

Secretary Atticks and Members of Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee,

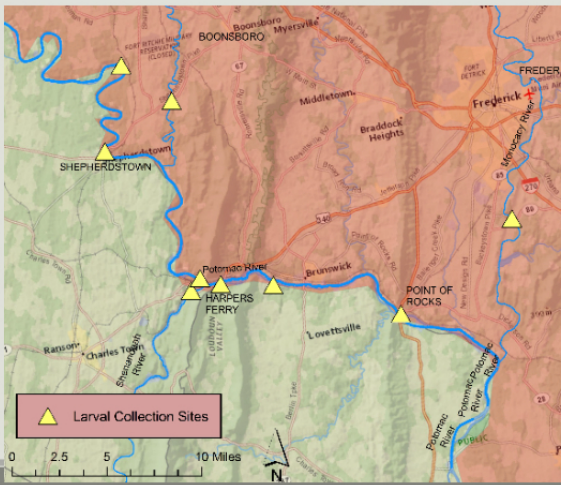
I live in the southern portion of Washington County, in Knoxville, Maryland. Delegate Parrott established a bill for a pilot program to treat black flies from Williamsport to Brunswick, Maryland in 2016. Since that time we have had the following treatments to the Potomac River:

- FY 18 - 3
- FY 19 - 1 (funded with FY 18 funds and no funding in FY 19)
- FY 20 - 4
- FY 21 - 0 (no funding due to Covid-19)
- FY 22 - 2
- FY 23 - 5
- FY 24 - 0 to date
- FY 25 - DLS recommends deletion of \$275K program

As you can see, we have had some treatments since 2018. To be effective the treatments need to be done prior to the first hatch and at least once per month. Last year we had “biting” black flies by April 5 which was early. Usually it’s around mid-month April through hard frost in October/November. The problem is inconsistent funding from the State of Maryland, Department Of Agriculture. To date, Washington County has been very supportive. House Bill 1353 required counties and municipalities to pay 50% for the nuisance insect program.

Delegate Parrott’s PowerPoint presentation from 2016 included a wealth of information and a map from the Lamp Study which showed the areas that need treatment along the Potomac River. Please keep in mind that the triangles represented the breeding sites. The black flies can fly as far as 30 miles from the Potomac River.

The Lamp Lab - Findings



- The yellow triangles are the breeding sites the Department of Entomology lab was able to identify over the last 2 years.
- You can see the history of their work, surveys, and findings on the website, mdblackfly.com, and the specifics in the written testimony.

Without these treatments, there’s no doubt in my mind that the black flies impact tourism, outdoor business ventures, recreational activities, and just normal tasks that homeowners need to complete. They swarm and bite leaving itchy, red, swollen welts that can take weeks to heal. It’s truly

unbearable at times. With little to no wind and high humidity, you know that you will be “eaten alive” when outside in our area. And while it is mostly a rural area, these black flies can fly up to 30 miles from the breeding sites in the Potomac River. Our citizens deserve this program to be put in place permanently to allow for enjoyable, uninterrupted outdoor activities.

I testified before the ENT committee Wednesday, February 28. Senator Corderman and McKay, as well as Delegates Wivell, Valentine, Baker, and Parrott support this program. I hope we can count on you as well!

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

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