

Balancing Stewardship and Recreation in Montgomery County Parks

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The Commission

M-NCPPC is a bi-county agency created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927.

The Commission's geographic authority covers most of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

The Commission's planning jurisdiction, the Maryland-Washington Regional District, comprises 908 square miles; its parks jurisdiction, the Metropolitan District, comprises 75 square miles.



The Commission has three major functions:

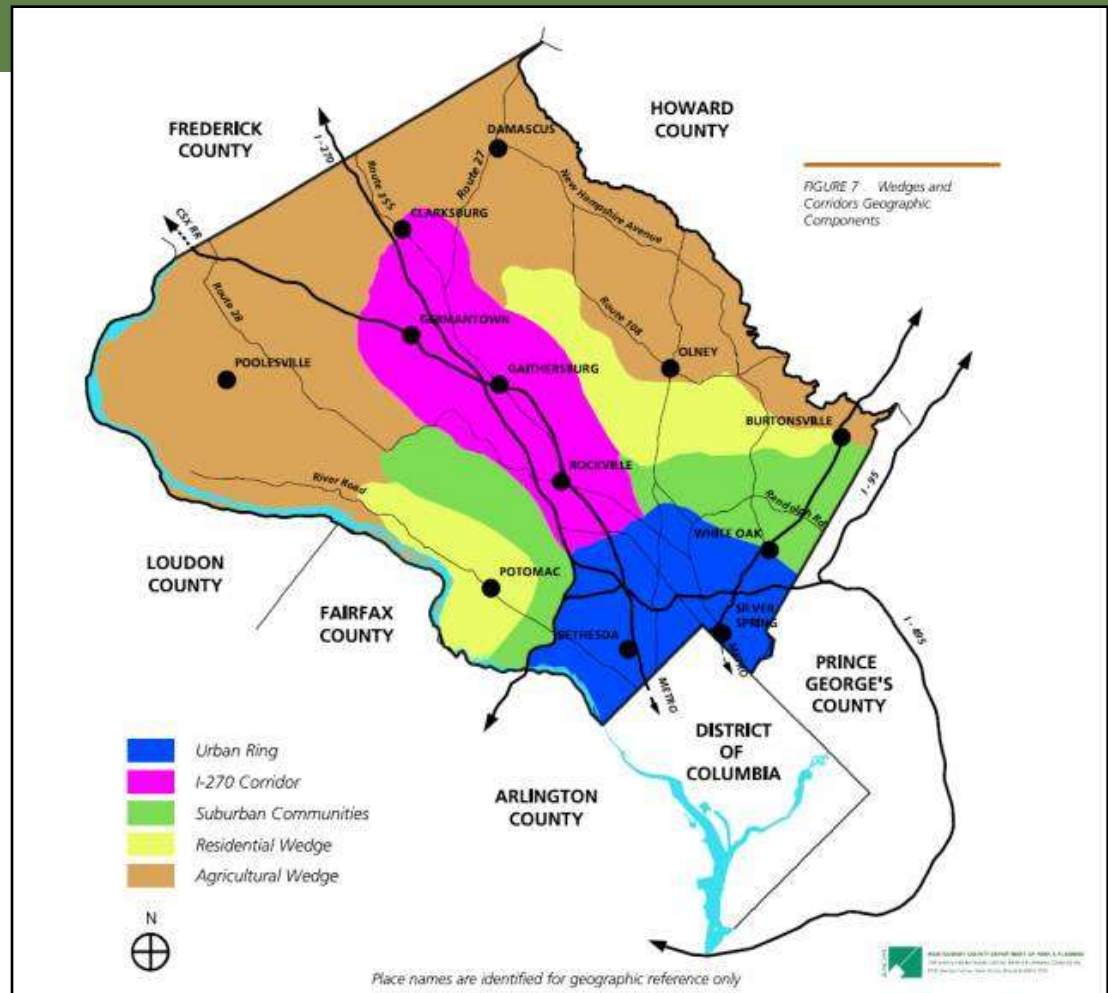
- 1. The preparation, adoption, and from time to time, amendment or extension of the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.*
- 2. The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system.*
- 3. In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire County public recreation program.*



The General Plan

“Stewardship ... is to be considered a universal ethic.”

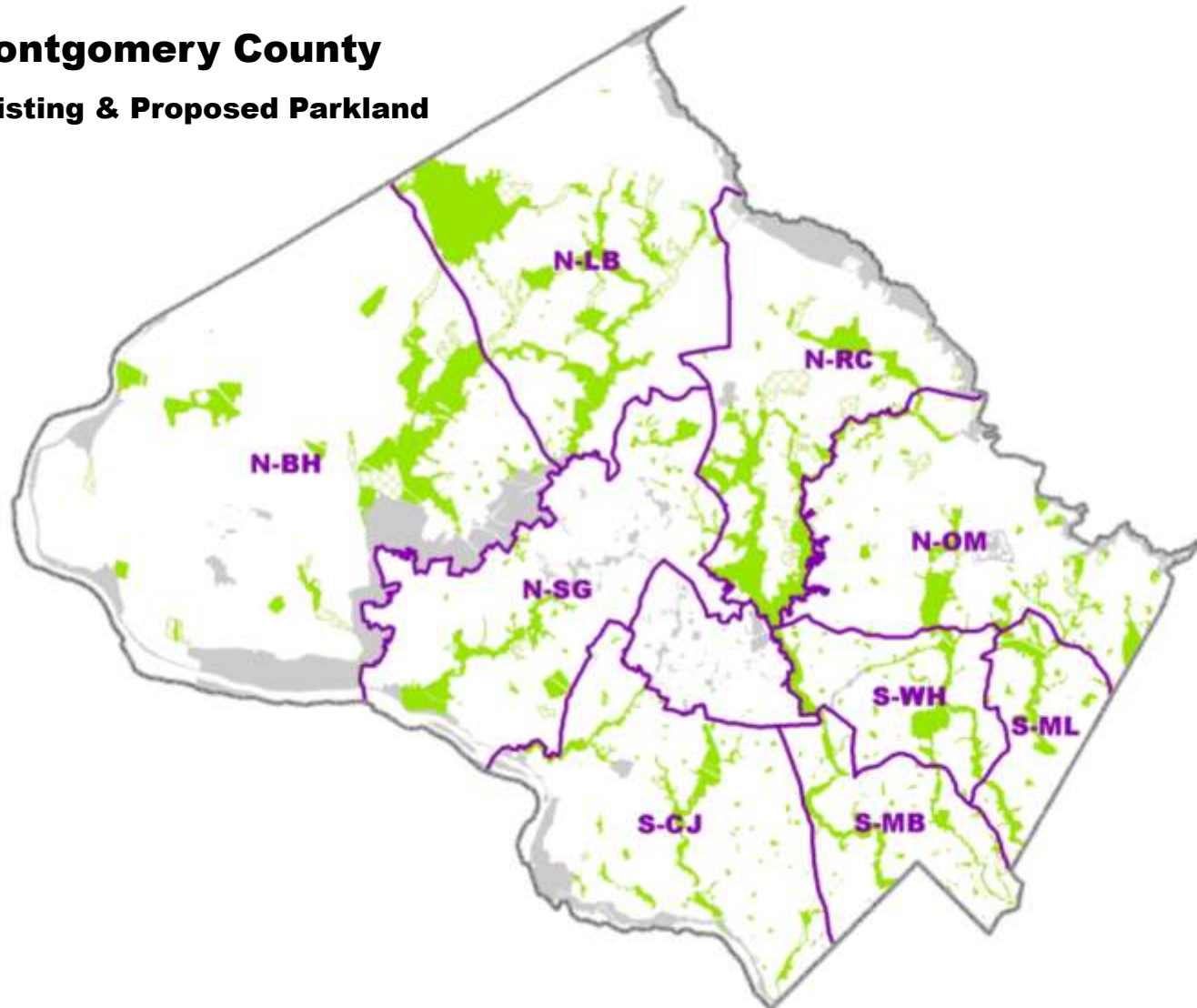
General Plan Refinement of the Goals & Objectives for Montgomery County, M-NCPPC, 1993: page 18.



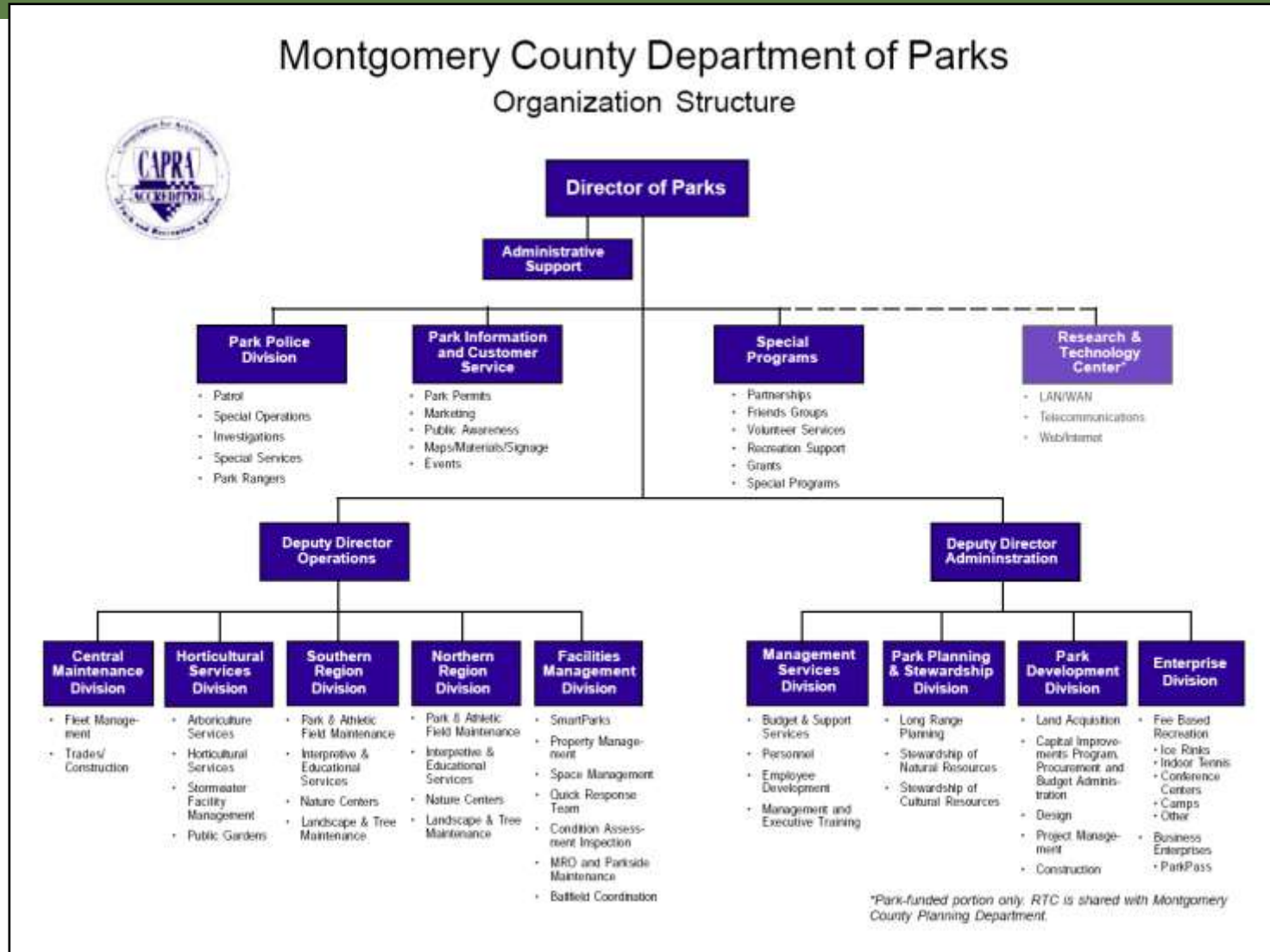
Montgomery County Parks

Montgomery County

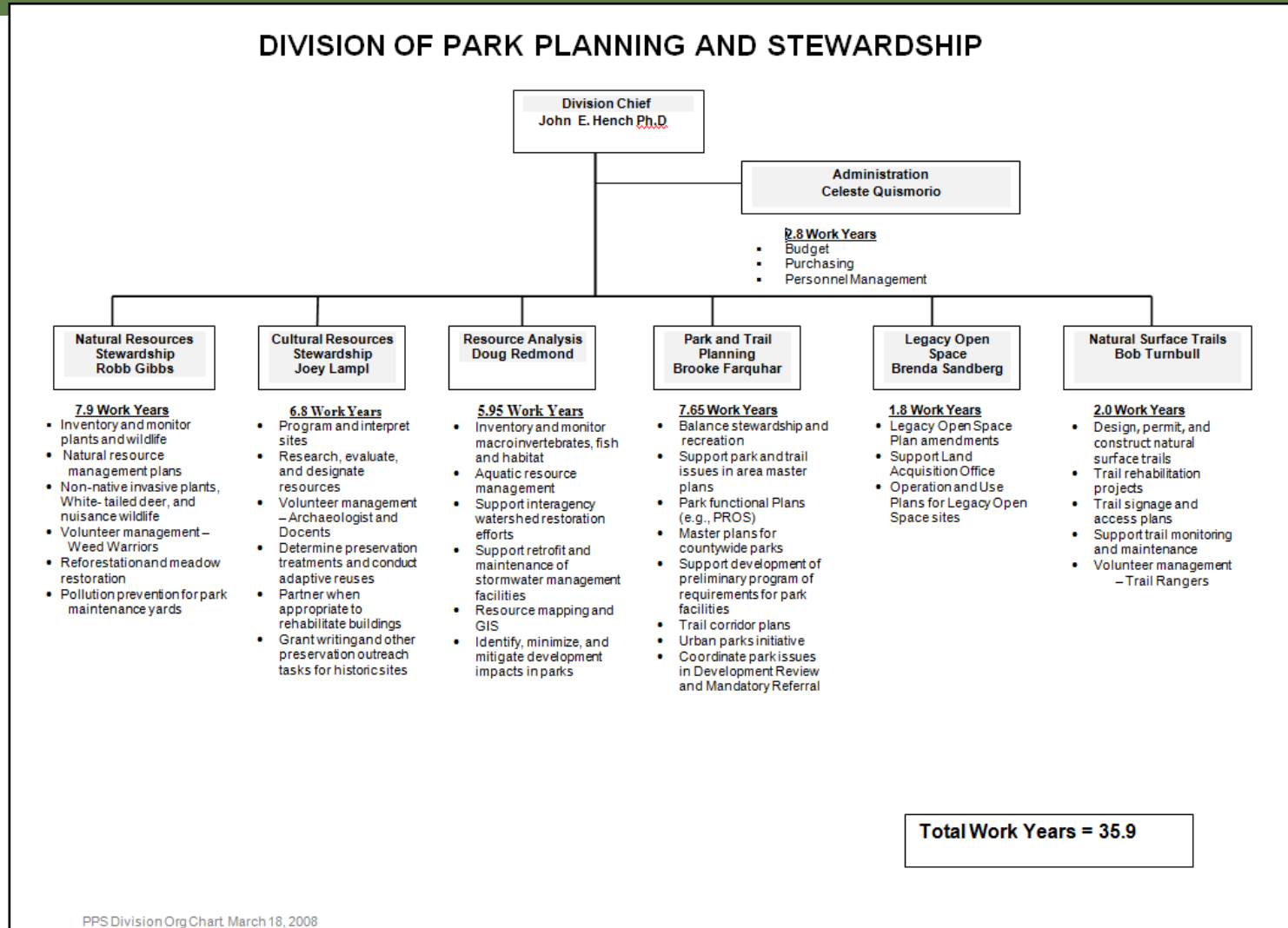
Existing & Proposed Parkland



Department of Parks Organization Chart



Park Planning and Stewardship Division Organization Chart





Northern Red Salamander



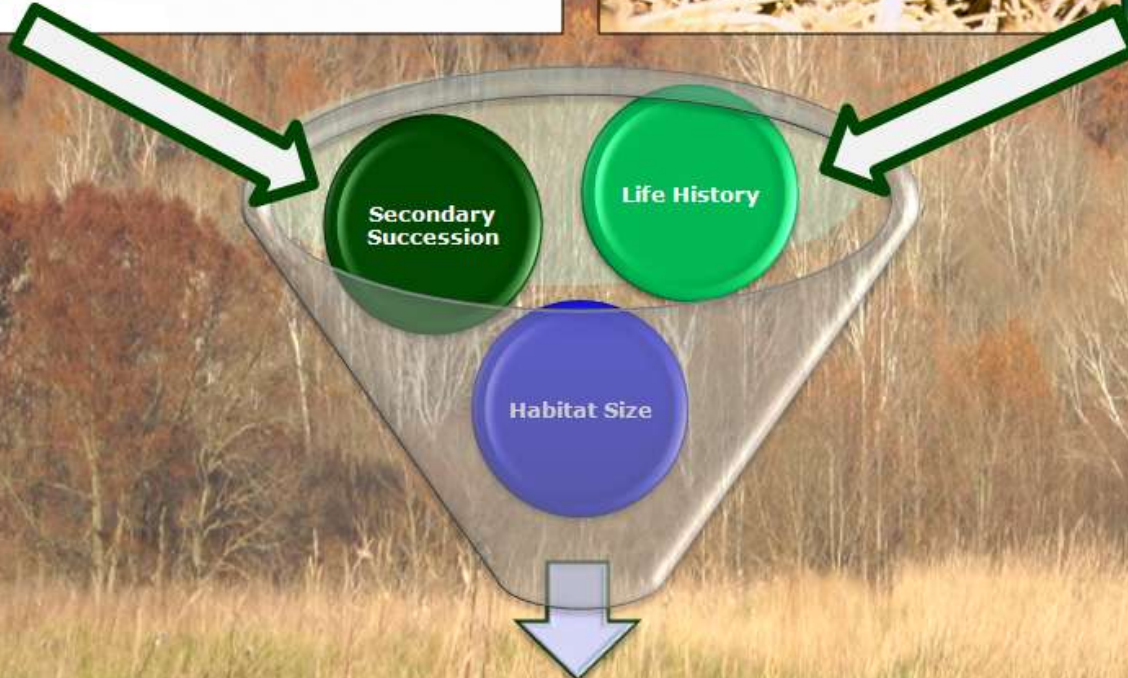
Kentucky Warbler



Least Shrew



Rough Green Snake



WILDLIFE HABITAT RELATIONSHIPS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARKS

Other Habitat Considerations: Non-Tidal Palustrine Wetlands



Wood Frog



Spotted Salamander eggs



Spotted Salamander

Other Habitat Considerations: Forest Fragmentation



Predicting the Effects of Land-Use Change on Wildlife Resources in County Parks

Upland Chorus Frog



Barred Owl



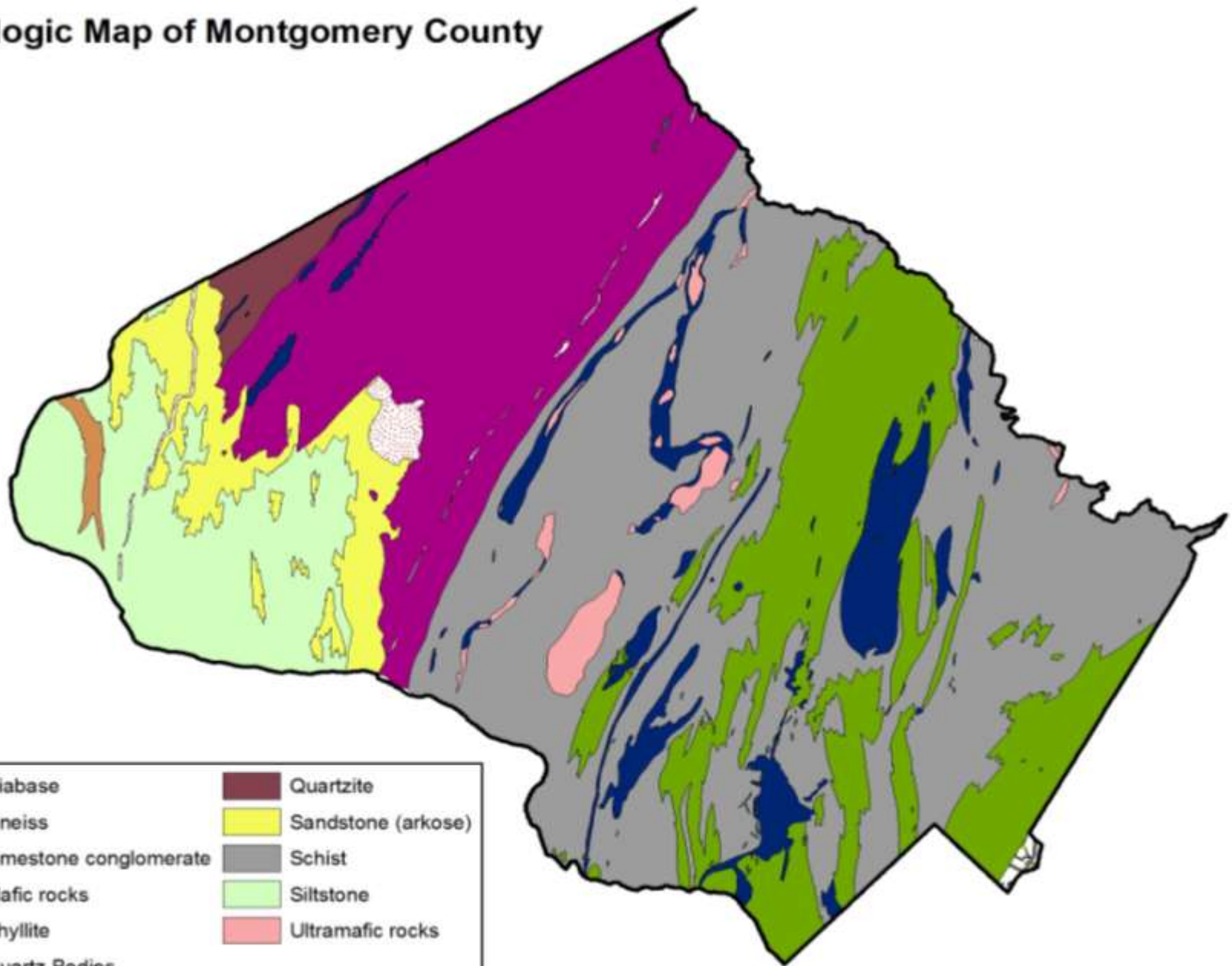
Short-Tailed Shrew








Tufted Titmouse

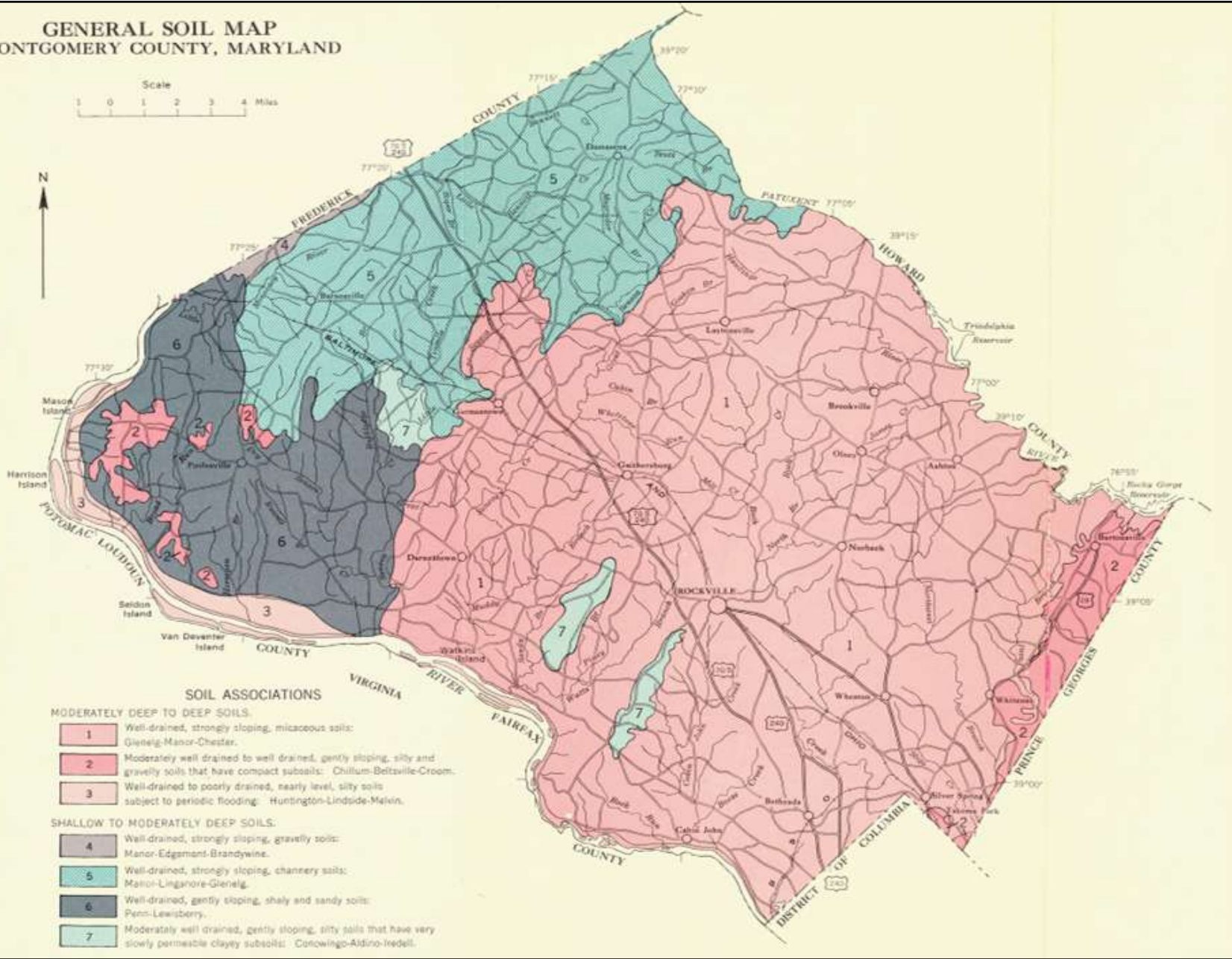


Geologic Map of Montgomery County



 Diabase	 Quartzite
 Gneiss	 Sandstone (arkose)
 Limestone conglomerate	 Schist
 Mafic rocks	 Siltstone
 Phyllite	 Ultramafic rocks
 Quartz Bodies	

GENERAL SOIL MAP MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND



SOIL ASSOCIATIONS

MODERATELY DEEP TO DEEP SOILS.

- 1** Well-drained, strongly sloping, micaceous soils: Glenelg-Manor-Chester.
- 2** Moderately well drained to well drained, gently sloping, silty and gravelly soils that have compact subsoils: Chillum-Beltsville-Croom.
- 3** Well-drained to poorly drained, nearly level, silty soils subject to periodic flooding: Huntington-Lindsay-Melvin.

SHALLOW TO MODERATELY DEEP SOILS.

- 4** Well drained, strongly sloping, gravelly soils: Manor-Edgmont-Brandywine.
- 5** Well-drained, strongly sloping, channery soils: Manor-Lingadore-Glenelg.
- 6** Well-drained, gently sloping, shaly and sandy soils: Penn-Lewisberry.
- 7** Moderately well drained, gently sloping, silty soils that have very slowly permeable clayey subsoils: Conowingo-Aldino-Iredell.

Terrestrial Natural Communities of Montgomery County, MD

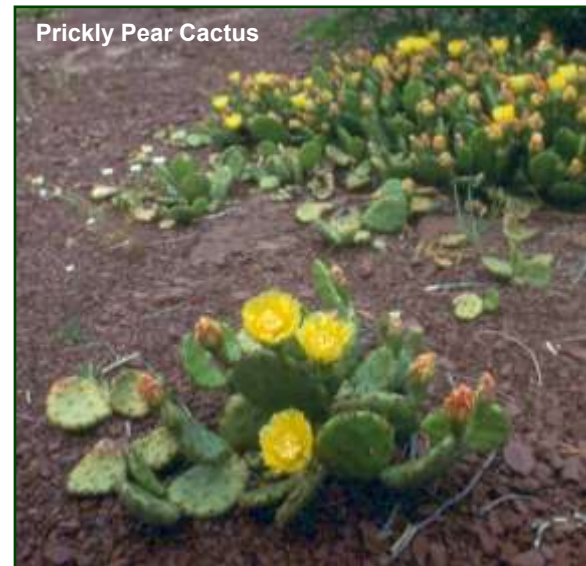
- **Potomac River Over-wash Savannah**
- **River-side Outcrops of the Potomac Basin**
- **Mid-Atlantic Serpentine Barrens**
- **Mid-Atlantic Shale Barrens**
- **Dry Forest on Acidic Bedrock**
- **Mesic Forest on Acidic Bedrock**
- **Central Maryland Floodplain Forest**
- **Central Maryland Swamp Forest**



Blockhouse Point Conservation Park



Mid-Atlantic Shale Barrens



Mid-Atlantic Serpentine Barrens



Kregia Dandelion

Striped Gentian



Shingle Oak



Fringe Tree



Moist Forest on Acidic Bedrock



Rattlesnake Orchid



Pink Lady's-Slipper



Showy Orchids



Virginia Dayflower

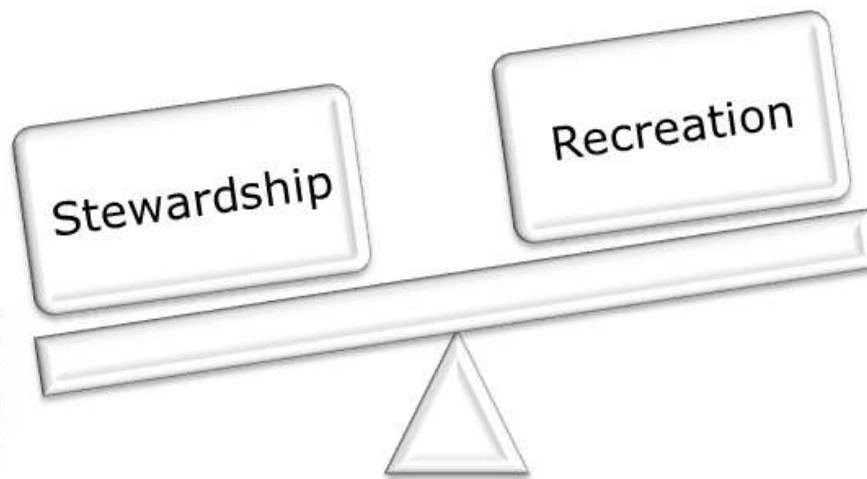


Large Whorled Pogonia



Montgomery County Department of Parks Mission:

“Protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance the demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer a variety of enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places for leisure-time activities.”



“Manage the county park system so it best meets the needs of current and future generations”

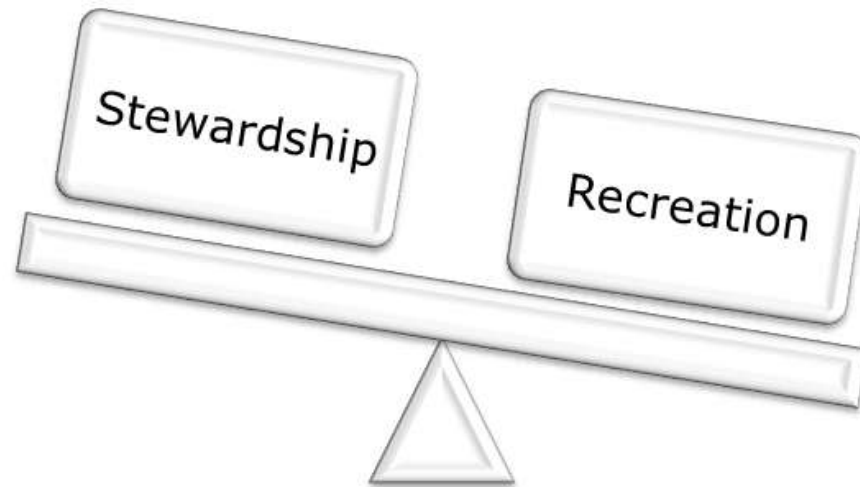


“Offer a range of leisure activities that strengthen the body, sharpen the mind, and renew the spirit”



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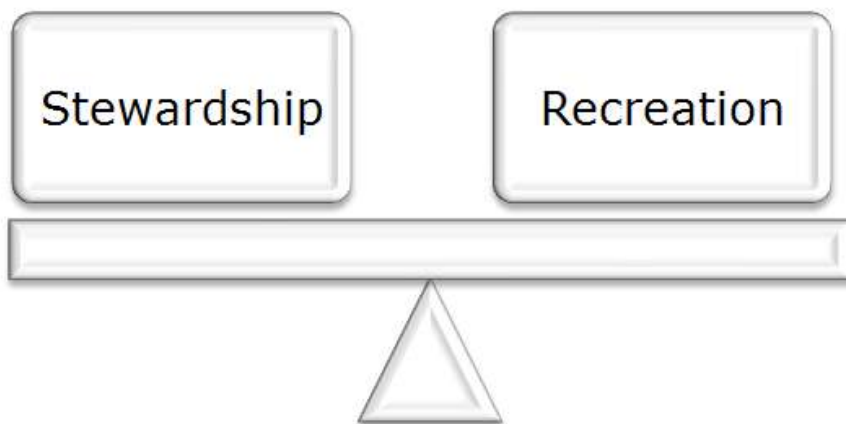
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2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan
A PARKS RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN
for Montgomery County, Maryland



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

2005 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)

A PARKS RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN for Montgomery County, Maryland



The LPPRP provides policy guidance on...

- **Recreation, Parks & Open Space**
 - **PROS Needs**
 - **Park Classification System**
- **Agricultural Land Preservation**
- **Natural Resource Conservation**
- **Cultural Resource Conservation**



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

PARK TYPE	PARK TYPE DESCRIPTION	TYPICAL FACILITIES*	APPROXIMATE SIZE
COUNTY-WIDE PARKS – Parks in this category serve all residents of Montgomery County			
- Recreational Oriented Parks			
Regional Parks	Large Parks that provide a wide range of recreational opportunities but retain 2/3 or 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 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
- Conservation Oriented Parks			
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 of compatible recreation activities.	Trails, fishing areas, nature study areas, informal picnic areas.	Varies
COMMUNITY USE PARKS – Parks in this category serve residents of surrounding communities			
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. (Don not include regulation size ballfields).	2.5 Acre
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 Acre
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

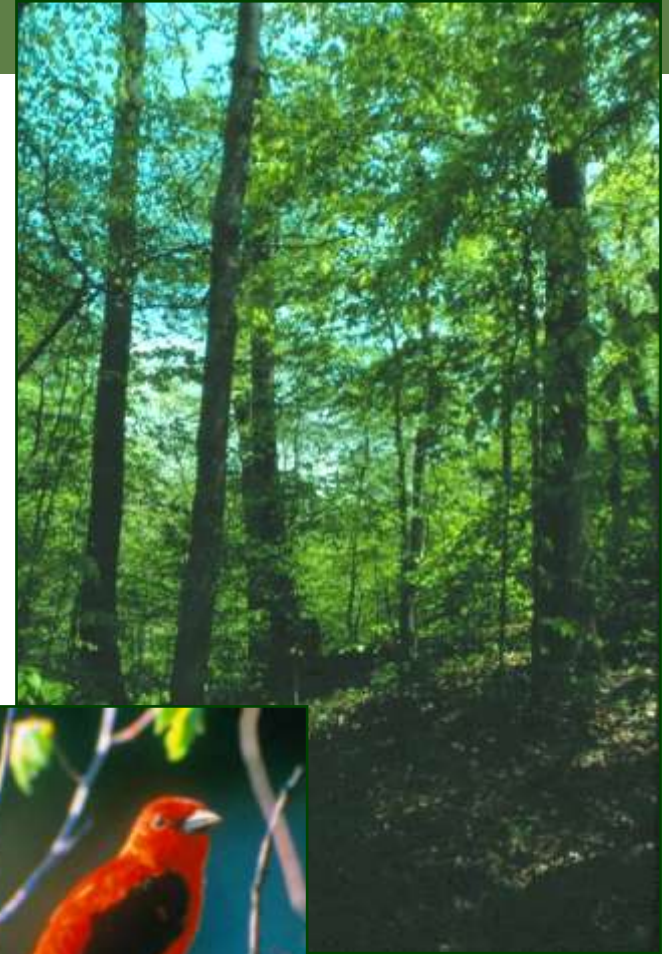
Figure 4.3

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

Defining Natural Resource Conservation Areas

- Sensitive Areas
- Biodiversity Areas
- Best Natural Areas
- High Quality Forest & Forest Interior Habitat

2005 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan (LPPRP). A Parks Recreation Open Space Plan for Montgomery County, Maryland, MNCPPC, page V-14.



Scarlet Tanager



Sensitive Areas

1. Streams and stream buffers.
2. 100-year floodplains.
3. Wetlands and wetland buffers.
4. Steep slopes.
5. Highly erodible soils.
6. Habitats of rare, threatened, endangered, and watch-list species



Codified at §3.05 (a) (1) (viii), Article 66B, Annotated Code of Maryland (Maryland Office of Planning and Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 1993). Also see the Environmental Guidelines (M-NCPPC, 2000)



Biodiversity Areas

1. **Areas of contiguous, high quality forest, marsh, or swamp.**
 - a. Relatively little evidence of past land-use disturbance.
 - b. Few or no exotic, invasive, plant species
2. **The known presence of rare, threatened, endangered, or watch-list species.**
3. **Generally represent the best examples of unique plant community types found in Montgomery County,** i.e., river-rock outcrops of the Potomac River Basin; serpentine influenced plant communities; diabase influenced plant communities; plant communities on soils derived from Triassic shales, siltstone, sandstone, and conglomerate; central Maryland floodplain forest; central Maryland swamp forest; mesic forest on acidic bedrock; dry forest on acidic bedrock; and limestone influenced plant communities.
4. **Areas of exceptional scenic beauty.**



Best Natural Areas

- 1. Large areas of contiguous, high quality forest, marsh, or swamp.**
 - a. Generally more than 100 acres.
 - b. Relatively little evidence of past land-use disturbance.
 - c. Few or no exotic, invasive plant species (See Appendix A).
- 2. The known presence of rare, threatened, endangered, or watch-list species**
- 3. The best example of a unique plant community type found in Montgomery County, i.e., river-rock outcrops of the Potomac River Basin; serpentine influenced plant communities; diabase influenced plant communities; plant communities on soils derived from Triassic shales, siltstone, sandstone, and conglomerate; central Maryland floodplain forest; central Maryland swamp forest; mesic forest on acidic bedrock; dry forest on acidic bedrock; and limestone influenced plant communities.**

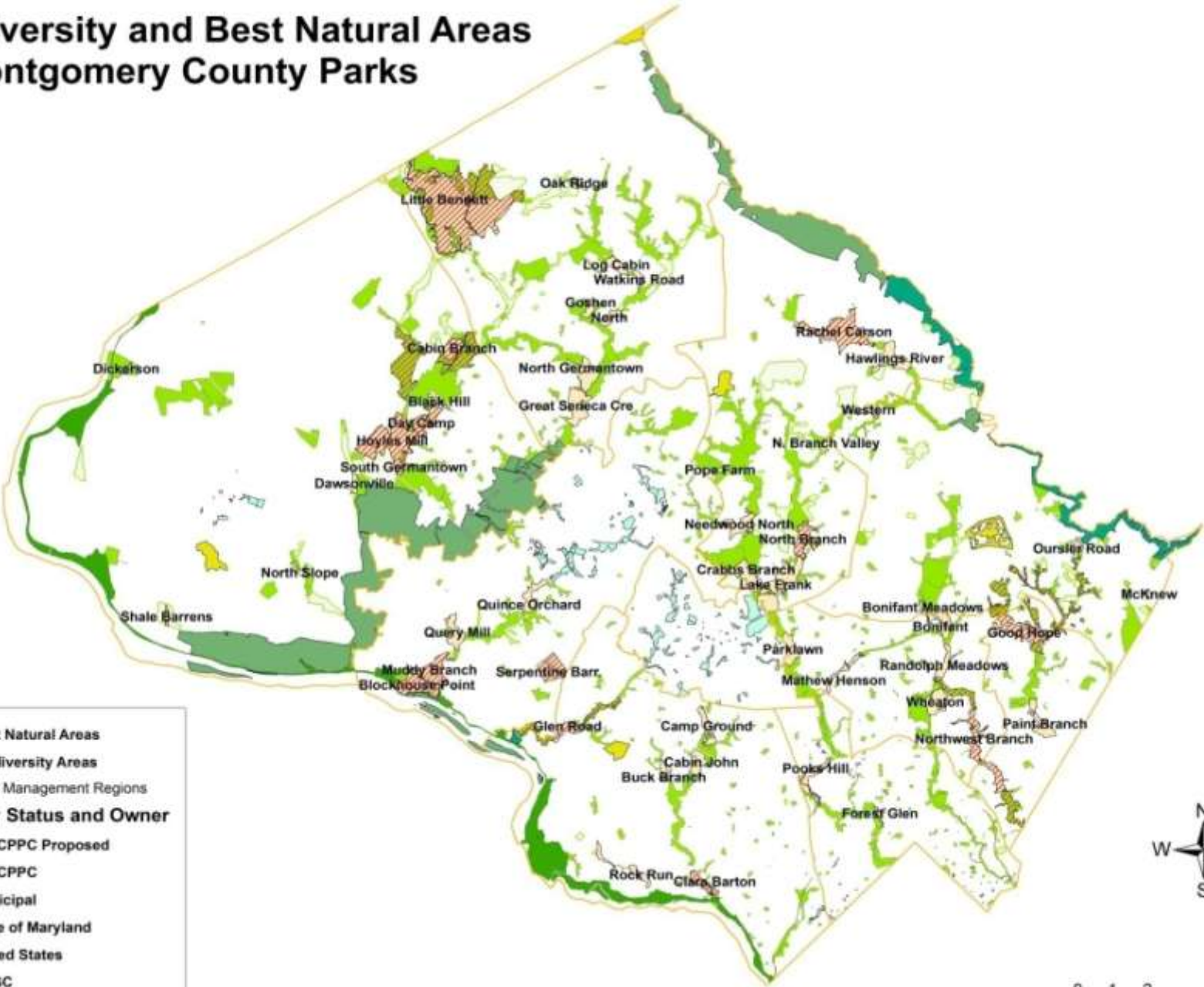


Best Natural Areas

- 4. High quality wetlands, including those of Special State Concern as noted in COMAR Title 26.**
- 5. Aquatic communities rated as good or excellent in the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy.**
- 6. Special Trout Management Areas as noted in COMAR Title 08.**
- 7. Areas of exceptional scenic beauty.**



Biodiversity and Best Natural Areas in Montgomery County Parks



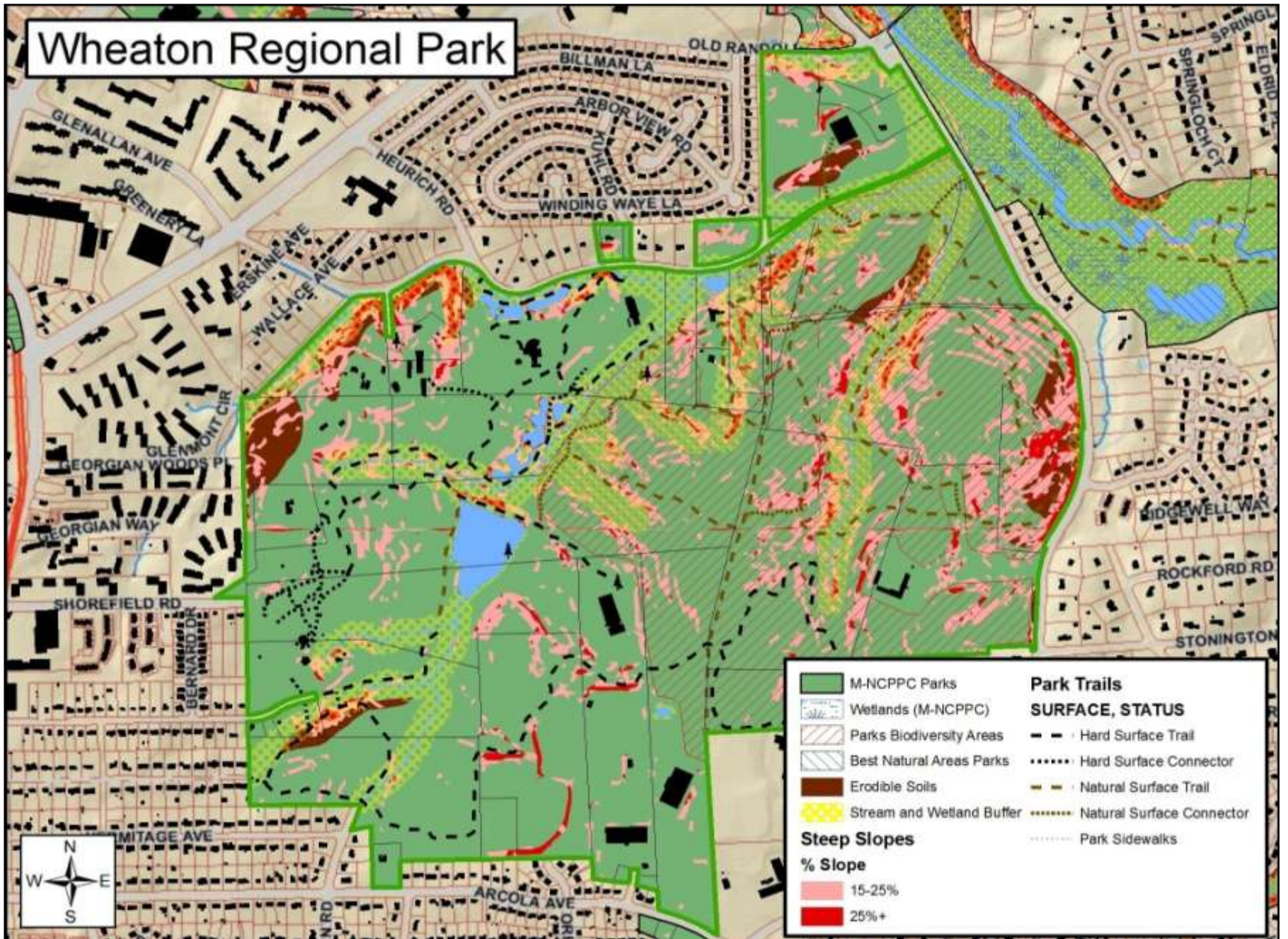
Best Natural Areas
 Biodiversity Areas
 Park Management Regions
Parks by Status and Owner
 M-NCPPC Proposed
 M-NCPPC
 Municipal
 State of Maryland
 United States
 WSSC
 Revenue Authority



Acquisition by Park Type

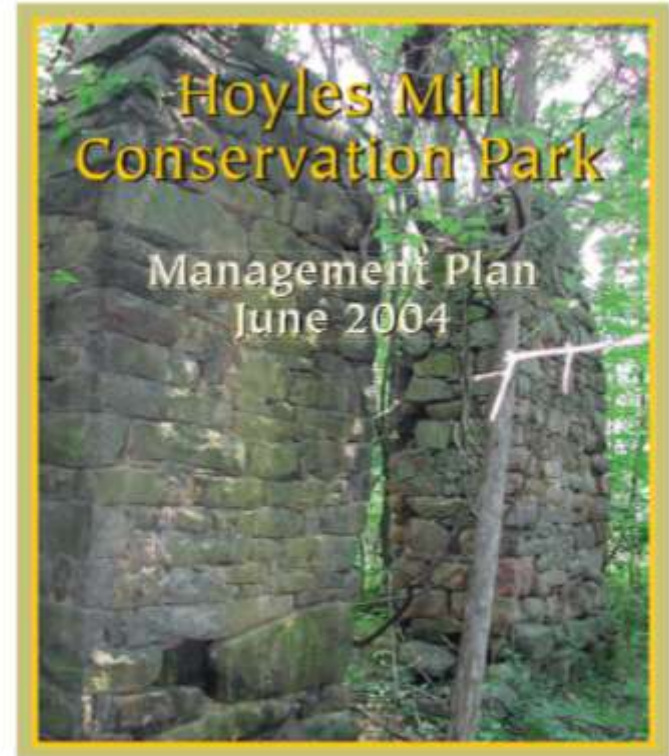
PARK TYPE	TOTAL ACERAGE	ACERAGE ACQUIRED 1998 - 2008
COUNTYWIDE PARKS		
Regional	7,928	105 (1.3%)
Recreational	3,026	300 (9.9%)
Special	2,444	1,327 (54.3%)
Stream Valley	13,591	1,643 (12.1%)
Conservation	3,810	1,642 (43.1%)
COMMUNITY-USE PARKS		
Urban	41	17 (41.5%)
Neighborhood	665	36 (5.4%)
Local	2,258	295 (13.1%)
Neighborhood Conservation Area	284	37 (13.1%)
TOTAL	34,046	5,508 (16.2%)

Wheaton Regional Park



Operational Planning Tools

- Primary Directives
- Access and Oversight
- Park Police
- Wildlife Management
- Vegetation Management
- Aquatic Resource Management
- Trails
- Encroachments
- Improvements/Infrastructure
- Compatibility with Adjacent Property Owners
- PRIVATE INPUT / Concerns
- Operational Budget Implications



The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
Montgomery County Department of Park & Planning
Countywide Planning Division, Park Planning & Resource Analysis
Natural Resources Division, Natural Resources Management
Northern Region, Black Hill Area Park Police

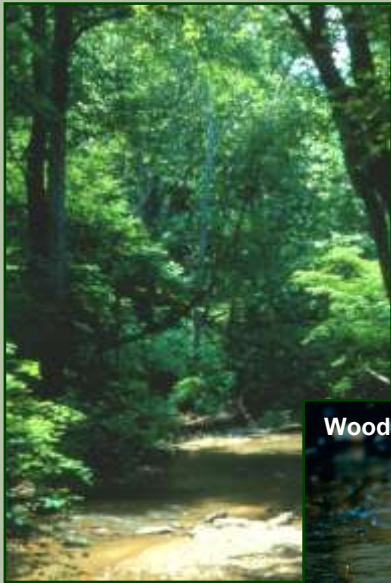
Balancing Stewardship and Recreation

Stewardship

Best management of the county park system for the benefit of current and future generations.

Recreation

Offer a range of leisure activities that strengthen the body, sharpen the mind, and renew the spirit



Wood Duck



Greenside Darter

Outside Threats

Inter-Agency Watershed Restoration Projects

Transportation Projects

Affordable Housing

Schools

Waste Management Infrastructure

WSSC Infrastructure

Developer Built Mitigation Projects

