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## Activists Take Plunge in Anacostia To Raise Awareness

Patrick Madden

July 01, 2011 - Nearly three decades after a federal deadline passed requiring waterways to be fish-able and swim-able, the Anacostia River remains neither. Yesterday, advocates took the risky step of swimming in the river to raise awareness about the pollution.



Vernon Archer, mayor of Riverdale Park, Md., wades into the Anacostia River Thursday with the goal of raising awareness about pollution.

Courtesy of: Patrick Madden

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Former Maryland state senator Gerald Winegrad wore a gray hazardous materials suit as he slowly waded into the river Thursday.

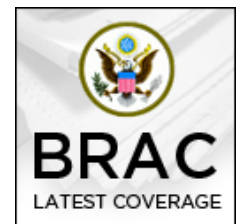
"It's a tragedy we have to risk life and limb to come in the water, especially this river flowing through the nations capital," said Winegrad.

Next to Winegrad, Anacostia River Keeper Jim Foster sifted through garbage.

"All this stuff has washed off the land," says Foster. "Here are water bottles, convenient for people to stop in grab a water, drink most of it, and throw it away."

But Winegrad, who now teaches environmental policy at the University of Maryland, says the biggest problem is stormwater run-off.

"Every time it rains here, it brings in contaminants off of people's lawns,

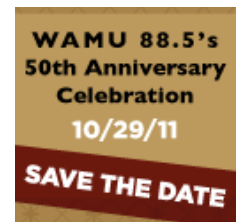


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sidewalks, and gutters, flowing into streams," says Winegrad.

He says local politicians need to tighten storm water regulations and limit development along the Anacostia River watershed.

Updated: Jul. 1, 2011 at 6:41 am



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