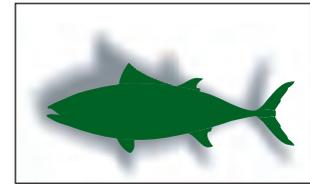


# GOAL, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Green Infrastructure Plan is to implement the recommendations of the 2002 General Plan. The goal, objectives, policies and strategies contained herein directly support the following vision set forth in the General Plan for the future of the environment in Prince George's County:

- Preserve, enhance, and where appropriate, restore environmentally sensitive features through the identification of green infrastructure elements.
- Implement the desired development pattern throughout the county while protecting sensitive environmental features and meeting the full intent of environmental policies and regulations.
- Restore and enhance water quality in areas that have been degraded by a high percentage of impervious surfaces, and preserve water quality in areas not degraded.
- Preserve some portions of the county from future development, improve water quality, and restore important ecological functions to degraded ecosystems.

## GOAL

The goal of the Green Infrastructure Plan is to preserve, enhance, and/or restore an interconnected network of countywide significant environmental features that retain ecological functions, maintain or improve water quality and habitat, and support the desired development pattern of the General Plan.

This goal is a refinement of the goal of the Environmental Infrastructure chapter of the General Plan and includes elements from the stated vision and policies.

## OBJECTIVES<sup>16</sup>

The following objectives are the result of analysis of trend data, input from the public participation process, and other provisions of the General Plan.

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<sup>16</sup> Plan objectives are not specific requirements but are indicators of how well the plan is being implemented. As each Biennial Growth Policy Update is prepared as required by the General Plan, an evaluation of the progress made on meeting these objectives will be prepared if the required information for updating is available.

1. By the year 2025, ensure that 75 percent of the green infrastructure network acreage meets the definition of countywide significance.<sup>17</sup>

Tracking this objective: No trend data exists for this objective because a green infrastructure network of countywide significance is being produced for the first time with the development of this plan. New aerial photographs and additional analysis for countywide significance factors will be needed to evaluate this objective.

2. Ninety percent of the land acreage purchased for environmental preservation using public funds should be located within the green infrastructure network. If a portion of a property purchased is in the green infrastructure network and a portion is outside of the network, for the purpose of this calculation, the entire acreage purchased will be counted toward meeting this objective.

Tracking this objective: No trend data exists for this objective because a green infrastructure network of countywide significance is being produced for the first time with the development of this plan. Land acquisition data will be required to evaluate this objective.

3. In new subdivisions in the Rural Tier, and outside of approved growth centers and corridors in the Developing Tier, ensure that 100 percent of impacts to regulated areas are limited to unavoidable impacts, such as those for road and utility crossings.

Tracking this objective: No trend data exists because this information has not been previously tracked. This objective can be evaluated by tracking development review approvals.

4. By the year 2025, less than 25 percent of countywide net losses of woodland cover should occur within the green infrastructure network.

Tracking this objective: Countywide, the average annual woodland cleared through regulated activities is 651 acres with an average annual *net* loss of 477 acres (1993-2003) (i.e., approximately one-third of approved woodland clearing is offset by afforestation/reforestation mitigation efforts that reestablish woodland cover). To meet this objective, if current trends continue, the annual loss of woodland on average should not exceed 119 acres per year within the green infrastructure network with the remaining 358 acres of net loss occurring outside of the green infrastructure network. It is recognized that clearing and development will occur in the green infrastructure network, but this should be considerably offset by countywide mitigation efforts that are targeted to the green infrastructure network.

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<sup>17</sup> Countywide significance: Corridors 200 feet wide or wider in the Rural and/or Developing Tier; corridors of any width in the Developed Tier; gaps of 600 feet or less; areas contiguous with downstream corridors, open bodies of water, or designated open space of adjacent jurisdictions.



5. By the year 2025, improve the water quality in each major watershed to elevate the Benthic Index of Biological Integrity (IBI)<sup>18</sup> rating of the watershed by at least one category using as a baseline the 1999–2003 biological assessment of the streams and watersheds of Prince George’s County completed by the Department of Environmental Resources (Map 3).

Tracking this objective: The county has just completed its first round of five-year sampling covering all watersheds. As the rotating sampling efforts are completed in the future, the Benthic IBI rating will be compared to the previous rating to determine if the rating is higher, lower, or the same.

6. By the year 2025, improve the stream habitat in each major watershed to elevate the habitat rating of the watershed by at least one category using as a baseline the 1999–2003 biological assessment of the streams and watersheds of Prince George’s County completed by DER (Map 4).

Tracking this objective: The county has just completed its first round of five-year sampling covering all watersheds. As the rotating sampling efforts are completed, the habitat rating will be compared to the previous rating to determine if the rating is higher, lower, or the same.

7. Each year, strategically target 100 percent of off-site forest mitigation acreage into the green infrastructure network and/or adjacent to streams outside of the green infrastructure network. Fifty percent of the forest mitigation acreage should be targeted to improving water quality by establishing, enhancing and/or restoring riparian forest buffers.

Tracking this objective: The average amount of off-site mitigation from 1993-2003 has been 29 acres per year. If this objective is fully achieved, 14.5 acres of forest buffers could be created each year. This objective will be tracked through the Woodland Conservation Ordinance data tracking system that currently exists.

8. Each year, 100 percent of off-site environmental mitigation projects (wetland, forests, stream restoration, etc.) should be targeted to priority areas identified in the countywide catalog of mitigation sites. A minimum of 50 percent of the mitigation projects should be targeted to enhance the water quality of the major watershed in which the project generating the need for mitigation is located.

Tracking this objective: No trend data exists for this objective because a countywide catalog will be produced for the first time with the development of this plan. To the degree possible, the countywide catalog of mitigation sites will be used to track this objective.

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<sup>18</sup> Benthic Index of Biological Integrity (IBI) is a method standardized by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources of assessing the health of streams in Maryland. Benthic macroinvertebrates (i.e., “small bugs”) are sampled from the stream and the composition of the species present provide information on the overall health of the system based on their sensitivity to pollution.

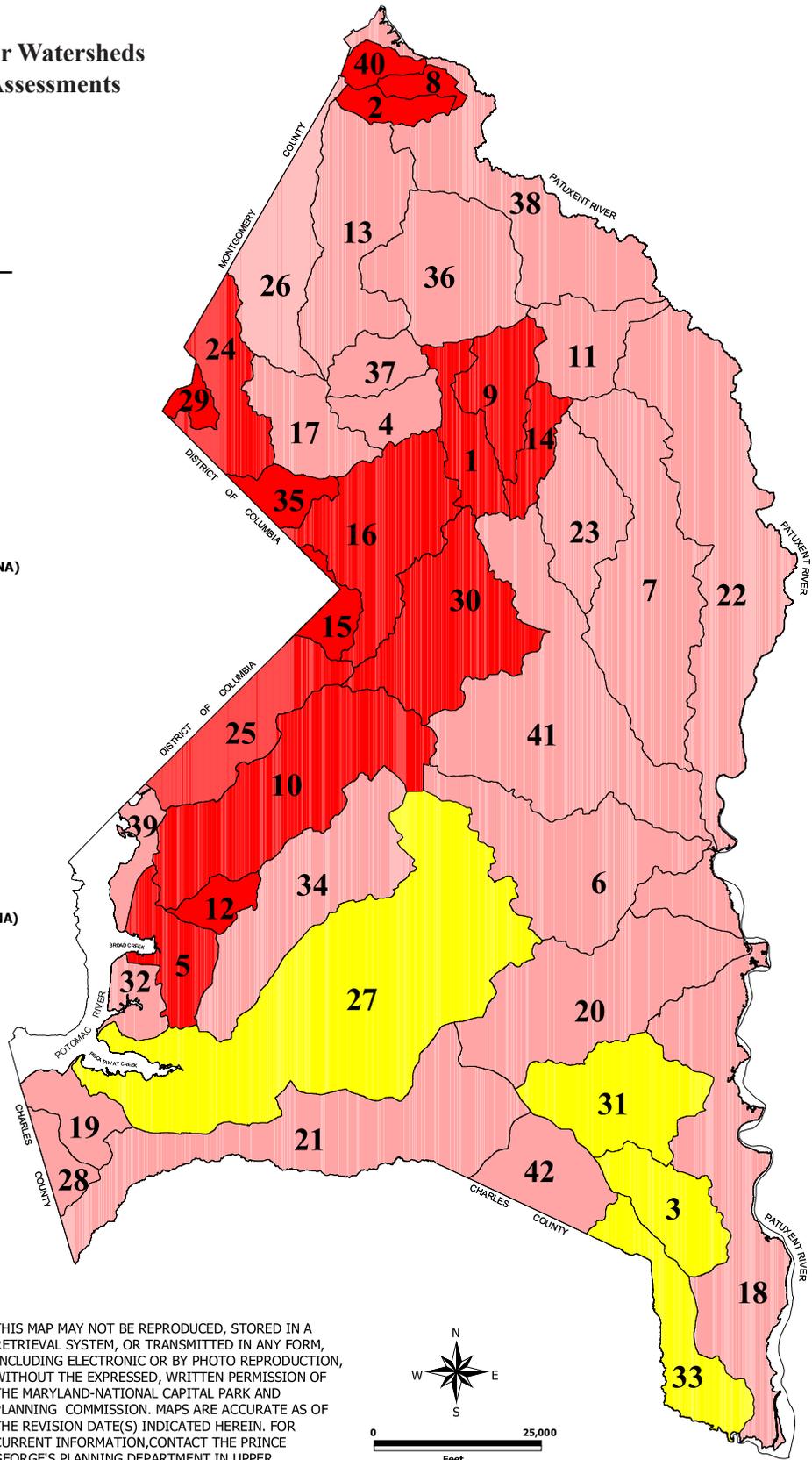


### Map 3: Benthic IBI Water Quality of Major Watersheds 1999–2003 Biological Assessments

**Weighted Conditions**

- Good ●
- Fair ●
- Poor ●
- Very Poor ●

- 1 - Baldhill Branch
- 2 - Bear Branch
- 3 - Black Swamp Creek
- 4 - Brier Ditch
- 5 - Broad Creek
- 6 - Charles Branch
- 7 - Collington Branch
- 8 - Crows Branch
- 9 - Folly Branch
- 10 - Henson Creek
- 11 - Horsepen Branch
- 12 - Hunters Mill
- 13 - Indian Creek
- 14 - Lottsford Branch
- 15 - Lower Anacostia River
- 16 - Lower Beaverdam Creek
- 17 - Lower Northeast Branch (ANA)
- 18 - Lower Patuxent River
- 19 - Lower Potomac River
- 20 - Mattaponi Creek
- 21 - Mattawoman Creek
- 22 - Middle Patuxent River
- 23 - Northeast Branch (WB)
- 24 - Northwest Branch
- 25 - Oxon Run
- 26 - Paint Branch
- 27 - Piscataway Creek
- 28 - Pomonkey Creek
- 29 - Sligo Creek
- 30 - Southwest Branch
- 31 - Spice Creek
- 32 - Swan Creek
- 33 - Swanson Creek
- 34 - Tinkers Creek
- 35 - Upper Anacostia River
- 36 - Upper Beaverdam Creek
- 37 - Upper Northeast Branch (ANA)
- 38 - Upper Patuxent River
- 39 - Upper Potomac River
- 40 - Walker Branch
- 41 - Western Branch
- 42 - Zekia Swamp Creek

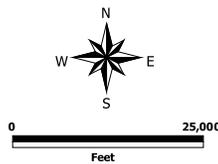


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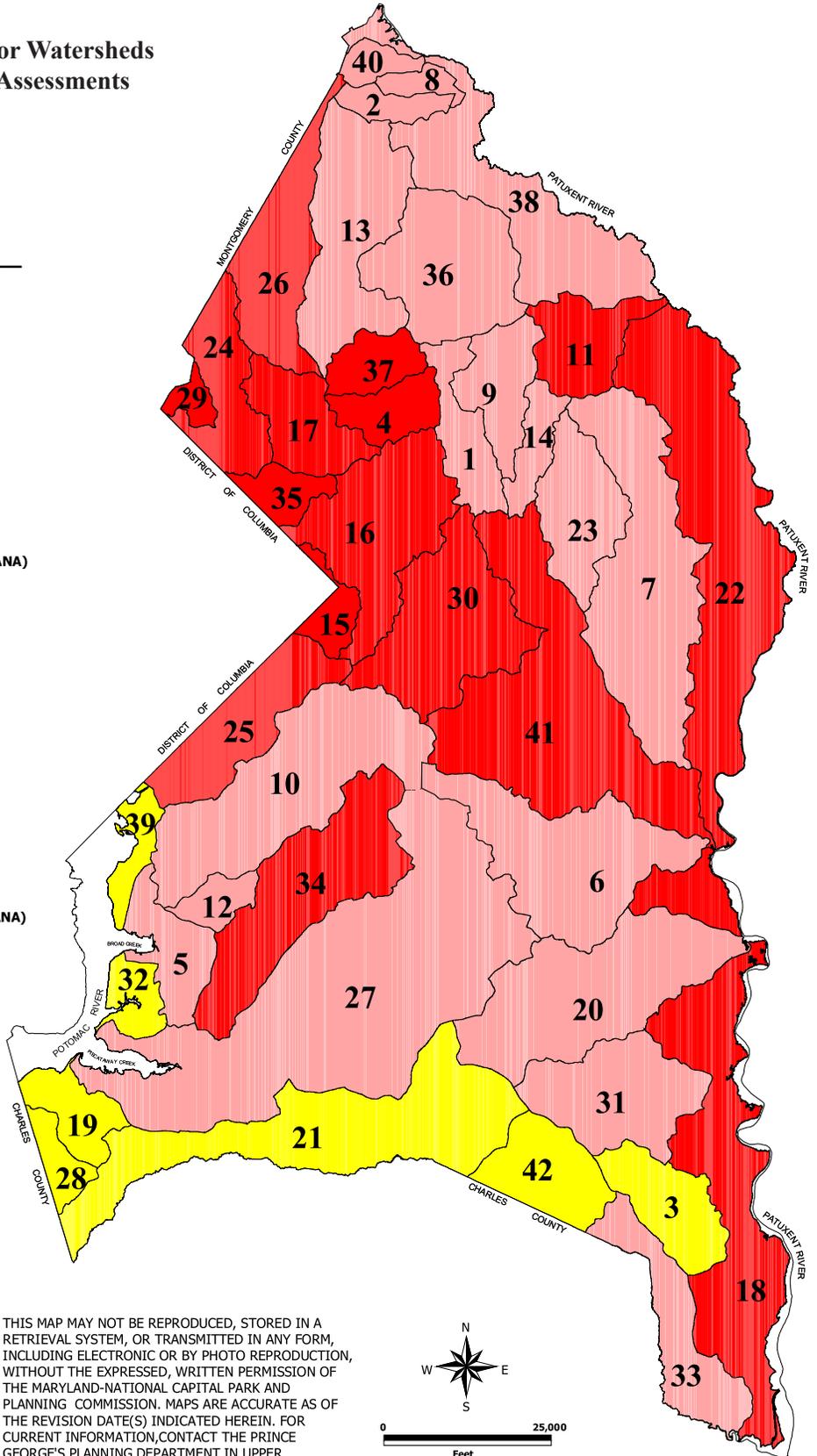


# Map 4: Habitat Water Quality of Major Watersheds 1999–2003 Biological Assessments

## Weighted Conditions

- Good ●
- Fair ●
- Poor ●
- Very Poor ●

- 1 - Baldhill Branch
- 2 - Bear Branch
- 3 - Black Swamp Creek
- 4 - Brier Ditch
- 5 - Broad Creek
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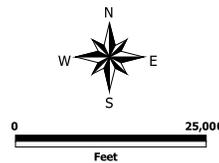


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## **POLICIES**

The following policies support the stated measurable objectives and reflect the policies of the Environmental Infrastructure Chapter of the General Plan. The policies are used in the implementation chapter to provide the framework for recommendations.

### ***Policy 1:***

Preserve, protect, enhance or restore the green infrastructure network and its ecological functions while supporting the desired development pattern of the 2002 General Plan.

### ***Policy 2:***

Preserve, protect, and enhance surface and ground water features and restore lost ecological functions.

### ***Policy 3:***

Preserve existing woodland resources and replant woodland, where possible, while implementing the desired development pattern of the 2002 General Plan.

### ***Policy 4:***

Promote environmental stewardship as an important element to the overall success of the Green Infrastructure Plan.

### ***Policy 5:***

Recognize the green infrastructure network as a valuable component of the county's Livable Communities Initiative.

