

Strategies, Projects Will Restore River’s Economic, Recreational Potential



Rep. Hoyer speaks at a press conference announcing ‘Turn it Around’ – a new comprehensive, strategic plan to restore the Anacostia River Watershed.

Washington, D.C. – The Anacostia Watershed Restoration Plan, a comprehensive set of goals and strategies to clean up the pollution and run-off that has made the region’s Anacostia River one of the most polluted in the nation, was announced today by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, joined by Members of Congress and other elected officials from Maryland and the District of Columbia, brought together by the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership. Called “Turn It Around,” the Plan aims to reverse hundreds of years of environmental neglect of the area.

The Plan is the result of a two-year, \$2.8 million effort to identify specific projects that help

eliminate the pollutants that drain into the river as a result of storm water run-off and erosion of the 176 square miles of land that make up its watershed. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments supported the Plan's development. The Plan, a restoration overview, and supporting documents can be found at: www.anacostia.net/plan.html

"Now we can begin even more aggressive action to clean up the Anacostia River," **said Rep. Steny Hoyer, (D-MD), who has provided strong support for the Partnership's work.**

"I look forward to seeing this community benefit from what will result from this plan – cleaner water, green jobs for local contractors, and better recreational opportunities for hiking and boating."

The more than 3,000 projects in the plan reflect several major restoration strategies, including: state-of-the-art stormwater controls, stream restoration, wetland creation and restoration, fish blockage removal, reforestation, control of trash and toxic contamination and parkland acquisition.

In addition to benefiting the surrounding communities with cleaner water, greener streets and recreational amenities, the projects are expected to reduce flooding, save on infrastructure repairs resulting from stormwater damage, limit trash and help reduce energy use and the "heat island effect" resulting from the addition of shade trees.

Congressman Chris Van Hollen, (D-MD), said the plan marks "a new chapter in our effort to clean up the Anacostia River, and I am proud to join my colleagues here today to mark its significance. The "Turn It Around" plan is an unprecedented multi-jurisdictional effort that will invest \$2.8 million to identify specific projects that will have measurable results. It will make a huge impact in our effort to restore the Anacostia River."

Congresswoman Donna Edwards, (D-MD), said the plan is a comprehensive and clear path forward. "We must use nonstructural alternatives like green infrastructure if we are to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff effectively and in an environmentally safe manner. I look forward

to biking around a cleaner and healthier watershed that will benefit the entire region and be a model for the country.”

“I was pleased to introduce the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act, with the enthusiastic co-sponsorship of my colleagues, and to finally get it authorized as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007,” **said Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)**. “It took us five years to get the bill passed in Congress, but my regional colleagues and I are intent on following through with the executives of our jurisdictions and the Army Corps to begin implementation immediately.”

“Today, we are taking a giant step toward a new life for the Anacostia River and watershed with the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Plan,” **said Governor Martin O’Malley**. “When Plan implementation is complete, a healthier and cleaner river will mean continued economic investment along its banks and throughout the Anacostia River watershed. Together we can work to ensure that the legacy we leave our children and theirs is one that is even better and stronger than the one we inherited.”

The Anacostia Restoration Plan is intended to work in concert with major federal and state efforts as well as those of nonprofit and citizen volunteer groups. For example, the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority has launched a \$3 billion Long-Term Control Plan to significantly reduce combined sewer overflows that dump raw sewage into the Anacostia after heavy rains. In addition, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission is implementing a \$350 million program to reduce sanitary sewer overflows which discharge untreated sewage into the watershed.

“Montgomery County is committed to restoring the Anacostia River to the mighty river it once was in our lifetime,” **said Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett**. “Under the new plan, we’ll be implementing one of the toughest stormwater permits in the country to further restore the Anacostia for future generations.” Mr. Leggett added that over the past 20 years, the county has completed 39 projects throughout the Anacostia watershed, provided stormwater

management for 677 impervious acres, and restored 13 miles of tributary streams.

The Plan also takes into account the work of watershed stewardship groups and community volunteers which pursue activities such as cleaning up trash, creating vernal pools, modifying fish blockages, and installing rain gardens.

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