



North Branch Trail at Rock Creek Regional Park, SC2019012

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Completed:3/12/2021

Description

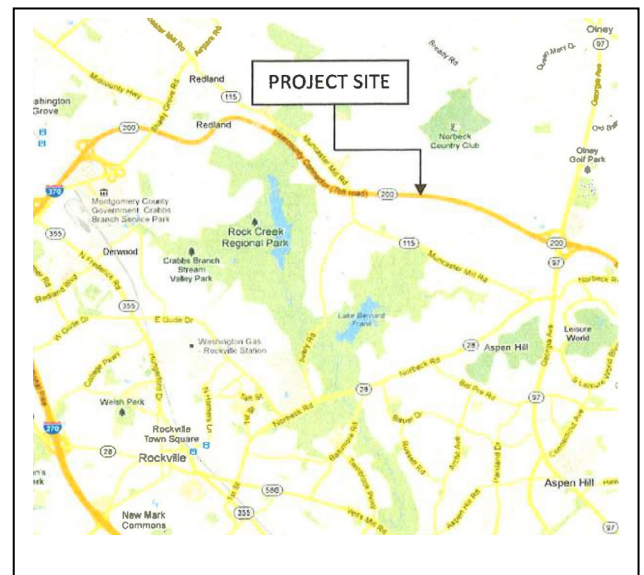
8B. Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan SC2019012: North Branch Trail at Rock Creek Regional Park, Upper Rock Creek Special Protection Area

Construct trail from the ICC bike lane to the hiker-biker trail built as part of the Preserve at Rock Creek housing development.

Master Plan: 2004 Upper Rock Creek and 1994 Aspen Hill

Applicant: Montgomery County Department of Parks

Filing Date: November 20, 2018



- The review of this Plan is in two parts:
 - **Item 8A – Forest Conservation Plan SC2019012** discussed as a separate staff report, and
 - **Item 8B – Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan SC2019012.**
- Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan with conditions (**Item 8B**).
- This project is partially located within the Upper Rock Creek Special Protection Area (SPA) and on publicly owned property. Approval of a water quality plan is required under Section 19-62 of the Montgomery County Code. The Planning Board must take separate action on the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan (**Item 8B**).
- The Planning Board's action on the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan is regulatory and binding.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan, subject to the following conditions:

1. Impervious surfaces should be limited to no more than what is shown on the plan.
2. Prior to the start of any clearing or grading, the applicant must have the associated amended Final Forest Conservation Plan approved that matches the final trail improvements shown on the sediment control plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The North Branch Hiker-Biker trail is located within the Rock Creek Regional Park and the North Branch Stream Valley Park Unit 4. The Water Quality Plan covers only the section within SVU 4 in the Upper Rock Creek Special Protection Area (SPA). The entire trail is proposed to be approximately 2.3 miles in length. The North Branch Trail is one segment of a continuous regional park trail system that would extend from the District of Columbia to Olney. The hiker-biker trail system through Lake Frank and the North Branch of Rock Creek has been recommended in multiple master plans including the 1978 Master Plan of Bikeways, the 2005 Olney Master Plan, the 1985 and 2004 *Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan*, the 1998 and 2008 *Countywide Park Trails Plan*, the 2000 *Rock Creek Regional Park Master Plan*, and the 2008 *Upper Rock Creek Trail Corridor Plan*.

The area of the trail within the SPA is near the Intercounty Connector (ICC) and in areas previously impacted by the construction of the highway. A short segment then connects this section to the proposed Preserve at Rock Creek developer trail. Where possible, the trail is located along an old roadbed and people's choice trails.

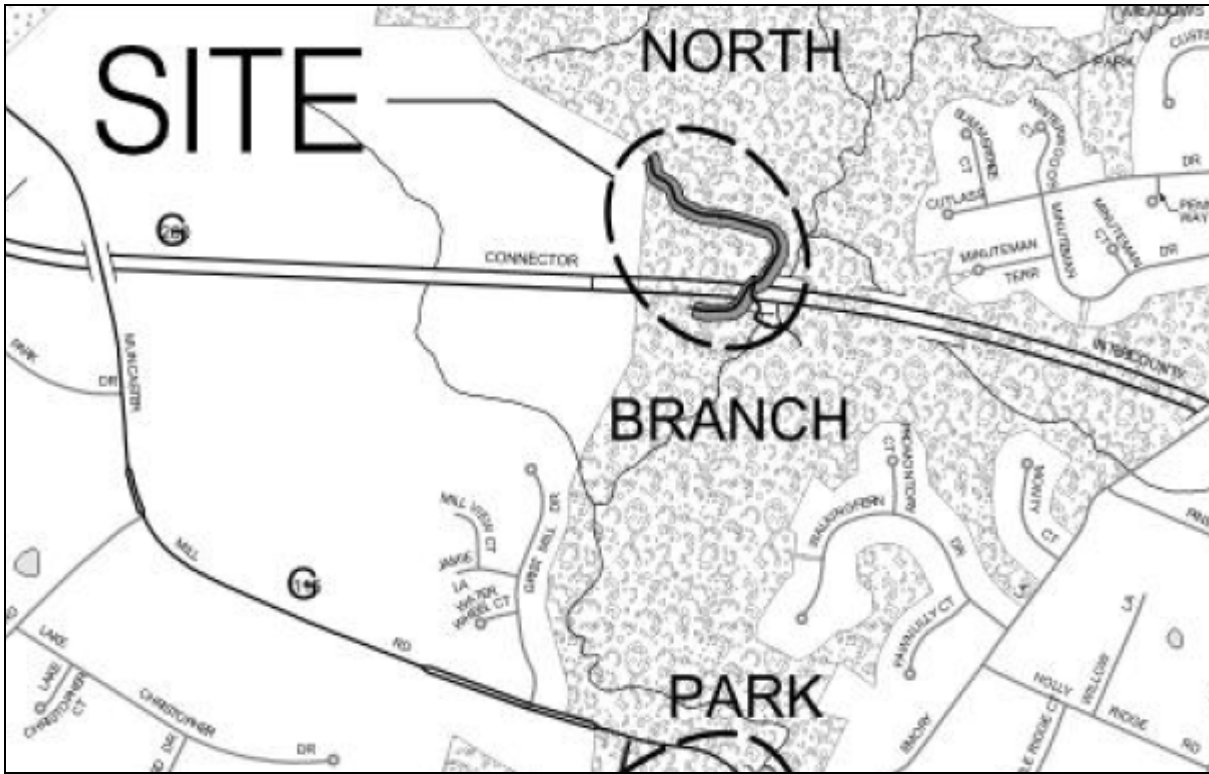


Figure 1 Trail Location

SPA WATER QUALITY PLAN ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Application meets the Water Quality Plan requirements of Chapter 19 of the Montgomery County Code for the Upper Rock Creek Special Protection Area.

Review for Conformance to the Special Protection Area Requirements

This project is located within the Upper Rock Creek SPA and on publicly owned property. It is required to obtain approval of a water quality plan under Section 19-62(c) of the Montgomery County Code. This section of the code states:

Publicly owned property. Before engaging in any land-disturbing activity on publicly owned property in an area designated as a special protection area, the applying agency or department should prepare a combined preliminary and final water quality plan.

In addition, Section 4.9.20.2.2B2 of the Zoning Code for the Upper Rock Creek Overlay Zone states:

All public project must satisfy the provision of the Upper Rock Creek Overlay zone, however, these provisions are not intended to preclude the development of public facilities. Such facilities must conform to the water quality plan submission and review requirements established in Chapter 19, Article V, and keep imperviousness to the minimum needed to accomplish the public purpose intended.

Under Section 19-65 of the law, the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS) and the Planning Board have different responsibilities in the review of a Water Quality Plan. MCDPS has reviewed and conditionally approved the elements of the water quality plan under its purview. The Planning Board's responsibility is to determine if environmental buffer protection, SPA forest conservation and planting requirements, and minimization of impervious surfaces have been satisfied.

County DPS Special Protection Area Review Elements

In a letter dated January 13, 2014, MCDPS found that the elements of the SPA Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan under its purview were acceptable (Attachment 1).

Site Performance Goals

As part of the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan, the following performance goals were established for the Property:

1. Minimize storm flow run off increases.
2. Minimize sediment loading.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater management goals for the Project will be met with a combination of non-rooftop disconnection, sheet flow to buffers, micro bioretention, bio swales and bioretention and rain gardens.

Sediment Control

An engineered sediment control plan must be submitted for this project prior to permitting.

BMP Monitoring

A stream monitoring fee for the site areas and a BMP monitoring fee will not be required.

Planning Board Special Protection Area Review Elements

Staff recommends Planning Board approval of the elements of the SPA Water Quality Plan under its purview.

Forest Conservation

The Application meets the requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law. M-NCPPC Staff approved a Natural Resource Inventory and Forest Stand Delineation on July 28, 2017 (Attachment 2).

This trail improvement proposes to clear 5.11 acres of forest along the trail alignment. Mitigation for the loss of this forest is not required due to the largely forested nature of the park property. The applicant has minimized the limits of disturbance and minimized the impacts to large and specimen trees.

A separate forest conservation plan that includes the entire trail project will be approved as part of the Water Quality Plan Approval.

Environmental Buffer Protection

Wetlands will not be disturbed by the construction of this trail. However, two minimal sections of the trail must be temporarily disturbed during the construction process. The buffer area for the two wetlands will be restored and maintained in the long-term through the installation of retaining wall adjacent to the trail. No Runoff flow will be directed to the wetland areas.

Impervious Surfaces

A main goal for development in all SPAs is to minimize impervious surfaces. The Upper Rock Creek SPA has an eight percent impervious limit.

Approximately 0.44 acres of new impervious surface will be added in order to construct the trail. Although State Highway Administration and County standards typically require an 11 to 14-foot width, the trail has been limited to a 10-foot width and there are no unnecessary impervious surfaces. Part of the trail is designed to be located along previously disturbed areas, which also minimizes the total amount of impervious surface while maintaining the public purpose.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends the Planning Board approve the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan with conditions specified above.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS) Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan approval letter
2. Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation