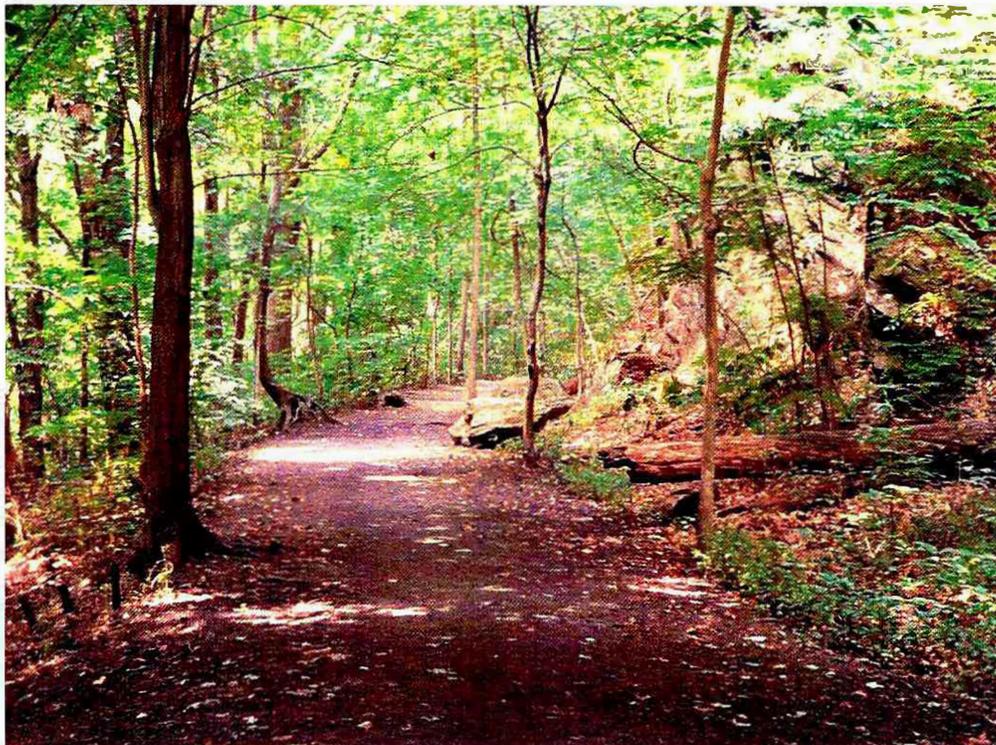


**BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT
OF
RECREATION AND PARKS**

**ROBERT E. LEE PARK
REPORT**



DECEMBER 2006

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ROBERT E. LEE PARK COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Baltimore has made an offer to turn over Robert E. Lee Park to Baltimore County. The Robert E. Lee Park Committee was charged with the mission of examining whether it is in the best interests of the County, and the Baltimore County Department of Recreation & Parks, to assume ownership and administrative responsibility for that park, and if so, to determine both the facility and programming potential of the site. The Committee was given certain guidelines to use in preparing this report.

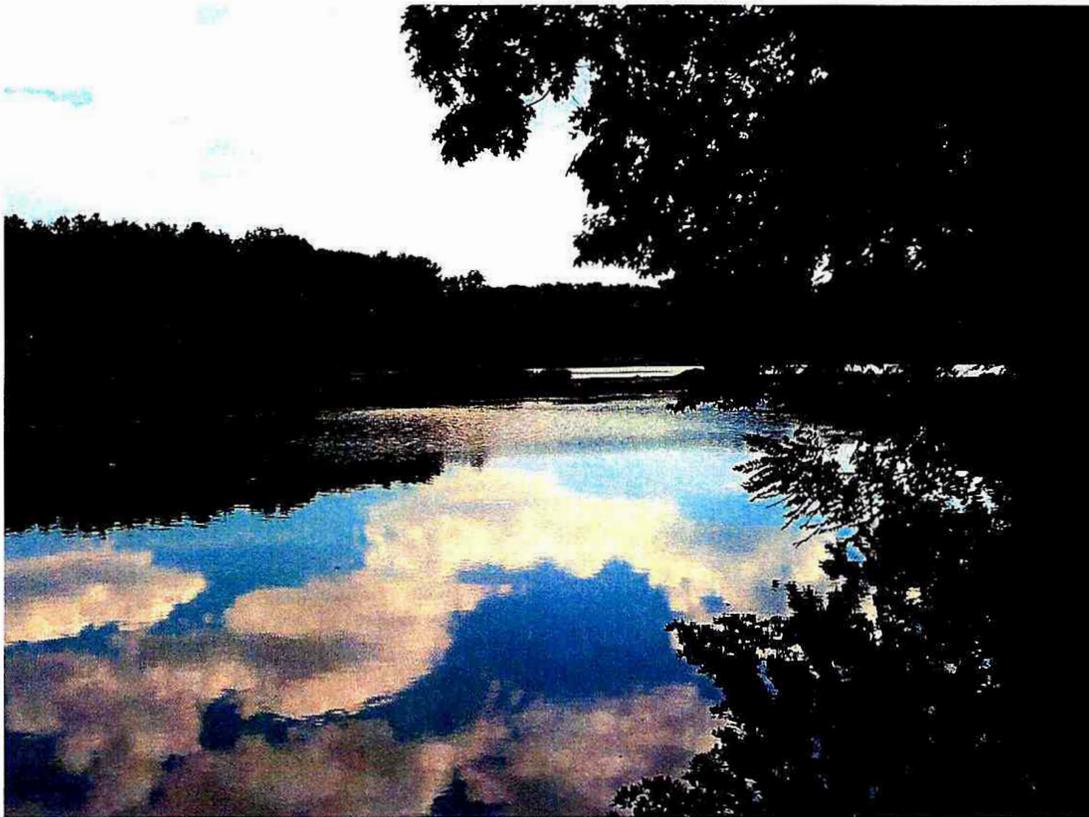
The committee was to start its work with a "blank slate" and examine the total potential of the Park without giving consideration to the restrictions of budget on staffing, operations, or maintenance at the park. The committee was instructed to focus first on the obvious potential of the park as a center for natural and environmental recreational activities and study. Secondly, the committee was told to examine all potential recreational uses of the park, both active and passive; from a site for the programming of special events, to the use of Lake Roland for water related leisure pursuits, to a home for activities centering on archeological or historical activities, etc.

The committee was instructed to design a possible staffing structure, outlining the changing personnel needs at the park as it may be developed over the course of the next decade. This structure includes administrative, program and maintenance staff.

The committee was instructed to research current and potential problems at the park as they relate to both facility and program, and to develop possible strategies to deal with these problems. The committee was also told to consider information from previously held community input meetings concerning the park when developing ideas and recommendations.

The Robert E. Lee Park Committee adhered to these guidelines throughout their work on this project. The committee feels that the

resulting report can be a good first step in the long process of acquisition and development. The report should be efficacious as a foundation for further research and evaluation to determine whether assuming ownership and operational responsibilities at Robert E. Lee Park is a good decision for Baltimore County.



BRIEF HISTORY

Robert E. Lee Park and Lake Roland were developed to supply a reliable source of drinking water in large volume for the growing city of Baltimore. In the early 1800's water was sent from the Jones Falls into the city through a series of wooden pipes, spring houses and fountains. By the mid 1800's the need for water increased and a different method of delivery had to be developed.

In 1854 the City of Baltimore purchased the entire holdings of the Baltimore Water Company and began to expand their operation. By 1858 work was begun on the dam and the Greek revival style valve house that would create the reservoir and the new water system.

The reservoir was formed by impoundment of the waters from the Jones Falls, Roland Run and the Towson Run. The lake that was formed covered about 100 acres (today it is about 54 acres). Water from the lake flowed through an underground brick aqueduct to another reservoir in Druid Hill Park.

The name Lake Roland comes from Roland Thornberry, an influential Baltimore County land owner and the also the namesake of Roland Run and eventually Roland Park. Lake Roland and the land surrounding it became a favorite gathering place for the citizens of Baltimore to enjoy sailing, swimming, picnicking, ice skating in the winter and a place to relax in an expansive green space.

The lake was a source of drinking water until 1915 when silting issues caused the reservoir to cease its primary function. Part of the land was sold to the L'Hirondelle Country Club in 1916. The city maintenance division took control of the lake and parkland. Property management was eventually given over to the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks.

The 415 acre park known as Robert E. Lee Park is named after the confederate general because creation of the dam was the last engineering assignment that he completed before the Civil War

began. It has also been reported that there is a notation in the park deed that the name of the park must remain Robert E. Lee.

The park has a beautiful trail that is in part what is left from the rail system that would eventually become part of the North Central Railroad. Some of the ties and tracks can still be seen along the path.

Another tidbit of information; submerged on the southern side of the lake is the Bellona Powder Supply Company. This company supplied 20% of the gunpowder to the American forces during the War of 1812.

This lake and the land that surrounds it has played a role in the life of a growing city and county by providing a source of drinking water, a place to participate in a recreational activity, a sanctuary for wildlife and a place which a man who holds a position of historical significance helped to create.



OVERVIEW OF ROBERT E. LEE PARK

Tens of thousands of acres of grasslands once stretched across Northern Maryland and Pennsylvania. Prior to European colonization Native Americans regularly burned these areas to keep them open, stimulate plant growth, attract game animals, and to clear their way for travel. Early settlers referred to these areas as barrens. After native populations were decimated by disease and warfare, the practice of burning these areas ceased.

Woodland began to recover and much of the previous grasslands vanished. Prairie-like vegetation persisted in the serpentine areas. Today only a few thousand acres still exist in Maryland, the largest being Soldiers Delight at 2000 acres. As Maryland encompasses some 12,407 square miles, one can see from the map how rare these sites actually are (***See Appendix A: Figure 1 - Barrens and Dry Glades Map***).

On that map, Robert E. Lee Park is the tiny dot just above Baltimore City, and of its 415 acres, just 90 make up the serpentine complex of Robert E. Lee Park. The rest of the park is part of the Piedmont complex consisting of gently rolling topography. Chestnut Oak, White Oak, Black Oak, Tulip Tree, Black Gum and Northern Red Oak are the prevalent tree species in the oak/hickory complex. Along the streams that feed the reservoir, Umbrella Magnolia, Red Elm, Basswood and Box Elder trees compete for sunlight.

Towson and Roland Run, along with the Jones Falls, feed Lake Roland (***See Appendix A: Figure 2 - Hydrology Map***). Once nearly 100 acres in breadth, the lake has gradually silted in to approximately 57 acres since its creation in 1858. Sadly, the lake has been evaluated by the Department of Natural Resources as being impaired. Impairment can be due to low O², invasive plants, siltation, or pesticide contamination. Of the 59 state lakes classified as significant, 57.5% are designated as impaired, and Lake Roland is one of them. The Lake Roland impairment appears to be pesticide chlordane in the lake sediments.



The only significant open area is the peninsula accessed off of Falls Road onto Lakeside Drive and parking is very limited. The only access to the park's peninsula is across the footbridge, which is in poor condition.

Despite some of these unfavorable conditions, the vistas available to park visitors, along with shady hiking trails and the globally rare serpentine grasslands make the park a rare jewel. Its potential can be increased with adequate management - reverse the encroachment of woody growth in the serpentine areas, rebuild and restore eroded areas on the peninsula, and provide safe and wholesome environments for picnics, games, hiking, walking dogs under leash, and perhaps even canoeing and kayaking on the lake.



Erosion Site

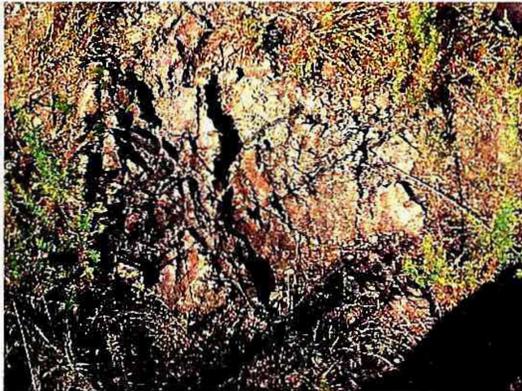


Erosion Caused by Bicycles

GEOLOGY OF ROBERT E. LEE PARK

Robert E. Lee Park is part of Baltimore County just north of the fall line, which is a rapid change in elevation from the coastal plain to the piedmont. Piedmont means "foot of the mountains" and the fall line is where rapids in rivers and streams allowed for waterpower to be utilized in the area. Robert E. Lee Park's elevations range between 231 – 300 feet above sea level. **(See Appendix A: Figure 3 – Physiographic Provinces Map.)**

Robert E. Lee Park is part of a narrow band of serpentine lands that once stretched from Alabama to Canada. Most of these areas have been destroyed due to development, mining, etc. Serpentine and serpentine soils are dry and nutrient poor and are extremely toxic to most plants not adapted to this mineral chemistry. Serpentine gets



its name from the green and brown colors within the rock. These colors are primarily the results of the weathering of magnesium silicate. This mineral is toxic to many plants, and in the middle section of Robert E. Lee Park, one-third of the bedrock may contain magnesium. The soil can be very dark in those areas

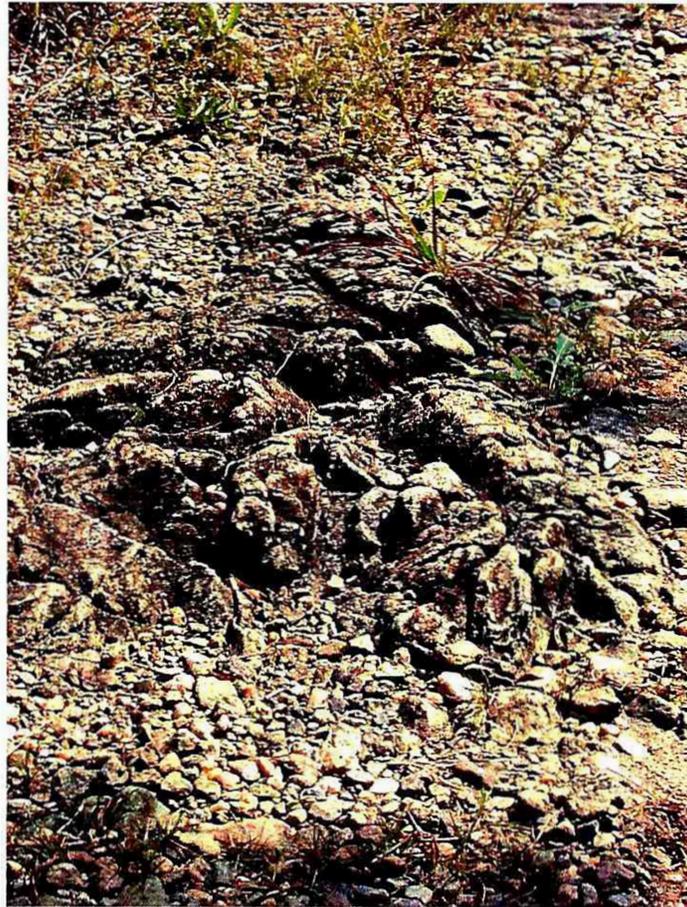
depending on the content of its iron, chromite and magnesium.

Robert E. Lee Park's soil in the serpentine areas is thin and rocky. Thus the Park in the barrens zone is characteristically dry. With shallow soils and low organic levels mixed with clay, the soils cannot contain water or nutrients, especially calcium. In addition, the serpentine areas within the Park may have naturally occurring "pockets" of heavy metals, such as chromium, nickel and cobalt, which are also deadly to plants.

Rocky thin soil areas are quickly eroded by wind, water, hiking and biking traffic. This erosion, both natural and manmade, allows non-

acidic soil in the deeper layers to be exposed, thus creating multiple habitats for plants to colonize.

Serpentine barrens are globally rare habitats. In the Eastern United States, Soldier's Delight is the largest remaining biome at 2000 acres, and is the most species rich in the world. Robert E. Lee Park contains 90 acres of serpentine and hosts many of those same globally rare plants.



Dry Rock and Soil in the "Barrens"

NATURAL HISTORY OF ROBERT E. LEE PARK

Robert E. Lee Park encompasses two different ecosystems just north of the fall line in Baltimore County's Piedmont. One such system is the oak, hickory, and tulip tree complex that makes up most of Maryland's Piedmont and the other is the globally rare serpentine lands.

Robert E. Lee Park is characterized as having rolling hills in its serpentine complex where one may see Virginia Pine, Juniper and Greenbrier thickets intertwining among Blackjack and Post Oak. Scattered through these hills are areas where serpentine bedrock comes to the surface and small grassy meadows are exposed.



The grassy openings contain many rare and endangered plants that occur nowhere else in the world. The high magnesium and low calcium content of the soil in the areas allow only limited growth of some hardwoods and those other plants adapted to these same conditions. Typically prairie plants such as Purplish Three-awn, Indian Grass, and Little Bluestem grasses abound along with other rare plants such as state-rare Fame Flower (*Talinum teretifolium*) and Serpentine Aster (*Aster depauperati*), Purple Gerardia (*Gerardia purpurea*), Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*), Leatherwood (*Dirca palustris*), Heller's Witchgrass (*Dichanthelium oligosanthes*), Few-flowered Panicgrass (*Panicum oligosanthes*), and the rare, state-endangered Fringed Gentian (*Gentianopsis crinita*). These plants occur here because the serpentine soils allow these rare plants to compete where in richer habitats they would be at the disadvantage.



Fame Flower

(See Appendix B for photos of plant life.)

The topography in the park varies from 231 feet above sea level where the Jones Falls, Roland Run and Towson Run flow into Lake Roland to the upper serpentine habitats at 300 feet. The serpentine areas comprise a quarter of the park's 415 acres.

The park abounds in the wildlife of Central Maryland. (See Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources website www.dnr.state.md.us for a comprehensive list of mammals, birds, insects and plants of Maryland) Deer, squirrel, raccoon, and opossum can be found throughout the park while various migratory and non-migratory birds can be seen and heard depending on the season and habitat. Amphibians can be found under rocks and logs and within small streams that bisect the hardwood section of the park. One would likely see amphibians typical of Central Maryland including American Toads and Red-backed and Dusky Salamanders.

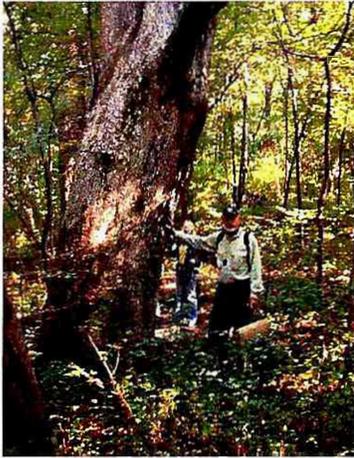
The Baltimore Bird Club has held annual walks here for many years and can supply a comprehensive list at www.baltimorebirdclub.org. On our visits there in September we saw and/or heard, among others, Towhees, Catbirds, Wood Thrush, Carolina Wren, Cardinal, Red-tailed Hawks, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Field Sparrows.

Of the original 100 acres of Lake Roland only about 57 remain (**See Appendix A: Figure 4 – Serpentine Soils Map**). The northern half of the reservoir has silted in since its creation in 1858. Notwithstanding, large numbers of migratory waterfowl as well as shore birds use the lake and its shallows for staging areas during migration and feeding areas during the summer. Numerous low-lying willow covered islands provide dense thickets for shelter and shade.



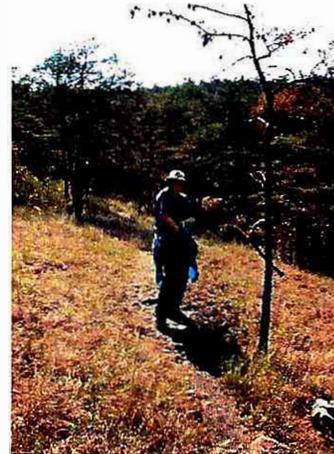
Green Heron

The cool upstream portion of the Jones Falls provide habitat for Creek Chubs, White Sucker, Black-nosed Dace and Brown Trout, which in turn feed the Belted Kingfisher and Black-crowned Night, Little Green and Great Blue Herons.



Because of the variety of habitats, Robert E. Lee Park is a place where one can enjoy seeing century old oaks and tulip trees while hiking along the cool riparian river zone or just as easily walk $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the north and west and, in the blink of an eye, one can emerge upon a globally rare serpentine "barren," one of only four left in Maryland.

This is not to say that the park doesn't need management, far from it. The last of the serpentine grasslands are being threatened by the encroachment of Virginia and Scrub Pine, Blackjack Oak, and Greenbriar, all of which are rapidly closing in on the last open prairie habitats. The only open peninsula area of any size directly adjacent to Lake Roland has contaminated and eroded soils due to the unrestrained hordes of unleashed dogs. And the waters of the lake contain unacceptable levels of pesticides in the sediments, such as chlordane, which continue to wash downstream where they were, or are still being, applied to the uplands. Despite these obstacles, Robert E. Lee Park holds valuable resources worth protecting and enhancing for the citizens of Baltimore County.



Serpentine "Barren"

DOG OWNERS' BEHAVIOR

Through observation, talking to citizens who use Robert E. Lee Park, and research on a variety of websites, it has become apparent to the committee that the dog owner issue solicits the most commentary. This committee recognizes and appreciates the need for dogs to exercise, but the unregulated and uncontrolled actions of some dog owners has inhibited the use of the park by many of those seeking alternative types of recreation. Also, dog owners may have



inadvertently created health issues through the contamination of the soil.

Currently dogs are let off leash in large numbers to roam and swim. Many owners do not clean up their dog's droppings, creating a large area of the park with high and odiferous concentrations of dog feces and urine. The soil in these areas may have unsafe levels of contaminants. In addition, areas of the peninsula have been seriously eroded by dogs and people seeking access to the shoreline. This creates a potentially unsafe condition.

There have been reports of dog on dog attacks, as well as incidents of dogs harassing and attacking trail users and adjacent homeowners. While some dog owners seem unconcerned by this, other dog owners and park users have expressed fearful concern about the unleashed dogs. Park users should not have to be concerned about loose dogs in any Baltimore County park, as each visit should be a safe and enjoyable experience.

Without question, this issue must be addressed quickly before Baltimore County assumes responsibility for the park.

Recommendations

The committee's first recommendation would be that no area of the park be designated specifically as a "Dog Park". However, due to the

large number of dog owners who visit the park on a daily basis and who may apply pressure on elected officials, we do conclude that some type of enclosed area for dogs may be a necessary element of the park plan. The desired effect of providing such an area would be to encourage dog owners who wish to allow their pets off leash to continue to use the park in compliance with the law. Most of the limited open space in the park is on the peninsula, however, and it is hard to envision a dog park there that would not severely limit the ability of the Department to hold other activities and events at the park. An area other than the peninsula must be considered as the location for any dog run.

- Enlist local, law-abiding dog owners to support change in the use policy. Ask park users to report dogs that harass park users to park staff or the police.
- Create signage that tells dog owners of the new policies and the law.
- Register dog owners using the park.
- Control access by creating a single point of entry for dogs and their owners.
- Develop and offer a pet owner education and etiquette program as well as dog training classes.
- Enlist the help of Animal Control and the Baltimore County Police Department for enforcement.
- Incorporate park staff in any enforcement plan.
- Employ a Park Ranger to enforce Baltimore County laws.

PROGRAMMING POTENTIAL

The programming potential is vast at Robert E. Lee Park. The most obvious use is that of a Nature Center to take advantage of and to utilize the spectacular natural amenities the park has to offer (see Natural History section for full description). The Nature Center will provide environmental education, encompassing cultural and natural history and operate programs conducive to the environment. We recommend a nature center be constructed in the serpentine area off the Copper Hill Road area to take advantage of the surroundings. It may be possible to use the existing house as the park headquarters. Nature program offerings would include numerous activities both on land and on water.

It is also possible for the local Recreation and Parks staff and council to operate programs. These programs would provide a wide variety of opportunities including art classes and festivals to concerts and a fishing center. The existing concession building could be used as the fishing center headquarters as it is located close to the boat dock/fishing platform. The large deck area next to the pump house overlooks the dam and could also be used as a programming area. The existing peninsula area with a large well-preserved pavilion surrounded by a macadam path may play host to festivals, concerts and picnic area rentals.

Due to time and funding constraints and to correlate with the staffing needs, the programming potentials are broken down into short term and long term. The list is not all-inclusive, but is a sampling of the potential for a variety of activities.

Short-term (1-5 years):

Nature Center activities to encompass environmental education and cultural and natural history include:

- Bird walks
- Hikes with interpretive signage
- Geology- chromium, copper, etc.
- Hikes and walks

- Campfire programs
- Bluebird trails
- Canoe trails
- Creation of meadow and wetland interpretive signage
- Observation blinds
- Trail system-map, markers and blazed trees
- Art classes/nature crafts
- Honey harvest
- Initiation of a project to revive grasslands
- Establishment of a Nature Center Council
- Recreation and Parks Staff and Council Programs include:
 - Concerts
 - Art Festivals
 - Rental of pavilions /picnic areas
 - Dog park
 - Bike trails
 - Model boat launching
 - Dog obedience/field agility



Existing Peninsula Area with Pavilion

Long-term (5-10 years):

Nature Center activities to encompass environmental education and cultural and natural history include:

- Development of a Nature Center in the serpentine area
- Boardwalks for nature observations
- Recreation and Parks Staff and Council Programs include:
- Fishing Center with rental of canoes, kayaks and paddleboats
- Bass fishing with catch and release tournaments
- Audio trails
- Ropes course



Existing Concession Building (Future Fishing Center)

As with all Recreation and Parks programming, the Department will provide reasonable accommodations and adaptations as needed in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Department will ensure that people with disabilities are able to fully participate in all of the general programs offered and have access to the park and its amenities. Programs specifically designed for people with disabilities may include horticultural therapy, day trips for therapeutic summer camps and after school programs and field trips for special education classes and service provider agencies.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), the Department will provide modifications to existing structures and any new construction shall comply as well. Such alterations include accessible parking, perhaps on the peninsula side of the bridge, an accessible route to the park and connecting the park amenities, access to the pavilion, accessible restrooms, headquarters, and concession area. An accessible path and proper grade should be established to connect to the existing macadam path around the peninsula. This would provide a universally accessible trail for wheelchair users, people using ambulatory assistive devices, joggers, walkers, and strollers as well. Most of the park area is of a hilly terrain, ideal for hikers and not accessible.

There is, however, an existing trail that runs alongside of the old railroad that is level, firm and stable. While this trail does not meet accessibility standards, it would provide a challenging and scenic opportunity for some people with mobility impairments and athletic wheelchair users. An accessible trail to connect to the railroad trail would need to be established, as current access to the trail is down a severely eroded bank.



All new construction shall comply with ADAAG or ADAAG Supplements for Recreation Facilities (2002) including fishing piers and platforms, boating facilities and observation decks.

LAND & FACILITIES - OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is an overview of observations and research done by the committee at Robert E. Lee Park. Its purpose is to provide a quick glance at the state of the park and suggest some recommendations on how to address certain issues and conditions there. The committee considered matters pertaining to; water, sediment and soil quality; access and parking; the existing structures, amenities and landscape. The committee also makes some general recommendations at the end of the section.

A most important topic of the committee's report, not covered in this section, is the condition and future of the serpentine barrens areas of the park. These areas are very rare globally and hold ecological and geological significance. This topic is covered in detail in the Geology and Natural History sections of this report.

Water, sediment and soil quality

The committee has no current data on the quality of water, sediment and soil or possible contaminant levels, but simple observation would indicate that contaminants in all three could possibly be above safe and acceptable levels.

The committee recommends that water, sediment and soil samples be gathered and tested immediately.

The committee does not feel that Baltimore County should acquire the property if contaminant levels are above safe range and the water, sediment or soil will require long term and costly remediation.

Access and parking

(For maintenance trucks, emergency vehicles, general public)

There are only two points of access into the main area of the park, one off Falls Rd. and one off E. Lake Avenue. Copper Hill Rd. leads

into the northwest area of the park providing limited maintenance access.

The existing bridge over Jones Falls below the dam is inadequate to serve the access needs of larger maintenance and emergency vehicles. Currently, there is not enough parking to accommodate the need that would be generated by use of the park as a center for both active and passive recreational programs and events.

The committee recommends that the main existing access road off Falls Rd. be repaired and widened to make it safer and provide some on street parking. It is also recommended that a new public access road further north on Falls Rd. be constructed. The committee recommends that the existing bridge be inspected, and either renovated or replaced as necessary to provide access for cars and maintenance/emergency vehicles. Previous inspections by the City of Baltimore have shown the bridge to be unsafe for vehicles.

All existing parking areas should be repaired, and expanded where possible. Parking should be created in appropriate areas scattered throughout the park.

Existing structures, amenities and landscape

There are three main buildings at the park, the comfort station, the caretaker's house and the concession building. All are in some state of disrepair, but the structural condition is uncertain.



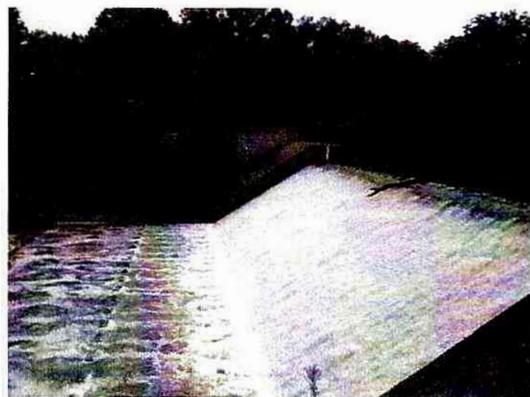
The committee recommends that each building undergo a structural assessment and, if found to be in sound condition, the buildings should be repaired as necessary and incorporated into the park plan.

Even if the existing comfort station is usable, the Department should construct or install additional rest room facilities of an environmentally benign design, adequate to meet the expanded demand envisioned by the committee.

The peninsula area of the park is currently the area which receives the greatest amount of public use. It is much worn, and quite dirty with dog feces and urine. (See Dog Owner Issue section) The peninsula trail is in disrepair, and there are several areas of severe erosion leading to the lake shoreline.

The committee recommends that the trail and all eroded areas be repaired as needed. A long term erosion abatement plan for the peninsula should be instituted.

Lake Roland and the dam are the centerpieces of the park. The quality of the water and sediment in the lake is uncertain (see above). While the dam appears to be in good shape, the committee has no hard evidence of its structural integrity.



The committee recommends that the structural integrity of the dam be assessed. If it needs major repair, cost estimates for the job should be compiled and factored into the decision on acquisition.

The committee recommends that a safety barrier for boats be constructed above the dam and that a small fishing/paddleboat concession center be opened near the fishing platform/boat launch structure. The Department should offer a boater safety and education program for boaters who plan to use the lake.

The Department should ban all swimming in the lake by humans; however, if the water quality proves unsafe, then swimming by dogs should also be banned.



A survey of the condition of the wooded areas and trees throughout the park should be done. Unsafe limbs should be trimmed, and dead and downed trees removed as necessary. A long term plan for new native tree plantings should be instituted.

Existing trails provide a wonderful course for walkers, runners and hikers at the park. There are some areas where erosion is a problem.

The committee recommends that all erosion be repaired and an erosion control plan be instituted as necessary. A trail loop course should be created, with safety signs at the light rail crossing. Interpretive markers, designed to explain the environmental, geological and historical significance of specific areas along the trail, should be erected.

To enhance the attraction and safety of the trails for all users, the Department should prohibit dogs off leash on the trails. The Department should also prohibit the use of bikes throughout the serpentine barrens areas.

Additional Recommendations

The committee makes the recommendation that the following enhancements to the park be considered.

- Addition of designated picnic areas/groves-(possible rental revenue source)
- Addition of gazebos/pavilions where appropriate-(possible rental revenue source)
- Installation of adequate potable water sources

- Addition of benches
- Addition of power outlets and lighting in appropriate areas.

All of the above recommendations are general, and preliminary in nature. It should be obvious that the acquisition and development of a facility of this type and size would be an enormous undertaking for Baltimore County and the Department of Recreation and Parks. There will need to be significant further research and assessment done at Robert E. Lee Park before any final decision on acquisition is made.

STAFFING NEEDS

SHORT TERM (FIRST FIVE YEARS):

Nature Center Director

This position will be a Naturalist by education and experience. This person will map the park, supervisor the creation of a trail system as well as the nature center, identify the flora and fauna, establish exhibits, supervise all nature center staff and organize special nature center special events.

Administrative Aide

This position will provide clerical support to the Nature Center as well as assist with projects and special events of the Nature Center.

Seasonal Naturalists (3)

These employees will lead nature activities during the summer months. Activities include day camps, nature walks, special events, etc.

Part-Time Leaders

These monthly employees will assist the nature center staff to maintain the trails and nature center and assist with all special events and activities.

Ranger

This position will have limited enforcement ability with primary concentration on leash law enforcement and security/safety issues. This person should have a background in law enforcement.

Custodian

This position will be responsible for the cleaning and sanitizing of the building. Short term this position may be a Building service employee but long term this position should assigned to the park.

Activity Coordinator

This employee will report to the Towson Community Supervisor II. Job duties will include assisting the Community Supervisor to plan, organize and implement recreation activities not associated with the Nature Center staff (i.e. concerts, remote controlled boat races etc) Also assist the Nature Center staff with events.

Board of Education Teacher

This teacher scientist/naturalist is an employee of the Baltimore County Board of Education and work with the school groups coming to the center.

LONG-TERM (FIVE TO TEN YEARS):

Assistant Director

This position will assist the Nature Center Director, schedule the nature center activities (special events and group tours) and maintain the exhibits.

Seasonal Staff (Recreation Leaders I and II)

These positions will assist the Community Supervisor II and the Activity Coordinator with the implementation of special events and programs. Will also, with approval from the Community Supervisor, assist the Nature Center staff.

Boating/Concession Center Manager (Activity Coordinator)

This position will operate the boating/concession center. This employee must be knowledgeable with the techniques of fishing and the use of canoes, paddleboats and kayaks. Center may also sale bait and tackle. Center opened April through October, 9AM to 6PM, seven days a week. May want consider turning this function over to a private provider.

Boating/Concession Center Assistant Manager (Recreation Leader II)

This position will assist the fishing center manager.

PERSONNEL BUDGET

Nature Center Director (CS II)	\$41,540
Assistant Naturalist (CS I)	\$34,248
Administrative Aide (30 Hours) \$13.93 x 30 hrs x 52 wks	\$21,715
Seasonal Naturalists (Leader III) \$8.77/hr x 60 days x 7hrs/day x 3 positions	\$11,050
Part Time Leaders (Recreation Leaders III) \$8.77/hr x 20 hrs/wk x 52 wks x 2 positions	\$18,242
Ranger (2 positions) [CS I]	\$68,496
Custodian (Building Service personnel)	0
Activity Coordinator (30 Hours) \$8.87 x 30 hrs x 52 wks	\$13,837
Part Time Recreation Staff	
2 positions x \$6.46/hr x 20 hrs/wk x 52 wks	\$13,437
2 positions x \$7.31/hr x 20 hrs/wk x 52 wks	\$15,205
Boating/Concession Center Manager	\$10,644
Activity Coordinator – April through October \$8.87/hr x 40hrs/wk x 30 wks	
Fishing Center Assistant Manager	\$13,158
Leader II – April through October \$7.31/hr x 30hrs/wk x 30 wks x 2 positions	

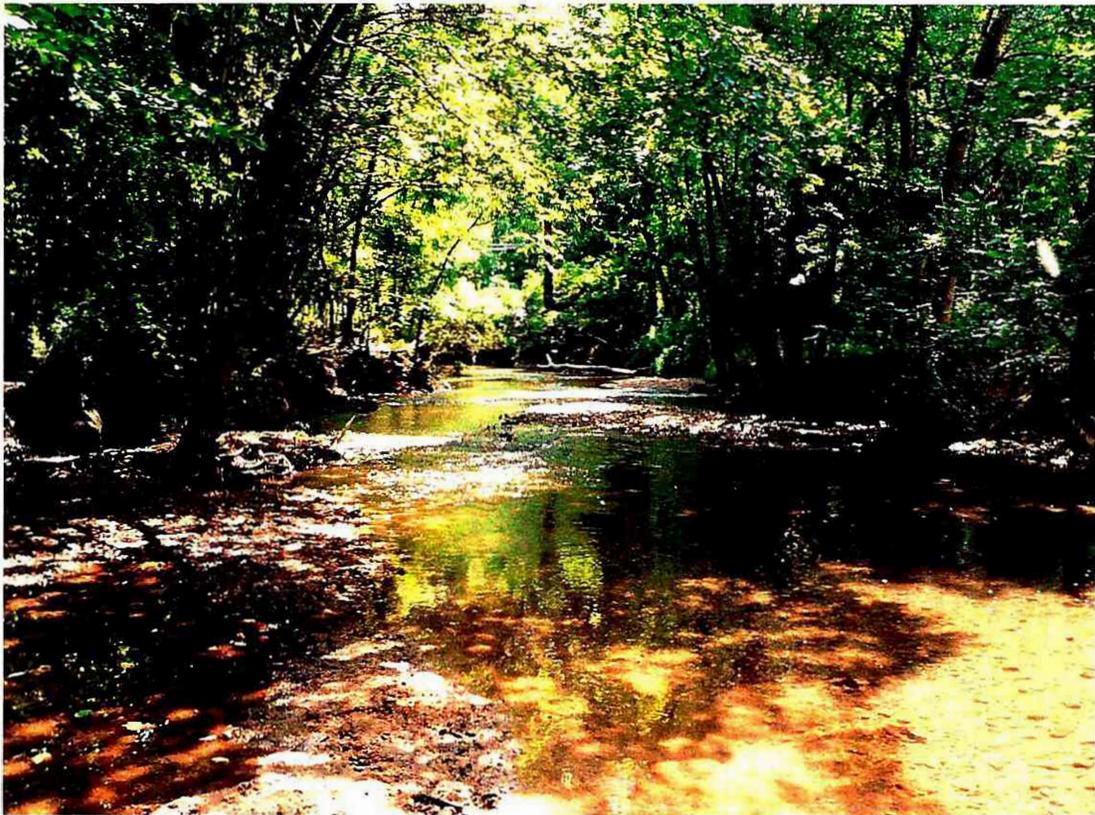
CONCLUSION

The committee's research on the geology, natural and cultural history, and recreational viability of Robert E. Lee Park, reveals it to be a site with significant potential to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Baltimore County, Baltimore City and surrounding counties. However, the committee cannot stress strongly enough that soil and water testing must be done prior to any commitment by Baltimore County. If either or both tests prove to show a health risk then the recommendation would be to withdraw from the project.

The other issue that must be addressed is the dog off leash problem. This issue is a concern for all who use the park. The park is known as an unofficial dog park and seeing dogs off leash is the norm. Dogs off leash not only violate Baltimore County code but also will hinder recreational programming. There are very few recreational events that are compatible with dogs on the loose. The committee is not suggesting that dogs be banned but rather the dog owners, who turn their dogs loose, learn to use the park in a legal and respectful manner. To help with this issue we believe that a park ranger is critical to gaining control of the dogs and their owners. Someone must be on site with enforcement powers to stem the tide of dog owners ruling the park. This issue is so important to the redevelopment of this park that if a quick and reasonable correction is not made to this problem than it is not worth assuming responsibility of this park.

Another factor to consider is the expectations of the park users once Baltimore County assumes responsibility for the park. The park users will believe that the many problems in the park will be corrected immediately. A thorough and detailed maintenance plan also needs to be done to prepare a budget for necessary repairs and improvements. The cost of such action will run in the millions of dollars and State and County agencies should prepare for such funding needs.

Robert E. Lee Park is currently in the “diamond in the rough” state and could be so much more. The unique nature of the globally rare serpentine barrens would make the park a destination for many visitors interested in natural history. Despite a few large negatives associated with this park, it certainly has the potential to be a wonderful addition to the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks inventory of outstanding parks.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Administration

Robert Barrett – Director
John Markley – Deputy Director
Keene Gooding, Jr. – Chief, Recreation Services

Robert E. Lee Park Committee

Sheryl A. Frias	Martha Stoelting
F. Kirk Dreier	Karen Volz
Robert McClelland	Jeffrey Budnitz

The committee wishes to thank the following people for their
contribution to the work of the committee:

Deanna Bailey – Baltimore County Department of Recreation & Parks-
Project Coordinator
David F. Brinker – DNR Wildlife Heritage Division
Bron Frias – Photographer/Volunteer
Patrick McDougal – Baltimore County Department of Recreation &
Parks – Planner
Mary Porter – Baltimore City Department of Recreation & Parks
Dr. Bernadette Roche – Loyola College
Joseph Warfield – Oregon Ridge Nature Center Naturalist/Volunteer
Donna Willis – Baltimore County Department of Recreation & Parks –
Administrative Aide

Sources of Materials for this Report

Maryland Department of Natural Resources Website
Wildlife and Heritage Server
Maryland Geologic Survey 200/Physiographic Provinces and Their
Subdivisions in Maryland
Herbaceous Plants of Maryland, Brown and Brown
Wildflowers of North Eastern/North Central North America

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (con't)

Sources of Materials for this Report (con't)

Newcomb's Wildflower Guide, Laurence Newcomb

Maryland Geology, Martin F. Schmidt, Jr.

Maryland Geological Survey

Baltimore County Public Library Website

Maryland Historical Trust Website

Live Baltimore Website

Minutes from the Robert E Lee Park Community Meetings of
May 2, 2001 and October 23, 2001 and the Final Concept Plan –
September 5, 2003



APPENDIX A: Maps



DRAFT Key Wildlife Habitat:
Barrens and Dry Glades

MD DNR - Wildlife & Heritage Service 5-16-05

Figure 1

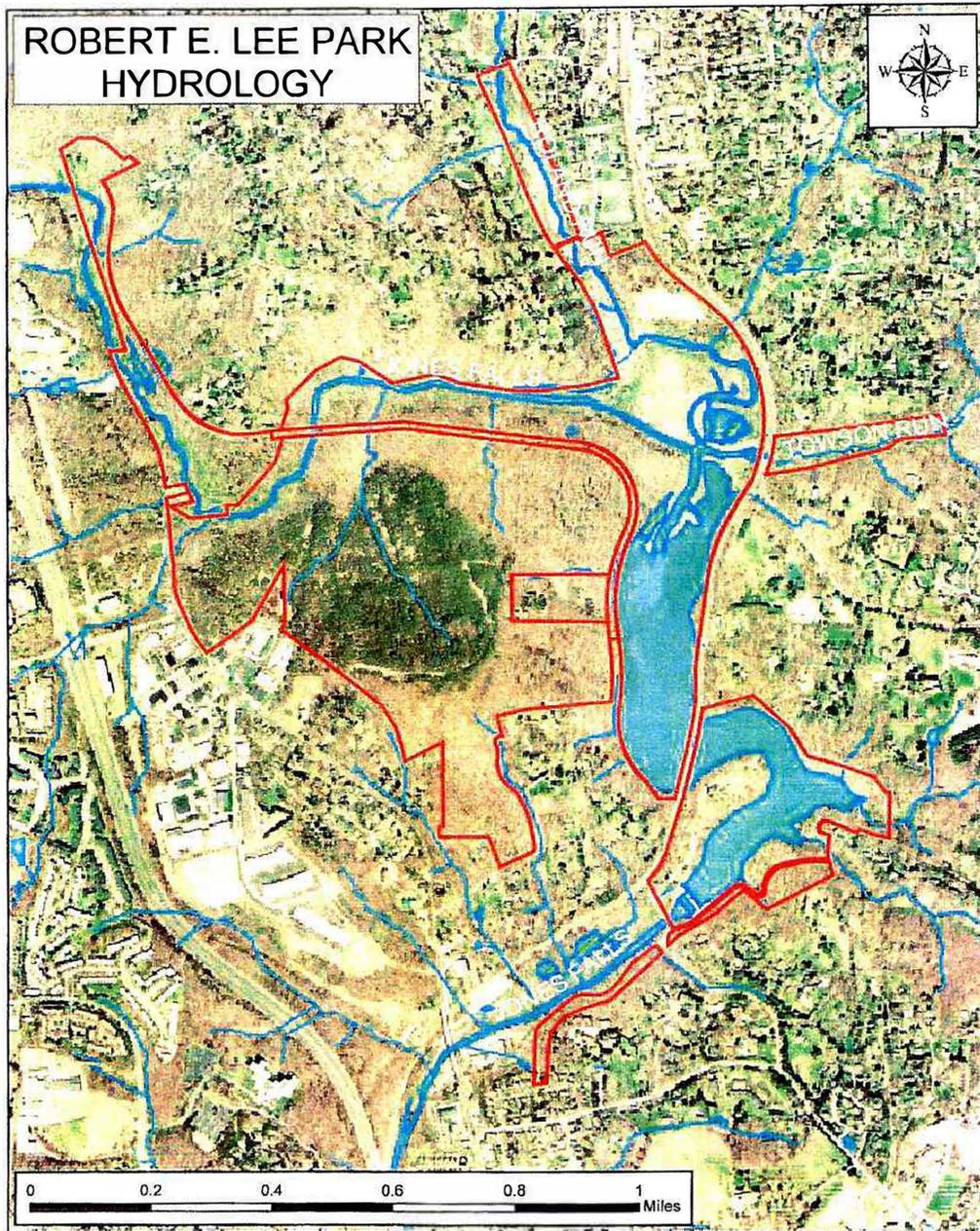


Figure 2

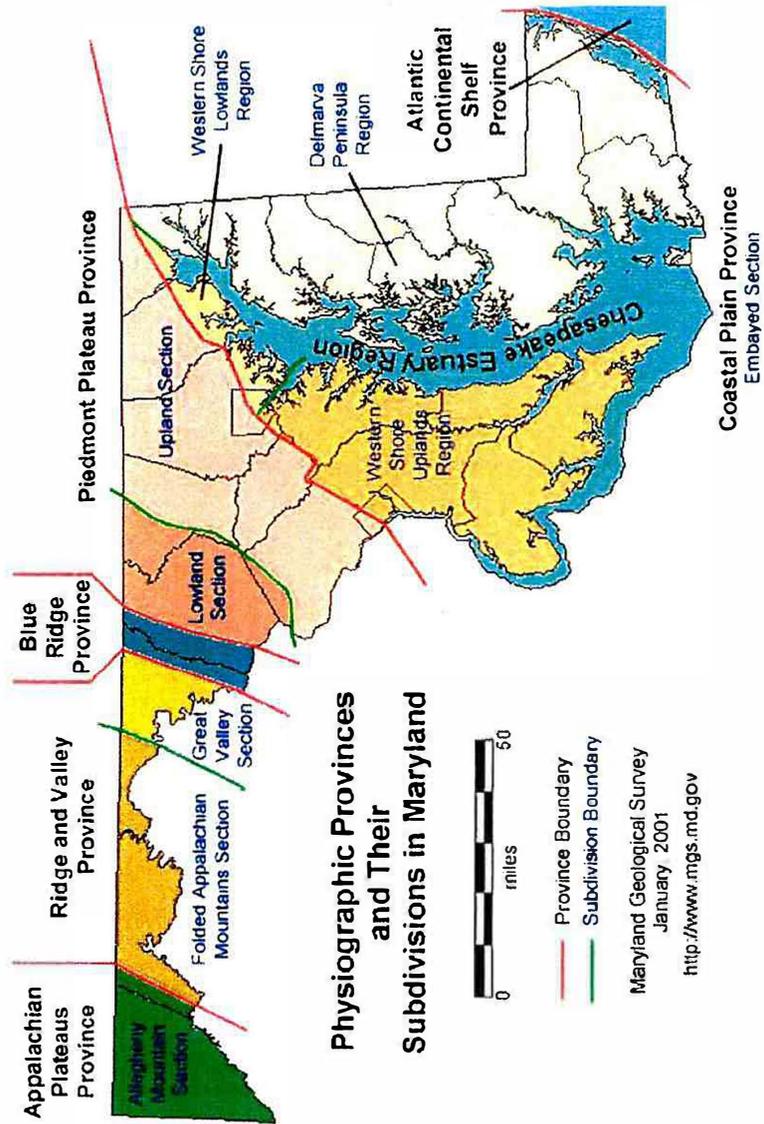
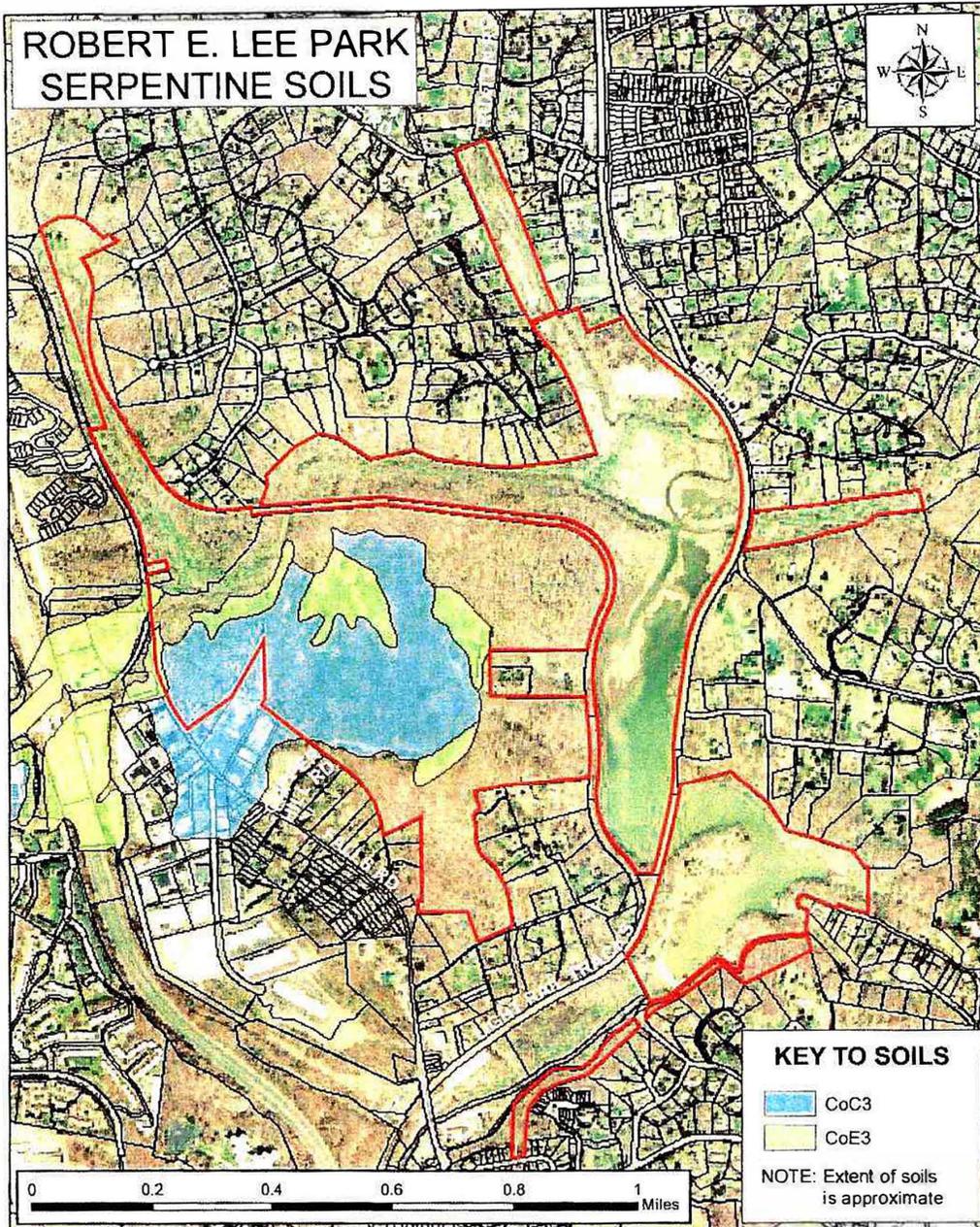


Figure 3



Aerial photography flown April 2005. The cadastral information on this plot was compiled from existing deed information, and is not to be considered authoritative. Map created by the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks, September 2006.

Figure 4

APPENDIX B: Plant Life



Virginia Pine



Leatherwood



Wisteria Vine and Pods



Whorled Milkweed



Serpentine Chickweed



Sm. Flowered Snake Root



Purple Gerardia



Fame Flower Bloom



Fame Flower on Rocky Serpentine



*Serpentine Rock
with Lichen*



*Serpentine Aster
with Greenbriar*



*Serpentine Aster with
Crescentspot Butterfly*

APPENDIX C: Additional Photos of Robert E. Lee Park



Scenic Trail along Old Railroad



Remains of Old Railroad



Footbridge over Stream



Boat Dock/Fishing Platform



Promenade around the Pump House



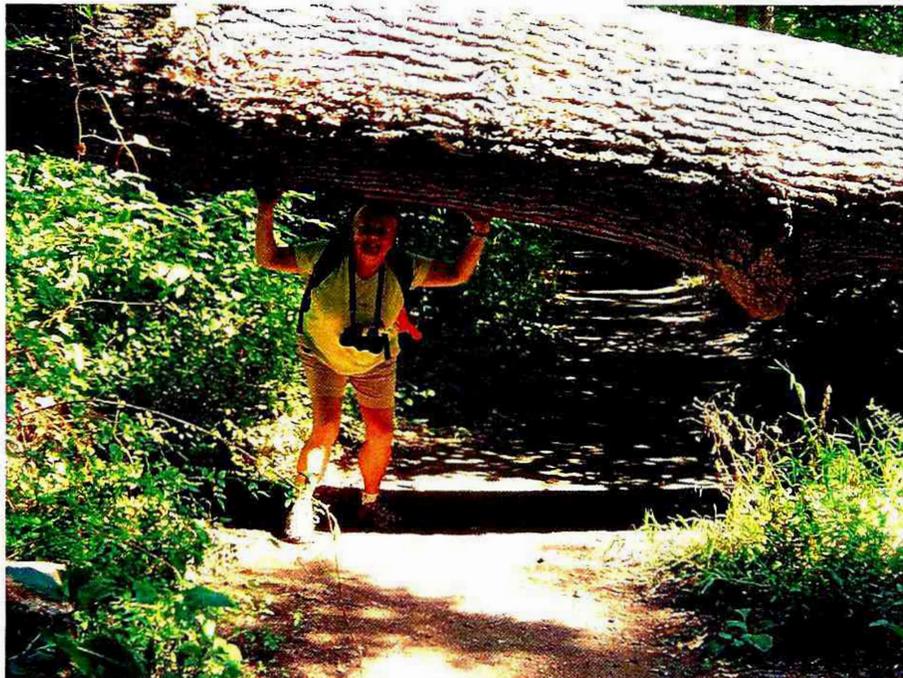
Trail Marker on Falls Road (Seven Miles to Baltimore City)

In Memory of Sheryl Frias

The Robert E. Lee Park Committee wishes to remember our departed colleague, Sheryl Frias, and acknowledge the vigor, enthusiasm, experience, and knowledge that she contributed to this project.

We will all remember the cheerful countenance she displayed at our meeting on that day when she was taken from us so suddenly.

Each of us will carry fond memories of this remarkable lady as we work each day in service to others.



NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE #
JEAN TANSEY	R&P CAPITAL PLANNING	410 887 3824
ROBT. BARNETT	R&P DIRECTOR	410 887 3807
JOHN MARBLEY	R&P DEP. DIR.	410-887-3810
Kimberly Warren	Ruxton Piedmont Lake Roland Area Imp. Assoc.	410-920-1422
Louise Hildreth	REL Park Conservancy Ruxton-Kiderwood etc	410-337-8657
Jane Lawrence	REL Park Conservancy	
Sgt Steve Moffett	BCOPD smoffett@baltimorecounty.md.gov	X5933
JEFFREY BUDNITZ	RRRAIA	410.435.3102
Elyse Jacob	" "	410-377-7303