

### **Maryland Native Plant Society Efforts to Stop ICC**

The Maryland Native Plant Society is participating along with other interested parties in efforts to block construction of the Intercounty Connector (ICC). Although no lawsuit has yet been filed, the Society expects a legal action challenging the ICC to be filed sometime this fall. If built, the ICC highway would fragment and devastate 8 parks in the upper Rock Creek and upper Anacostia River watersheds within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. The parks under threat (from west to east) include Mill Creek Stream Valley Park, Rock Creek Regional Park, North Branch Stream Valley Park, Layhill Local Park, Northwest Branch Recreational Park, Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park, Paint Branch Stream Valley Park, and Little Paint Branch Stream Valley Park. Over 700 acres of forest (most of which occurs within parklands) would be clear-cut to accommodate the highway. Many uncommon and rare plant species grow in harm's way, including species listed as state threatened and state endangered. Several county champion trees could be lost as well. The Society depends heavily on access to public parklands to carry out our education, conservation, and restoration missions. If the ICC is built, loss of public parklands would occur, especially parklands containing mature forest habitats and exceptional species diversity. Regardless of the outcome of a legal challenge, with political support for the ICC waning, the upcoming elections could spell doom for the project. Contrary to what you hear in the press, **the ICC is not a done deal!** For further information, please contact MNPS Vice-President John Parrish at [lifeonearth@juno.com](mailto:lifeonearth@juno.com).