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2 Councilmember Charles Allen



Councilmember Christina Henderson

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4 Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

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Councilmember Janeese Lewis George

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7 Councilmember Kenyan R. McDuffie

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14 A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

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18 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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21  
22 To affirm the District of Columbia’s commitment to improve the water quality of its rivers and  
23 creeks, to honor dedicated community leaders and environmental advocacy groups for  
24 their efforts to restore the health of District waters, and to declare June 8, 2023 as DC  
25 Clean Waters Day in the District of Columbia.

26  
27 WHEREAS, clean water is essential in supporting human and animal life, healthy  
28 ecosystems, commerce, and economic sectors.

29  
30 WHEREAS, the Potomac River received its name from Indigenous peoples from the  
31 Patowomeck village and was first home to Powhatan, Piscataway, and Nanticoke peoples.

32  
33 WHEREAS, the Potomac River was an avenue for transporting machinery and weaponry  
34 and served as a strategic location for Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

35  
36 WHEREAS, over 100 species of freshwater fish, 60 mammals, over 100 birds, and  
37 dozens of reptiles and amphibians rely on the Potomac River for food, nutrition, and shelter.

38  
39 WHEREAS, although called a “national disgrace” by President Lyndon B. Johnson in  
40 1965, and given a D letter grade by the Potomac Conservancy in 2011, the Potomac River earned  
41 a B letter grade on the Potomac Conservancy’s 2023 water quality report.

42  
43 WHEREAS, the Nacotchtank peoples lived alongside the Anacostia River for 10,000  
44 years and referred to the river as “anaquash,” which means village trading center.

45  
46 WHEREAS, the Anacostia River was called “the forgotten river,” was a dumping ground  
47 for human and industrial waste during the Civil War era, and has been polluted by animal waste,  
48 stormwater runoff, garbage, and toxic chemicals in recent years.

49  
50 WHEREAS, the Anacostia River has shown signs of a healthy ecosystem such as otters  
51 returning to the watershed and healthy underwater grass at the bottom of the river, according to  
52 ecologists.

53  
54 WHEREAS, Rock Creek supports over 150 species of birds, 15 mammals, and 9 species  
55 of fish;

56  
57 WHEREAS, Rock Creek has higher E. coli levels than the Potomac and Anacostia rivers  
58 due to animal waste in stormwater runoff from homes, sidewalks, and yards flowing into the  
59 creek.

60  
61 WHEREAS, the District launched the Clean Rivers Project to reduce sewage, toxic  
62 contaminants, and stormwater runoff from entering the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers and Rock  
63 Creek.

64  
65 WHEREAS, Oxon Run Creek scored moderately poor on the Audubon Society’s 2022  
66 stream water quality report due to urbanization and pollution.

67  
68 WHEREAS, the Ward 8 Water Watchers program was created to communicate with the  
69 District’s lawmakers about Oxon Run Creek’s progress and necessary requirements for further  
70 improvement and engage residents and community leaders by providing watershed education and  
71 training and opportunities for community members to remove garbage from the creek.

72  
73 WHEREAS, after listening to feedback from community members, activists, scientists,  
74 and advocacy groups, DC Water, the District of Columbia’s Department of Parks and  
75 Recreation, the District of Columbia’s Department of Energy, and the National Park Service  
76 came together and developed the Oxon Run Stream project, which will reduce sewage from  
77 flowing into the stream, restore the stream to its naturalized state, and develop community  
78 outreach plans for community feedback.

79  
80 WHEREAS, despite being harmed by decades of urbanization and pollution, the  
81 District’s residents, activists, scientists, advocacy groups, and lawmakers are committed to  
82 ensuring that District waters receive the comeback that its resident and ecosystems deserve.

83  
84 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
85 resolution may be cited as the “DC Clean Waters Day Recognition Resolution of 2023”.

86  
87 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia affirms the District’s commitment to  
88 improve the water quality of its rivers and creeks, honors dedicated community leaders and

89 environmental advocacy groups for their efforts to restore the health of District waters, and  
90 declares June 8, 2023 as DC Clean Waters Day in the District of Columbia.

91

92           Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in  
93 the District of Columbia Register.