

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

April 7, 1958

THE HONORABLE JOSEPH MEYERHOFF, *Chairman*
State Planning Commission
100 Equitable Building
Baltimore 2, Maryland

Dear Joe:

As you know, I have a keen interest in the public acquisition and improvement for park and recreation purposes of undeveloped lands in Maryland.

This interest is based on the rapid population growth of the State and the expansion of our industrial establishment.

Desirable as this growth and expansion are, they emphasize the danger of the covering of our lands to an extent that the areas for future recreational use of the citizens will be far from adequate.

I have been encouraged greatly by the progress we have made in the development of the big Patapsco Valley Park along the Patapsco River and by the fine public acceptance of this project and the excellent use that is made of the developed areas.

I now believe that we should move without delay toward the development for park purposes of the land along the Big Gunpowder River from Tidewater to the vicinity of Prettyboy Dam, and that the Valley of the Little Gunpowder also should be considered in the project.

This, as you know, is an area of scenic beauty where the two rivers run through deep valleys which are largely wooded with oaks and magnificent beech trees. The rivers readily would lend themselves to the development of ponds and lakes for recreation and the adjacent land is ideal for rugged hiking trails and camp sites.

This natural beauty already is threatened with encroachment by both residential and industrial development, and we should begin our studies, planning and acquisition of land as soon as feasible.

I am advised that the park proposal has the hearty endorsement of such organizations as the Junior Gunpowder Club, the Rotary Club of Kingsville and the Gunpowder Farmers Club. I know that many civic-minded individuals in the area and in Baltimore City would give you their full cooperation.

Judge John B. Gontrum of the Third Judicial Circuit is an early pioneer for this project, and at the Governor's Conference on Recreation in 1954, I personally urged consideration of the proposal, and my suggestion brought considerable applause from those attending and many letters of approbation in subsequent days.

I ask now, Joe, that you place this important matter before the Planning Commission at the earliest opportunity and that a study be organized without delay so that a detailed report of the potentialities may be made at the next session of the General Assembly.

With thanks and my kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

(Signed) THEODORE R. MCKELDIN
Governor