

Energize, Mobilize, Localize:

The People's Climate March in Baltimore

The People's Climate March in April was one of the landmark environmental events of the Trump era. More than 300,000 people traveled to DC from all over the country to march for jobs, justice, and climate action on the 100th day of Trump's presidency. Back in February, several environmental and community orga-

nizations in Baltimore got together to consider how to engage with the march. This coalition knew that members would be traveling from Baltimore to DC looking for ways to fight back against climate change, and knew that local movements needed that energy to make change in Baltimore. How to engage Climate Marchers in local struggles after the March? And how to build a bigger coalition and strengthen relationships to be a more effective movement in the future?

The coalition quickly blossomed to over 25 groups including representatives of faith, labor, Latinx rights, criminal justice, workers rights, fair development, transportation equity, economic justice, and more movements in the city. At twice monthly meetings that became weekly in the month before the March, the groups coordinated community outreach



Part of the East Baltimore bus to the People's Climate March.

PHOTO: TORIANNE MONTES-SCHIFF

across Baltimore, filled 13 buses with marchers leaving from every quadrant of the city, coordinated multiple MARC train teams leaving from Penn Station, and hosted documentary screenings, music shows, and art builds to develop participation and messaging about the march. Clean Water Action's canvass team

shared the efforts and encouraged residents across Baltimore to join up with the coalition.

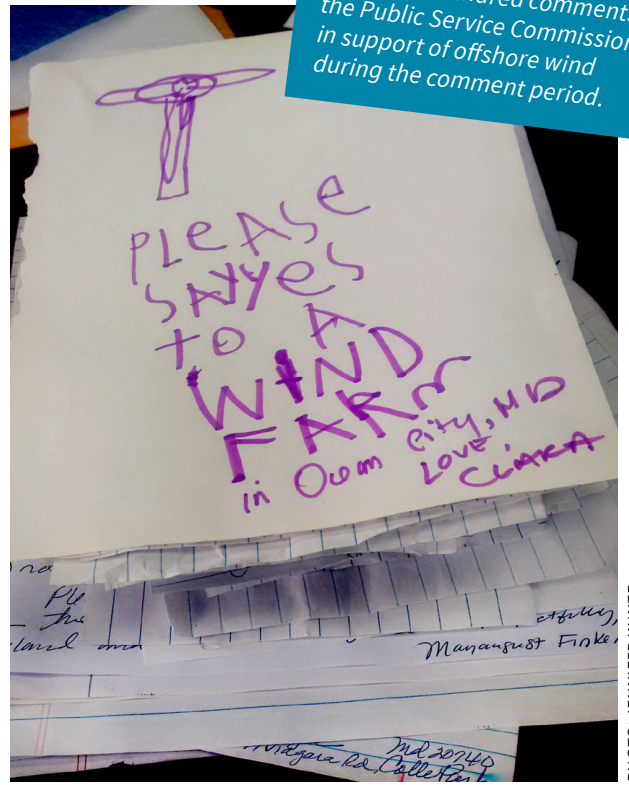
The focus on Baltimore continued on the day of the March with speakers from various organizations on each bus sharing information about the 20/20 Vision for Development without Displacement, the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition, the campaign for offshore wind and against oil trains, and more. Baltimoreans who came to the march left with flyers, factsheets, and a list of upcoming movement meetings and rallies. And marchers have continued to show up here in Baltimore, for rallies and public hearings at City Hall in support of offshore wind, fair development that increases density and walkability without displacing Baltimore residents, a moratorium on crude oil train terminals in Baltimore, and more.

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MARYLAND

Offshore wind is coming to Maryland!

By 2020, hundreds of wind turbines could be turning off the shore of Ocean City, providing enough green, renewable energy to power more than 500,000 homes and enough jobs to employ more than 9,000 people over 20 years. This spring, over four hundred Clean Water Action members signed comments, wrote letters, and even spoke out at hearings to urge the Public Service Commission to issue Offshore Wind Renewable Energy Credits to one or both companies bidding for permission to operate in Maryland. The Baltimore City Council even joined the chorus, adopting a resolution to highlight the thousands of jobs the industry can bring to Sparrow's Point. In May, the Public Service Commission gave both of the two companies permission to move forward with their projects; we'll keep you up to date as both companies pursue their federal permits. Offshore wind means onshore jobs in Baltimore!



Clean Water Action members wrote four hundred comments to the Public Service Commission in support of offshore wind during the comment period.

PHOTO: JENNIFER KUNZE

People's Climate March *continued from page 1*

But the groups truly saw the fruits of their labor in the past few weeks as President Trump chose to withdraw from the Paris Climate Accords. The Baltimore City Council wanted a powerful way to respond, and the coalition jumped into action and drafted a resolution in the span of days that not only stated the city's commitment to fight climate change, but outlined the very specific ways that Baltimore can do that: from banning crude oil train terminals and investing in

offshore wind, to purchasing renewable energy and supporting community solar, and even developing affordable energy-efficient housing, eliminating food deserts, and investing in public transportation. This resolution passed unanimously in June, and the organizing, relationships, and even artwork that the Baltimore People's Climate movement produced will help Clean Water Action and our partners push forward against climate change in the years ahead.



PHOTO: VALESKA POPULOH

In the weeks before the march, local artists organized a series of "art builds" to bring Baltimore's voice to the march.



PHOTO: TAYLOR SMITH-HANS

Baltimoreans marched behind a banner demanding a just, clean energy and economic future for our city.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Budget Victory:

Getting Toxic Sediment out of the Anacostia River

The Anacostia River corridor within the District of Columbia contains 15 miles of shoreline, 1,200 acres of green space, and a string of 10 adjacent neighborhoods on the river's east side in Wards 7 and 8. Polluted and neglected for decades, the Anacostia River is undergoing a renaissance thanks to years of community advocacy.

In 2016, Clean Water joined the Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative (APACC), a group of 18 community-based organizations working together to realize a vision of improved parklands, with increased community access, for the benefit of long-term and current residents. APACC and Clean Water are dedicated to working with community members, particularly those who have lived in Wards 7 and 8 the longest, to inform and actively participate in the work of the collaborative.

The District must complete sediment remediation plans by 2018 in order to clean up the Anacostia River and hold the federal government accountable for pollution damages. Funds for sediment remediation have been planned into the DC capital budget every year since 2011. Unfortunately \$5 million that were dedicated toward cleaning up toxics in the Anacostia

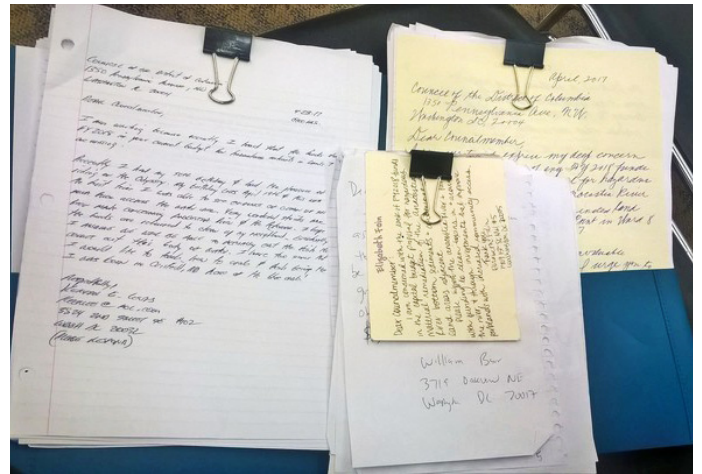


PHOTO: BOCHYNSKI

Letters from DC members asking the Council to restore toxics cleanup funding.

was removed from the mayor's proposed FY18 capital improvement plan.

When Mayor Bowser's proposed budget for FY18 zeroed out funding for cleaning up toxic heavy metals and other contaminants from the Anacostia river bottom and adjacent parklands, DC residents took action. At the Committee on Transportation and Environment budget hearing on Friday, April 28 we testified alongside DC residents and APACC partners, and submitted over 100 community letters and public comments.

Chairwoman Cheh acknowledged the concerns voiced by the community when she stated, "Neither the river nor the people there are forgotten any more, at least by this Committee." As a result of public input, Chairwoman Cheh and the committee proposed restoring \$4.5 million in their budget report for the city council. Clean Water members continued to urge councilmembers to support funding the Anacostia clean-up, resulting in the Council approving the recommendations when it adopted the budget on May 30.

When community members take action and make their voices heard, we make great strides to restore years of damage to the Anacostia River.



PHOTO: BOCHYNSKI

APACC member meeting.

VIRGINIA

2017 Legislative Victory:

Protecting Public Health and the Potomac River from Sewage Dumping

The City of Alexandria's Old Town combined sewer system (CSS) is a collection system of pipes and tunnels designed to collect both sewage wastewater and surface runoff. Combined sewers are no longer used in newly built communities (modern sewer systems separate sanitary sewers from runoff) because they can cause serious water pollution problems during combined sewer overflow (CSO) events when wet weather flows exceed the sewage treatment plant capacity. Untreated sewage is a source of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution, is harmful to fish and other aquatic life, and can lead to dangerous levels of bacteria such as E. coli in local waterways. The discharges contain human and industrial waste, and can cause beach closings, impair waterways and make them unsafe for swimming and other recreation, lead to restrictions on fish consumption and contamination of drinking water sources.

Clean Water Action is working to hold the City of Alexandria accountable for dumping nearly 150 million gallons of wastewater directly into the Potomac River every year. Last year, the city had an opportunity to adopt a modern Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to reduce sewage overflow over the next 20 years. Clean Water canvassed extensively on the Alexandria CSS issue, mobilizing more than 300 letters to the city council and Virginia General Assembly. Despite broad public support for a strong solution, Alexandria only committed to reducing its annual discharges by 50% by 2035 in the final LTCP, while studying how it can address the remaining half.

With the threat of sewage dumping continuing to risk the health of nearby residents and downstream communities for decades, Clean Water partnered with elected officials and local allies, and mobilized community residents to take action during the 2017 Virginia legislative session. Clean Water members urged their representatives to hold Alexandria accountable and eliminate the Commonwealth's last major source of untreated sewage dumping into the Potomac River watershed.

State Senator Scott Surovell led the charge and introduced SB 818 to bring the city into compliance with state and federal laws. SB 818 (Surovell) was incorporated into SB 898 (Stuart), passed with bipartisan support in the General Assembly, and signed by Governor McAuliffe in April. The bill requires Alexandria to bring all of its CSO outfalls into compliance with Virginia law and the federal Clean Water Act by July 1, 2025, and requires the city to annually report its progress to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality until compliance is achieved.

When communities make their voices heard, elected officials notice. Because Clean Water members took action and contacted their representatives we helped pass legislation that results in a better environment and healthier waterways for all Virginians.

Thank you for taking action!

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