



**NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARINGS
APPLICATION FOR WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION 23-WQC-0007**

Prince George's, Anne Arundel, and Baltimore Counties
Baltimore City

Staff Assigned: Danielle Spendiff

Case Number 23-WQC-0007/202061983

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail, 6 South Gay Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 has requested a State Water Quality Certification for a dedicated alignment and structures for a high-speed superconducting magnetic levitation (SCMAGLEV) transportation system between Washington, DC, and Baltimore, MD, with an intermediate stop at Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall (BWI) Airport. The SCMAGLEV alignment consists of both below ground and elevated rail on viaduct. SCMAGLEV infrastructure in Maryland includes the Cherry Hill Station and supporting ancillary facility sites such as maintenance of way (MOW), train maintenance facility (TMF), substations, systems, and fresh air/emergency egress facilities. The majority (approximately 70%) of the rail alignment in Maryland will be below ground with the remaining rail alignment elevated on concrete piers. The below ground sections will be installed using tunnel boring machines. The Project encompasses portions of Prince George's County, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Baltimore City. The proposed project is located within the following 8-digit watersheds: Anacostia River (02140205), Baltimore Harbor (02130903), Gwynns Falls (02130905), Little Patuxent River (02131105), Patapsco River Lower North Branch (02130906), Severn River (02131002), and Patuxent River Upper (02131104). All potential discharges are located within Use Class I and II waterways.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) are developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 USC 4321 et seq. At this time the alignment proposed in the request for Water Quality Certification (known as J-03) has not been accepted as the preferred alignment under NEPA. The proposed alignment will permanently impact 22.63 acres (985,631 square feet) of nontidal wetlands, 11.37 acres (495,071 square feet) of the nontidal wetlands buffer, and 8,781 linear feet (50,708 square feet) of nontidal waterways. The proposed project would temporarily impact 27.77 acres (1,209,800 square feet) of nontidal wetlands, 21.08 acres (918,308 square feet) of the nontidal wetlands buffer, and 17,691 linear feet (85,359 square feet) of nontidal waterways. Proposed impacts to Nontidal Wetlands of Special Concern (NTWSSC) and their expanded buffers are included in the above totals and consist of the following: permanent impacts to 1.96 acres (85,237 square feet) of NTWSSC and

2.97 acres (129,561 square feet) of NTWSSC expanded buffer, and temporary impacts to 0.49 acres (21,538 square feet) of NTWSSC and 3.56 acres (154,874 square feet) of NTWSSC expanded buffer. Approximately 52.6 acres of impacts to the 100-year nontidal floodplain are proposed. Tunnel crossings underneath tidal portions of the Patapsco and Anacostia Rivers would result in approximately 0.82 acres (35,578 square feet) of impacts to tidal wetlands. Compensatory mitigation requirements for all unavoidable impacts will be met through a combination of mitigation bank credits and permittee-responsible mitigation. Impacts are proposed within the Tier II watersheds of Beaverdam Creek 2 and Patuxent River 1; a social and economic justification (SEJ) is required for unavoidable impacts to the Beaverdam Creek 2 and Patuxent River 1 Tier II watersheds.

The purpose of this public notice is to solicit comments from the public about the proposed work and to announce the date of multiple Maryland Department of the Environment public informational hearings on the subject application. At this time, no decision has been made with regard to the request for water quality certification. Three in-person public hearings will be held for the project at the following locations:

- 1) Wednesday, October 11, 2023: 7:00-9:00 PM, with a poster session beginning at 6:00 PM
Ironworkers Local 5
9301 Peppercorn Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774
- 2) Thursday, October 12, 2023: 7:00-9:00 PM, with a poster session beginning at 6:00 PM
Lakeland STEAM Center
2921 Stranden Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21230
- 3) Tuesday, October 17, 2023: 7:00-9:00 PM, with a poster session beginning at 6:00 PM
Courtyard Marriott, Fort Meade
2700 Hercules Road
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701

A virtual online public informational hearing will be held on Thursday, October 19, 2023 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Interested parties may participate in the virtual online hearing using the following link:

Time: October 19, 2023, 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89236208049?pwd=K2JtL3d5V1dWaEwxZ3YwaE5ZL01XQT09>
Meeting ID: 892 3620 8049
Passcode: 886070
To join by phone:
+13017158592,,89236208049#,,,,*886070# US (Washington DC)
+13092053325,,89236208049#,,,,*886070# US

Comments can also be provided in writing at the public informational hearings, via email or U.S. mail. **Comments must be received on or before November 2, 2023.**

Public hearing documents, including WQC request documents, project plans, and planning documents will be made available in advance of the hearing on MDE's Wetlands and Waterways homepage at: <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/wetlandsandwaterways/pages/index.aspx>. NEPA documents and other project information is available at <https://www.bwmaglev.info/>. Please refer to the Code of Maryland Regulations 26.08.02 for information regarding the Water Quality Certification application and hearing process.

Written comments or requests to be included on the interested persons list may be sent to: Maryland Department of the Environment, Attn: Danielle Spendiff, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 430, Baltimore, MD 21230, or via email to Danielle.spendiff1@maryland.gov or by phone to 410-537-4023. Please refer to the Code of Maryland Regulations 26.08.02 for information regarding the Water Quality Certification application and hearing process.