



**SIERRA
CLUB**

Volume 4, Issue 2

August 2023

Washington County Sierra Club Notes

Catoctin/Washington County Groups Joint Potluck Picnic & Hike

**Sept. 17, 2022, 1:00 – 4:00 PM, Washington Monument
State Park, Fort Necessity Picnic Shelter**



Please join us for a joint potluck picnic held by the Catoctin and Washington County Groups of the Maryland Sierra Club. You do not have to be a member of either group to attend, but we ask that you register on Campfire so that we can plan accordingly.

There is an admission fee for entrance to the park:

MD residents \$2.00/vehicle; out-of-state residents \$4.00/vehicle. Here is the link for registering:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001olq9AAA>

The **Washington County Group will provide Beyond Burgers and 2 coolers of lemonade and water. The Catoctin Group will provide burger buns & fixings.** We are asking all attendees to bring their favorite picnic dish. When you register on Campfire please include the dish you will bring. If there are duplicates, we may ask you to choose an alternative.

The following are suggestions for dishes you can sign up for:

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| Baked beans | Salads (pasta, potato, fruit etc.) |
| Fresh fruit | Veggie tray, chips, dip, etc.) |
| Dessert | Your signature picnic dish |

We are **greening the potluck** by asking you to bring your own plates, cups, cutlery, napkins and table coverings. Please avoid disposable plastic and Styrofoam. We hope to set an example of Zero Waste.

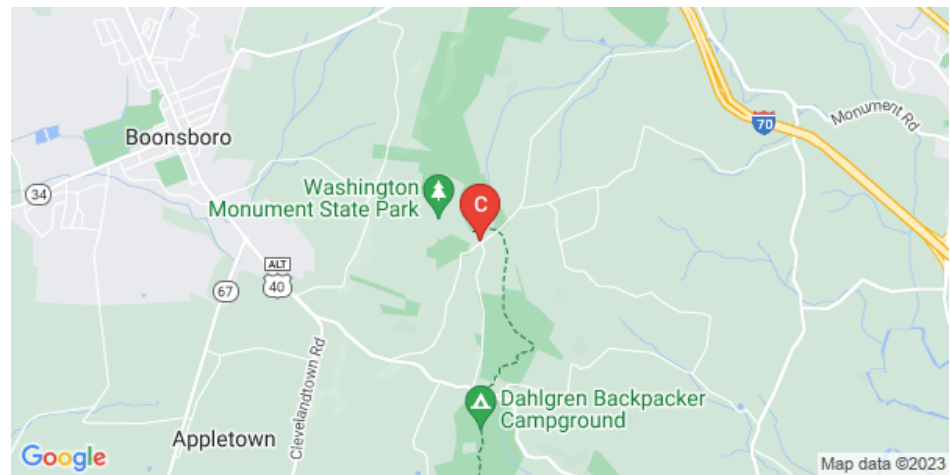


The picnic has picnic tables with bench seats for 55, but you may **bring your own folding chairs if desired.** The ExCom members will arrive at 12 noon to begin setting things up and get the grills going.

We are also planning a short hike to the Washington Monument following the meal, so bring your hiking shoes and trekking poles if you use them.

Be sure to register on campfire no later than Sept. 13, and include the dish you plan to bring.

We hope to see you there!



6620 Zittlestown Rd, Middletown, MD 21769

MD Department of Environment Public Meeting in Washington County August 8

The Center for Global Sustainability and the Maryland Department of Environment will **host six listening sessions this July–September** to collect public input that will inform Maryland’s final climate plan. One of these is in our local area.



Maryland’s Climate Pathways report was released in June, including a variety of policy options aimed at reducing emissions by 60 percent by 2031 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2045 as required by the Climate Solutions Now Act. The report will inform a final plan to be completed by the end of this year. To read the full report and submit comments online, visit www.mde.maryland.gov.

DATE FOR LOCAL AREA MEETING:

August 8, 2023 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

LOCATION:

Hagerstown Community College
11400 Robinwood Dr., Hagerstown
BSH- 114 (Behavioral Science and Humanities Building Auditorium)

To register for the meeting: <https://cgs.umd.edu/events/maryland-department-environments-listening-sessions-marylands-climate-pathway-report-0>

Your Comments Needed on Washington County Comprehensive Plan 2040

“It is our collective and individual responsibility to preserve and tend to the world in which we all live.” — Dalai Lama

The Washington County Planning Commission has released the new Comprehensive Plan for the County. This document aims to develop a community vision for future land use and effective growth management, including land use, transportation, agricultural and forestry, and water resources, among other things, through 2040.

By actively engaging with the planning process, you can help shape the future of Washington County. Visit the website below to read the document, make public comments, join the email list and find out about public input meetings scheduled for fall 2023.

<https://www.washco-md.net/planning-zoning/comp-plan-2040/>

Become a Sierra Club Leader!

Interested in joining the leadership team at either the local (Washington County Group) or state (Maryland Chapter) level? Elections for both Executive Committees are coming soon. Stay tuned to your email for more details, including how to vote and who to contact if you have questions.



Would you like to participate in Pollinator Palooza, Sept. 23, 10-2 pm?

We have been invited to set up an educational display at Pollinator Palooza, an event designed to teach people about the importance of pollinators and encourage their protection. The gathering, which draws over 500 people each year, includes over a dozen teaching tents, talks, tours of the 4 teaching gardens on campus, and children’s activities. Annette Cormany, the Horticulture Educator at the University of MD

“If the Bee disappears from the surface of the Earth, Man would have no more than four years to live.” — Albert Einstein

Extension - Washington County developed this event along with Master Gardener volunteers.

Teaching tents offer information on everything from bees to butterflies, Bay-Wise practices to sustainable landscaping. Partners include local beekeepers, native plant societies, the Audubon Society, C&O Canal Trust, Monarch Alliance, DNR's forestry division and the Antietam Conococheague Watershed Alliance. The event takes place at the Washington County Agricultural Education Center, 7303 Sharpsburg Pike, Boonsboro, MD 21713.

If you would like to participate in our Sierra Club Group's display, please contact Dr. Eric Schwartz eric.schwartz@mdsierra.org or Dr. Teresa Roberts roberlte@gmail.com

Save the date! November 4 Riparian Ranger Workday. Time and place TBA.

The Riparian Rangers program of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay focuses its efforts on the maintenance of stream and riparian buffer restoration in the watersheds of the Chesapeake Bay. The Washington County Group of the Sierra Club started participating in the tree maintenance program in 2022 and are continuing with the program in 2023. Stay tuned for more details on this fall event.

Water Quality Monitoring Program Updates

Several Washington County Sierra Club members participate in a couple of different citizen science water quality monitoring programs in the area.



“We have 10 recreational sites along Antietam Creek and the upper Potomac River being sampled every Wednesday by about a dozen dedicated volunteers,” says Catherine Gaudlip of Hood College, who along with Upper Potomac Riverkeeper Brent Walls, runs a weekly water monitoring program. “It's been a relatively dry summer, with consistent bacteria levels across the board. The sites that are consistently above the threshold of 235 MPN *E. coli* are Antietam Creek-1 Burnside Bridge and Antietam Creek-4 Security Road. One rain event caused Upper Potomac River-8 Brunswick to have high levels due to its location downstream of the junction of the Shenandoah River with the Potomac River. Results are posted on Thursdays through **Swim Guide** phone app and through social media, so that people can make an informed decision about recreating at these sites. Antietam Creek has had higher turbidity values than the Upper Potomac River every sampling event this summer.”

Susan Simonson, of the Antietam Conococheague Watershed Alliance adds, “ACWA continues our volunteer water quality monitoring on a monthly basis. We recently conducted a second round of DNA source

tracking sampling in July, and are awaiting the results. The sampling occurred at 13 locations throughout the upper Antietam Creek watershed. The source tracking analysis helps categorize DNA into six categories (bovine, dog, sheep, poultry, human, & pigs), which could potentially identify the contribution of bacteria to the streams.”

According to Brent Walls, remediation of water quality in streams and rivers is definitely a step process. “First you identify the streams that have high bacteria which can impact human health. Then you break that stream up into smaller sections to see where you have high levels or low levels. Then you want to replicate that monitoring under similar conditions a few times. Then sample under other conditions like wet weather or after a crop harvest. Then you collect DNA samples during similar weather, typically dry vs. wet weather. This helps you to narrow down what the source may be and where it may be coming from.”