

HARFORD COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY – October 21st, 2025

Members Present

Jackie Koehn, Sally LaBarre, Roland Beckman, Michael Charlton, Lynn Faulkner, Paul Gartelmann, Dennis Kirkwood, Dan Spiker

Ex-officio Members Present

Terry Hanley, Dan Furman, Jeff Schoenberger

Guests

Mimi Sanford, Wildlife and Heritage Service, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Welcome / Introductions

Jackie Koehn welcomed the EAB. Everyone introduced themselves.

Review and Approval of the July 2025 Meeting Summary

The July 2025 meeting summary was approved.

Presentation by Mimi Sanford, Maryland DNR

Mimi Sanford presented an overview of Maryland's SWAP, updated every ten years and due again by May 1, 2026. The plan is a non-regulatory guide focused on Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats.

Overview of SWAP:

- Eight required elements: species, habitats, threats, actions, monitoring, review and revision, partner involvement, and public involvement.
- Plants are included indirectly because habitat conservation requires plant protection.
- Timeline for the update includes species and habitat meetings through 2025, a draft plan due December 31, 2025, and final submission in May 2026.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need:

Examples discussed included Tidewater Mucket, Chesapeake Logperch, Baltimore Checkerspot, and Bog Turtle. Threats and actions presented by Ms. Sanford included:

- Habitat loss from construction projects; recommendation to advocate mussel friendly stream work.
- Predator issues for Bog Turtles; recommendation to control or exclude predators.
- Illegal collection of turtles; recommendation for public education and regulatory adjustments.
- Evaluating whether propagation or reintroduction efforts are needed for certain species.

Key Wildlife Habitats:

About 60 key habitat types have been identified statewide, including several in Harford County:

- The Susquehanna River and its associated floodplains and submerged aquatic vegetation.
- Smaller rivers and streams such as Winters Run.
- Man made water bodies including Atkisson Reservoir.
- Freshwater wetlands including those at Swan Harbor Farm.

Threats discussed included toxic runoff and hydrology altering practices. Possible actions include expanding retention requirements and increasing protection for Wetlands of Special State Concern.

Mr. Gartelmann asked about changes from the 2015 plan, and Ms. Sanford explained that plants are being incorporated more prominently. Many concerns remain the same, though some have intensified while others have diminished. The state's growing focus on renewable energy has also influenced priorities. Few species have been removed, and several have been added. Species newly added to the RT&E list are automatically included. Others are added due to population or breeding site declines. Public comment is expected in the spring, but input is welcome at any time. A list of new species will be released when the updated SWAP is published. The team is exploring whether to break out the SWAP by region or county. Ms. Faulkner asked about using the Maryland Biodiversity Project, and Ms. Sanford said they are using a large amount of available data and hope that project contributes. They would like to create a website listing all species and associated threats, though that may not be feasible in this update.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Schoenberger from the Department of Public Works reported that the next household hazardous waste collection event will be held at the Harford Mulch and Compost Facility on November 15. A community cleanup at Deerfield Elementary on October 11 drew 103 participants and collected 6.38 tons of trash and 1,200 pounds of scrap metal. Highways and Litter Control conducted a sweep of bandit signs on October 14, removing 175 signs. Watershed Protection projects beginning this month include Lower Wheel Creek repairs, the Anita C. Leight stream restoration, and the Abbey Circle outfall stabilization.

Mr. Furman from Planning and Zoning reported they are close to releasing a Request for Proposal for contractual assistance to gather public input for the Land Use Plan update. They are reviewing the latest updated TIA for the proposed Costco, with County comments expected in the next few weeks. Council Bill 25-009 would amend final plat size requirements to allow a maximum of 24 x 36 inches, up from the current 24 x 20 inches.

Mr. Hanley from Parks and Recreation reported that Kristin Kirkwood is leading nature-based education efforts, with the first meeting well attended and informative. The eel ladder at Eden Mill is installed and working well.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.