



Maryland Trails



A Greener Way To Go

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
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Message From The Governor

During these difficult economic times, when our State and our nation face great challenges that lie ahead, it is even more important that we find effective, resourceful ways to achieve our shared goals in Maryland to protect our hard-working families, as well as our environmental legacy that we leave to future generations.

That is why, in December 2008, we introduced Maryland: *Smart, Green & Growing*, a multi-agency, Statewide initiative that is designed to help awaken in ourselves and in our neighbors a renewed sense that we can build the more sustainable future we prefer for our State through our decisions and actions in our own here and now. Through *Smart, Green & Growing*, we are working to coordinate and streamline our efforts in community revitalization, transportation improvements, economic development, Smart Growth and environmental restoration.

Maryland's trails are an important element of this initiative, and they present a unique opportunity to work toward many of our goals simultaneously, including: multimodal transportation, economic prosperity, improved health and environmental stewardship. Our trails not only offer mobility options, but they also: support expanded economic opportunity; provide access to a healthy, sustainable lifestyle; and encourage all of our citizens to make that vital connection to our natural environment.

Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go communicates a Statewide vision for Maryland's trail network and provides a strategic approach to planning for future trail development. Please join me and the Maryland Department of Transportation in establishing Maryland as a national leader for trail systems and furthering our commitment to protecting our quality of life in Maryland.

Martin O'Malley
Governor of Maryland





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*Additional copies are available by calling (410) 865-1277 or (888) 713-1414 toll free
or by downloading from the trails website at www.mdot.state.md.us/Planning/Trails
This document is available in alternative formats upon request.*



Maryland as a Trail Crossroads of the Nation

Maryland is fortunate to have more than five trails of national significance that travel through the State, including:

- Great Allegheny Passage;
- East Coast Greenway;
- American Discovery Trail;
- Grand History Loop; and
- Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

These trails link Maryland to surrounding communities and states as well as attract tourists from around the country. Completing key links in these regional trails would: highlight Maryland as a national trail crossroads, contribute to a more sustainable future and support a stronger economy.



Maryland’s Trail System Today

Today, Maryland is home to more than 800 miles of shared-use trails, with more trails planned. Counties and municipalities throughout the State have planned an additional 92 miles of trail that will expand trail service to new areas and close small gaps in the existing trail network.

Major Maryland trail corridors include: the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park, the Torrey C. Brown Trail (Northern Central Railroad Trail) and the Baltimore & Annapolis Trail (B&A Trail). These trails: serve urban and rural areas; make walking and bicycling a more convenient way to get around; preserve green spaces; generate tourism revenue; and connect residents to transit, shopping, recreational areas and other destinations.

Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go

Marylanders do not begin or end their journeys at a city, county or State border, and neither should Maryland’s trail network. To support Governor O’Malley’s *Smart, Green & Growing* initiative, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is leading the effort to develop a Statewide trail planning approach that supports trails as a practical and environmentally friendly travel option.

Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go is the result of a collaborative effort between MDOT, sister agencies and local governments to create a



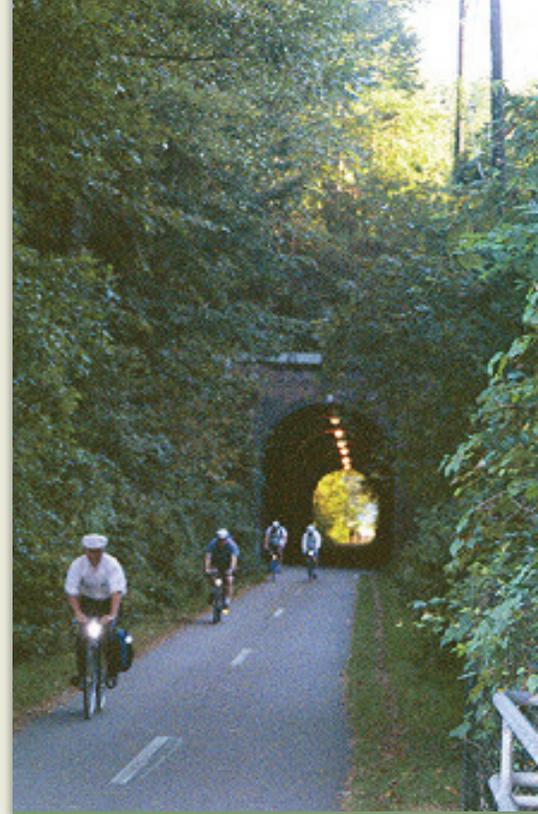
unifying vision and guide as we continue to develop and improve the State’s trail system. The vision document illustrates the important role that each of us play in making Maryland’s trail network a world-class, multi-purpose system. It also provides a “one-stop shop” for information about Maryland’s trails. The *Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go* initiative will help the State: track our progress, provide local governments and agencies a venue to coordinate trail planning activities and inform Maryland residents and visitors about local and regional trails.

Trails Are A Smart, Green Transportation Option

Trails are an important piece of Maryland's transportation system and provide a large number of benefits at a low cost, including:

- a healthy way to get to work or school and to run errands;
- a great space for a workout;
- a neighborhood amenity;
- a place to experience and learn about nature; and
- an attraction for visitors and businesses.

Trails also are a cost-effective way to contribute to many of Maryland's larger goals, such as: reducing greenhouse gases, providing students safer routes to schools, supporting local economies and promoting healthier lifestyles.

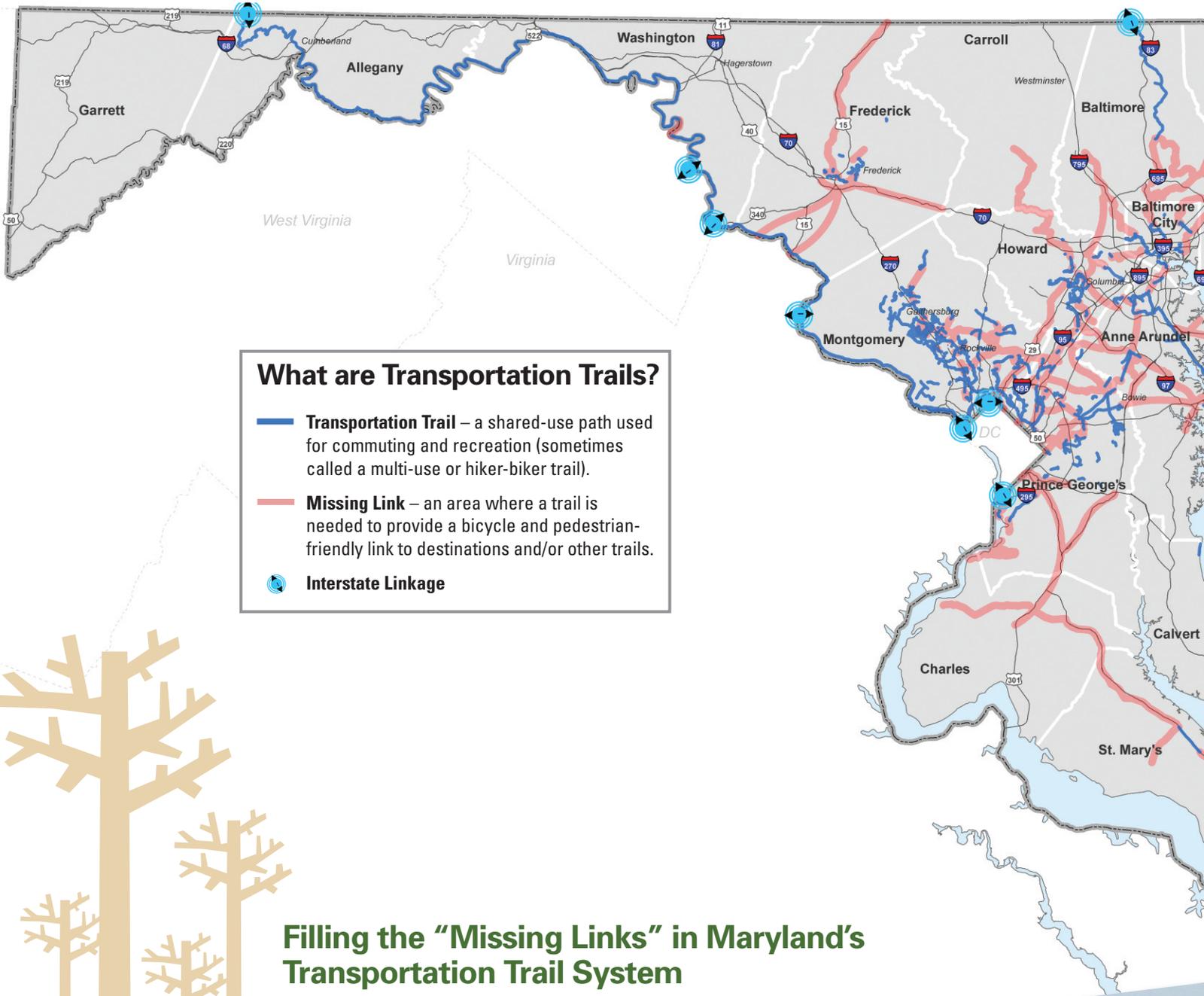


Did You Know?

- Walking or bicycling five miles to work four days a week saves 100 gallons of gas and 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.
- Thirty minutes of exercise a day is recommended as a means of improving your physical, emotional and psychological health.
- A quarter of Maryland residents live within one-half mile of a trail. Half of trips most Marylanders make are within a 30-minute bicycle ride and a quarter are within a 20-minute walk.
- In 2007, the Great Allegheny Passage Trail generated more than \$12 million for local businesses.

Trails Contribute to Statewide Goals:





What are Transportation Trails?

- **Transportation Trail** – a shared-use path used for commuting and recreation (sometimes called a multi-use or hiker-biker trail).
- **Missing Link** – an area where a trail is needed to provide a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly link to destinations and/or other trails.
- Interstate Linkage**



Filling the “Missing Links” in Maryland’s Transportation Trail System

Maryland is working hard to identify and fill gaps in the trail network so that our trail system connects more people to more destinations. Because Maryland’s transportation trail network is larger than a single city or county, MDOT and its partners have worked together to identify over 100 “missing links” in the trail network and have prioritized about 25 miles of these links for construction. Filling these missing links with trails will bridge barriers and gaps in existing high-traffic trails and connect destinations in neighboring counties and cities. *Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go* is Maryland’s vision and guide as we continue to: identify and prioritize construction of missing links, strengthen partnerships among groups that develop trails and identify funding for future trail construction and maintenance.

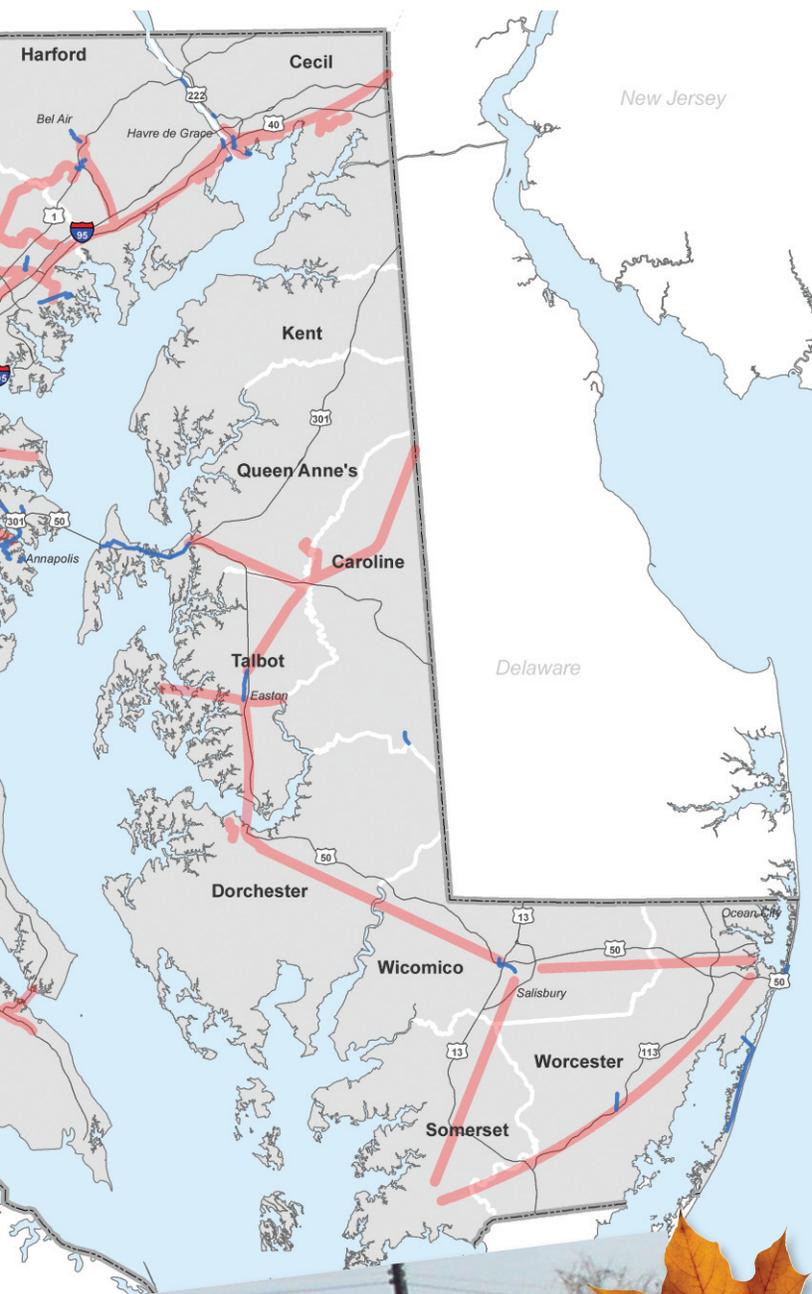




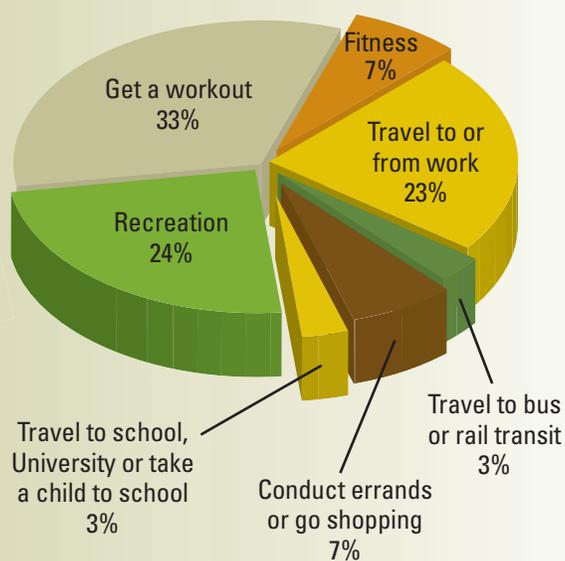
Maryland's Trails Tomorrow: Trails Without Borders

Nearly 700 trail users contributed to Maryland's vision for trails by completing an online survey. Multiple State and local agencies and advocacy groups also were engaged in the process. When asked to look 20 years into the future, Maryland agencies and trail users envisioned a trail system that:

- **Provides a Transportation Option** – Marylanders want safe trails that provide convenient access to transit, shopping and communities. Today, 36% of trail trips are for traveling to work, school, transit or shopping.
- **Is Well-Connected** – Closing gaps in the trail network is the most important factor to increase trail use in Maryland. Sixty-three percent of trail users surveyed would use trails more often if the system were expanded and gaps were closed.
- **Advances Sustainability** – Multi-use trails provide a sustainable travel option that reflects the State's commitment to environmental stewardship.



What is the Purpose for Your Trip on the Trail?*



*Respondents who use trails three or more times per week.





Maryland's Vision for Trails

- Increase the number of people using trails for transportation.
- Provide a system of multi-use trails that strategically link destinations throughout the State.
- Provide a sustainable transportation alternative.
- Promote physical activity and tourism in the places Maryland residents and visitors live, learn, work and play.

How Do We Get There?



Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go outlines a roadmap for achieving a world-class trail system in Maryland. In addition to developing Maryland's long-term vision for trails, this initiative identifies four goals and supporting objectives that will guide MDOT, partner agencies and local governments when: developing new trails, improving existing trails and planning for future trails.

goals

Maryland Trail Goals

- **Increase Trail Use for Transportation Purposes:** Enhance user experience and access to trails and destinations across Maryland.
- **Strategically Expand the Trail Network:** Systematically develop and enhance trails where Maryland residents and visitors live, learn, work and play.
- **Address Barriers to Trail Development:** Explore policy and process-oriented solutions to programmatic and physical challenges to trail development.
- **Expand Partnerships and Coordination to Support Trails:** Facilitate collaborative relationships among stakeholders and pursue new approaches to promoting and funding trail development.

strategies

Implementation Strategies

The vision document also outlines specific actions Maryland agencies will take to support trails and achieve goals. Some examples include:

- MDOT will explore developing and hosting a website that provides interactive maps and other resources for trail users and developers.
- State agencies will continue to work closely with railroad and utility companies to develop priority trails in underutilized corridors.
- MDOT will explore streamlining funding programs and providing support staff, training and technical assistance to support local trail developers and to promote construction of priority trail links.



What Have We Done So Far?

Maryland already has achieved multiple trail milestones:

- Half of Maryland's rail transit stations are within one-half mile of a trail and 100 percent of MTA and WMATA buses (more than 2,000!) have bicycle racks.
- Cumberland and Frostburg, Maryland, have received funding to become the State's first "trail towns." "Trail towns" draw on users of Maryland's 343 miles of "rail-trails" to support local businesses and economic development.
- State agencies and more than 30 counties and municipalities have contributed trail data to create the first comprehensive inventory of transportation trails in Maryland.
- Recent legislative changes now allow the Maryland Transportation Authority to consider bicycle and pedestrian access on toll facilities and bridges.



What's Next?

MDOT has been proud to lead the development of this vision – *Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go*. Achieving the goals and objectives outlined in this vision document will take time and will require the continued support of stakeholders across the State. MDOT and its partners will work to put these strategies into practice through the solutions they consider to address future needs and by advancing priority trail projects.

Going forward, MDOT will:

- continue to identify gaps and missing links in the existing trail network;
- identify criteria to prioritize trail investments contributing to the vision, including trails which: link to transit and transit-oriented development, address physical barriers, bridge jurisdictional boundaries, promote economic development or complete trails of national and/or regional significance;
- develop performance measures to track the State's progress towards trail goals and objectives;
- provide policy leadership to support trails and an interconnected, multimodal transportation system;
- establish partnerships to serve the trail needs of Maryland's residents, businesses and visitors;
- explore ways to improve trail design, operations and maintenance; and
- develop a website that shares information about the vision, that promotes collaboration in trail planning and that provides interactive mapping tools to explore Maryland's trail network.



On Our Way!

Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go will help us achieve our ultimate goal of expanding and connecting Maryland's trail network. We continue to work hard to identify and construct key missing links because connecting existing trails is essential to connecting communities.

We look forward to completing our Eight Top Priority Links:

- **Anacostia Trail** will connect the Anacostia Trail in Prince George's County to the Anacostia River Trail in Washington, D.C. (two miles);
- **Little Paint Branch Trail Connector** will connect the Paint Branch and Little Paint Branch Trails in Prince George's County (about one mile);
- **Henson Creek Trail** will connect communities to the Branch Avenue Metro Station in Prince George's County (about three miles);
- **Patuxent Crossing** is a new bridge over the Patuxent River that will connect the West Baltimore & Annapolis Trail, Baltimore & Annapolis Trail and Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Trail in Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties;
- **BWI Connector** will connect the BWI Trail in Anne Arundel County to Baltimore City's trail system (about three miles);
- **Jones Falls Trail** will be a 10-mile trail, built in phases, that will connect central Baltimore City to Baltimore County;
- **Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Trail System** will cross the Susquehanna River and connect Harford and Cecil counties; and
- **Big Slackwater Gap** is a project to reconstruct a three-mile section of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath in Washington County.



How Can I Get Involved?

The vision document is only the first step in supporting trails in our State and ensuring that Maryland is *Smart, Green & Growing*. To get involved:

- ride the trails;
- advocate for trails or “adopt” a trail in your neighborhood (Contact your local Parks & Recreation Department for more information); and
- learn about other efforts Maryland is undertaking to be *Smart, Green & Growing* and how you can get involved at: www.green.maryland.gov.

For more information and copies of the vision, visit: www.mdot.state.md.us/Planning/Trails.



Acknowledgments

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Maryland: *Smart, Green & Growing* is a Statewide initiative designed to help us create a more sustainable future for Maryland. As part of the *Smart, Green & Growing* effort, Governor O'Malley has gathered a multi-agency team to work together to develop *Maryland Trails: A Greener Way To Go*. This document outlines a long-term vision to create a Statewide system of trails that provide sustainable transportation and recreation options for all Marylanders. Maryland's State agencies, local governments, businesses and citizens already have begun working together: to create more livable communities, to reduce our carbon footprint and to help us become a more sustainable State. Maryland's trails contribute to these efforts by reducing the environmental impact of transportation and by providing Maryland's youth, residents and visitors the opportunity to access, explore and experience nature.



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