

APPENDIX F
Scenic Quality Inventory/Evaluation: RATING CRITERIA

Landform



Vegetation



Water



High vertical relief such as prominent bluffs or cliffs; or severe surface variations; **or** highly eroded formations such as weathered rock surfaces; **or** detailed features dominant and exceptionally striking and intriguing.

A variety of vegetative types in interesting forms, features, and patterns; **or** various vegetation forms that add to horizon lines.

Clear and clean appearing, still; **or** cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor in the landscape.

Interesting erosional patterns; **or** variety in size and shape of landforms; **or** detailed features present and interesting, though not dominant or exceptional.

Some variety of vegetation, but only one or two types.

Flowing or still, but not dominant in the landscape.

Low, rolling hills, foothills; **or** flat valley bottoms. Interesting detailed landscape but features few or lacking.

Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation.

Absent or not noticeable.

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Color



Adjacent Scenery



Scarcity



Cultural/Changes



Rich color variations , a variety or vivid color; **or** pleasing contrasts in the soil, rock, vegetation or water.

Adjacent scenery greatly enhances visual quality; **or** distinctive natural forms; **or** even cultural changes, such as buildings and structures that add to the scenic quality rather than detract from it.

One of a kind; **or** unusually memorable; **or** very rare within the region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing.

Free from esthetically undesirable or discordant sights and influences; **or** cultural modifications add favorably to the visual variety.

Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rock and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element.

Adjacent scenery moderately enhances overall visual quality.

Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region.

Scenic quality is somewhat depreciated through inharmonious cultural intrusions, but not so extensively that they are entirely negated; **or** modifications add little or no visual variety to the area.

Subtle color variations, contrast or interest; generally muted tones.

Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality.

Interesting within its setting, but fairly common within the region.

Modifications are so extensive that scenic qualities are mostly nullified or substantially reduced.

APPENDIX F

Southern Maryland Heritage Area: Scenic Inventory/Assessment

Landform



High scenic bluffs with elevations of up to 200 ft. can be found along the shoreline of Southern Maryland at Chapel Point State Park, and along smaller tributaries in Southern Charles County.

High cliffs are exceptional points for scenic vistas of the Chesapeake Bay and the outlying countryside, and can be found at Calvert Cliffs in Calvert Cliffs State Park.

Landform



The Southern Maryland region is located within the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain. The land is predominantly flat and low rising to around 200 feet along parts of its Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River shorelines.

Scenic rolling hills are present in much of the region. Combinations of steep slopes and rolling hills present interesting land formations along some of the area's inland tributaries.

Vegetation



The Southern Maryland region contains a number of protected lands that are significant, in part, for the variety and extent of the vegetation they contain. These lands include swamps, marshes, wetlands, forests, and Natural Heritage Areas.

The corridor is covered with mature deciduous forests. Dominant species include oak, tulip poplar, eastern hemlock, loblolly pine, and white pine.

Water



The Chesapeake Bay is the largest freshwater estuary in the world; the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers are the two main tributaries in Southern Maryland; the Wicomico River is State Scenic River.

Southern Maryland is dissected by many tributaries. Scenic creeks and streams are located throughout the study area.

APPENDIX F

Southern Maryland Heritage Area: Scenic Inventory/Assessment

Color



Adjacent Scenery



Scarcity



Cultural/Changes



Colorful patterns of flowers, trees and bushes planted on the grounds of the region's many historic homes and plantations, such as Sotterley, add to the charm of the region.

Indigenous forms of architecture found around the region, such as lighthouses and tobacco barns, are examples of blended artificial and beneficial adjacent scenery.

Southern Maryland is home to Battle Creek Cypress Swamp, the northern most stand of bald cypress trees in the U.S., and Calvert Cliffs, which contains the largest deposit of Miocene Epoch fossils in the eastern U.S.

Scenic quality is maintained in areas located away from major transportation corridors. Areas such as Piney Point and Cove Point have beautiful examples of Chesapeake Bay lighthouses, which lend a cultural charm to natural scenic resources.

Walking trails through Flag Ponds Nature Park, Kings Landing Park and other regional natural areas offer memorable aspects of wildflowers for nature enthusiasts including Columbine, Blue Flag Iris, and Rose-Mallow.

Little marked development in outlying rural country-sides adds to adjacent scenery, such as in the Nanjemoy area of Charles County, and the lower St. Mary's County area.

Southern Maryland contains habitats and major nesting grounds for a number of important wildlife species, including the Bald Eagle and the Great Blue Heron, distinguishing the region from other parts of the state and the country.

Scenic quality is somewhat detracted along parts of Routes 2 and 4 in Calvert County, where there is a high concentration of development. This is an example of cultural intrusion that detracts from scenic quality.

Natural grasses, different soil textures, coastal shorelines, and flora and fauna all contribute to the color and natural scenery of Southern Maryland.

Adjacent scenery detracts in areas along Routes 2 and 4 in Calvert County and US 301 in Charles County, where there is a high concentration of urban development along both sides of these highways.

Southern Maryland's protected lands provide habitat to a number of species of plants and animals that are common within the Mid-Atlantic region.

Scenic quality is severely reduced in areas along US 301 in Charles County, from Waldorf to La Plata. However, areas located off major transportation routes have maintained scenic qualities