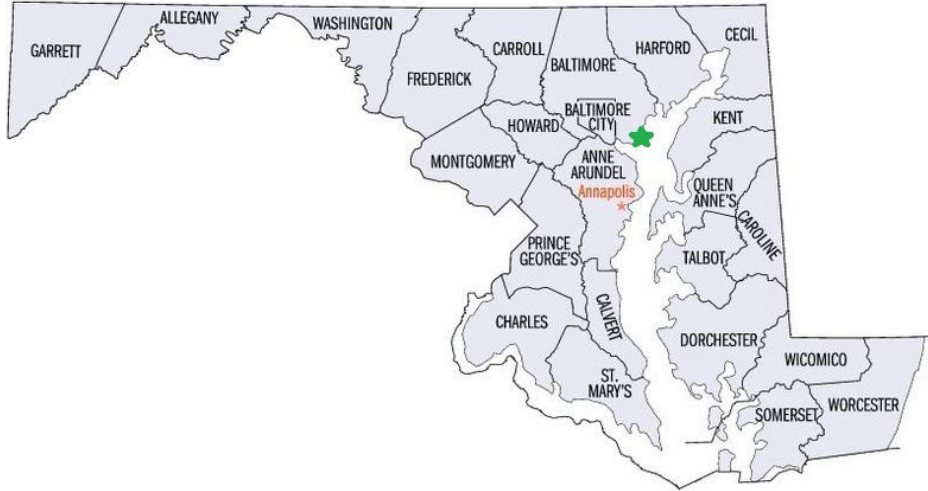


Baltimore County - Schoolhouse Cove - Bear Creek - Patapsco River



What was requested?

The Department received a request to create a new speed zone within the existing Upper Bear Creek speed zone in the Patapsco River. The request is to create a new speed zone for a small inlet off of Bear Creek called Schoolhouse Cove. The affected area is currently regulated with a speed limit of 6 knots on Saturdays, Sundays, and State holidays, all year. The new speed zone would have a speed limit of 6 knots, all year.

Why was this change requested?

The Department was provided the following information:

- The requested area is a small cove about 300 yards long.
- Boats moving in and out of Stoughton's Marina routinely get on plane prior to entering the larger upper Bear Creek and create large wakes for the property and docks on the north end of the cove.
- A speed zone is requested to decrease shoreline erosion, enhance safety for swimmers and people on small watercraft, and decrease property damage to boats docked at the homes in this cove.

What is the current regulation for the area?

The requested area is within the speed zone described in COMAR 08.18.19.04B(1): Upper Bear Creek encompasses the area beginning at a point, at or near Lat. 39° 15.085' N., Long. 76° 29.320' W., then running 94° (True) to a point, at or near Lat. 39° 15.080' N., Long. 76° 29.222' W., then running 193° (True) to a point, at or near Lat. 39° 14.875' N., Long. 76° 29.283' W., and running to the head of the creek, including all tributaries. This area has a 6-knot speed limit on Saturdays, Sundays, and State holidays, all year.

Definitions

“6 knots (6.9 MPH)” means a person may not operate or give permission to operate a vessel:

- (a) At a boat speed in excess of 6 knots (6.9 statute miles per hour, or 11.1 kilometers

- per hour); or
- (b) To tow an individual on a ski, aquaplane, or similar device.

“All year” means the period beginning at 12:01 a.m. each January 1, and ending at 12 midnight each succeeding December 31.

“Saturdays, Sundays, and State holidays” means the period beginning at 12:01 a.m. each Saturday, and ending at 12 midnight each succeeding Sunday, and during the period beginning at 12:01 a.m. and ending at 12 midnight each holiday officially recognized by the State of Maryland as listed by the Maryland Department of Budget and Management.

Regulatory Process

Boating rules in Maryland may be created by either the General Assembly or the Department. When the Department creates a boating rule, it is called a regulation. When the General Assembly creates a rule, it is called a statute. The Department often has to create a regulation to implement a statute. The regulatory process begins with scoping and the Department follows normal [procedures](#) as concepts move forward.

During the scoping process, the Department gathers suggestions and ideas from stakeholders and others about how to solve a boating problem or address a need. The goal of scoping is to identify issues, potential impacts, and reasonable alternatives associated with the issues so that management actions can be developed. After the public has had an opportunity to comment on possible management actions during the scoping process, the Department considers these comments and develops an appropriate management strategy.

When could this be effective?

The Department projects that this change could be effective in the spring of 2027. However, the exact date cannot be determined at this time.

Maps of the Area - Schoolhouse Cove, Bear Creek, Patapsco River

The area requested is the polygon outlined in red.



Corresponding satellite image of the requested area.

