



THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL

Trails Stewardship Committee

Spotlight on Baltimore County: Gunpowder Falls State Park *by Katherine O. Rizzo*

Gunpowder Falls State Park is comprised of six areas that cover roughly 18,000 acres of northeastern Baltimore County and western Harford County. The park was established in 1959 to protect the areas around the Gunpowder River as well as the Big and Little Gunpowder Falls areas.

The park holds over 120 miles of multi-use trails and picnicking areas. Topography includes tidal wetlands, steep rugged slopes and everything in-between. Tubing, canoeing and kayaking are allowed in the park as well as crabbing, fly fishing and hunting with permits.

The six areas of Gunpowder Falls State Park are:

- **Hereford Area** – This 3,620-acre section of the park is located in northern Baltimore County east of the Prettyboy Dam. With more than 20 miles of wooded trails to explore, this area is an ideal location for trail riding. The Big Gunpowder Falls is popular with canoers and kayakers and is also used for tubing. The Mill Pond Cottage, which provides overnight accommodations, is located in the Hereford Area.

- **Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail** – This trail follows 19.7 miles of the former Northern Central Railway through northern Baltimore County. It starts in Ashland, Maryland, and ends at the Maryland-Pennsylvania line. The trail passes through historic communities such as Ashland, Phoenix, Monkton and White Hall. The Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail is a multi-use trail that is also ADA accessible. The trail was inducted into the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Rail Trail Hall of Fame in 2015.

- **Sweet Air Area** – This 1,250-acre area straddles the Little Gunpowder Falls and spans both Baltimore and Harford Counties. The area includes 18 miles of multi-use trails, however, bikers and horseback riders are not allowed on the Cody Jean and Red Dot Trails. You can read more about the Harford County part of Sweet Air on equiery.com.

- **Central Area** – The Central Area is in Kingsville, Maryland, and is where the park headquarters are located. This area borders both the Big and Little Gunpowder Falls and also includes Days Cove. This area is also the location of the historic milling village of Jerusalem Mill. The Graham Equestrian Center, an MHC Industry Professional member, is located in the Central Area. Horseback riders can park trailers at Graham Equestrian Center with a reservation. The Center does not rent horses.

- **Hammerman Area** – Located in Middle River, Maryland, this area is only open 8am to sunset in April through October and then 10am to sunset from November through March. This area includes a 1,500 foot beach and swimming area along the banks of the Gunpowder River. There are food concessions, picnic pavilions and playgrounds here, as well as canoe and kayak rentals. There is also an Archery Range at the Hammerman Area. Due to the wetland and beach areas, the Muskrat and Dogwood Trails in Hammerman are for hiking only.

- **Dundee Creek Marina** – Also located in Middle River, the Dundee Creek Marina is at the mouth of the Gunpowder River. The marina has several amenities for slip holders and public boat users but does not have horseback riding trails.

According to DNR's website, the Jones Road Area of the park is currently closed to public use due to public safety concerns and ongoing environmental degradation.



DNR photo



Maryland Historic District photo

PATAPSCO STATE PARK TRAIL UPDATES

- The Thru Trail Reroute in the Woodstock Area is complete and open for multi-use. Park staff, local Boy Scouts, and a large trail volunteer force recently constructed 1.25 miles of trail on the Baltimore County side, downstream from Old Court Road, using grants sponsored by Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration. The goal of this reroute was to construct a sustainable trail that will last for future generations and offer a better trail experience for our visitors. White and red combined blazes will now mark the entire Thru Trail on the Baltimore County side of the park.
- The MORE Fun Trail in the Woodstock Area is still closed due to a dangerous bridge. Please adhere to the closure order.
- Project Access Area at Morgan Run Natural Environment Area is closed. With financial support from the Maryland Department of Disabilities and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Project Access Area at Morgan Run Natural Environment Area is being renovated to provide ADA-compliant parking and a path to the stream, as well as improve instream habitat for trout. This closure will continue until October 15.