

CALENDER OF UPCOMING EVENTS

December 3, 1999: Businesses for the Bay Annual Meeting, 9am-3pm, Annapolis. Call Kelly Mecum, Businesses for the Bay Coordinator at 1-800-YOUR-BAY.

December 3, 1999: Anacostia Community Summit, Friday, Dec. 3, Washington Navy Yard. The summit, being organized with the assistance of the National Park Service, the American Heritage Rivers program, and local community and environmental groups, is intended to initiate a locally-led process to develop a community vision for the Anacostia River. Call Leigh Dunkleberger at 202-260-9799 for more information.

January 17, 2000 – Martin Luther King Service Day: Volunteers needed to assist the DC Environmental Health Administration with the final phase of its Watts Branch stream bank stabilization project. Call Gilda Allen at 202-535- for details.

ARBC Encourages Good Watershed Stewardship

Because of its proximity to densely populated areas, the Anacostia River suffers from stresses common to most urban rivers. The river's watershed encompasses an area of approximately 170 square miles in Prince Georges County, Montgomery County, and the District of Columbia, and it's important to realize that every square foot of the watershed can have an impact on the health of the river. Businesses occupy a significant fraction of the land area of the watershed, and owners/managers of business properties can play an important role in protecting and restoring the river by understanding the problems which affect the river and learning about solutions:

Problems

- Urban watersheds have much of their surface area covered with concrete, asphalt, and other impervious materials, which prevent rainwater from soaking into the ground and providing steady replenishment for streams in the form of ground water.

- Prevailing urban landscaping and engineering practices have sought to remove storm water from properties as rapidly as possible. Water is quickly conveyed by storm sewer pipes to streams, causing torrential flows and stream bank erosion during rainstorms, and unnaturally low stream flows at other times.
- Human activities leave traces of toxic chemicals on roadways, parking areas, lawns, and other surfaces. This "non-point source pollution" accumulates and is washed into our streams by rainwater or melting snow.

The ARBC encourages all businesses to learn about and consider implementing the following:

Solutions

- Minimize impervious surfaces on your property. Use pervious materials, such as gravel or porous pavements when possible for parking areas and walkways, in order to reduce the amount of storm water runoff
- Use watershed-friendly landscaping techniques such as "rain gardens" and grassy drainage swales to slow down and filter storm water runoff before it leaves your property.
- Reduce your use of herbicides and pesticides and, if appropriate, implement an "integrated pest management" program
- Properly dispose of used motor oil and chemical wastes. Never pour oil or chemicals into storm drains.
- Pour vehicle wash water onto grassy surfaces.

The ARBC is developing a watershed stewardship pilot program whereby several members will install small rain gardens. Rain gardens are designed to capture storm water and filter it through natural materials, which remove toxics, before it enters the ground water or a storm sewer.

To obtain more information on what you can do on your business's property to help protect and restore the Anacostia river and its tributaries, contact

DC EHA, Watershed Protection Division, 202-535-2252 (Suzanne Wald).
PG County Department of Environmental Resources, 301-883-5826 (Ali Abbasi).
Montgomery County

Watts Branch Stream Bank Stabilization

ARBC volunteers participated in the recent Watts Branch tree planting effort co-sponsored by the Earth Conservation Corps (ECC) and the DC Environmental Health Administration. Over 900 trees and shrubs were planted along the banks of the stream during the months of September and October. These plants, all native species, serve to augment the riparian buffer zone along the Watts Branch, providing shade to help keep the stream cool, habitat for wildlife, and increased filtration of sediments and chemicals carried by storm water runoff.

Businesses for the Bay

ARBC encourages all businesses in the watershed to join the over 200 participants in the Chesapeake Bay Program's *Businesses for the Bay*. As a member you receive valuable information and contacts for pollution prevention projects that can save money! For more information, contact the Businesses for the Bay Coordinator at 1-800-YOUR-BAY, or visit their website at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/b4bay.htm>.

ARBC Membership

ARBC encourages businesses to get involved and join the coalition. We are a group of businesses in and around the District of Columbia who are concerned about the Anacostia River. We support education efforts to raise awareness about the river and how to help prevent pollution from toxic chemicals. We undertake activities to restore and protect the river and its tributaries, and serve as a clearinghouse for ideas and projects that businesses can participate in and support. For more information about ARBC, contact Mary Jean Brady (Washington Gas) at (703) 750-5558.

Update

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