



# THE ANACOSTIA NETWORKER

The Newsletter of the Anacostia Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee  
Dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Anacostia River and its tributaries

Vol. 2, October 2003

## What is AWCAC?

The Anacostia Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee (AWCAC) was formed in 1996 to serve in an advisory capacity to the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Committee (AWRC). This citizen-based committee provides a vital link between the watershed community and the AWRC to ensure that public interests are considered during all stream restoration and protection projects and activities. AWCAC includes six members from each of the three Anacostia watershed jurisdictions (Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, Maryland and the District of Columbia). Many of these individuals represent watershed organizations based in their communities.



AWCAC Signage installation along Northeast Branch, Summer

The qualification for membership in AWCAC is an active interest in the effort to protect and restore the Anacostia River and its tributaries. AWCAC meetings are held quarterly at different locations in the three jurisdictions and are open to all interested persons. For more information contact John Galli at 202.962.3233 or [jgalli@mwkog.org](mailto:jgalli@mwkog.org).

## Meet the Members

Current AWCAC members include:

- Mr. Thomas Arrasmith, 2003 Chair (District of Columbia)
- Mr. Jim Andre (District of Columbia)
- Ms. Elizabeth Arnold (Vice Chair, Prince George's County)
- Mr. Craig Benson (District of Columbia)
- Mr. Jim Fary (Montgomery County)
- Mr. Bob Ferraro (Montgomery County)
- Mr. John Garner (District of Columbia)
- Mr. Bill Matuszeski (District of Columbia)
- Mr. David Paglin (Vice Chair, Montgomery County)
- Mr. Christopher Pohlhaus (Prince George's County)
- Mr. Charles Pritchard (Montgomery County)
- Mr. Lutz Rastaetter (Prince George's County)
- Ms. Helene Smith (Montgomery County)
- Mr. James Willie (District of Columbia)

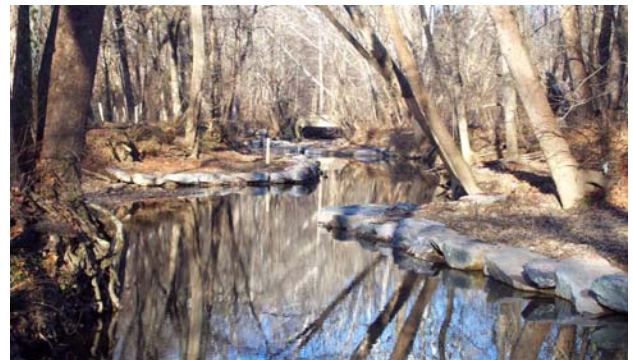
## Some AWCAC Activity Highlights

- Participated in a four-day Environmental Protection Agency panel to develop recommendations for methods to reduce the toxins, nutrient overloads and trash in the Anacostia River and Rock Creek (March 1998);
- Co-hosted a College Park Town Meeting entitled Clean Water: An Asset for the Quality of Life and Economic Growth of College Park (May 1998);
- Coordinated a Beltsville Town Meeting on Little Paint Branch Preservation and Restoration: Charting the Future of Little Paint Branch (January 1999);
- Designed and installed aluminum stream identification signs at six Prince George's County road crossings with funding from the Chesapeake Bay Trust (September 2000);
- Lobbied Maryland State Legislature against the Inter-County Connector and its environmental impacts to the Anacostia Watershed (2002).
- Joined efforts with ICPRB and ARBC to hold a

stormwater management throughout the watershed (2003)

## Restoration News

Much has been accomplished since the state of Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties signed the first Anacostia restoration agreement in 1987. Fortunately, the ecological health and appearance of the tidal river and its tributaries continues to improve thanks to the work of dedicated watershed residents,



Northwest Branch Restoration Project, 2002

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environmental organizations, and businesses. Also key to the restoration effort have been the significant financial and staff commitments from the member governments and agencies of the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Committee, which include the District of Columbia Department of Health, the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority, the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, the Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources, the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Park Service.

In 1991, the original signatories reconvened to adopt the *Six-Point Action Plan* to serve as the framework to guide long-term restoration efforts. The goals outlined in that agreement addressed the following:

1. Reduction of Pollution Loads
2. Restoration of Ecological Integrity
3. Improvement of Fish Passage
4. Increase in Wetland Acreage
5. Expansion of Forest Coverage
6. Increase in Public and Private Participation and Stewardship

The most recent restoration agreement, signed at a highly publicized event on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001, commits the three Anacostia jurisdictions to a suite of 50 specific, long-term restoration indicators and targets and to the implementation of basin-wide efforts to reach the six goals by the year 2010.

To date, the AWRC and its members have identified over 700 stormwater retrofit, wetland creation, stream restoration, riparian restoration, combined sewer overflow (CSO) abatement, trash and toxics reduction, and other restoration-related projects designed to correct existing environmental problems and enhance overall ecosystem quality. Of these, approximately one-third have either been completed or are in progress. Since 1987, roughly \$35 million has been spent on restoration project implementation, with an additional \$30 million spent on land acquisition, planning, monitoring,

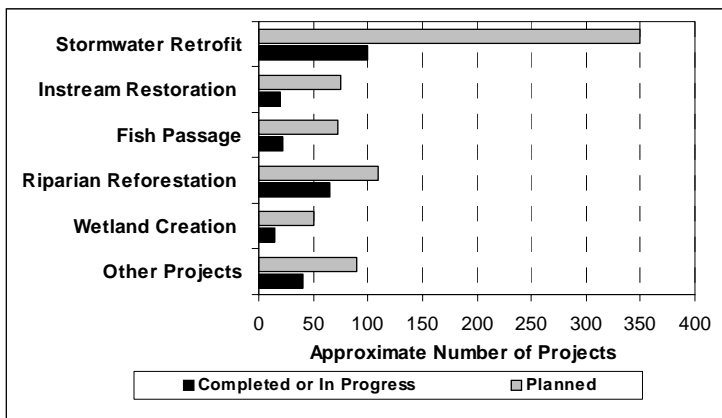
engineering, design, and maintenance. In addition, \$65 million has been spent on engineering controls designed to reduce the impacts of CSO's on the tidal river and of leaking, aging sewer lines on the streams. Despite these expenditures and the many important accomplishments to date, many Anacostia tributaries continue to be plagued by the problems of excessive erosion, trash, and myriad pollutants that can only be remedied through the concerted efforts of all watershed residents and the financial commitments of the three Anacostia watershed jurisdictions, the state of Maryland, and the Federal government.



*A Highly Degraded Reach of Brier Ditch Tributary, Spring 2002*

## Low Impact Development Workshop at the Navy Yard

During the spring of 2003, the Anacostia Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee began working on an initiative to bring practical information about watershed-friendly development strategies and stormwater management control to residents of the Anacostia watershed. Several other groups in the region were working on similar initiatives, and so AWCAC teamed up with ICPRB and the Anacostia River Business Coalition to create a workshop on Low Impact Development (LID) strategies, which was held August 14th at the Washington Navy Yard on the banks of the Anacostia River. Approximately 100



*Status of Restoration Projects for the Period 1987-2001*



*Jim Cummins (ICPRB) addressing participants at the LID Workshop on August 14th*



An example of LID: Bioretention parking lot median at the Navy Yard. Stormwater runoff from the parking lot enters the bioretention system where both contaminants such as oil and grease are filtered out, and the volume of runoff is decreased before reaching the Anacostia River.

participants turned out for the event.

The workshop began with tours of several LID projects at the Navy Yard including bioretention cells in parking lots, “tree boxes” in pedestrian areas, and rain barrels, all of which seek to limit the harm caused by large volumes of uncontrolled runoff entering the Anacostia watershed’s streams during storm events. Speakers showcased projects underway throughout the watershed in slideshow presentations, including green roof, raingarden, and parking lot retrofits.

The day concluded with breakout sessions devoted to matching individuals interested in creating LID projects on their property, with contractors and funding opportunities to help make these ideas become reality. At the close of the event, twelve organizations/ individuals were interested in pursuing further opportunities to install LID techniques on their properties.

Those involved with the planning and development of the workshop have learned a great deal about the impact of such an event on the watershed community. Future plans for making LID technologies more available to the public include working with permitting agencies to fast-track development plans that are watershed-friendly. Also, the creation of a “travelling workshop” is of interest to several individuals. Bringing information about LID technologies to interested groups, rather than having groups come to a workshop, is seen as having great potential impact throughout the watershed.

Want to know more about  
your watershed?  
Check out the Anacostia  
website at  
[www.anacostia.net](http://www.anacostia.net)

## Friends of Sligo Creek

The Friends of Sligo Creek (FoSC) is dedicated to protecting and restoring Sligo Creek and its stream valley parks.

One of our top priorities this year is to continue to remove invasive vines where they are threatening native trees and to address stormwater runoff-related problems. The group also hopes to plant trees along the stream, to reduce the amount of litter found in the park and stream, and to work on lessening erosion of the stream banks.

In 2002-2003, *Friends* mapped some eight miles of Sligo Creek Park, from the headwaters in Wheaton where the stream emerges to East-West Highway. *Friends* walked the stream in sections, evaluating habitat and stream conditions and noting this information on maps provided by the M-NCPPC. On land, mappers noted the locations of spring wildflowers such as spring beauty, to identify priority areas for the removal of invasive plants.

Guided walks pointing out plant and animal species are planned for Fall 2003.

To learn more about Sligo watershed activities or to join FoSC, contact Sally Gagne at 301.588.2071, or visit the FoSC website at [www.fosc.org](http://www.fosc.org)

## Citizens to Conserve and Restore Indian Creek (CCRIC)

As it’s name implies, CCRIC members are dedicated to improving the health and beauty of Indian Creek. We are currently working to prevent a proposed mall development near the Greenbelt Metro station that threatens one of the few remaining large, wooded stream valleys within the Washington Beltway. We need your help to preserve this treasure.

Throughout 2003, CCRIC will be offering plant identification walks and bird watching tours along Indian Creek, starting at the Greenbelt Metro. Volunteers are invited to participate in our stream cleanups and monitoring activities.

For event dates and other information, visit our website at [www.greenbelt.com/civic/CCRIC/](http://www.greenbelt.com/civic/CCRIC/) or call 301.441.3844 to request information. We meet one Sunday a month at the Greenbelt Community Center.



Spotted Salamander: An Anacostia Watershed Wetland Denizen

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## Eyes of Paint Branch

The Eyes of Paint Branch was formed in 1994 to preserve and enhance the ecology of the Paint Branch. We are a grass-roots organization of volunteer citizens devoted to preserving the Paint Branch watershed through education, community awareness, and action.

Eyes of Paint Branch organizes community activities such as stream cleanups, field trips, bird walks, tree plantings, and public education. Members are actively involved in monitoring the condition of the stream and coordinating with biologists and various organizations to ensure that the Paint Branch gets as much protection as possible.

Members also write letters to elected officials and testify at public hearings when important issues are being addressed. Publications of Eyes of Paint Branch include the newsletter "My Backyard," periodic bulletins, and short-fused releases



A Naturalized Brown Trout: One of Many Fish Species Found in the Upper Paint Branch

called "Action Alerts." We also participate with other organizations such as Trout Unlimited on projects like the Embrace-A-Stream Project.

The Eyes of Paint Branch is always looking for people who are willing to help protect this irreplaceable treasure. To learn more, please visit our website at [www.eopb.org](http://www.eopb.org), call us at 301.890.1998, or write to Eyes of Paint Branch P.O. Box 272, Burtonsville, MD.

### *AWCAC Chair's Vision*

*A clean and healthy river whose lovely creeks, streams and broad reaches are home to abundant wildlife, delight our neighborhoods, charm our visitors, beguile our critics, and grace our Nation's Capital.*

*-Tom Arrasmith, 2003 AWCAC Chair*

## Fall 2003 Calendar of Events

- **Wednesday, October 29th**      **M-NCPPC (Montgomery County) Weed Warrior Training**  
**Contact: 301-495-2464**
- **Saturday, November 1st**      **Riggs Manor Neighborhood Park Tree Planting**  
**Contact : John Galli@202-962-3348**
- **Saturday, November 8th**      **Layhill Local Park Tree Planting**  
**Contact: Jody Powell@301-949-4135**
- **Tuesday, November 11th**      **AWCAC Meeting @ Bladensburg Waterfront Park**  
**Contact: Christine Vatovec@202-962-3233**
- **Saturday, November 15th**      **Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Tree Planting**  
**Contact: John Galli@202-962-3348**
- **Monday, November 17th**      **Neighbors of Northwest Branch Stakeholders Meeting**  
**Contact: Christine Vatovec@202-962-3233**
- **Saturday, November 22nd**      **AWCAC Guided Stream Walk of the Northwest Branch**  
**Contact: Jim Fary@301-460-1561**