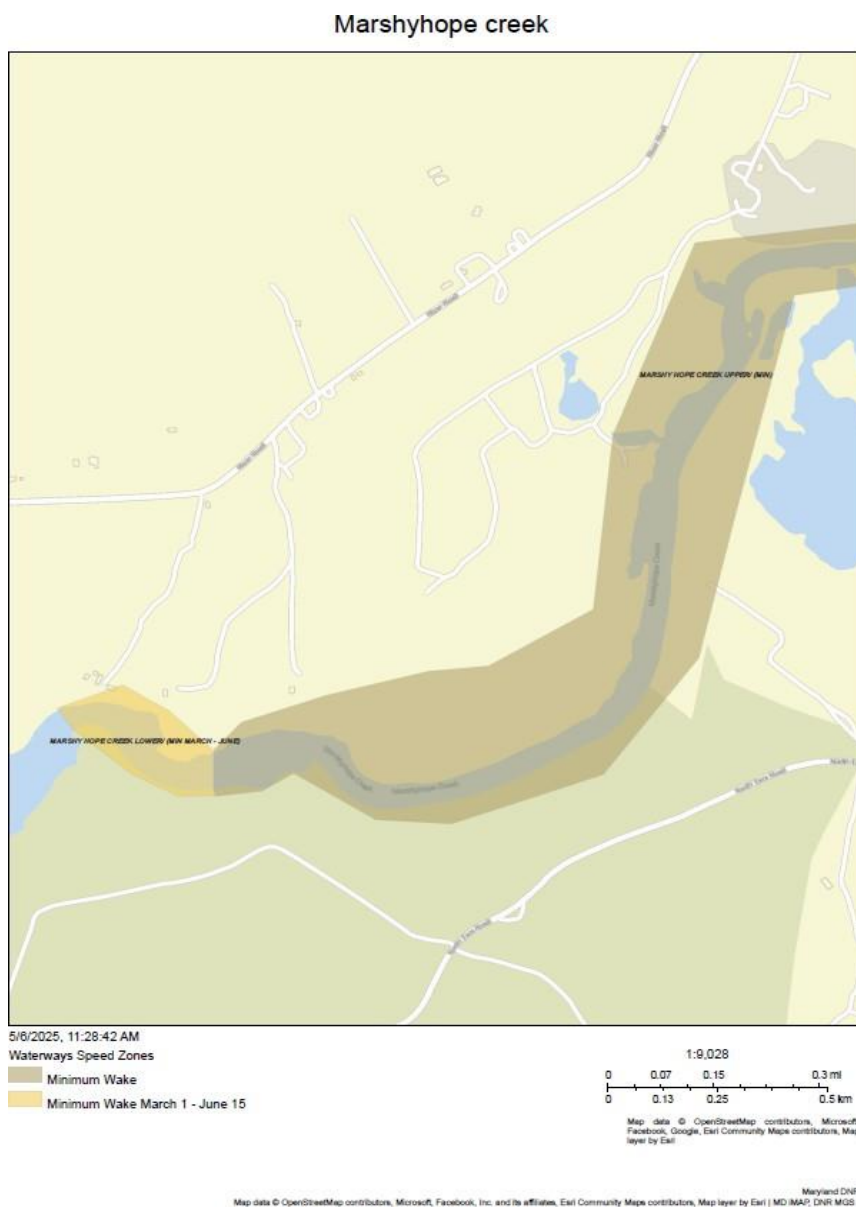


Dorchester County - Nanticoke River - Marshyhope Creek

What was proposed?

The Department proposed to combine two existing speed zones in Marshyhope Creek, a tributary of the Nanticoke River, into one continuous speed zone. Currently, there is a small seasonal (March 1 through June 15) minimum wake speed zone in the lower Marshyhope Creek adjacent to a larger year-round minimum wake speed zone in the upper Marshyhope Creek. The proposed action combines the areas and increases the speed limit for the entire area to 6 knots at all times.

Map of Area



Why is this change necessary?

The proposed action addresses the need to clarify and simplify the speed zones on Marshyhope Creek.

Who will this affect?

All boaters operating in Marshyhope Creek in the Nanticoke River.

What is the specific regulatory action?

Amend Regulation .02 under COMAR 08.18.16 Nanticoke River.

Have these changes been discussed with advisory bodies or other interested individuals?

- The idea was scoped with the Boat Act Advisory Committee at their meeting in September 2025.
- The idea was scoped with the general public from June 23, 2025, through August 3, 2025.

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 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. The ideas for this proposal were scoped from June 23, 2025, through August 3, 2025.

At the conclusion of the scoping process, the Department determined that the action is necessary and appropriate. The rules are being promulgated following the Administrative Procedures Act described in Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the State Government Article Annotated Code of Maryland.

- The General Assembly's Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review Committee reviews the regulatory proposal for fiscal and legal analysis.
- The proposal was printed by the Division of State Documents in the Maryland Register on January 23, 2026.
- A 30 day public comment period began on the day of publication. The comment period ends February 23, 2026.
- After review of the comments, the Department may adopt the changes.
- If the Department adopts the changes, they become effective after a notice is published in the Maryland Register that announces approval and the effective date.

Effective Date of Change

The Department projects that this change could be effective in March of 2026, however the exact date cannot be determined at this time.