

Greater **Baltimore**



Wilderness

Coalition

Vision

The **Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition** is a voluntary alliance of public agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, and conservation coalitions that supports the vision of expanding a connected and protected green infrastructure network in populous central Maryland from the Chesapeake Bay to the Piedmont.

Connected values

The **Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition** supports multiple values in the pursuit of its Vision.

Principle values are:

>> **Resilience** – The **Coalition** seeks to improve regional capacity to respond successfully to the impacts of a changing climate. The region is particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and strong coastal storms. Green infrastructure investments on a regional basis at all scales, landscape through site-specific, can provide cost-effective protection for valuable transportation, energy and water treatment infrastructure, shield homes and businesses from adverse impacts, and provide additional benefits, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.

>> **Biodiversity** – In the rapidly developing and changing regional landscape, considerable native habitat for wildlife and plants has already been lost or is fragmented by highways, transmission lines, and other development. The **Coalition** supports new partnerships and initiatives to reconnect, restore and protect habitat across jurisdictional boundaries. A network of protected land and water resources are needed to support migratory species, permit forage for food and shelter, and conserve refugia for rare and endangered species.

>> **Equity** – Access to the benefits of nature is unequally available across the region. The **Coalition** believes access to nature is a basic human need and American right. An increasingly urbanized population needs more nearby nature. Studies demonstrate that access to nature benefits health

reduces crime, spurs investment and improves local economies. Local and regional greenways, city parks, restored urban stream corridors and street trees and urban forests provide particular value to currently underserved neighborhoods and communities that lack open green space.

>> *Discovery* – Every person, young or old, requires accessible and abundant opportunities to discover nature’s wonders and appreciate the benefits provided by healthy, functioning ecosystems. Citizens knowledgeable about the natural foundations of the world they inhabit are the best means of ensuring its stewardship and renewal for the future. The **Coalition** believes a protected green infrastructure network provides the best classroom and instructional material for a life of learning about and respect for our natural world.

Membership and Governance

The **Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition** is an unincorporated, voluntary association. It is guided by a Steering Committee selected from among members and representative of the diversity of agencies, organizations and geography of the region. Each member will be asked to endorse a charter document which commits the agency or organization to supporting the core mission and purposes of the Coalition. An initial set of policies and procedures has been adopted to provide structure for Coalition decision-making and meetings.

The region includes the counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s and the cities of Annapolis, Baltimore, Bowie and others within this geographic area.

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