



Request for Public Comment

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act - *de minimis* Finding

Outfall Stabilization at Gunpowder Falls State Park

Baltimore County

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (SHA) is proposing the restoration and stabilization of approximately 1,975 linear feet of stream channel to help meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) mandates for nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment and deliver equivalent impervious area treatment credit. The proposed project is along an unnamed tributary to Big Gunpowder Falls near US Route 1 (Belair Road) in Perry Hall, Baltimore County, MD. The project would impact Gunpowder Falls State Park, owned and managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and protected under Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (Section 4(f)).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE PROJECT

Why is this work necessary and what improvements are proposed?

A Baltimore County stormwater outfall, originating from county-owned roads within a housing development, has eroded gully through the Gunpowder Falls State Park more than 15 feet deep for several hundred feet. The objective of this outfall stabilization project is to improve the stability and function of the outfall and receiving channel by providing adequate drainage and safe conveyance of storm flows. Additionally, the repair of this channel would provide water quality treatment and stabilization for the outfall. The design approach would include a plunge pool directly downstream of the outfall and step pools along upper and middle limits of the channel. Towards the downstream end of the channel, rock cascades and larger pools are proposed to dissipate energy and maintain hydraulic stability. The proposed improvements are designed to raise the channel bed to help prevent further lowering of the channel bed and reduce erosion and ultimately reduce the amount of sediment and nutrient loads transported downstream. Bank stabilization vegetation such as live stakes, shrubs, and additional plantings is also proposed.

Why are comments being requested?

23 CFR 774.5(b) of Section 4(f) allows the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine that certain transportation uses of Section 4(f) land would have no adverse effect on the protected resource. With respect to publicly owned parks and recreation areas, a finding of *de minimis* impact may occur if a transportation project, including any proposed mitigation, does not "adversely affect the activities, features and attributes" of the Section 4(f) resource. When this is the case, public notice and opportunity for public review and comment on the finding is required. In addition, the finding of FHWA requires written concurrence from the officials with jurisdiction over the resource. Before concurring, the officials with jurisdiction must consider any public comments received.

What are the impacts to protected Section 4(f) resources?

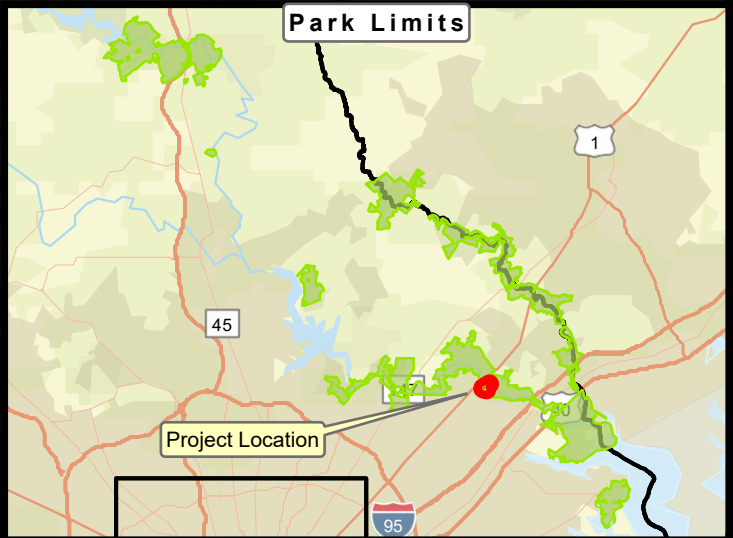
The outfall structure and the project are located entirely within the Sweathouse and Lost Pond Area of Gunpowder Falls State Park. The north end of the project area crosses a neighborhood access social trail, and the downstream extent of the project crosses the Big Gunpowder Trail/Service Road. The estimated limit of disturbance area is 4.49 acres. Construction access for the project would be from Medolyn Road, a county-owned dead-end street. A temporary mulch access road would connect the access off Medolyn Road to the proposed outfall channel work. The staging and stockpile area would be in an area devoid of trees. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2028 and would take about one year to complete. The Park would need to be accessed through design and construction. The trails would be intermittently closed to trail users during construction between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, except holidays, for up to a year. Additionally, SHA would need to access the site after construction is completed to ensure the outfall channel restoration and stabilization measures remain effective.

Gunpowder Falls State Park is over 18,000 acres in size and has recreational amenities including more than 120 miles of multi-use trails, historic sites, playgrounds, picnic areas, event venues, and a marina, as well as opportunities for birding, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, tubing, and swimming. The Park was established in 1959 to protect the Gunpowder River and the Big and Little Gunpowder Falls which span Harford and Baltimore Counties. The proposed impacts to Gunpowder Falls State Park would not affect the above-mentioned activities on a permanent basis. The overall impacts to this property would be minor and are, therefore, not expected to adversely affect the activities, features and attributes of Gunpowder Falls State Park.

The SHA, through this notice, is notifying the public that it will request that FHWA make a *de minimis* (or minor) impact finding, in accordance with Section 4(f). M-NCPPC is being informed of SHA's intent to seek a Section 4(f) *de minimis* impact finding. With this notice, the public is afforded the opportunity to provide comments on this finding.

How do I comment?

Please contact the Project Manager, Ms. Dody Frawley at 717-915-6644 or dfrawley.consultant@mdot.maryland.gov, or Ms. Kirby Amoriello, SHA Environmental Manager at (410) 545-2874 or KAmoriello.consultant@mdot.maryland.gov.



MAPEL: BAB621
 FMIS: BAB62B21
 Date: 03/19/2026
 County: Baltimore
 Topo Quad: White Marsh
 Coordinates (Decimal Degrees):
 39.423, -76.442

SECTION 4(F) RESOURCES MAP

Outfall Stabilization at Gunpowder Falls
State Park

N

Feet

*Note Locations are Approximate Scale: 3,500

- Project Location
- DNR Owned Property
- Trail
- Rivers and Streams
- County Boundaries
- Service Road or Trail