For more than 25 years, the Anacostia Watershed Society has led the effort to restore the Anacostia River and its tributaries to fishable and swimmable conditions by stopping new pollution, restoring natural systems, and rebuilding the communities’ connection to the river. All year long we monitor the health of the river, and release an annual State of the Anacostia River Report Card.

In 2017, the overall score for the Anacostia River remains an F, but continues to improve across almost all measures. Improvements in Water Clarity, Chlorophyll a, Submerged Aquatic Vegetation, Toxics, and Trash were offset by water quality declines in Dissolved Oxygen and Fecal Bacteria. Across these parameters, the score improved two points from last year, from 47% to 49%.

Four major obstacles prevent the Anacostia River from being a healthy natural resource: fecal bacteria, toxics, trash, and uncontrolled stormwater, each monitored by AWS and measured by the Report Card. With the support of local governments and partners, these major problems are currently being addressed, such as with the first tunnel section of DC Water’s Clean Rivers Project coming online in 2018, removing a significant amount of fecal bacteria. Stormwater management and trash reduction efforts are moving forward across the region, and plans to remediate legacy toxics in sediment are under discussion.

Community and local government engagement and leadership – the overall effort and commitment of the area for a clean Anacostia River – grew stronger. Leaders from the District of Columbia, Montgomery County, and Prince George's county signed the Anacostia River Accord, agreeing to work collaboratively to remove trash from the Anacostia River Watershed, and to protect and restore critical shoreline and natural areas.

The truth is, a passing grade for the Anacostia River is in sight. The Anacostia River is cleaner than ever thanks to the persistence of the communities who live, work, and play in the watershed. We remain confident that a swimmable and fishable Anacostia River can be achieved by 2025, as long as we can sustain our momentum.
## 2017 ANACOSTIA RIVER REPORT CARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WATER QUALITY INDICATORS</th>
<th>SCORE(%)</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>TREND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissolved Oxygen</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Needs Attention]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecal Bacteria</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Clarity</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorophyll $a$</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submerged Aquatic Vegetation</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stormwater Runoff Volume</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Degrading]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxics</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Effort and Commitment</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade for Entire Anacostia River</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>![Improving]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** Progress made continues to hold steady with powerful lead by the District of Columbia.

*1 AWS scoring method used for Stormwater, Toxics, and Trash. EcoCheck scoring method for all other categories. (100% is best.)

*2 Standard school grading system (Below 60 = F).

*3 Historical data were used for trend analysis.

NOTE: Toxics, Trash, and Overall Effort and Commitment evaluations are from 2016. Other data sets are from 2015, the most recent available.

The following parameters are used to assess water quality and conditions:

**Dissolved Oxygen** is critical for the survival of aquatic life and ecosystem sustainability.

**Fecal Bacteria** contamination is caused by sewage discharges and leaks, as well as from pet and wildlife waste.

**Water Clarity** is a measure of light penetrating the water column; this affects the health of aquatic grasses.

**Chlorophyll $a$** is the measure of microalgae biomass; this can impact water clarity and dissolved oxygen levels.

**Submerged Aquatic Vegetation** requires light to thrive and is essential habitat for young fish and other aquatic life.

**Stormwater Runoff** flushes trash and toxics from paved areas and erodes stream banks, filling the river with sediment.

**Toxics** in the Anacostia include PCBs and PAHs that potentially pose chronic damage to people and wildlife.

**Trash** is unsightly, injures and kills wildlife and is a major river pollutant, especially plastic bags, bottles, and foam.

**Overall Effort and Commitment** is based on current initiatives from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector to clean up and restore the river.

Full report available online at:


Thanks to the following organizations in helping assess water quality:

- Mid-Atlantic Tributary Assessment Coalition
- USDA Environmental Microbial and Food Safety Laboratory
- District Department of Energy and Environment
- American Chemical Society
- The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment

AWS is looking for potential funders to make this reporting sustainable. Please contact Emily Conrad if you can help at econrad@anacostiaws.org or 301-699-6204 x111

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