

# Anacostia's Great Outdoors: Fact Sheet

## Connecting People and the Anacostia

In partnership with the federal government, the District of Columbia and State of Maryland are working to restore the Anacostia River and provide safe and convenient means for people to access the Anacostia River and enjoy the outdoors.

The Anacostia Riverwalk Trails will link together hundreds of miles of regional trails; including the Fort Circle Trail (DC), the Bladensburg Trail (MD), the Rock Creek Trail (DC and MD), the Mount Vernon Trail (VA) and the C&O Canal Trail (DC and MD). These connections will also provide access to the East Coast Greenway, a network of trails linking Maine to Florida.

## Anacostia Riverwalk Trail - DC

With 12 miles already in place and a total of 20 miles planned, the Anacostia Riverwalk trail in Washington, DC will connect sixteen waterfront neighborhoods to Anacostia Park and the Anacostia River. A key component of the larger Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, the Riverwalk Trail will allow District residents and visitors to walk and bike along the river to several popular destinations, including the Fish Wharf, Nationals Park, Poplar Point, the Navy Yard, historic Anacostia, RFK stadium, Kingman Island, the National Arboretum, and the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. At either end, the trail will connect to the National Mall at the Tidal Basin and to the Bladensburg Marina Park in Prince George's County, MD.

By Spring 2012, construction will be complete on two new pedestrian bridges on both sides of the river connecting South Capitol Street to Benning Road. Design of the Kenilworth Gardens segment, which will connect Benning Road in the District to the Bladensburg Trail in Maryland, is 65 percent done and scheduled to conclude in the summer. Construction is planned to begin by the end of 2012.

## Anacostia Riverwalk Trail - Maryland

Maryland has completed a new 1.5-mile, handicap accessible trail from the Bladensburg Waterfront Park through the Anacostia Stream Valley Park towards Washington, DC. This trail connects to the existing 36-mile Anacostia Tributary Trail System in Maryland. When complete, Maryland will provide 39 trail miles in this system.

The trail provides access to Maryland's \$9.2 million Anacostia Wetland Mitigation Project that was part of the Woodrow Wilson Replacement Bridge project. The 50-acre mitigation project is among the largest and most complex environmental stewardship projects and involved the

removal of more than 20 acres of landfill. Additionally, the project included: planting 85,000 wetland plants, reforesting 14 acres of land, creating 20 acres of tidal wetland, and preserving four acres of habitat along the Anacostia River.

## Connecting DC and Maryland

Maryland, the District, and the U.S. Department of Transportation are working to design and build the critical Kenilworth Gardens Section, which will connect the Maryland and District Anacostia Riverwalk Trail Networks. Design is 65 percent complete and construction will begin in 2012. Maryland is providing an additional \$1 million from the Cycle Maryland Bikeways Program to build this critical connection.

## New Cycle Maryland Bicycle Funding Programs

Today, Governor O'Malley announced two new bicycle funding programs to move forward his Cycle Maryland Initiative that makes bicycling a true transportation alternative and ultimately provides a cleaner environment and a healthier lifestyle for all. The Maryland Bikeshare Program provides reimbursable grant funding to Maryland communities to plan, establish or expand bikesharing programs that offer an affordable option for short-distance trips as an alternative to public transportation, driving in a car or walking. The Maryland Bikeways Program will provide \$10 million in state funding to make needed connections on trails and on road. Investing strategically in the bicycle network, Maryland hopes to stimulate the economy and achieve cost savings for households and government agencies. Governor O'Malley today announces the first \$1 million Bikeways award will go toward the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail's final connection between Maryland and District of Columbia, ultimately providing nearly 60 miles of contiguous trails.

## Federal Partnership to Revitalize the Anacostia

The Anacostia River Watershed is one of seven locations selected for help from the nation's new **Urban Waters Federal Partnership**. This partnership will reconnect urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and collaborating with community-led revitalization efforts to improve our Nation's water systems and promote economic, environmental and social benefits. Specifically, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership will:

- Promote more efficient and effective use of federal resources through better coordination and targeting of federal investments.



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- Recognize and build on local efforts and leadership by engaging and serving community partners.
- Work with local officials and community-based organizations to leverage area resources and stimulate local economies to create local jobs.
- Learn from early and visible victories to fuel long-term action.

Led by federal agencies and coordinated by the White House Domestic Policy Council, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership closely aligns with and advances the work of the White House's place-based efforts, including the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, to revitalize communities, create jobs and improve the quality of life in cities and towns across the nation. The Urban Waters Federal Partnership also advances the work of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

## What's Next

More community collaboration, bringing federal partners together with diverse local constituents who have demonstrated leadership in the watershed to identify local priorities and projects the Federal partnership can support through leveraging technical assistance, training, education, and funding to improve water quality, revitalize neighborhoods, and enhance local economies. Specifically, Georgetown University, Casey Trees and USDA are offering an Urban Tree Canopy Assessment workshop focusing on planning tools for green infrastructure and water runoff in fall 2011.

The Federal Partners will select several Stream Reaches to focus the Anacostia River pilot. These are small stretches of the river and surrounding watershed where Federal partners have existing or planned efforts and can interact with local advocates of the Anacostia River to maximize resources and improve the health of the urban community that lives with the river.

## Federal and State Projects Underway

### Stormwater Management Efforts

NPS, National Capital Parks-East is working closely with the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) to coordinate stormwater management projects on NPS property including:

- Installing "no mow" areas along tributaries to serve as riparian buffers.

- Installing stream trash traps in Kenilworth Park
- Retrofitting parking lots and creating rain gardens

## Watts Branch Restoration

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chesapeake Bay Field Office and DDOE formed a partnership to restore 1.8 miles of Watts Branch, the longest Anacostia River tributary in the District.

Using natural stream design techniques, Watts Branch was restored to improve habitat and reduce bank erosion. Soil lifts, matting, and the planting of native vegetation stabilized the stream banks and DC Water is rehabilitating, replacing, or relocating the sewer lines in the stream valley. \$2.7 million was provided by partners including: the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; DDOE; Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA); US Environmental Protection Agency; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; National Park Service; DC Water; and the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR).

## Studying water and groundwater quality

Since 2002, the US Geological Survey (USGS) has partnered with DDOE, NPS, U.S. National Arboretum (USDA), and DPR to establish a groundwater-level- and water-quality-monitoring network in the Anacostia River Watershed in the District, including 28 wells and 1 tidal gage. Samples are analyzed for nutrients, metals, volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds (VOCs and SVOCs), and pesticides. USGS also has collected and analyzed geologic and hydrogeologic information to improve the understanding of groundwater flow in the Anacostia watershed. This is a multiyear investigation funded jointly by USGS and DDOE.

## Modeling Surface Water Quality

USGS monitors the concentrations and loadings of nutrients, sediment, and bacteria in the non-tidal tributaries of the Anacostia River to establish status and goals for water quality in the watershed. The project includes real-time monitoring of temperature, turbidity, pH, conductance, and dissolved oxygen at stations on the Northeast and Northwest Branches and Paint Branch in Maryland. This project is a multiyear investigation funded by cooperative agreements between USGS and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, Maryland.



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