

## The Montgomery County Stormwater Partners Seeking to Protect and Restore our Waters

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**Over the past decade, our streams have gotten dirtier. The reason? We've destroyed too many "pollution filters" -- forests and wetlands -- and added too much pavement. We seek a more effective stormwater permit, with clear limits on how much pollution gets dumped into Montgomery County's waters. Why? So that we can rebuild our green infrastructure, and protect and restore our Patuxent and Potomac River drinking water supplies, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Anacostia.**

**The Problem:** Montgomery County's Clean Water Act ("NPDES") permit, up for renewal in 2006, is supposed to ensure that our waters are protected from polluted runoff. First issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment in 1996, the existing permit does not define measurable actions that our government must take to protect our waters. Two-thirds of our streams are impaired, in whole or in part. Stormwater from development in Watts Branch sends pollution slugs into the Potomac, prompting the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission to spend \$20 million to move its drinking water intake pipe to reach for cleaner mid-river water. Upcounty, failure to "design with nature" during the construction boom has killed aquatic life in streams in Clarksburg and elsewhere, and groundwater sources are threatened.

**The Solution:** Montgomery County must act to stop pollution at its source. To accomplish this, the Stormwater Partners Coalition has issued a Twelve-Point Proposal for a much tougher, more protective NPDES permit; below are three core elements of this proposal (all twelve points are listed on the reverse side of this flyer).

***1) Put our polluted rivers and streams on a "pollution-reducing diet."***

Include quantitative pollution caps -- and an enforceable action plan - to meet bacteria and other pollutant standards. Incorporate "Total Maximum Daily Loads" (TMDLs), which are pollution limits set by MDE, into Montgomery's NPDES permit. Translate TMDL plans into cost-effective, on-the-ground actions.

***2) Establish a new set of objective and protective standards for new development and redevelopment in the County's NPDES permit,*** and include

measurable, enforceable protections for our coldwater trout and drinking water supply streams and groundwater recharge areas so that other jurisdictions across the state can then follow when their permits come up for renewal.

***3) Spur the widespread use of "green design" to restore streams.*** We're proposing that the County's NPDES permit require that 25 % of the degraded subwatersheds, in each of the County's twelve "downcounty" watersheds, be restored through "source prevention"

*The Stormwater Partners' Proposal  
for a More Effective Stormwater NPDES Permit for Montgomery County*

**Attainment of Water Quality Standards and Goals**

- 1) Require enforceable pollution reduction measures through numeric pollution caps, in order to meet standards for bacteria and other pollutants, for the Anacostia and other waters.
- 2) Protect high-quality and good-quality streams, and our drinking water sources, through zoning, planning, and regulatory changes reflecting the best science and technology for Environmentally Sound/ Low Impact Development (ESD/LID).
- 3) Restore degraded streams through measurable, enforceable goals. Apply stormwater ESD/LID measures cost-effectively on a whole-watershed and – subwatershed basis, emphasizing on-site rainwater re-use, infiltration, and landscaping approaches, such as rain gardens and reforestation.
- 4) Honor the commitment to a trash-free Potomac by 2013; require a 15% reduction per year of trash levels in our waters; along with monitoring and recycling, litter control and trash trap implementation and enforcement.
- 5) Establish numeric limits (maximum flow targets) for stream flows to address volume, velocity, and baseflow protections in already-developed and newly-developing areas, and enable measurable and enforceable regulation.

**Pollution Prevention at the Source**

- 6) Establish enforceable, measurable goals for the use of off-the-shelf source reduction stormwater measures countywide, including: more-aggressive enforcement and education of recycling and pet waste disposal laws, and implement upgraded street sweeping and storm drain cleanouts.
- 7) Identify and remediate stormwater “hotspots.”
- 8) Require actions to protect and restore forested stream buffers and other forested areas, linked to a strengthened county Forest Conservation Law.

**Accountability and Coordination, Public Involvement, and Program Support**

- 9) Increase the level and frequency of public involvement and notification in the County's stormwater permit program development decisions, and in project implementation.
- 10) Require enforceable duties of each of four County agencies who have stormwater responsibilities (DEP; DPS; DPWT; and Park and Planning) to reduce fragmentation and increase accountability and transparency.
- 11) Shift stormwater monitoring to more-closely track the County's watershed protection and restoration goals and stormwater measures, and to cooperate with volunteer groups.
- 12) Increase program funding while sending a “price incentive” for more-protective stormwater measures through broadening use of the County's Water Quality Protection Charge.

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