

## *Chapter 20: Water Resources*

### ■ Legislative Requirement

Legislation (HB 1141) passed by the 2006 Maryland General Assembly resulted in several significant changes to land use regulations controlled by Article 66B of the Annotated Code of the State of Maryland. New watershed-based planning requirements are among the more significant changes. A Water Resources Element (WRE) must be developed and adopted by all local governments on or before October 1, 2009. The County and its eight municipalities were granted by MDP a six-month extension to April 1, 2010, to adopt the plan element.

This WRE must identify drinking water and other water resources needed for existing and future growth. It also must identify suitable receiving waters (where stormwater and treated wastewater can be discharged) and land areas for stormwater management and wastewater treatment. The WRE must address pollutant reductions, where needed, from both existing development and future growth. This legislation comes at a time when water quality and quantity planning is of utmost importance.

### ■ Process

Carroll County and its municipalities worked collaboratively to develop one unified WRE document that could be adopted by all of Carroll County's jurisdictions to satisfy the requirements of HB 1141. The forum for collaboration on this effort was the Water Resources Coordination Council (WRCC). The WRCC includes County staff, representatives of each Carroll County municipality, and the Carroll County Health Department. Meetings are advertised and open to the public.

Since this process involved substantial technical information, a WRE Guidance Team was formed to discuss issues as they arise. This team included representatives of County staff, each municipality, and the three relevant State agencies (MDE, MDP, and DNR). A WRE Work Group (consisting of the County and municipal representatives from the WRCC) met periodically to work through issues related to data collection and technical background assessments.

The WRE Work Group followed the Models and Guidelines (No. 26) developed jointly between MDE and MDP and additional guidance provided by the State agencies for the development of this plan element.

### ■ Technical Assessments

The Group collected data on the current capacity of each community water and wastewater system. This information helped identify additional capacity needs based on current (as of

Dec. 2007) and planned future demand/growth (based on adopted plans as of Dec. 2007 - no information was based on proposals). Where limitations identified cannot be overcome, reductions in future demand will need to be considered.

The County hired a consultant, Malcolm Pirnie, to provide technical assistance with several of the background assessments needed to form decisions and develop strategies to be included in a plan element. The consultant provided a number of assessments/evaluations.

- Reviewed the 1988 water study completed by R.E. Wright
- Completed a water balance assessment for each 8-digit watershed - water available for future consumption, from both groundwater and surface water sources
- Assessed overall limitations of wastewater
- Evaluated options/alternatives for individual community water and wastewater systems as well as countywide
- Identified strategies to address water and wastewater issues

The nonpoint source ("NPS" includes stormwater and septic) component of this plan was conducted by County staff. MDP and MDE provided a loading analysis model from which the results should be acceptable to the State. Recommended strategies need to address the NPS contribution to or impact on impaired waters (303d), Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Tier II waters (high quality), and Tributary Strategies/Chesapeake Bay TMDL, among other things.

The County participated in the Center for Watershed Protection's Builders for the Bay Better Site Design Standards assessment and consensus document. This project provided the stormwater programmatic assessment required in the WRE guidance document. The consensus document primarily provides recommendations for addressing impervious surfaces and reducing runoff. Many of the recommendations have already been implemented. Others are incorporated into the WRE.

Upon completion of these assessments, County staff worked with the municipalities/WRCC members to draft the actual WRE plan document. The plan was approved by the Carroll County Planning Commission on March 29, 2010, and seven municipal planning commissions between February and April 2010 and was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on April 1, 2010, and elected officials of seven municipalities between March and June 2010. One municipality received a six-month extension from MDP on the adoption deadline. This plan is incorporated to this document by reference.