

ECOLOGICAL INVENTORY SITES

11. MANAGED CONSERVATION AREA, FLOODPLAIN FOREST

LAKE ACCOTINK PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1992

(p. 11, 13, Appendix)

Floodplain Forest

The floodplain forest is a counterpart of the upland hardwood forest, occurring instead in the floodplains of Accotink Creek, Flag Run, and other smaller tributaries. The single most conspicuous species is Sycamore, which appears in all stages of floodplain forest development. Associates in the mature stage range from Ashleaf Maple, River Birch and Common Pawpaw on wetter sites, to Tuliptree and oaks on drier sites. Sweetgum and Red Maple are also common. Successionally, these are preceded by Black Willow, a species which persists on the very edge of the streams and lake. Ironwood is an abundant understory tree. The shrub layer varies from sparse viburnums and Spicebush, to almost 100% cover of herbaceous species. Indicator herbaceous species include Jack-in-the-pulpit, Spotted Touch-me-not, Virginia Bluebells, False Nettle, and Skunk Cabbage, although Mayapple may be the most common.

C. Natural Resources

The natural beauty of Lake Accotink is a main attraction for many visitors. The protection of these resources is important, not only because the park is made up of sensitive ecosystems, but also because degradation of the natural environment would detract from visitors' experiences.

