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MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR SIGNIFICANT PLANT AND WILDLIFE HABITAT AREAS OF MARYLAND'S WESTERN SHORE: CECIL COUNTY

APPENDIX B TO

FINAL REPORT

SUBMITTED TO:

Coastal Resources Division
Tidewater Administration

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Forest, Park and Wildlife Service
Department of Natural Resources

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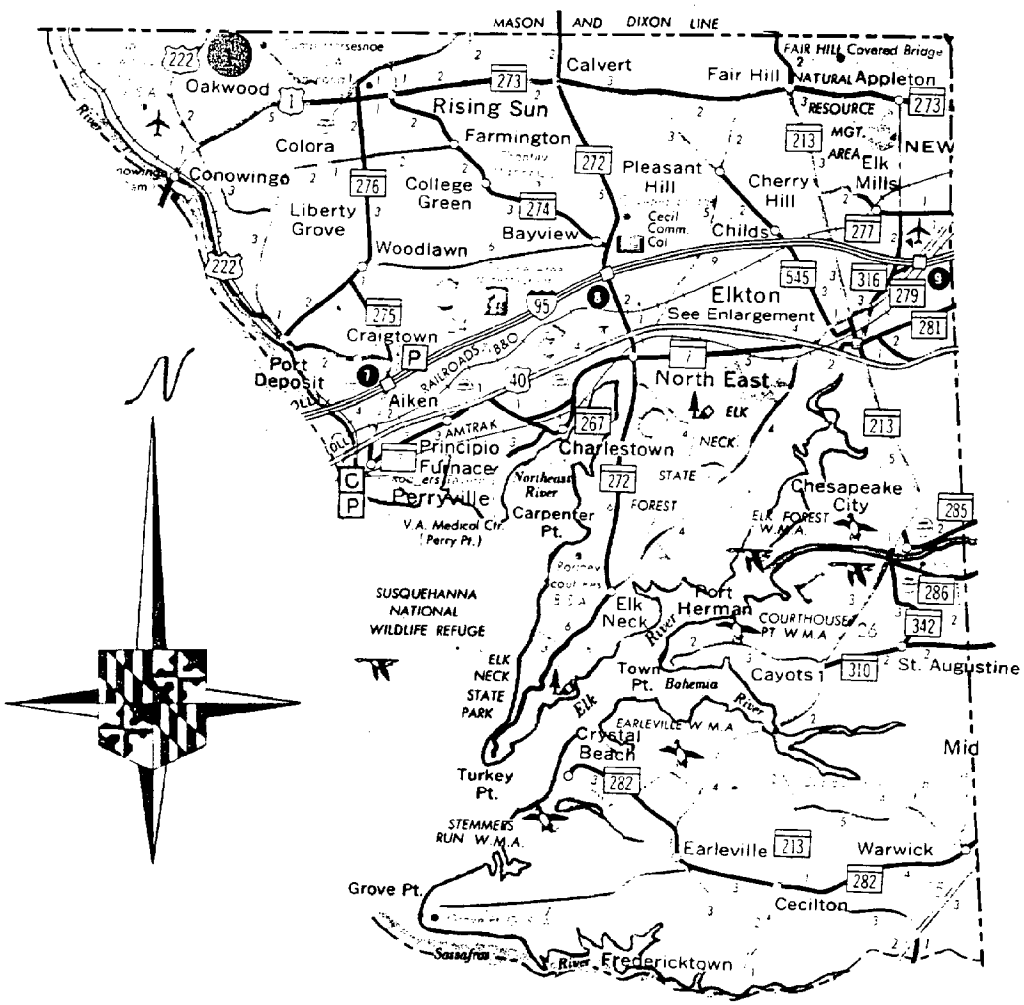
CECIL COUNTY



SCALE

0 6 12 MILES

0 10 20 KILOMETERS

1 = Locations of Protection Areas of significant habitat. Sites are numbered in order from north to south.

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CECIL COUNTY: Protection Area Locations

Protection Area	Site # on County Map
Roaring Woods	1

PROTECTION AREA SUMMARY

Protection Area Name: Roaring Woods

County: Cecil USGS Quad: Conowingo Dam

SUMMARY OF ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

This steep, north-facing slope supports a mature forest of Tulip Tree, species of oak, and Red Maple. The diverse herbaceous layer includes an uncommon wildflower and a rare plant species known from just five other sites in Maryland. Collection for medicinal use is reported to have severely depleted populations of this plant throughout its range. The sites in Maryland are near the southern limit of the range of this species.

OTHER VALUES AND SIGNIFICANCE:

This forested slope aids in flood control and protects the water quality of Octoraro Creek by slowing and absorbing rainfall. The forests and floodplain along the creek provide diverse habitats for a wide variety of wildlife. Due to the unusual chrome-rich soils of this area, additional rare species are likely to occur here.

THREATS AND MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

Threats

Logging within the protection area boundary is the most serious potential threat to this area. The rare species habitats and scenic value would be destroyed. Sediment runoff into Octoraro Creek would likely be excessive should these highly erodible soils be deforested. Logging the uplands on the southern boundary would invite invasion of non-native, weedy species. These weedy species may outcompete and eliminate the rare species and completely alter the composition of the forest vegetation.

Management Needs

Because this protection area consists of steep slopes with highly erodible soils, clearing of the forest should be prohibited. The size and reproductive success of the rare species population should be monitored regularly.

BOUNDARY RECOMMENDATIONS:

The protection area boundary includes the entire population of the rare species and the picturesque forested slope. In addition, a buffer has been included along the southern boundary, above the 300 ft. elevation level. Within this boundary active disturbances should be avoided.

SITE DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

This 66-acre protection area encompasses steep, north-facing and east-facing slopes adjacent to Octoraro Creek. It is characterized by maturing, second-growth, deciduous forest and a well-developed understory. The chrome-rich soils are very rocky and numerous boulder slides and scree areas are present. Several small streams and seeps support areas of exceptionally lush herbaceous growth. Due to it's aspect, the north-facing slope is more moist and lush than is normally expected on chrome soils. A narrow band of floodplain forest occurs along Octoraro Creek. Species such as Sycamore, River Birch and Silver Maple are common along the creek, but so also are non-native, weedy species. Tulip Tree, oaks, and Red Maple dominate the slopes with a well developed understory of Maple-leaved Viburnum, Wild Hydrangea, and blueberry.

The scenic value of this area cannot be overstated. It is among a handful of picturesque forests remaining along Octoraro Creek. Much of this watershed has been cleared for farming or for residential and commercial purposes.

Roaring Woods is bounded on the north by Octoraro Creek and a youth camp. Adjacent areas to the east and west are forested, but a dirt road penetrates the forest on the west side. This road forms part of the western boundary of the protection area. On the uplands adjacent to the southern boundary are cultivated fields, pasture, and private residences. A large gravel mining operation is located in Pennsylvania, less than 3/4 of a mile northwest of the protection area.

Prepared by: Richard H. Wiegand

Date: September 1989

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