

Lower Monocacy Watershed – Carroll & Rock Creeks **By Chuck Harris, Maryland DNR Forest Service**

In 1995, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service, working with the City of Frederick, prepared a Forest Master Plan for Rock and Carroll Creeks (Feely, et al. 1995). The plan was developed in part because the City of Frederick was interested in developing a greenway along local streams to help provide open space for the rapidly developing western part of the City. The Forest Master Plan evaluated the general condition of Rock and Carroll Creeks and made some general recommendations on actions that should be taken. The report indicated that one of the most pressing environmental problems affecting the stream's aquatic resources was sedimentation from adjacent construction sites and stream bank erosion.

By May 2002 plans for stream restoration along Carroll Creek on County owned property were developed for the Carroll Creek Wildlife Park off Montevue Lane. Grant funding was secured and the project came to fruition. Maryland Forest Service Watershed Forester Phil Pannill oversaw the project.

Mr. Pannill, from June through August 2003, met with various volunteer groups, state, city and county officials (such as the Western Maryland RC&D, Eastern Shore RC&D, City of Frederick, Potomac Conservancy, and Friends of Baker Park) to begin plans for stream bank restoration and streamside forest buffer planting at Baker Park, along Carroll Creek in Frederick City, and along Carroll Creek in Frederick County extending to property managed by the U.S. Army Ft. Detrick Military Reservation.

Over the last 18 years, Foresters like Patricia Feely, George Eberling, Bryan Seipp, Paul Eriksson, Mike Kay and Phil Pannill did a lot of good work to establish riparian forest buffers along this corridor. Some of it worked out, and some of it didn't. Problems such as vandalism, floods, droughts, invasive weeds, and whitetail deer had an impact on the success of the plantings. Meadow voles were and continue to be a problem pest, construction of sewer lines within the plantings, government bureaucracy, and a general lack of routine maintenance meant that some areas needed to be replanted more than once.

Today, the Greenway along Carroll Creek has a well established riparian buffer. Soon the tree canopy will be closing in and future passive park recreation uses will be developed by both Frederick City and Frederick County Park & Recreation. New riparian buffer planting sites have been identified for continued protection of the watershed and to assist in improving water quality for this important watershed. In the meantime wildlife abounds, and erosion and sediment during floods is minimized, but the work that was started back in 1995 needs to continue to protect the Lower Monocacy Watershed.



Carroll Creek Wildlife Park off of Montevue Lane, June 2009