



Clean Land, Safe Water, Healthy Lives



8th Annual Potomac Watershed Trash Summit

Discussion Session Action Items

On October 18, 2013 key stakeholders, including agency staff, local watershed groups, businesses, NGOs, and concerned citizens, gathered for the 8th Annual Trash Summit to dialogue, plan and take action on strategies that lead to a Trash Free Potomac Watershed. Four discussion sessions explored the topics of public education, regulation, policy, and enforcement. During the sessions key action items and strategies were identified to guide our efforts to build a trash free Potomac Watershed in the coming year. These notes provide a summary of each discussion session and the actions items agreed on by participants.

Public Education: Breaking Barriers, Crossing Borders

Focus: The Regional Litter Prevention Campaign continues to expand and Trash Free Communities are adopting strategies to tackle the litter in large part because of effective partnerships with community groups and businesses. This session explored options and opportunities to create ways to reach new audiences and develop lines of communication between environmental organizations and potential community partners in order to break social barriers and cross political borders. Participants discussed methods employed at the community level that have been effective in reaching residents that are not normally engaged in environmental issues, and they explored general practices that can be used to reach community residents.

Moderator: Abraham Haspel, Board Member, Alice Ferguson Foundation

Presenter:

- Kellie Bolinder, Executive Director, Earths Conservation Corps

Action Items:

- Promote a local watershed approach that tackles the issue of litter from the headwaters downstream. This could include a joint partnership between the Town of Capitol Heights, Anacostia Watershed Society, and Town of Forest Heights as a means to impacting litter issues in Watts Branch and Oxon Run Creek.
- Increase support for environmental education organizations and projects:
 - **Teenage volunteer base:** In order to reach this audience, social media platforms, including Twitter and Instagram, can be used.
 - i. make messaging more specific to the teenage audience by identifying ways environmental efforts impact and benefit teen groups and incorporating

messaging and strategies with which teens can identify, such as how litter impacts of their neighborhoods, schools, and favorite places.

- **Faith-based Organizations:** Develop and grow relationships with faith-based organizations such as Eco Sheiks. Utilize their partnerships to foster relationships, especially in Montgomery County, and perhaps projects will reach their network in India.
- **Funding:** Competition for funding is competitive. How can we make funding sources more secure? The funding environment cultivates a culture to disincentives partnering with others for fear of losing funding.
- Help grow the Baltimore Litter Prevention Campaign through partnerships with Baltimore Trash Talk. Interested parties can join upcoming local \$0.05 bottle and can deposit and Recycling Stream.
- More workshops, such as the Trash Summit, are needed to bring local and regional leaders together to impact local litter issues Session participants made a commitment to partner more with other groups to support a common goal to reduce litter through mediums such as the Trash Summit.

Regulatory: Sparking Action with the Clean Water Act

Focus: With a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) in place for trash along the Anacostia River, key agencies have been charged with taking action on strategies to reduce litter in the region. In this session, participants learned about the strategies these jurisdictions are already using and discussed challenges and opportunities for implementation.

Moderator: Lori Arguelles, Executive Director, Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF)

Panel Members:

- Bob Hoyt, Director, Department of Environmental Protection, Montgomery County
- Adam Ortiz, Director, Department of Environmental Resources, Prince George's County
- Dr. Hamid Karimi, Deputy Director, Natural Resources Administration, District of Columbia Department of the Environment

Action Items:

- Increase education of policy makers, including federal partners, on the issue of litter and its regulations.
- Increase the number and reach of education campaigns in order to create behavior change.
 - Non-governmental agencies can help create behavior change by educating the public about trash through interactive and engaging outreach programs (the example given was AFF's Litter Prevention Video Contest held in the spring of 2013)
- Use existing gatherings and meetings to update each other on work and share best management practices, including the regulatory working group, best management practices working group, and Anacostia Restoration group.

- The Anacostia meeting could expand to include the larger Potomac Watershed, as there is much overlap in the type of work and challenges faced throughout the region.
- Consider having a meeting very soon of stakeholders to set goals for the next 6 months, including evaluation of current mechanisms for sharing work. The District Department of the Environment volunteered to organize the meeting.
- Reengage with the existing energy regulatory working group.
- Improve the alignment of governmental agencies with nonprofits, schools, businesses, and non-government entities.
- Create a mechanism, such as a tracking document, that will ensure consistency, among collaborating agencies when there is turnover among participating staff members.
- Continue to improve and share monitoring data.

Policy: Leading Behavior Change with Legislation

Focus: Increasingly, waste reduction is being highlighted in large initiatives for environmental sustainability, and this has some important ramifications for litter prevention. This session examined the plans to achieve zero waste in Maryland and the District of Columbia, reviewing the steps each has laid out to reach this goal. Panelists will focus on components that will have the greatest impact on reducing litter.

Moderator: Michael Herman, Esq, President, Alice Ferguson Foundation and Principal, Law Offices of Michael D. Herman

Presenters:

- Bob Summers, Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment
- Julie Lawson, Director, Trash Free Maryland Alliance

Action Items:

- The Policy Working Group will meet on November 18, 2013 to discuss regional zero-waste initiatives and potential legislative support in 2014. The items to be discussed during the meeting include but are not limited to:
 - Conducting research on the District of Columbia's Styrofoam ban in order to create an action plan to implement it in a timely manner.
 - The importance of factual data to support conclusions about economic impacts and opportunities to address environmental issues.
 - Review current research to see where further research needs to be conducted.
 - Research will then be used to help with advocacy of specific bills to government officials.
- Advocacy to local legislatures on the importance of funding education and enforcement initiatives.

Enforcement: Collaborating with Courts to Inspire Change

Focus: Littering and illegal dumping crimes continue to be issues within the region despite expanded Litter Enforcement Month efforts. This session explored ways to improve enforcement and prosecution of litter-related crimes by working more closely with the court system. Participants learned about Baltimore's Environmental Controls Board and how enforcement officers can better work with the court system to address illegal dumping, littering, and other trash-related crimes.

Moderator: Dan Jackson, Senior Consultant, Sustainability Solutions, Logistics Management Institute an Secretary, Board of Directors, Alice Ferguson Foundation

Presenter:

- Jason Hessler, Assistant Commissioner, Permits and Code Enforcement, Housing Authority of Baltimore City.

Action Items:

- Support Police Departments using cameras to catch illegal dumping:
 - Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the cameras to influence budget decisions.
 - Explore partnerships with private sector to share camera footage.
 - Provide information on which cameras are the most effective and how to most effectively use them.
- Have citizens share information about trash hotspots and illegal dumping.
 - This can be done by utilizing FieldScope and AFF's Trash Network.
- Increase communication, especially through public education, about litter, illegal dumping, and related crimes and effective enforcement of the laws.
- Work to inspire officers to take ownership and be passionate about enforcement of these laws.