

## **South River Greenway Fact Sheet**

### **What is the South River Greenway?**

The South River Greenway includes two of the largest forested tracts remaining in Anne Arundel County. One hundred miles of streams in four distinct watersheds (Bacon Ridge Branch, Broad Creek, North River, Tarnans Branch) flow through the Greenway into the South River. Land use includes farms, subdivisions extensive wetlands, and several thousand acres of undisturbed forests which provide vital protection to the South River, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

### **Why is the South River Greenway important?**

#### *Natural Resource*

- Watershed protection for the South River and the Chesapeake Bay.
- Undeveloped forests covering over 6,000 acres including 2,400 acres of interior forests.
- Fifteen different wetland types covering 800 acres.
- Identified as an Important Bird Area by MD/DC Audubon. Eighteen species of Forest Interior Birds (including several species at risk) have been documented in the Greenway.
- A regionally important area for reptiles and birds according to the Gap Analysis Report – a report of biodiversity in the Mid Atlantic region.
- High priority forest block under significant development threat as identified by MD DNR's Green Print Program and the Chesapeake Bay Program's Resource Lands Assessment Report
- Historical spawning area for yellow perch and river herring.

#### *History*

- A Native American Burial ground is located near Bacon Ridge Branch.
- Colonial barges once plied up Bacon Ridge Branch several miles above Rt. 50 to load hogs for shipment to England; the remains of a colonial wharf are still visible.
- Crownsville Hospital opened in 1911 to serve African American patients needing psychiatric care.

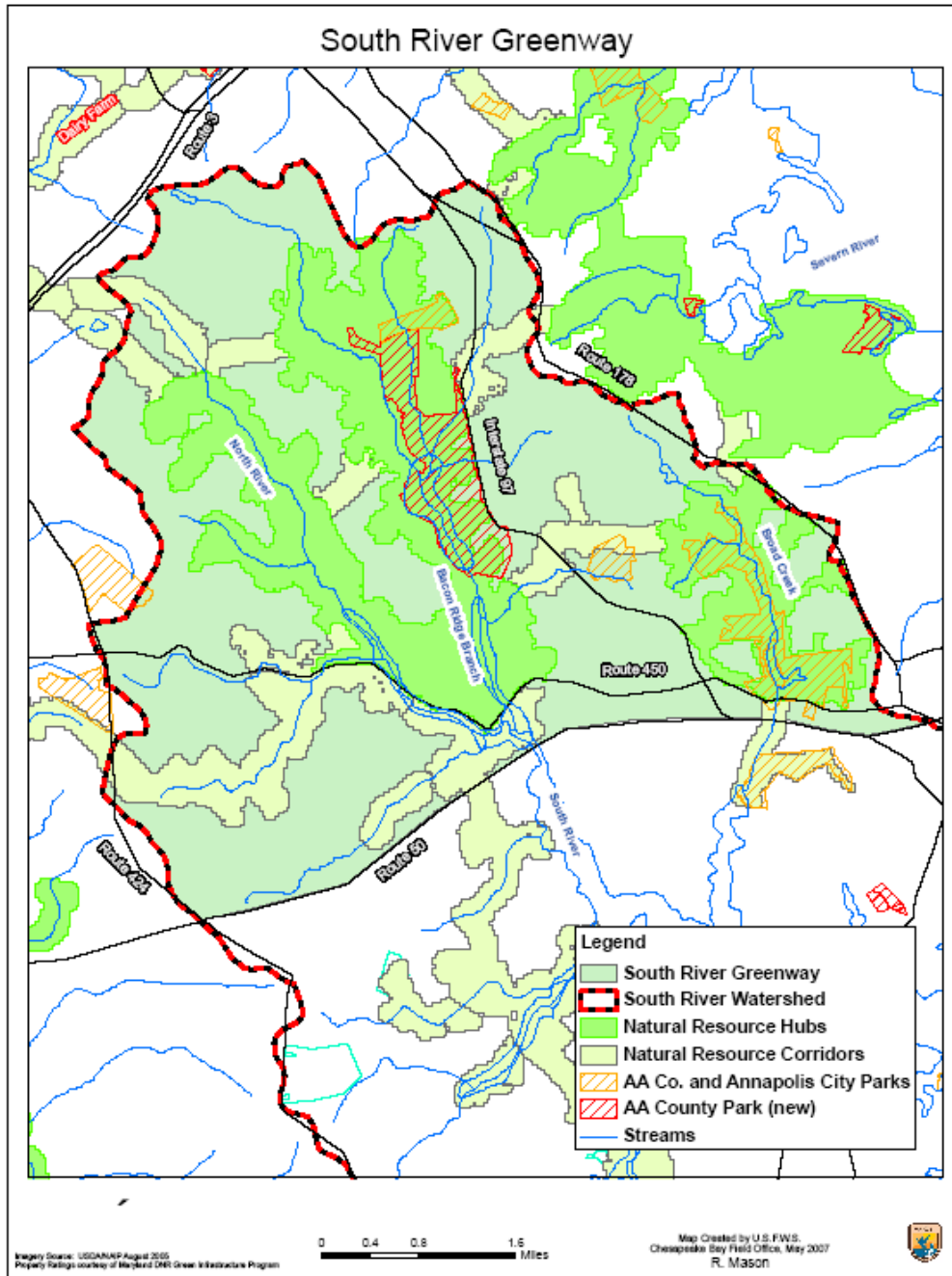
### **Why is it Vulnerable?**

Due its location within an easy commute to major metropolitan areas, forested tracts in the Greenway are under intense development pressure. Seventy-five percent of the undeveloped forests have highly erodible soils, meaning small disturbances to the land result in large impacts to streams that transport sediment to the South River and eventually Chesapeake Bay. Despite the extensive forest buffers, 21 miles of streams are listed as in poor condition as a result of land use changes (roads and subdivisions).

### **Can the South River Greenway be preserved?**

The Greenway has great potential to be turned into a natural area park for citizens of the county and state. The Greenway is located in the center of Anne Arundel County, ten minutes from the state capital. A network of trails could be developed connecting Annapolis, Crownsville, Crofton, Gambrills, Millersville, Edgewater, Severna Park, the Navy Dairy Farm, and beyond - in fact much of the trail system exists. Nearly 2,500 acres of this land is owned by local, state or city government. Many more acres are precluded from development due to Forest Conservation Act easements and building restrictions on wetlands and steep slopes. With key land acquisitions and or easements, the Greenway can be preserved.

The time to act is now before this natural gem is lost forever.



Partners in this project:

- Anne Arundel County
- Biophilia Foundation
- Maryland/DC Audubon
- Maryland Environmental Trust
- Scenic Rivers Land Trust
- South River Federation
- Trust for Public Land
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

To receive updates about the project or to become involved, contact:

Rich Mason, Scenic Rivers Land Trust - 410-573-4584 or  
 Kincey Potter, South River Federation - 443-223-6392

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