



# Clean Land, Safe Water, Healthy Lives



## 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Potomac Watershed Trash Summit Session Notes and Action Items

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Potomac Watershed Trash Summit was held on Friday, November 7, 2014 at the Samuel Riggs IV Alumni Center at the University of Maryland in College Park. Two sets of concurrent sessions ran throughout the day. Below you will find key discussion points and actions that came out of each session. To view the program book and presentations and to watch videos from the Summit, visit [TrashSummit.org](http://TrashSummit.org).

Participants were asked to identify at least one action to take back to their community or work.

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### Building Alliances: Pursuing Trash Free Policies

9:45 - 11:00am Chaney Library

**Focus:** Many public policies to reduce trash pollution rely on retailers to be effective, whether it's alternative packaging or changes at the point of sale. This session will explore how businesses engaged in developing local source reduction policies and the campaigns to pass them. Participants will also learn about other tactics that successfully engaged businesses in other social and environmental issues, and discuss how to adapt them to efforts to reduce litter.

**Organizer:** Trash Free Maryland Alliance

**Moderator:** Dan Jackson, President, Alice Ferguson Foundation and Senior Consultant, Energy & Environment Group, Logistics Management Institute

**Presenters:**

- Charles Allen, Councilmember-Elect, Ward 6, District of Columbia Council
- Julie Lawson, Director, Trash Free Maryland Alliance

### Key Discussion Points:

- To get effective policy in place we need to find partners among businesses. Lessons learned from raising minimum wage and employee sick leave requirements include encouragement from customers to businesses to make the change, encourage progressive business to get out front, and focus on small businesses.

- Change the perspective of the role of single-use bags and their costs to businesses.
- Businesses want to know how they will be supported in meeting new legislation and how it will affect their bottom line. The District of Columbia is looking to develop cooperative purchasing for small businesses to help them buy cheaper alternative products.
- How do we best tell the story effectively of what trash is and what can individual do about it. Let people be unhappy about what they see to spur action. Provide effective information to particular audiences about appropriate products to use that are more durable.
- Support cooperation among businesses to use or purchase trash-free products. Municipalities, cultural cooperation.

**Actions:**

- Support Trash Free Maryland in sharing the story about trash pollution, raising awareness of the issue, and getting effective legislation passed. Get involved by visiting [TrashFreeMaryland.org](http://TrashFreeMaryland.org).
- Encourage at least one business to voluntarily make a switch to more sustainable packaging (away from plastic bags, Styrofoam, etc).
- Meet with or contact state and local elected officials in support of legislation to remove plastic and Styrofoam packaging.
- Invite businesses and elected officials to clean-up events.

## **Taking Action: Tools for Keeping Your Neighborhood Trash Free**

9:45 - 11:00am Heise Hall

**Focus:** Get empowered! This session will provide grassroots level information and guidance on programs and best practices everyday citizens can start using now to reduce litter and trash around their homes, neighborhoods and communities. Local county and city agencies will share their litter prevention, waste reduction programs, recycling efforts and goals, interactive community clean-up programs, and sustainability plans.

**Organizer:** Prince George's County Department of the Environment

**Moderator:** Lauren Kinard, Public Information Specialist, Prince George's County Department of the Environment

**Presenters:**

- Alan Pultyniewicz, Recycling Coordinator, and Leslie Wilcox, Watershed Outreach Planner, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection
- Brendan Shane, Policy and Sustainability Chief, District Department of the Environment
- Shani Kruljac, Environmental Planner, Arlington County Solid Waste Bureau
- Alfred Titus-Glover, Environmental Planner, Prince George's County Department of the Environment

**Key Discussion Points:**

- Ways to reduce waste in communities. Examples included DC bag fee and Styrofoam ban.
- Ways to engage communities to join clean-ups and how to get/ engage volunteers.
- Storm water management education. We heard from organizations that were painting storm water drains in their neighborhoods to draw people's attention to the importance of the drains.
- How communities are increasing recycling outputs by working in multifamily housing complexes.

## **Fostering Trash Free Communities: How Public-Private Partnerships Help Transform Neighborhoods and Businesses**

9:45 - 11:00am and 11:15am - 12:30pm Orem Hall

**Focus:** This session will explore how Public Private Sector Partnerships are providing new platforms for innovative programs to address the pervasive problem of litter in the communities where we work, live and play. Hear from government, nonprofit and business leaders about the cost-effective solutions and unconventional alliances they have successfully pursued and how these partnerships may benefit you.

**Organizer:** The Alice Ferguson Foundation

**Moderator:** Jason Rolfe, Mid-Atlantic and Caribbean Regional Coordinator, NOAA Marine Debris Program

**Presenters:**

- Adam Ortiz, Director, Prince George's County Department of the Environment
- Dave Feldman, CEO and Co-Founder, The Livability Project
- Kyle Todd, Executive Director, RIA Main Street

**Key Discussion Points:**

- Private-public partnerships require collaboration between business and government. It is essential that both sides are able to see the other's perspective and the way in which they work.
- Who do you talk to in order to initiate collaborative action projects? Reach out to municipality leaders and businesses
- How do you initiative local citizen interest/care? Engage youth, find the right stakeholder combination; multi-pronged approach to engage all.
- Raising awareness in the community through events, such as community cleanups, but partnering with local government to address the source of the litter.

**Actions:**

- Pre-consumer waste reduction: work directly with food companies to look at solutions and alternatives to reduce waste.
- Coordinate local main street events or collaboration to build momentum locally and feed off momentum from neighboring areas.
- Ask local businesses to sponsor public trash cans.
- Host community cleanups and engage local government to address sources of litter at the same time.

## **Marketing to Millennials: A Generational Approach to Trash Reduction**

11:15am - 12:30pm Heise Hall

**Focus:** The results of the 'Trash Incentives' 2013 pilot evaluation of the Regional Litter Prevention Campaign showed the large majority of those who were still littering in Prince George's County were millennials. This is the largest generation in the U.S., representing one-third of the total U.S. population in 2013. In this session, you will gain a deeper understanding on beliefs and trends of millennials and learn how new marketing techniques are supporting this generation to generate less waste.

**Organizer:** The Alice Ferguson Foundation

**Moderator:** Kacey Wetzel, Senior Program Officer, Chesapeake Bay Trust

**Presenters:** Kara Pennino, Community Outreach Liaison, Alice Ferguson Foundation

**Key Discussion Points:**

- The importance of using social media to raise awareness of your organization, event, and/or cause and capturing the attention of millennials.
- How to promote leadership through social competition.
- Diverse methods of reaching out; sharing resources for networking and implementation.
- Why gamification is a great way to get people involved – speaks to peoples competitive nature. Promote and gamify behavior change and volunteering- myactions.org as a tool.
- Social media should not be the main or sole method of education. Social media should be used to support a cause and increase awareness. There needs to be a base line of education to make connections and create sustainable change.

**Actions:**

- Support the social media of campaigns of others.
- Learn how to tweet and use other social media.
- Start a trash competition at local schools.

**Measuring Success: Trash Free Solutions that Work**

11:15am - 12:30pm Chaney Library

**Focus:** Developing prevention activities and measuring their success is critical to both solving the aquatic trash problem and communicating the progress we have made. While simple in concept, it is difficult to find and measure meaningful data in order to track the progress and effectiveness of our work. These measures are necessary to highlight successes and make the case for continuing and expanding solutions. This session will (1) highlight the activities of organizations that are effectively measuring the progress and success of their aquatic trash reduction/prevention activities and (2) invite and encourage participation in ongoing EPA Trash Free Waters planning for a public-private partnership project in the DC Metro area.

**Organizer:** Environmental Protection Agency, Trash Free Waters Program

**Moderator:** Matt Colombo, ORISE Fellow, Trash Free Waters Program, Environmental Protection Agency

**Presenters:**

- Matt Robinson, Environmental Scientist, Stormwater Management Division, District Department of Environment
- Katie Register, Executive Director, Clean Virginia Waterways

**Key Discussion Points:**

- "Data with a purpose." Use data to tell a story and encourage voluntary changes in consumer behavior and the use of policy to encourage these changes. Use data to focus efforts on hotspots and problem areas. Data also helps demonstrate successes and which tools are most effective.
- Identify barriers to change and what to implement to create change.

**Actions:**

- Identify celebrity spokesperson for the issue: Brad Pitt or Leonardo DiCaprio

- Build on work already going on by: offering an innovation challenge (new balloon type or eliminating); continue developing public-private partnerships, and tap corporate interest in civic responsibility.
- Equip communities to develop community-based solutions that are local and managed at a stream level. Tap college and high school volunteer base. Do this by sharing best management practices and how to do it.
- Get a group involved in some litter action project beyond the Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup, which the Alice Ferguson Foundation organizes every year in April. Build year-round momentum.
- Continue the conversation with a follow-up meeting to be organized by Matt Colombo, ORISE Fellow at EPA Trash Free Waters.