

Rare and Beautiful Drinking Water Creeks in the Upcounty Are Worth Fighting to Protect.

*Little Seneca Creek, Dayspring Creek & Whetstone Run: along with Ten Mile Creek, these are drinking water supplies threatened by sprawl including proposed county highway projects. **Citizens are urged to participate in the “Upcounty Transportation Town Hall,” October 12, 2023 at Blackrock Center For the Arts.***

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FoTMC-LSR and TAME Coalition (Transit Alternatives to Midcounty Highway Extended/M-83)
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Both Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir are located within Seneca Creek watershed, Montgomery County's largest watershed and a designated drinking water supply. The major threat to these waterbodies is urbanization (a.k.a. sprawl) from proposed development projects. During urbanization, developers take down forests and farms, then they grade, compact and pave-over the land; the resulting runoff over time erodes streams, and silts-in lakes and the Chesapeake Bay with sediment.

Going from west to east in the upcounty, there are large proposed urbanization projects that would pave-over forests and farm fields in the Seneca Creek watershed, degrading Ten Mile Creek; Little Seneca Creek; and Great Seneca Creek. There's still time to save these irreplaceable creeks through focused citizen action.

Here are three of the largest proposed urbanizations in the upcounty area of Seneca Creek watershed:

(1) *Pulte Corporation's plan for a massive housing development* proposed for west of Clarksburg Road, in the two most-sensitive high-quality tributaries of Ten Mile Creek (see the article in this newsletter on the litigation over the Pulte proposal and the ongoing work to protect Ten Mile Creek);

(2) *Proposed Observation Drive Extended*, that would be built right alongside the clear-running tributary of Little Seneca Creek that flows behind Clarksburg High School;
and

(3) *Proposed Midcounty Highway Extended/ M-83 Highway*, that would destroy 100 acres of high-quality forest in county parks and send runoff into clear-running Dayspring Creek in Germantown, Great Seneca Creek in Gaithersburg, and Whetstone Run in Montgomery Village. Citizens with TAME Coalition (Transit Alternatives to Midcounty Highway Extended/M-83) are demanding that proposed M-83 highway be removed from the master plans, so that we can permanently protect these creeks - and the forests and farms that keep our drinking water clean. TAME Coalition supports transit expansion and improvements to existing roads to alleviate traffic congestion, and housing justice enabling people to live where they work.

Both of the proposed highway projects listed above – Observation Drive Extended and Midcounty Highway Extended /M-83 – are under the purview of county government: the County Council; County Executive and Department of Transportation; and Montgomery County Planning Board & Planning Department.

Though they sometimes appear to be dormant, these highway boondoggles can be revived at any time, like a vampire rising when the moon is full. Some politicians are protecting the projects' legal basis by retaining the planned highways in master plans – and inserting them into new plans. But, a growing number of elected officials are now listening to the diverse movement of county residents who are demanding that planned highways be permanently canceled via removal from master plans. We will protect our communities' green spaces, our clean water and air. “*Save It, Don't Pave It!*” “*No New Highways!*”

For more information:

<https://tinyurl.com/upcountytransit> – for details on the October 12th Upcounty Transportation Town Hall.

<http://tamecoalition.org/>

<https://www.tenmilecreek.org/>