



PATUXENT RIVER COMMISSION

301 W. Preston Street, Suite 1101
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2305
Phone: (410) 767-4500
Fax: (410) 767-4480
Internet:

planning.maryland.gov/ourwork/patuxentrivercomminfo.shtml

☀ Please call Daniel Rosen at MDP 410-767-4577 if you have any questions or comments.

Larry Hogan, Governor
Councilman Michael Leszcz, Chairman
Councilwoman Mary Kay Sigaty Vice Chairman

We, the Patuxent River Commission, envision a Patuxent River ecosystem as vital and productive in 2050 as it was in the 1950s. We therefore commit to be stewards and advocates for the Patuxent River and to lead and inspire actions to protect, enhance, and restore living resources and the natural, cultural, economic, and recreational values of the Patuxent River and its watershed.

MEETING SUMMARY

May 10, 2017

Maryland Department of Agriculture

Annapolis, MD

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Members: Michael Leszcz (Chair), Mike Hewitt, Martin Chandler, Mark Symborski, Fred Tutman, Christopher Perry, Barbara Sollner-Webb, Guy Curley, Brenda Sanford (designee for Steve Darcey), Jack Fringer, Jackie Takacs, Byron Petrauskas, Jim George, Alison Armocida, Jason Dubow

MDP Staff: Jason Dubow and Deborah Herr Cornwell

Visitors: Amy Stevens, Montgomery County; Michael Snyder, Prince George's County; Scott Knoche, Morgan State University PEARL Laboratory

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the March 8, 2017 meeting were adopted unanimously.

Results of Patuxent River Clean-up Days

The Patuxent Riverkeeper reported that 5,500 pounds of trash was picked up on April 1 and Chairman Leszcz noted that a pickup truck load was also picked up from Riverfront Park.

June Wade-in

The 29th Annual Senator Bernie Fowler Patuxent River Wade-in will be held on June 11, 2017 at Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum (JPPM) from 1 pm to 4 pm. The staff at JPPM are assisting Senator Fowler with coordinating the event.

Rosaryville State Park site visit

Jason Dubow reported that the Rosaryville restoration project has been delayed so it won't be available for the fall field trip. Alison Armocida provided additional information about the Rosaryville project, which will include two miles of stream restoration and will be paid for by the MDOT-SHA. John McCoy has offered to provide a tour of residential rain gardens in Columbia; a potential date for the field trip is October 11. The Commission discussed other options as well, such as restoration at the Patrick farm in Howard County and the reforestation at the Maple Lawn South residential development.

Implementation of Patuxent TMDL for PCBs

Building upon the experience of Prince George and Montgomery Counties, Jason Dubow presented the opportunity for the Commission to put together a voluntary multi-county implementation plan for the draft PCB TMDL for the Patuxent River. The Commission discussed some challenges related to PCB clean-up. Jim George noted that minute amounts of PCBs are found in wastewater treatment sludge, that stormwater MS4 permittees are asked to address PCBs in their permits, and that any PCBs found in dredged sediments from catch basins must be disposed of properly. Mr. George noted that less obvious sources of PCBs are the biggest challenges and that identifying hot spots of PCB sources is very difficult. He noted that one potential source is from soil disturbance during construction, and that one possible approach to identify potential hot spots would be to create a database of land parcels historically likely to have had PCB exposure (e.g., a factory) so that protective measures could be implemented during any soil disturbance activities on those parcels. They often find hot spots during site construction but when construction is complete, such as the parking lot is paved, the levels decrease. Chairman Leszcz expressed concern about capped sites that may begin to leach due to natural erosive forces and/or failures. Amy Stevens' experience is that the sources can be elusive and are difficult to identify; disposal is also difficult. She said that implementing the Anacostia PCB TMDL has proven difficult.

Chairman Leszcz recommended waiting until the EPA approves the Patuxent River PCB TMDL and for the Commission to revisit this issue in 2018.

Tourism workgroup

The Commission's Tourism Workgroup has been working on the "Patuxent River Challenge" project with participants documenting specific activities by taking a photograph and posting on social media using the hashtag #PatuxentRiverChallenge. Each county would select two sites – with participants required to visit at least one site in each county to be eligible for a prize. Discussion included how to advertise the project, should it be on the Commission's website? A weather proof container to hold brochures promoting the project should be provided at each location. Concerns were expressed about who would be monitoring the social media postings, specifically, a disclaimer statement should be included to handle any objectionable postings. Metal signs should be installed at each location/activity to identify the project and to be included in the photograph.

It was noted that the social media websites have their own policing and would likely handle any objectionable postings; they wouldn't be showing up on the Commission's website. Fred Tutman offered the Patuxent Water Trail webpage as a means to advertise the Challenge.

The workgroup was directed to move forward and provide an update at the next meeting, including draft disclaimer language.

Bills of Interest: 2017 Maryland General Assembly

Jason Dubow referenced the summary of bills prepared by Daniel Rosen noting that HB 0924 Natural Resources – Oyster Management – Prohibited Actions passed requiring a Fisheries Management Plan be prepared before reducing or altering oyster sanctuary boundaries. This means that DNR's original plan to adjust sanctuary boundaries, and the Commission's letter earlier in 2017 to DNR with its recommendations concerning sanctuary boundaries within the Patuxent River, are on hold pending

DNR's completion of an oyster management plan.

Follow-up on Communications about Sewage Spill Notification and Posting

Correspondence was received from Maryland Department of the Environment acknowledging the Commission's recommendations for improving consistency in sewage spill notification procedures. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the local Health Departments are assisting MDE in developing a guidance document for sewage spill notifications. As the guidance document is prepared, the PRC's workgroup will be invited to participate in the discussions and to assist with the guidance development.

Discussion followed on why the current rules/regulations aren't being followed when sampling is required; clarification needs to be provided on COMAR. The public health problem that results from not providing appropriate notification needs to be emphasized. Jason Dubow will send an email to find out when the meeting is going to happen; Fred Tutman and Barbara Sollner-Webb to be cc'd on the email.

Open Floor

Fred Tutman recognized the passing of Herbert Sachs and shared excerpts of the obituary as well as his fond personal remembrances.