

**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
PRESS RELEASE**

Nr113005

For immediate release:

November 30, 2005

For more information, contact:

Marion Joyce

Manager, Community Outreach and Media Relations

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

The Montgomery County Planning Board

301/495-4600, 240/676-4108 cell

Marion.Joyce@mncppc.org

**VISITORS TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S AWARD-WINNING PARKS
HIT ALL-TIME HIGH AT 13 MILLION**

SILVER SPRING, MD – Derick P. Berlage, Chairman of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, lauded Montgomery County parks for attracting more than 13 million visitors last year. He attributed the high attendance figures to a nationally renowned park system characterized by careful long-range planning with active citizen participation, prudent development, fiscal responsibility and a strong commitment to the environment, the county's quality of life and safety for park visitors.

Within M-NCPPC's 32,639-acre park system in Montgomery County, just 8,791 acres or 27 percent are currently developed as active parks, and nature and recreation facilities. The remaining 23,848 acres or 73 percent are undeveloped and largely set aside for conservation and environmental protection.

"M-NCPPC offers a wide variety of popular parks and recreation opportunities throughout the county that appeal to a very large segment of our growing population," said Berlage. "With nearly a million residents in this county of approximately 500 square miles, it's clear our abundant parks are fulfilling a real need for active recreation and the enjoyment of nature."

Created by Maryland legislators in 1927, M-NCPPC is the only organization in the country to earn five national gold medals for Excellence in Recreation and Parks Management from the National Recreation and Parks Association.

###