

**Anacostia Watershed Steering Committee (AWSC)**  
Meeting Summary: September 6, 2018

**AWSC Members in Attendance:**

- Adam Ortiz, Prince George's Co DoE (PGDoE)
- Amy Stevens, Montgomery Co Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP)
- Jerry Maldonado, PG DoE
- Paul Emmart, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
- Katherine Bennett, MCDEP
- Hamid Karimi, DOEE
- Marian Dombroski, AWCAC Chair
- Tara Morrison, National Park Service (NPS)
- Erin Garness-Holmes, Anacostia Riverfront Trust
- Trey Sherard, Anacostia River Keeper
- Lori Arguelles, Alice Ferguson Foundation
- Dan Bierly, USACOE

**AWSC GUESTS:**

- Dev Murali, DOEE
- Gretchen Mikeska, DOEE
- Kevin Bush, Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser
- Valencia Wilson, DC Office of Planning
- Robert Moko, NPS

**COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Steve Walz
- Steve Bieber
- Aubin Maynard
- Phong Trieu
- Steve Shofar
- Lisa Ragain

**1. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME, AND INTRODUCTIONS**

*Adam Ortiz, Steering Committee Chairman*

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Adam Ortiz, Steering Committee Chairman*

Meeting summary approved with no comments.

### **3. “HONORING THE ANACOSTIA” DC’S RESILIENCE STRATEGY**

*Mr. Kevin Bush, Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser, Valecia Wilson, DC Office of Planning*

Mr. Bush provided an overview of the DC Resilience Strategy. He explained how DC is one of the 100 Resilient Cities funded through a grant by the Rockefeller Foundation. He described how the program evaluates shocks and stresses to the City, and that the program is divided into five discovery areas including; Integrated District Planning and Execution, Institutionalize Climate Action, Create Access to Opportunity in all Neighborhoods, Respond to and leverage Technological Change, and Honor the Anacostia River. Ms. Wilson is heading up the Anacostia River Discovery group. The Anacostia group has five areas of focus: investment without displacement; restoration of the Anacostia River; pilot projects that can serve as examples of resilience, one cohesive vision/plan for the Anacostia; and public access to the river. Ms. Wilson discussed how each of these focus areas could be implemented.

Mr. Ortiz asked how did the task force form and who formed it. Mr. Bush stated that the Mayor’s Office applied for the grant then hired Mr. Bush in August. Mr. Bush also said that it will only work if it is seen as a dialog. Mr. Ortiz also asked what the expectations for implementation are. Mr. Bush stated that the decision was made to house this in the Office of the City Administrator, so outcomes are already within existing budgeting/performance process.

Ms. Dombroski asked if the plan is being coordinated with the State of Maryland. Ms. Wilson stated that Maryland was represented on the team. Ms. Dombroski also asked about tours of the river and stated she wanted to coordinate about dock access.

**Actions/Outcomes:** The committee received the briefing

### **4. UPDATE ON MESSAGING WORKGROUP, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND SKEO PROJECT**

*Lisa Ragain, COG*

Ms. Ragain gave a brief update on the messaging workgroup and provided some analytics on social medial performance and a request to the jurisdictions for participation. Ms. Ragain talked about the focus of getting people to the river, and that tweeting about shad was very effective. DC Water has a shad mascot. She also discussed efforts at cobranding with the Tap It program.

Mr. Ortiz asked what does Instagram and Facebook analytics mean? Ms. Ragain responded that Facebook gets more followers and “likes” and that we’re just starting to get some traction on Instagram. Mr. Ortiz asked is this from the COG social media accounts or campaign social media accounts. Ms. Ragain responded that we are using the YOTA accounts.

Mr. Karimi asked about residents who don’t have access to the internet or use social media. Ms. Ragain responded that social media can be done with a minimum amount of funding and since there is no specific funding for this program it’s working pretty well; but there is no questions that the campaign needs to be expanded.

Mr. Karimi suggested that other advocacy groups be engaged. Mr. Sherard stated that the ARK is engaged and Ms. Ragain stated that there are lots of groups involved.

Mr. Sherard asked if we were involved in the “It’s Your River Too” campaign. Ms. Ragain said we weren’t, but it was a good idea to be included.

Mr. Mocko asked how much time would it take to make social media effective, would 2 hours a week be enough? Ms. Ragain replied not to spend time replying but look for things to be involved in, more effort collectively less individually.

Ms. Arguelles asked how to keep to momentum going after YOTA is over. Ms Ragain replied that the idea will be to use the YOTA website and events pages, to keep partners meeting and build upstream messaging.

Mr. Walz suggested rolling the YOTA site into the general Anacostia page.

Ms. Morrison stated that YOTA will be bringing the group together in the fall to ask how to keep momentum going.

Mr. Ortiz applauded the programing and said that COG will continue to ask the members to give what they can to the effort. Mr. Ortiz asked COG to confirm that all members are disseminating outreach/social media.

**Actions/Outcomes:** COG staff will continue to work with the jurisdictions.

## **5. UPDATE OF MAPPING AND WEBSITE**

*Aubin Maynard and Phong Trieu, COG*

Mr. Maynard provided an update the current fishing location maps in the Anacostia. Included on this map are the fish consumption advisory per jurisdictions. That information shows up as blue dots. Additional information can be obtained by double clicking onto the point.

For the River Access map, per the comments from the members, COG provided additional information for parking and dock access, as well as added an image.

Mr. Ortiz asked about updates to other maps and dashboards. Mr. Trieu said that the restoration progress maps are in progress as well as the updates to the dashboard. COG staff will have that to show by the next meeting. Mr. Karimi said that people should be encouraged to put in other places on the river. He also asked about warnings about swimming and where swimming was allowed. Mr. Trieu said that COG needs to do more research on use classifications and compile that map together with useful informational links.

There was some discussion about the feasibility of linking the bacteria reporting from swim guide to the use classification COG maps. Mr. Sherrard mentioned that ARK was finalizing such a map and that would communicate with COG to determine a possible landing spot for that map data. Mr. Ortiz asked COG to look into putting swimming data on COG website.

Ms. Mikeska stated that a law change in DC allows for a special exemption for swimming on the Anacostia for triathlons and other special events. Mr. Sherard let the group know that some places in the river were passing the primary contact standard most of the time. Mr. Ortiz asked Mr. Sherard to present his findings at a future meeting.

**Action/Outcome:** Committee members received the presentation

## **6. STEERING COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

a. AWCAC Update,

*Marion Dombroski, AWCAC Chair*

Ms. Dombroski said that there will be a potluck at the next AWCAC meeting and she is asking groups for photos of green infrastructure to use for a presentation at the potluck. At the last AWCAC meeting, there was a site visit to the Northeast Branch Pump Station at Edmonston, Ms. Mikeska gave a presentation on the sediment project, and there was a presentation on the proposed MagLev project that had major impacts to the wetland and forest in Upper Beaverdam Creek. New committee elections were held, and all the officers agreed to continue in their existing posts.

b. Management/Partnership Committee Update

*Phong Trieu, COG*

Mr. Trieu gave a brief update on the Trash TMDL workgroup activities. He stated that EPA is requesting data and that they will be meeting face to face with the trash workgroup in the fall.

c. New Initiatives

Mr. Karimi discussed the work being done by EPA in Cincinnati regarding bacterial source tracking. He hopes to initiate that project, setting up the such equipment at Fort Meade for analysis.

Mr. Karimi also discussed a grant where they will incorporate the effects of climate change into their nutrient loading estimates.

Ms. Mikeska stated that the next Anacostia Leadership Council Meeting will be on September 13, 2018.

Mr. Bierly discussed the project the ACOE is working on in Prince George's County. The project is estimated at \$30 million and will open up 80% of historical spawning range of anadromous fish. The next step is design and then construction. The scope of the project in Montgomery County was scoped down due to the limited spawning area. The current WRDA funding is being used in the Midwest but future funding should be more flexible.

Mr. Sherrard advertised the Anacostia Park cleanup on September 23, 2018.

Ms. Argulles told the group about the trash summit scheduled for October 16, 2018 with the focus on business.

Mr. Ortiz asked that the next meeting scheduled for December 6, 2018 be changed to avoid conflict with DC Water Board meeting.

## **7. Adjourn**

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2019