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.50
City of Takoma Park	11.71	0.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	0.00	7.00	2.50	0.00
Washington Grove	115.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1401.39</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>33.00</b>	<b>16.00</b>	<b>56.00</b>	<b>58.00</b>	<b>82.00</b>	<b>58.50</b>	<b>11.13</b>

\* as of December 5, 1997

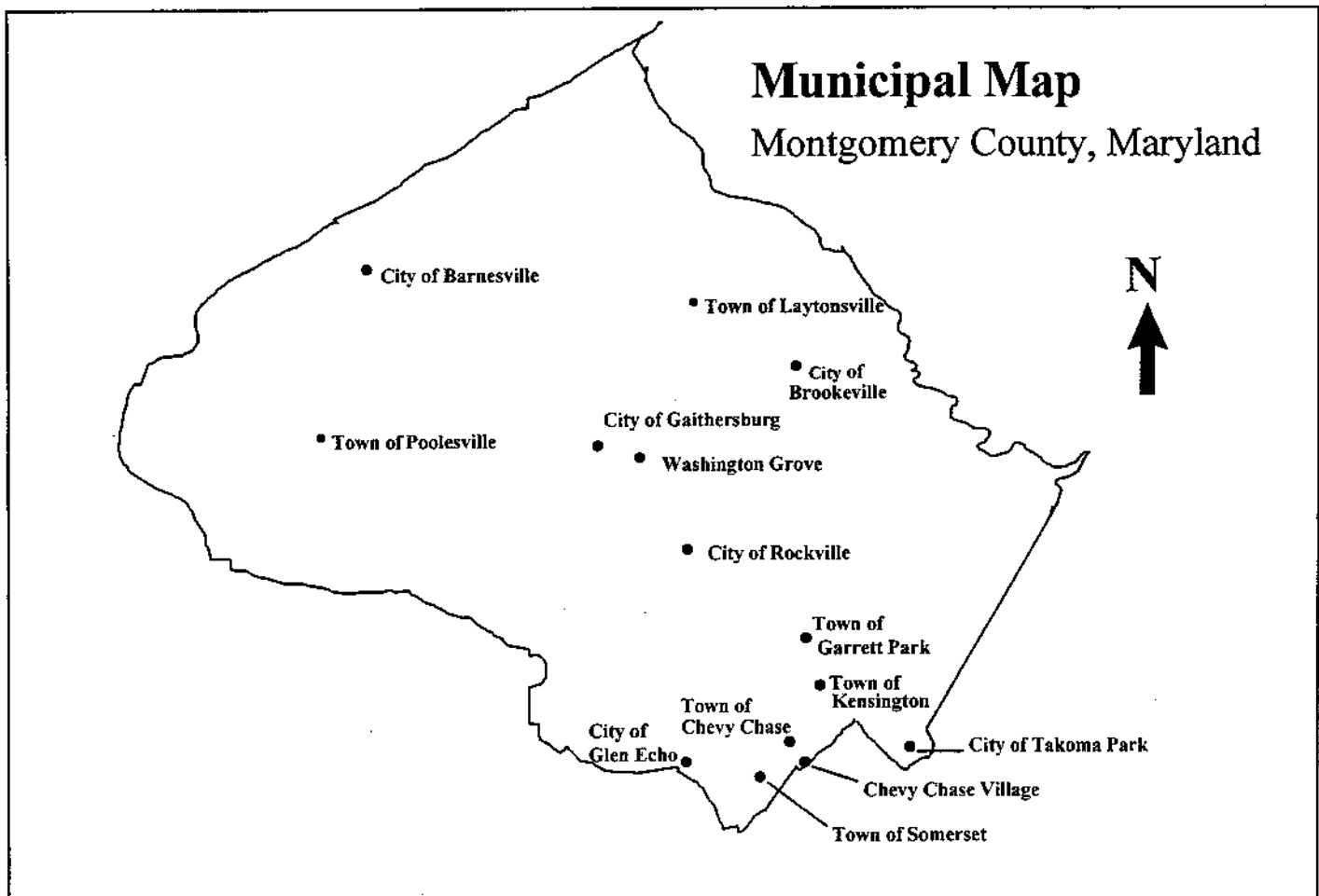


Figure 4.7

**1998 TOTAL PUBLIC PARK AND OPEN SPACE  
IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

<b>I. PUBLIC PARK AND RECREATION SPACE</b>	
<b>A. Public Park Acreage</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
M-NCPPC	28,354
State of Maryland	12,367
National Park Service	3,146
<b>County-wide Subtotal</b>	<b>43,867</b>
<b>B. Public Recreation Acreage</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Municipalities	1,401
Public School Recreation Space (60% of 3,200)	1,920
Undeveloped Public School Property	224
<b>County-wide Subtotal</b>	<b>3,545</b>
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC PARK AND RECREATION ACREAGE</b>	<b>47,412</b>

<b>II. OTHER OPEN SPACE ACREAGE</b>	
<b>A. Other Open Space Acreage</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)	3,100
Potomac Edison Power Company (PEPCO)*	2,553
Private Open Spaces	2,746
<b>County-wide Subtotal</b>	<b>8,399</b>

\* Transmission Lines Only

<b>GRAND TOTAL - PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ACREAGE</b>	<b>55,811</b>
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\* as of December 5, 1997

Figure 4.8

of other open space including Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, private conservation areas, and Potomac Edison Power Company (PEPCO) transmission lines.

## GREENWAYS IN PUBLIC PARKS

Greenways are another important type of open space. This plan examines the public park greenways in Montgomery County which are interconnected open spaces that are primarily comprised of the stream valley parks providing corridors for wildlife and trails. At the State level, greenways are considered such important open spaces, a Maryland Greenways Commission has been created to further promote their establishment and protection. The Maryland Greenways Commission, established in 1990, has identified 27 greenway corridors within Montgomery County in the publication the *Maryland Greenways Atlas*. The atlas provides an overall map of identified greenway corridors listed alphabetically and complete greenway descriptions. Montgomery County greenways identified in the atlas are fully described in the Appendix.

The greenway system forms an interconnected web of open space that preserves wildlife corridors, much of which is overlain by a network of natural-surface and hard-surface trails linking communities to natural areas and parks. Greenways can be that common thread that connects people and nature's interaction and sparks a greater environmental education and awareness. By putting people and nature together, increasing interest in the greenways concept has spurred a preservation of additional open spaces to provide inter-connected greenway corridors for both trail systems and wildlife habitat by both the public and private sector.

## Definition

There is not a discrete or definitive rule which determines what qualifies as a greenway. There are no physical standards or performance criteria that apply uniformly in defining a greenway characteristic. Instead, greenways have been loosely defined and flexibly applied to fit individual area circumstances on a case by case basis. All the definitions have similar common threads: connectivity, linearity, linkages, corridor, preservation, open space and recreation. Greenways also may serve many purposes - conservation, transportation, recreation, infrastructure, and flood control.

In summary, greenways are about connecting: connecting the gaps between the headwaters of adjacent watersheds; connecting across stream valleys; providing trail connections to the public trail and park network; and connecting people with the natural world.

The following working definition of greenways was approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board in 1993 and included in the *1993 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan*:

*Greenways are linear corridors of open space which may follow various natural or man-made terrain features such as streams, ridge lines, shorelines, utility rights-of-way, existing and abandoned transport rights-of-way or rail lines. Greenways frequently include bicycling or hiking trails and can link together neighborhoods, parks, population centers, historic sites, and natural areas in open space networks.*

Greenways often provide a natural preserve for wildlife propagation and migration as well as a trails system for recreation access and enjoying nature. Through careful planning these two needs often can be mutually accommodated in a greenway. There is also the possibility of conflict where the greenway is either narrow or encompasses an environment particularly sensitive

to human intrusion. As a result, there may be greenways that will not offer trails.

## **Purpose**

The purposes of developing greenways are numerous. With proper planning, greenways can provide quality recreation opportunities as well as conserve natural resources. Many specific benefits that can be achieved through the preservation of greenways:

- Protect environmentally sensitive areas such as streams, steep slopes, and wetlands as well as habitat for endangered plant and animal species that enhance the natural diversity of the area.
- Provide buffers between developed areas and streams or wetlands, helping control water pollution and flood damage by naturally filtering stormwater runoff.
- Provide the opportunity to acquaint the public with cultural, historical, and environmental information when they connect and access these features.
- Provide trails suitable for hiking, horseback riding, and bicycling, which furnish the public with increased recreational opportunities and natural interpretation experiences, and providing linkages to park areas and open spaces.
- Provide much more edge, or apparent open space, than consolidated parks.
- Add value to communities through improvement to quality of life and contribution to "sense of place."
- Provide travel corridors between larger forest tracts to allow mixing of the animal gene pool and supplement animal population declines.
- Prevent decline in the number of forest interior birds by preserving large tracts of interior forest habitat.

Greenways, primarily through the stream valley park system, are the backbone of the publicly owned land in the County. Stream valley parks are the prototypical example of a greenway because they provide all the elements associated with a greenway: connectivity, linearity, linkages, corridors, preservation, open space and recreation. The 12,000 acre stream valley park system also serves many of the purposes of greenways: conservation, recreation, transportation, and flood control. There are also few public greenways located outside stream valley parks, such as the Capital Crescent Trail and portions of the Matthew Henson Greenway.

The 1993 General Plan Refinement stated as Land Use Objective 8 "*Provide a coordinated and comprehensive system of parks, recreation and open space.*" An identified strategy to achieve this objective is "*Plan for and encourage the provision of greenways to connect urban and rural open spaces, to provide access to parkland, to connect major stream valley park areas, and for recreational purposes such as walking and biking.*"

The 1993 General Plan Refinement also states in Environment Objective 2 "*Preserve natural areas and features that are ecologically unusual, environmentally sensitive, or possess outstanding natural beauty.*" An identified strategy to achieve this objective is "*Connect parks and conservation areas to form an open space and conservation oriented greenway system.*"

Many greenways have been identified in recent area master plans. The *Germantown Master Plan* adopted in 1989 identified a greenbelt surrounding the Germantown area. The *Aspen Hill Master Plan* adopted in 1994, identified one major new east-west open space corridor: the Matthew Henson State Park and the Matthew Henson Greenway (former Rockville Facility right-of-way) that connects Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park. The *Clarksburg Master Plan*, adopted in 1994, identified four proposed greenway corridors: Ten Mile Creek Greenway, Little Seneca Greenway, Ovid Haven

Wells Greenway, and Little Bennett Creek Greenway. The *Four Corners Master Plan* adopted in 1996 and the *Cloverly Master Plan* adopted in 1997 both recommend the Northwest Branch Stream mainstream be designated as a greenway. The *Cloverly Master Plan* also recommends protecting a continuous greenway between the Patuxent River and the Paint Branch via the Burtonsville Local Park and the Right Fork of the Paint Branch.

As each future master plan is updated, a greenways section will identify current corridors, propose gaps in the system to be filled, and how to fill them.

## ***Major Greenways in Montgomery County***

The Montgomery County greenway system has received assistance through both Federal and State efforts. State parks, wildlife management areas and Federal parks all contribute to the greenway system. The Patuxent River State Park and the C&O Canal form the northern and southern spines of the County greenway system. The Seneca Greenway, when completed, will be one major north and south link between the C&O Canal and the Patuxent River State Park.

The following is a geographic categorization and brief description of existing Montgomery County multiple purpose greenway corridors. These greenways provide the framework for the county-wide trail network in the *Plan for Park Trails*.

There are three major corridors that form the framework of the public greenway system: Patuxent River, C&O Canal, and the Seneca Greenway. The first two run generally parallel to each other in an east/west direction and form the northern and southern boundary of the County. The Seneca Greenway corridor runs generally north and south and will eventually connect to the

first two. Each major greenway links to smaller supporting greenways to form the overall network.

Patuxent River Corridor - The Patuxent River State Park includes 6,647 acres bordering Montgomery and Howard Counties along the Patuxent River Valley. The Montgomery County portion extends from MD 27 east to MD 97. This undeveloped stream valley park has a self-guided nature trail and a portion of the park has been designated as a State wildland area. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) controls approximately 2,200 acres extending from MD 97 east to the Prince George's County line. One of the greenways that adjoins the Patuxent River Corridor is the Hawlings River which originates at the Patuxent River and links to Reddy Branch Stream Valley Park and Rachel Carson Conservation Park.

C&O Canal Corridor - The C&O Canal extends from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland Maryland, parallel to the Potomac River, for 184 miles, of which approximately 38 miles are in Montgomery County. This thin corridor is supplemented in width by the McKee Beshers Wildlife Management Area and the Seneca Creek State Park. Parts of the canal have been re-watered and parts have been filled over time with trees and shrubs. Four linear M-NCPPC stream valley parks intersect the C&O Canal: Muddy Branch, Watts Branch, Cabin John, and Rock Run, forming a secondary greenway system that flows into the Potomac River.

Seneca Greenway Corridor - State and County parkland and proposed acquisition areas combine to form a 25-mile greenway along the Seneca Creek from the Potomac River to within one mile of the Patuxent River. About half of the corridor, from the Potomac to MD 355, is contained in Seneca Creek State Park. Most of the portion northeast of MD 355 is owned and managed by M-NCPPC as the Great Seneca Extension Stream Valley Park. This greenway offers important connectivity between the Potomac Greenway and C&O Canal and the Patuxent Greenway, which includes the Patuxent River State Park and WSSC reservoirs on

the Patuxent. The Seneca Greenway has a one-mile gap that, if filled, would connect the Patuxent to the Potomac Rivers. Two greenway segments supplement the Seneca corridor: in the southern portion, Dry Seneca Creek originates just south of Route 107 near Poolesville and connects with Great Seneca Creek; in the north, the Magruder Branch originates south of Damascus and connects to Great Seneca Creek.

Clarksburg Greenways - The Clarksburg Master Plan identified four proposed greenway segments. The Ten Mile Creek Greenway follows the stream and will link Little Bennett Regional Park with Black Hill Regional Park. The Greenway is proposed to include a natural surface trail. The Little Seneca Greenway ties together Little Bennett, Black Hill, and Ovid Haven Wells Park. A hard surface recreational trail is proposed. The Ovid Hazen Wells Greenway provides access between Ovid Hazen Wells Park and Damascus Recreational Park. This greenway is proposed to include a hard surface trail. The Little Bennett Creek Greenway connects Little Bennett Park to Oak Ridge Special Park. An natural surface trail is proposed.

Supporting Greenways - In addition to the major greenway corridors, there are four smaller supporting public greenway corridors in the County: Northwest Branch, Rock Creek, Capital Crescent, and the Eastern County/Paint Branch. Each supporting greenway helps to bring the greenway concept geographically closer to residential neighborhoods. The supporting greenways can allow both public access via trails, and wildlife habitat via natural corridors. This concept is described in more detail in the trails section of chapter 6, and the supporting greenways are described in the Appendix.

### ***Corridor Gaps and Future Greenway Planning***

The Seneca Greenway Corridor has a two and one-half mile gap between the Great Seneca Extension Stream Valley Park and the Patuxent

River State Park. Closing this one gap will achieve interconnection amongst the three major greenway corridors in the County: The Patuxent Regional Greenway, the Seneca Greenway, and the Potomac River Greenway. The Patuxent River Corridor has one gap between Rachel Carson Conservation Park and the Patuxent River State Park. In the mid-County area, a final identified gap prevents the Muddy Branch Greenway from connecting the City of Gaithersburg with the Rock Creek Corridor. These gaps could be closed with a combination of State, Commission, and private efforts.

The extraordinary number of identified public greenway corridors is testimony to 70 years of protecting stream valley corridors. However, future greenway acquisitions will be needed to complete some of the identified County greenway corridors. These greenways will make possible an interconnected greenway network that will form a protected natural infrastructure through the County, helping to sustain wildlife and maintain ecological processes.

In the future, the area master planning process will be the primary vehicle to identify greenway components and gaps. To complete the greenway system, each identified greenway component could be protected through fee-simple acquisition, donations, easements, or other means.

## **PROTECTION OF M-NCPPC NATURAL RESOURCES**

The commitment of the Montgomery County Planning Board to responsible environmental stewardship is extensive and dates back to its creation in 1927. Over the years, approximately 28,000 acres of parkland have been set aside to conserve water, trees, soil, floral and faunal communities and open space while concurrently providing a variety of recreational opportunities. These actions have contributing immeasurably to

the quality of life in Montgomery County and to the Planning Board's reputation as a responsible steward of the County's park land resources.

In recent years, the Planning Board has expanded its efforts to include greater consideration of natural resources protection and preservation in the planning, development, and management of the park system. The Planning Board has made efforts to greatly increase its knowledge of where valuable resources are located, how to protect and preserve them, and how to best manage the County's parks and open spaces to achieve and maintain a rich and diverse variety of plants, trees and wildlife, and to maintain clean and healthy streams filled with diverse aquatic life.

This increased natural resources information has also guided the Planning Board in its acquisition of new parkland which has resulted in: 1) the acquisition of high-quality natural areas; 2) the protection and preservation of many rare, threatened, endangered, and watchlist species of plants and animals; and 3) the improvement of the County's stream quality and aquatic life by acquiring land at the headwaters of streams.

Natural Resources has 5 major protection techniques: inventory and monitoring, planning, management, research, and education and outreach.

## ***Inventory and Monitoring***

Developing and maintaining inventories of the wildlife, aquatic life, vegetation, and exemplary natural areas in the County's parks and open spaces is an essential basis for the effective protection and management of our natural resources. Particular emphasis is placed on identifying populations of rare, threatened, endangered, and watchlist plants and animals. By knowing what natural resources and exemplary natural areas the County has, and where they are located, strategies can be developed and implemented to preserve and enhance these resources for all residents to enjoy. Also, steps can

be taken to prevent the unknowing destruction of these resources.

After completing an inventory, the diversity and abundance of species and natural communities are then quantified and summarized. This information, along with other valuable geographic, hydrologic and similar types of useful information, is organized and entered into the Geographic Information System (GIS). The GIS is a computer mapping and database system that allows quick and easy access to information which can then be incorporated into and displayed as maps or tables for use in park planning. Appendix 5 shows the information which is recorded into the GIS system. To assure maximum usefulness, the information is updated and the status of the resources monitored on a continual basis.

## ***Planning***

Information regarding the County's natural resources and natural resources management policies have been increasingly incorporated into the park planning and master planning process to assure that these resources are fully and carefully considered. Examples of that include provisions for the protection, preservation and management of the County's natural resources and exemplary natural areas include: The General Plan, which sets out broad park facility and resources policies; Area Master Plans that are developed for each geographic planning area such as Potomac or Fairland; Functional Master Plans specific to certain park uses such as Trails and Bikeways or the PROS Plan; Park Master Plans that are developed for each major park in the County; and Natural Resources Management Plans, which incorporate information on geology, soils, topography, knowledge of past land use, and plant and animal inventory data.

## ***Management***

The information gained from inventories and research is used and applied to ensure the best management of natural resources for the ultimate

## ***Management***

The information gained from inventories and research is used and applied to ensure the best management of natural resources for the ultimate benefit of both park users and the natural environment. Natural resources data are the key to successfully balancing the Planning Board's stewardship responsibilities for County parkland with the need to provide park users with a variety of high-quality recreational experiences. Wise stewardship will help to ensure that future generations experience parks with high natural diversity and high natural value. The Planning Board's actions are guided by regulation, policy, and the accumulated knowledge and understanding of the County's natural resources. Natural resources information is therefore analyzed, summarized, and used in making decisions regarding the use and care of the County's parkland. Natural resources information is also used when making acquisition decisions.

Site-specific natural resource management techniques are frequently used to manage particular resources. For example: 1) open land is reforested to protect streams and create habitat for forest-dwelling species; 2) exotic invasive plants are managed to minimize their impacts on select native plant populations; 3) fields are mowed seasonally to maintain necessary habitat for species such as meadow larks, field sparrows, grasshopper sparrows, bobwhite quail, and meadow voles; 4) vernal pools are created to establish habitat for certain amphibians and reptiles; and 5) nest boxes are constructed and installed to provide shelter for certain species, such as bluebirds and flying squirrels, to help sustain their populations in the County.

## ***Research***

Scientifically valid methodologies are used to assess the effects of land use change or management activities on natural resources. The information gained from short-term and long-term research increases the knowledge of how parks function

ecologically, and this knowledge is applied in the planning and management process. For examples: studying the effects of the County's increased white-tailed deer population on forest regeneration; studying the effects of Little Bennett golf course on downstream water quality and aquatic resources; researching the effects of hard surface trails on surrounding natural resources; and studying the effects of culverts on fish populations.

## ***Education and Outreach***

Sharing the information acquired, promoting and encouraging citizen involvement in the planning and management of the County's natural resources, and promoting a sense of stewardship for the parks is important. Efforts are made, whenever possible, to offer opportunities for volunteers, such as: installing and maintaining of nest boxes; collecting of native seeds for our native plant nursery; making bird counts for the Breeding Bird Survey; assisting in the collection of fish and macroinvertebrate data; performing radio telemetry studies of wildlife; and planting and maintaining reforestation projects.

## **PROTECTION OF M-NCPPC HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

M-NCPPC's enabling legislation, which mandates natural resources protection, also requires protection of historical and archaeological resources. The Commission is the largest single owner of historic resources in the County, having acquired 76 sites as it has acquired land for parks.

In 1989, the County Council authorized the M-NCPPC to begin an archaeology program. The M-NCPPC has identified and inventoried over 280 prehistoric and historical archaeological sites. The number of identified historical and archaeological sites undoubtedly will increase as more of the park system is surveyed and expanded.

Public interest in local history has been very high in the last decade. The heritage tourism industry has grown as visitations of historic and archaeological sites has increased. In a recent survey, Montgomery County residents rated protection of historic areas a high funding priority. Historic resources greatly enhance the educational and recreational value of Commission-owned land and add to its visual attractiveness.

These cultural resources are found throughout the park system with many located in regional and stream valley parks. These resources include structures and sites that contribute significantly to the cultural heritage or visual beauty and interest of the County. There are other historic properties, although not acquired solely for their historical or archaeological significance, located in park property that at one time were settled or farmed, and acquired to meet other park and open space needs.

Historic and Cultural Resource Preservation has four main protection techniques: identification, preservation, interpretation, and archeology.

## ***Identification***

Cultural resources include both standing historic structures and archaeological sites. Approximately one hundred structures have been identified in the *M-NCPPC Historic Park Properties Inventory*. Over two hundred and eighty archaeological sites have been identified during the course of development impact reviews and related work. A listing of the historic sites owned by the Commission are included in Appendix 4.

Many of these properties are designated on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation in Montgomery County* and are subject to the Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24A of the County Code. Each property on the Inventory has been placed in one of three categories for the purpose of establishing historic or architectural significance.

*Category 1:* Historic properties of importance that contribute significantly to

the cultural heritage or visual beauty and interest of the County, park, or facility and its environs, and which should be preserved.

*Category 2:* Historic properties of value that contribute to the cultural heritage or visual beauty and interest of the County, park or facility and its environs, and that should be preserved if practicable.

*Category 3:* Any property that has been inventoried but does not qualify in one of the above categories, indicating little historic or architectural basis for retention.

## ***Preservation***

As the single largest owner of historic resources in the County, the Planning Board faces a tremendous challenge to protect and maintain these resources with limited funds and personnel. Many historic sites are located in remote areas that render them vulnerable to arson and vandalism. As with the private sector, the Commission is bound by the Preservation Ordinance (County Code, Chapter 24A), which requires that historic resources that are designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation must be preserved and maintained. Since many of the Commission's properties are designated historic resources, proposed changes to the exterior or the setting are subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission.

The only significant funding source available for repair work is the CIP project fund called "Restoration of Historic Structures" that represents approximately 1% of the total park program. The fund has been used to stabilize structures. The Planning Board has consistently won awards for its restoration projects such as Battery Bailey in Westmoreland Hills Local Park.

In recent years, the Planning Board has initiated several new programs to meet funding needs for preservation. These programs must continue to be developed to meet stabilization and restoration needs. They include the following:

Public/Private Partnerships Structures are leased to private individuals and groups at a low rate in exchange for renovation of the buildings for compatible uses such as Bed & Breakfasts.

Park Property Management A large number of historic resources come under this program. Rental money is earmarked for repairs to historic structures. Tenants have successfully renovated historic properties in exchange for rental reductions. More historic properties have the potential to be renovated under this program.

Training of Maintenance Staff Specialized restoration construction training is offered by National Park Service experts to Central Maintenance crews.

Cooperative Ventures Historic resources in parks adjacent to development are restored through cooperation between community groups and developers. Examples include Acorn Park in Silver Spring and the Waters House in the Milestone Development.

## ***Interpretation***

The recent survey of County residents underscores the high level of interest in historic sites and related programs. Now that historic sites have been identified and much progress has been made in their stabilization, the historic preservation program must focus more attention on interpretation of the cultural significance of historic sites. Public education and outreach is vital for increasing public awareness of historic sites and their significance to community life. The identity of individual neighborhoods and communities can be enhanced through the interpretation of historic sites within those communities.

Historic Sites Markers and Plaques This program identifies to the general public significant historic sites, such as Hyattstown Mill, Acorn Park, and the Jesup Blair House.

Brochures and Exhibits A recent Silver Spring Armory program featured African-American culture including foods, vendors, exhibits, lectures, and a "jumping the broom" wedding. A grant from the Montgomery County Commission on the Humanities funded a brochure on the Oakley Cabin, which is a well preserved example of a typical 19th century rustic log dwelling residence used by slaves and tenant farmers..

Historic Sites Tours Guided and self-guided tours have been developed. New programs should focus on individual sites or clusters of sites within a park or neighboring parks, and on sites related to a theme, such as the Underground Railroad or Montgomery County Mills.

Public Events A recent event celebrated Emancipation Day at Oakley Log Cabin. An article about the Commission's recent "re-creation of the underground railroad" program for children and adults appeared in the National Association of Interpreters' magazine, *Legacy* December 1997.

The most important goal for the future is to initiate new programs at high-priority sites, defined by high visibility, accessibility, and historic significance. More focus is needed on cultivating new volunteer opportunities as well as training interpreters and docents for future school programs and week-end events. In addition, training of existing staff would enable new and supplemental programs to be offered at parks throughout the County.

## ***Archaeological Sites***

Just as the County's parklands contain a great variety of historic and architectural resources, they are also rich in archaeological resources. The large number of stream valleys

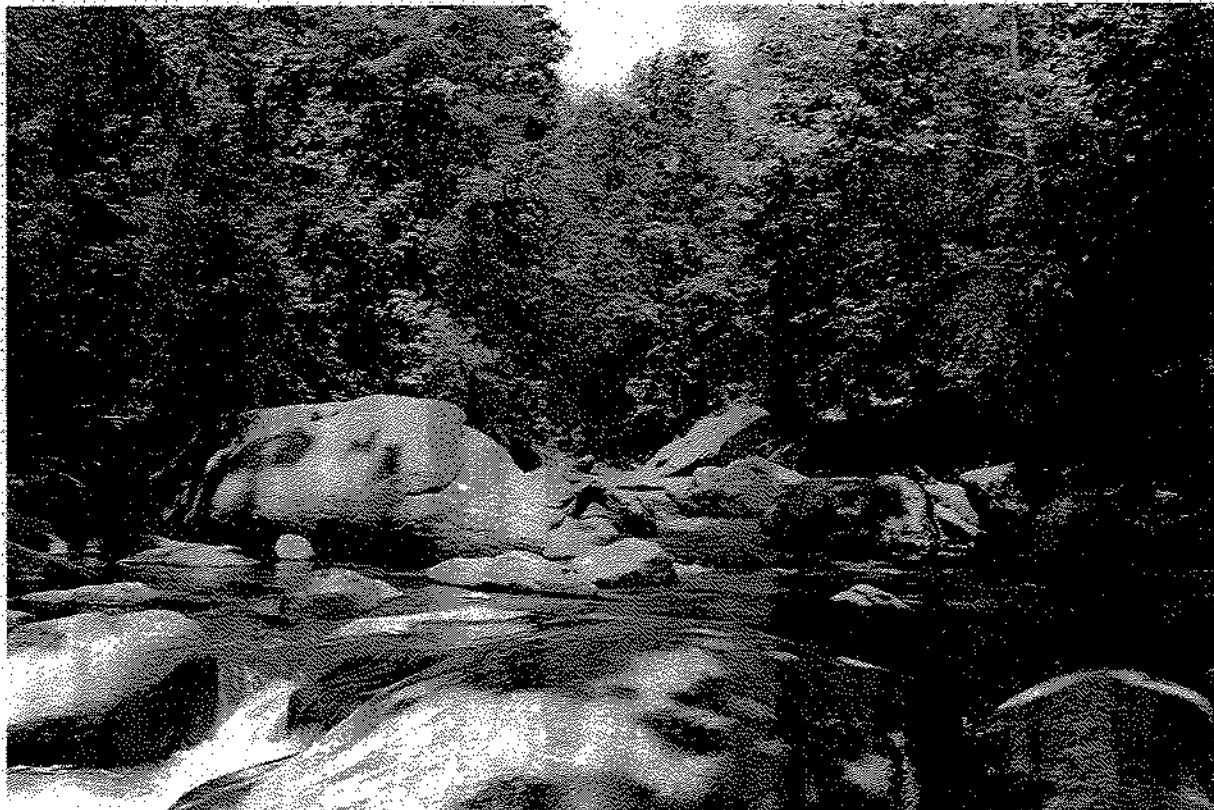
and creek drainages in the park system have great natural potential for both prehistoric and historic sites. Prehistoric sites include remains of Native American encampments. Historic archaeological sites include mill sites from the 1700s to 1900s and Civil War fortifications. These resources are found throughout the park system but, unfortunately, they often go unrecognized and are vulnerable to destruction.

According to the Maryland Historical Trust, "With the current and past intensive level of development in Montgomery County, a large portion of its archaeological record has been lost and this loss increases daily." In order to stem this loss of archeological sites on parkland and to comply with Federal and State regulations, the County Council authorized the Commission to begin an archaeology program. The program's purpose is to identify, manage, and interpret archaeological resources within our parks through an ongoing effort of protection, including a strategy for mitigating the effects of any stabilization, restoration, or construction on affected archaeological resources.

Close to 300 sites were discovered on or near parkland. The number of discovered sites will continue to increase as more of the park system is researched and/or expanded. Because the County's Piedmont stream valleys and creek drainages contain great natural potential for both prehistoric and historic sites, the continued identification, acquisition, and management of these areas will best preserve the County's dwindling, non-renewable archaeological resources.

Much has been accomplished with the use of skilled volunteers and a successful partnership with Montgomery College allows archaeology students to investigate park archaeological sites.

Efforts will continue to identify, manage, and interpret the historical and archaeological resources within the Montgomery County park system in compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations and guidelines.



*Muddy Branch Stream Valley Park*