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# Anacostia Clogged with Post-storm Debris

posted 03/08/10 5:46 pm producer: [Markham Evans](#)

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WASHINGTON - The river in Anacostia Park these days is an ugly soup of tree trash, water bottles, plastic bags, tires and barrels. Entire trees washed into the river near where it flows into the Potomac.

"It's basically like a ring around a bathtub," said Brent Bolin, the director of advocacy for the Anacostia Watershed Society.

And, according to environmentalists, what you can see is just scratching the surface. They are even more concerned about all the chemicals that are seeping into this river daily from places like the city's big snow piles at RFK stadium.

"It picks up oil and grease and gasoline and everything from the road, salt," Bolin said. "And that all just washes directly, straight into the river, bringing trash with it."

The Army Corps of Engineers has been making an effort at cleanup. But given its resources, the task is overwhelming.

The Corps had two dumpsters to fill Monday. Yet all of this stuff remains to be dealt with. They say they've pulled some logs out that were eight feet in diameter.

Then there are the fisherman.

"It's terrible because you lose so many hooks and sinkers in this garbage," said Kurt Odom. "Just trash."

Odom showed us his catch: two catfish. But would you eat fish out of a river even more polluted now than usual?

"I caught a little carp about that big," Odom said, holding his hands about a foot apart. "It looked as if something had eaten his face."

So is he going to eat the catfish? He didn't say.

The D.C. Council instituted the city's new 5-cent bag fee to help clean up the Anacostia, with four cents of every bag dedicated to cleanup funding. Environmentalists say plastic bags account for half the trash in the Anacostia River. They add most of the trash in the Potomac River comes from the Anacostia.

Environmentalists say they are looking forward to Earth Day, April 24, when there will be a concerted cleanup effort.



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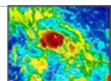
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