

VISUALIZE 2050

National Capital Region Transportation Plan

Agenda Item #5A

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION AND MITIGATION DISCUSSION

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TPB Technical Committee
March 7, 2025



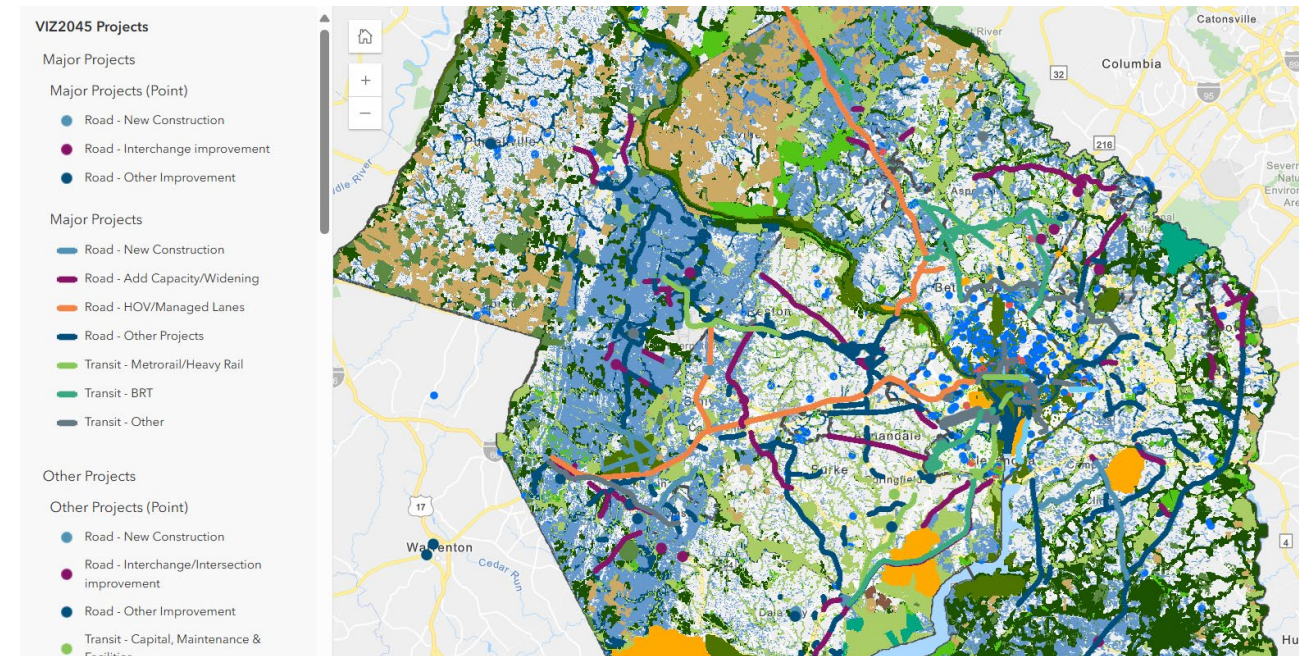
National Capital Region
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Background and Objective

- TPB must conduct an environmental consultation process to discuss and include in the plan possible **environmental mitigation activities** and **potential areas** to carry out these activities with the greatest potential to restore and preserve environmental functions. (23 CFR § 450.324 f.10.)
- TPB staff worked with regional agencies to develop an environmental consultation process that most effectively gathers input from TPB members, given:
 - Regional, system-wide transportation planning
 - Lack of project-level details
 - Varying state-level environmental approaches and transportation planning processes that limits the TPB's ability to implement a regional mitigation program and process.

Environmental Consultation Overview

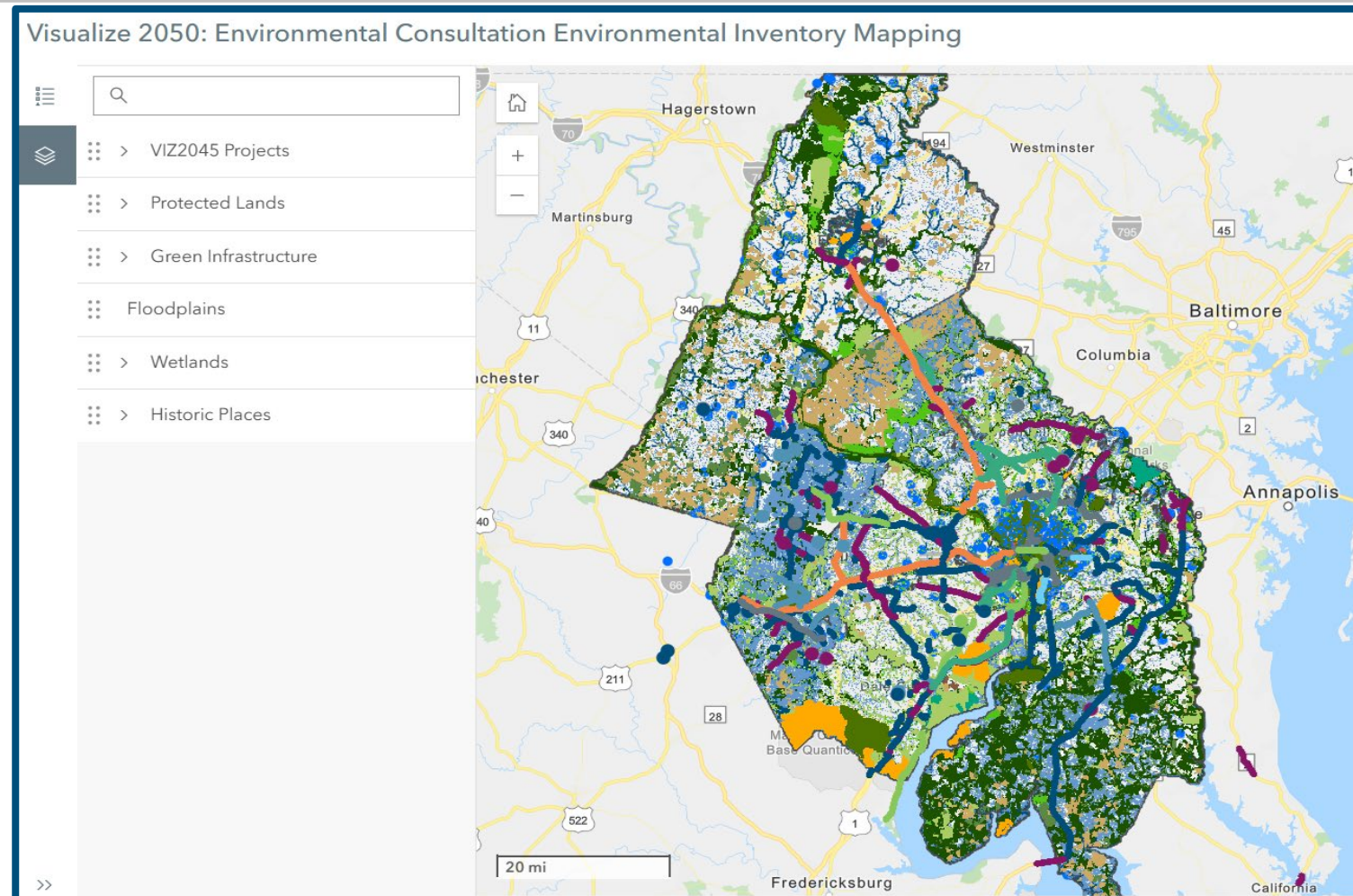
- The outcome: An [interactive map](#) highlighting environmental & historic resources with planned projects was found to be a useful tool to review the assessment of projects¹
- Helps to identify potential areas where mitigation might take place
- Compared planned projects with state conservation plans & inventories of natural and historic resources



Screenshot of the Environmental Resource map

¹<https://mwcog.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=e1a4447305f047fba6e1117b65a1328e>

Environmental Inventory Mapping Demo



Environmental Mitigation Overview

- **Environmental Mitigation:** Addressing damage to the environment caused by transportation projects
- Common impacts:
 - Increased traffic
 - Stormwater runoff
 - Habitat loss
 - Loss of permeable surfaces
 - Disruptions from construction
 - Soil erosion and sedimentation
- Mitigation efforts can apply to:
 - Neighborhoods
 - Wetlands/water sources
 - Cultural resources
 - Air quality
 - Community amenities
 - Forested/natural areas
 - Agricultural lands
 - Endangered/threatened species



Clearing of forest and marshes (Abingdon Woods in Harford County, MD) for new roadway.

Photo Courtesy: Nick Chryst / insideclimatenew.org

Identifying and Updating Possible Mitigation Activities

- Staff reviewed major capacity adding projects from Visualize 2050 with a non-categorical exclusion National Environmental Policy Act class of action. Project include transit, new roadway construction, and roadway widening.

Noted potential mitigation activities in our region:

Invasive plant management on project sites to compensate for impacts	Stabilize soil through strategic planting of trees and native grasses
Construct noise barriers to reduce noise pollution	Restore, enhance, or create wetlands to replace those impacted by the project
Compensate for lost or impacted land with greenspace or amenities	Mitigation banking
Minimize the footprint of a project to avoid damage to resources	Avoid critical habitats or minimize fragmentation of ecosystems
Install plant strips or bioswales to compensate for lost permeable surfaces or to capture runoff	Provide compensation or easements to protect agricultural lands
Install riparian buffers along water bodies to filter pollutants and reduce erosion	Monitor presence of animal species before and during construction
Design drainage structures so that flood waters are retained and slowed	Use of dust and emission control measures

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