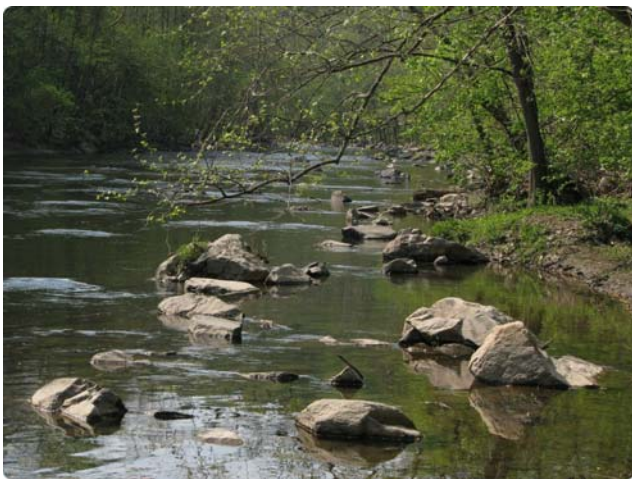


Patapsco River Restoration Project

Restoring a Maryland Treasure

A Maryland Treasure

Nestled largely within the Patapsco Valley State Park, the Patapsco River flows for almost 35 miles through ElkrIDGE, Ellicott City and other Maryland towns before it reaches Baltimore Harbor and the Chesapeake Bay. The Patapsco is one of the Baltimore area's hidden jewels, providing the people of Maryland with a favorite fishing hole, segments to canoe and kayak with class I and II rapids, trails to wander, and respite from the summer heat.

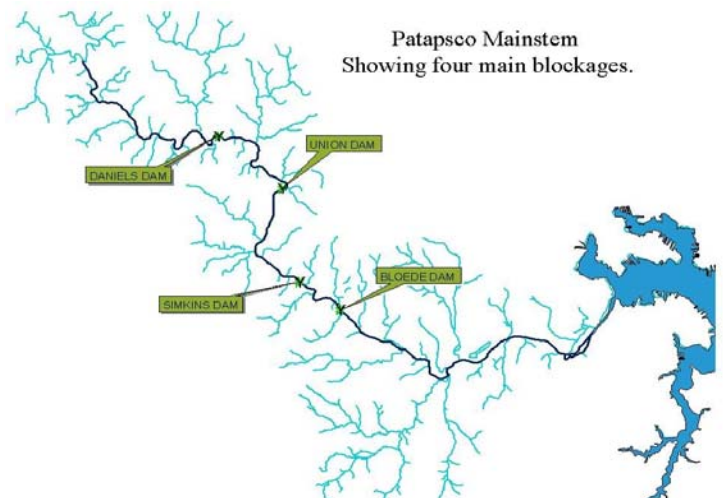


Bringing Rivers Back to Life

A healthy river can increase property values, boost recreational opportunities, attract tourists, reduce water pollution, and protect people and property from flooding. But dams such as these disrupt the natural functions of rivers, leaving many of them lifeless or cut off from their communities. American Rivers is working to ensure the Patapsco River escapes this fate by partnering with Friends of the Patapsco Valley State Park, the Maryland Department of Natural Resource, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to remove this suite of dams and put in place the necessary mechanisms to protect the Patapsco.

Relics of the Industrial Age

The Patapsco River is not without her problems. In the late 1800s/early 1900s flour and textile mills were erected along the banks of the Patapsco, and the river was dammed in order to harness her power. Today, the Patapsco River remains fragmented by the four dams pictured below (Liberty Dam, the fifth dam, serves as a water supply dam). This outdated infrastructure blocks passage for migratory fish like American shad, alewife and American eel. They also serve as an attractive nuisance for area swimmers, resulting in several deaths at Bloede Dam over the years. Also, while the river sections above and below Simkins and Bloede dams are popular canoe and kayak runs, both sites are difficult to portage and hamper recreation.





In addition to restoring more than 30 miles of habitat for diadromous species, removing these dams will result in restoration of a free-flowing river system. This includes a return of natural hydrological processes, increased diversity and relative abundance of native lotic fish and non-fish species, restored vegetative buffers, improved water quality through decreased stream temperatures and increased dissolved oxygen levels, and reduced occurrences of flooding and stream erosion through restored stream channel capacity and sediment transport. This watershed-level restoration effort will allow us to establish long-term pre- and post-implementation monitoring on the Patapsco and collect valuable data on the river's response to our restoration efforts.

The Patapsco River Restoration Project is more than just a dam removal project. By working with Friends of the Patapsco Valley State Park, we hope to also leverage river protection tools, such as Wild & Scenic status, and its recreational resources to make the Patapsco a river the community can be proud of. The Patapsco River's strategic location and the richness of the resource provide an opportunity to use the river to educate local communities on these protection and restoration tools and help more people connect with the river.

Restoration in Action

The dream for a restored Patapsco River is not out of reach. A number of factors have collided, making *now* the right time for action on the Patapsco.

- Design plans for the removal of the Simkins Dam are currently underway. The initial portion of this project is being funded through two grants from the American Rivers-NOAA River Grants program. This summer we anticipate completing design and filing permit applications for the removal. Pre-implementation monitoring will also begin this summer as part of what will be our long-term monitoring efforts on the Patapsco. Construction is expected to begin late Summer 2010.
- Union Dam was breached during Hurricane Agnes in 1972 and is scheduled to be removed by the state in 2009.
- After several deaths at the Bloede Dam, Maryland DNR is undertaking a feasibility study to examine what it would take to remove the structure. Once the feasibility study is complete, the state can begin to design what they think that removal will look like.

Whether as a model for integrated river restoration or a fishing and boating destination, we want people to think of the Patapsco.

