

POSSIBLE CHANGES TO REGULATIONS FOR TROUT DELAYED HARVEST AREAS

The department would like to create a new delayed harvest trout fishing area.

The department would like to add the South Branch Patapsco River from West Friendship Road (Howard Co) and Main Street (Carroll Co) upstream approximately 1.1 miles to the upper boundary of the Hugg Thomas Wildlife Management Area (WMA) to the list of Group 1 Delayed Harvest Trout Fishing Areas.

The removal of Bloede Dam will result in the loss of a very popular put and take trout fishing area in the Patapsco River and the Patapsco Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited has urged the department to consider additional delayed harvest fishing areas to maximize trout fishing recreation.

The proposed timeline for dam removal activities indicates that recreational fishing will be heavily impacted during the winter of 2018 and during the 2019 season at a minimum. The proposed area will increase angler access and trout fishing opportunities on public land in the Patapsco River watershed and mitigate the loss of fishing access at Bloede Dam.

A total of 750 trout will be stocked in the proposed area by slightly reducing the number of trout stocked at several nearby locations during 2018. The 5500 trout allocated to the Patapsco River (Avalon) section affected by the removal of Bloede Dam during 2019 will be distributed among the proposed delayed harvest area and other nearby trout fishing areas.

Parking and access by foot is available from existing areas owned by Howard County on West Friendship Road. Additional fishing and stocking access is available near the upstream proposed boundary through property owned by Carroll County and the Town of Sykesville. The proposed Delayed Harvest Fishing Area is within the Hugg Thomas WMA under the management of the Wildlife and Heritage Service. Freshwater Fisheries staff and Wildlife and Heritage staff met on site to discuss the proposal and determine the potential conflicts between anglers and hunters. Anglers will access the stream corridor from designated parking areas outside of the WMA. No stocking will take place during the fall months to avoid any disturbance of hunting activities. Freshwater Fisheries will continue to work with Wildlife and Heritage to provide a fishing opportunity at Hugg Thomas WMA that will not conflict with the goals, objectives, and primary use of the WMA.