

## Prince George's County Council

### Agenda Item Summary

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**Meeting Date:** 3/9/2004  
**Reference No.:** CR-006-2004  
**Draft No.:** 1  
**Proposer(s):** Peters  
**Sponsor(s):** Peters, Knotts, Hendershot, Shapiro, Harrington, Dernoga, Dean, Exum  
**Item Title:** A Resolution supporting a request by the Patuxent River Commission for federal legislation that will enable a study to determine the qualification of the Patuxent River for designation as a Federal Wild and Scenic River.

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**Drafter:** Dominic Motta, Chief, M-NCPPC  
**Resource Personnel:** Sandra Eubanks, THE Committee Director

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#### LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

<b>Date Presented:</b>	<b>Executive Action:</b>
<b>Committee Referral:</b> 1/20/2004 - THE	<b>Effective Date:</b>
<b>Committee Action:</b> 2/26/2004 - FAV	
<b>Date Introduced:</b> 1/20/2004	
<b>Public Hearing:</b>	
<b>Council Action (1)</b> 3/9/2004 - ADOPTED	
<b>Council Votes:</b> MB:A, SHD:A, TD:A, CE:A, DCH:A, TH:A, TK:A, DP:A, PS:A	
<b>Pass/Fail:</b> P	
<b>Remarks:</b>	

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#### AFFECTED CODE SECTIONS:

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#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

##### TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**Date 2/26/2004**

Committee Vote: Favorable, 4-0, (In favor: Council Members Harrington, Peters, Dean and Hendershot).

Staff summarized the purpose of the resolution and written referral comments that were received. CR-6-2004 supports the Patuxent River Commission's efforts in obtaining federal legislation that would enable a federally-funded study of the Patuxent River for its qualification for designation as a Federal Wild and Scenic River. The Patuxent River Commission seeks the support of each of the seven counties and the City of Laurel in this effort. The enabling legislation provides the resources required for staff support for the study and a modest budget for the conservation analyses by the National Park Services. A representative from the Patuxent River Commission spoke on behalf of CR-6-2004. Questions were raised regarding the impact of wild and scenic designation of a river. The wild and scenic designation will provide economic and recreational benefits. Recreation on the river comprises some of the major uses wild and scenic designation seeks to protect. Public access to the river for recreational uses will not be hindered. The federal government will provide assistance to the State. Most current land uses, public and private, along side the river will continue after designation. The goal of the Wild and Scenic River Act is not to revert these areas to their original pristine condition, but rather to protect and enhance the existing values and use of the river and surrounding lands. The wild and scenic river designation does not affect the ability of

private landowners to develop privately-owned lands within the river corridor.

The Patuxent River Commission representative indicated that Charles, St. Mary's, Calvert and Anne Arundel Counties have adopted resolutions for the wild and scenic river designation.

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION/FISCAL IMPACT:**

(Includes reason for proposal, as well as any unique statutory requirements)

The Patuxent River Commission seeks the support of each of the seven counties, and the City of Laurel, in its effort to obtain Federal legislation that would enable a study of the Patuxent River for the purpose of determining its qualifications for designation as a Federal Wild and Scenic River.

The Wild and Scenic River Act protects free-flowing rivers with “outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values” by linking local governments, private landowners, and nonprofit environmental organizations with State and Federal agencies. In addition, inclusion of a river in the program enhances funding priority for State and foundation grants, raises local and national awareness of the rivers value, encourages resource protection, promotes improved water quality, enhances interpretation, and provides limited financial assistance for river management. The enabling legislation provides the resources required for sustained staff support for the study and a modest budget for the conservation analyses by the National Park Service.

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**CODE INDEX TOPICS:**

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**INCLUSION FILES:**

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