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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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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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

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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.

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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.

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

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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.

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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.