

Scouting Easements

Forest Conservation in an Urbanizing State

The Challenge

Forests provide a wide variety of benefits to Maryland citizens. Yet as the population grows and development continues to expand into agricultural and forest land, the demands for these benefits will also increase. In the Interstate 95 Corridor of central Maryland, the expanding populations of suburban Washington, D.C., Baltimore MD, Wilmington DE, and Philadelphia PA, pose the greatest threats to forest land. In addition to “normal” growth in the corridor, two military bases are expected to receive an influx of personnel due to base realignment actions.

The Solution

The Forest Legacy Program has several Forest Legacy Areas in Maryland’s I- 95 Corridor that can conserve important natural areas. The Broad Creek Memorial Scout Reservation in the Deer Creek Forest Legacy Area is the largest privately owned forest parcel in Harford County, covering approximately 1,629 acres with almost 90% forest cover. The State used Forest Legacy funding to purchase a conservation easement on 376 acres. The Harford County Agricultural Preservation Program purchased a conservation easement on another 391 acres of the property. The remaining acreage is expected to be placed in an easement funded by Maryland’s Program Open Space before the end of 2010.

Resulting Benefits

The Broad Creek conservation easement helped protect a large and very popular forest parcel. The reservation is owned by the Baltimore Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America (BAC BSA). The property is used by 25,000+ campers every year and is home to a number of rare, threatened and endangered species and unique habitats. On the property, forestry is introduced to camp youth through the implementation of a Forest Stewardship Plan with practices such as periodic timber harvests.

Forest Legacy agreement helps conserve important natural areas in crowded I-95 corridor.



Entrance sign for the Broad Creek Memorial Scout Reservation welcomes visitors. (Photo by Don VanHassent)

The BAC BSA has a 60+ year tradition of providing Scout camping facilities, instilling character, citizenship and physical fitness to Scouting youth. The current and prospective conservation easements on the property remove development pressure and allow for the continuation of forest uses.

Highlights of Maryland’s Forest Legacy Program:

- Eight conservation easements totaling 2,014 acres have been protected.
- Maryland is working with a lower Eastern Shore’s landowner to protect almost 2,700 forested acres. This project is under 2011 funding review.
- Maryland Forest Legacy conservation easements valued at \$7,844,164 have used only \$4,613,000 in Federal funds, well below the required program cost-share.
- The Assessment of Need revision is nearly complete and will be included in the State Assessment and Response Plan.

Sharing Success

- The Forest Legacy Program inspired the Maryland Rural Legacy Program, successfully protecting over 62,000 acres of farm and forest properties from development.
- The program’s success has generated interest from western Maryland partners who are actively seeking the potential for the future funding projects.



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