



Public Notice

U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

Date: February 14, 2013

Public Notice # PN13-09

THE PURPOSE OF THIS NOTICE IS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC OF AN IMPORTANT NEW TOOL AVAILABLE TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES, THE WATERSHED RESOURCES REGISTRY (WRR), AND TO ANNOUNCE THE DATE/TIME OF PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION FOR THE WRR, SPONSORED BY THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, BALTIMORE DISTRICT, AND OTHER WRR PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS. THE PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION WILL BE HELD:

Thursday, March 14, 2013

9:30 am to 12:30 noon

Maryland Department of the Environment - Auditorium

1800 Washington Boulevard

Baltimore, Maryland 21230

To ensure sufficient space, we request that attendees register for the WRR session in advance at the WRR website: <http://www.watershedresourcesregistry.com>. For those planning to attend the public session, we recommend you park in the MDE Blue Parking Lot on Washington Boulevard. For more about the public information session, please contact Ellen Bryson at ellen.bryson@usace.army.mil or (410) 962-6084.

As background, the WRR was created in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region III; Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE); Maryland Department of Planning (MDP); State Highway Administration (SHA); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS); Maryland Environmental Services (MES); Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR); and the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The WRR incorporates eight GIS-based analyses that map and score areas based on various environmental resources. This information will help applicants identify areas that may benefit from mitigation, restoration and environmental enhancement. Of particular interest to the Corps regulatory environment and the public are the analyses that map high value wetland and riparian areas.

The WRR is being utilized as an initial screening tool by Regulatory project managers in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, as they review permit applications. Use of the WRR by permit applicants is invited and recommended; however, using the WRR is not required as part of a complete permit application. The WRR provides valuable guidance for both the applicant and the permit reviewer to better understand potential impacts of proposals. A particular goal of creating this tool is to ensure that the regulatory process is open and transparent to the regulated public.

Used early in the design phase of project development, the WRR can provide valuable background information on existing site conditions and important resources. This information can allow applicants to consider alternative sites and designs prior to investing considerable time and money into a particular site or proposal. Furthermore, for projects that require wetland or stream

mitigation, the WRR will assist users to find potential sites/opportunities for restoration, enhancement, or preservation.

The WRR findings are available in a user-friendly, interactive web-based mapping tool available at <http://www.watershedresourcesregistry.org>. In addition to the mapping tool, the website also provides important background information about the WRR project participants, how the map layers were created, and helpful instruction on using the tool.

The WRR web site allows users to find, review, and export preservation and restoration opportunities on a watershed basis. The WRR supports searches by watershed or by county. Users also have the ability to retrieve details about any location within the state of Maryland with a couple easy mouse clicks. After reviewing any site, users can print a map that, in addition to the preservation and restoration opportunity areas, includes coordinates, soil polygons, presence of, or proximity to, wetlands and streams, critical areas boundaries, etc., to support supplemental field investigations regarding a potential site.

William P. Seib
Chief, Regulatory Branch