

VII. Monitoring Goals

To evaluate the effectiveness of our program and to assist in future program goals, a monitoring program will be implemented. Various approaches will be investigated to determine those most appropriate for Rockville's urban streams. These may include: chemical, toxicity testing, biological surveys, RSAT, or modified RSAT. Whenever practicable Rockville will participate with Montgomery County's monitoring program to promote overall watershed improvements and coordination.

The initial stream assessment was made using RSAT. This base-line assessment provided a one-time overall look at the Cabin John streams in the City of Rockville. RSAT (or a modified RSAT rating based only on urban streams) may be used to assess the streams every three years in the future.

COST-BENEFIT

Most of the benefits of a SWM program are not easily quantified. The benefits that can be attributed to the improvements recommended in this watershed study include:

- less stream bank erosion, resulting in less sediment being deposited in the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay;
- improved water quality resulting in less chemical treatment of our drinking water;
- additional wetlands created for better wildlife habitat and improved flood control;

- expanded forests that both improve wildlife habitat and water quality;
- removing fish barriers to allow an increase in the diversity of fish; and
- increasing public awareness which can result in fewer pollutants dumped in the streams.

All of these benefits can result from implementing the recommendations of this watershed study. However, attributing an actual cost to the amount of sediment that will no longer be required to be dredged from the Chesapeake Bay; or the reduced amount of chemicals that will be needed to treat our drinking water because of the reforested areas, new wetlands, etc., is an unattainable figure. Despite this, it is recommended that monitoring these watersheds continue now that the baseline information has been obtained. The improvements to the watershed will not be seen all at once, but as recommendations are implemented the quality of the stream should improve and be observed through the monitoring process.

GOALS

The following goals for long-term monitoring should be pursued:

- Determine the effectiveness of our SWM program.
- Protect, maintain, and restore water quality in the city's watersheds.

How to obtain these goals:

- Keep abreast of current technology and trends to determine the best type of SWM for our watersheds.

- Monitor recent Montgomery County legislation that requires developers to monitor BMPs in critical areas of the county. This should yield information to assess the effectiveness of SWM practices.
- Modify the RSAT rating scale to more closely reflect and compare the types of streams that are attainable in an urban environment. For example, when studying the Watts Branch and Rock Creek watersheds, a rating system will be designed that sets a realistic goal for the watershed through recommendations made in the studies. The methodology may be similar to RSAT but the results will relate more specifically to Rockville's urban watersheds.
- Investigate the benefits of biological monitoring in urban streams. The City will continue to work closely with Montgomery County. If this additional monitoring can help in attaining our goals, the City could pursue this through the County's monitoring program or institute a similar one of our own.
- Require RSAT or a similar type of monitoring every three years to determine the status of our streams and to evaluate specifically the impacts in the areas where the recommendations have been implemented.