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Getting dirty to clean up the Anacostia River

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Thursday - 6/30/2011, 1:14pm ET



(WTOP/Andrew Mollenbeck)

WASHINGTON -- A group advocating renewed efforts to clean the Anacostia River jumped in Thursday to highlight just how filthy it can be.

"We're calling for the stopping of the poisoning of our water," former Maryland State Senator Gerald Winegrad said.

Almost 30 years have passed since the Clean Water Act set targets to make waters "fishable and swimmable."

"We're nowhere close" to meeting those goals, Winegrad said.

The latest rainfall washed bottles, an antifreeze container and a bag of cheese curls to the water's edge.

But that didn't stop advocates. One man submerged himself dressed in a coat and tie. Others waded through plastic bottles, cigarette butts and bobbing basketballs.

"It's going to take some resources, it's going to take some funding," says President of the Anacostia Watershed Society Jim Foster.

Foster and his organization is also calling for tighter restrictions on developers.

WTOP's Andrew Mollenbeck contributed to this report.

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