

## **Appendix C**

### **The Patuxent River**

The Patuxent River is the largest intrastate river in Maryland, flowing through seven counties (Montgomery, Howard, Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's) for a total distance of 110 miles. In 1980, the General Assembly enacted the Patuxent River Watershed Act, which created the Patuxent River Commission in 1981 as part of the Department of State Planning. Each county has a representative on the Commission in addition to a representative from the Maryland Office of Planning, and the Departments of Natural Resources and Health and Mental Hygiene.

In 1984, the Patuxent River Policy Plan, a land management strategy to protect the Patuxent River and its watershed, was created. Twenty goals were agreed upon which provided a vision to restore and maintain water quality, habitat, and groundwater and surface water supplies. The Policy Plan also included ten recommendations to control non-point source pollution. (See Environmental, Natural and Historic Resources Chapter, Page 38.)

One of these recommendations was the creation of a Primary Management Area along with both sides of the rivers and its tributaries. The dimensions of this Primary Management Area are one-quarter mile on either side of the main stem of the river and one-eighth mile on either side of the tributaries. The greenway is not a Primary Management Area, but the greenway boundaries shall correspond to these priorities whenever possible.

The plan was updated in 1997, and all seven county governments in the Patuxent Watershed and the General Assembly have approved the resultant "Patuxent River Policy Plan".

The Patuxent River Greenway is partially complete and will eventually include connected land in portions of seven Maryland counties. The greenway will connect a variety of environmentally sensitive areas including: Patuxent River State Park, Oxbow Nature Area, and Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, which is part of the National Estuarine Research Reserve system. The Patuxent Regional Greenway promotes passive recreational and educational opportunities.

The South County, Odenton, Crofton, and Jessup and Maryland City Small Area Planning Committees recommend that the County fully support the Patuxent River Commission and the Patuxent River Policy Plan, and that the implementation of the plan be a high County priority. In addition, it is recommended that the County establish a Patuxent River Greenway which would follow the basic principals as provided below.

#### ***The Patuxent River Greenway***

A greenway is a continuous system of open spaces such as parks and privately owned natural areas, which are connected in some way. In the case of the Patuxent River Greenway, this connection is the Patuxent River itself. A greenway serves several

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purposes such as: preservation of historically or culturally significant areas, protection of wildlife habitat, public recreation and education, or simply conservation of an exemplary natural area. The primary purpose of the Patuxent River Greenway is protection of the river and its natural resources, including wildlife, wildlife habitat, wetlands, and water quality. Although certain areas of the river are open to the public, the majority of the area is under the stewardship of private landowners. Therefore, the greenway will serve the purpose of recreation and education in public areas and recognition of and assistance to landowners in privately owned areas.

The Patuxent River Greenway will:

- a) Recognize landowners for their past stewardship of the natural environment along the Patuxent River.
- b) Offer management information and services landowners might need to continue or improve their effective management of this unique and valuable resource.
- c) Build a community of landowners and other community members interested in the continued protection of the Patuxent River's natural resources.
- d) Protect and improve wildlife habitat by maintaining the natural state of the river corridor.
- e) Determine the sources of pollution impacting the river and ways to reduce this impact.
- f) Monitor the health of the river at public access areas and on private property if requested.
- g) Educate the community about water quality and the importance of wetlands and riparian buffers.