



Anacostia Watershed Society Announces Christopher E. Williams as President and CEO

*International conservation leader tapped to
advance the restoration of the Anacostia watershed.*

Bladensburg MD, August 24, 2021 – The Board of Directors of the Anacostia Watershed Society today announced the appointment of Christopher E. Williams as President and CEO of the organization. For more than 20 years, Williams has been a leader in regional, national and international conservation efforts, most recently serving at Senior Vice President for Conservation at American Rivers. He previously had senior leadership roles at World Wildlife Fund and began his career at the National Wildlife Federation as a legislative advocate.

“I’m delighted to welcome Chris to the Anacostia Watershed Society. With a broad national and international perspective on river restoration best practices, Chris will build on our growth and propel us to our goal of a fishable and swimmable Anacostia River,” said Neil Lang, Chair of the Anacostia Watershed Society Board of Directors.

“Working with noted search consultant Development Resources, Inc. (DRi), we conducted a national search, reviewed close to 100 candidates with varied and diverse experience and Chris clearly stood out as the leader we needed at this moment. We’re lucky to have him join us,” said Kathryn Petrillo-Smith, AWS Board Member and Chair of the Search Committee.

As Senior Vice President for Conservation at American Rivers (AR), Williams led a strategic planning process that shifted AR’s approach from stand-alone river restoration projects across the nation to intensive focus at the watershed level – integrating conservation and restoration best practice with local, state and federal policy and local stakeholder partnerships to produce comprehensive and sustainable solutions. Williams was one of the authors of AR’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan and guided its implementation internally and externally.

“I’m honored to be chosen to lead the Anacostia Watershed Society at this pivotal moment in the decades long effort to restore the Anacostia. The Anacostia is my home watershed – where I met my wife, raised my children and put down deep roots. I’m so excited to work with the staff, the Board, our many partners, and the communities of the

watershed to achieve the goal of a fishable and swimmable Anacostia by 2025, a giant step toward a river restored to health for the benefit of all living in its watershed and for future generations,” said Christopher Williams.

Williams will begin as President and CEO immediately. Erin Borgeson Castelli, Interim President and CEO, will return to her role as Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer.

About the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS)

Our mission is to restore and protect the Anacostia River by bringing partners and communities together to achieve a clean and safe river for the benefit of all living in its watershed. Our ultimate vision is to restore and sustain the Anacostia as a swimmable and fishable river for the health and well-being of all by 2025 and beyond.

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