



## Anacostia Watershed Society

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### **ANACOSTA RIVER EARTH DAY EVENT WILL ENCOURAGE D.C. AND MARYLAND RESIDENTS TO GIVE UP SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER SHOPPING BAGS!**

VOLUNTEERS FOR APRIL 18 RIVER CLEANUP WILL RECEIVE FREE, REUSABLE CANVAS SHOPPING BAG.

**Bladensburg, MD**—If you think that single-use bag you got at the grocery store was free, then you better think again. Not only did the store figure their costs for that convenience into the price of your food, but, as a tax payer and water utility customer, you're paying for that bag several times over in every paycheck and water bill. That's right! Every time a "free" bag ends up in the garbage, or on the street, or in a storm drain, your hard-earned money is going to somewhere other than your pocket. For instance, in the District of Columbia, government agencies spend millions addressing trash issues each year, while the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (DC WASA) spends more millions cleaning up trash that has found its way into D.C.'s combined sewer and storm water system. Similar situations hold true for Maryland residents in Prince George's County and Montgomery County.

If you think it is ridiculous to pay over and over again for not only your own single-use bags but the bags that other people take and throw out on the street, you are not alone. Still, this type of litter is harmful to more than just your pocketbook. A recent scientific study completed by the Anacostia Watershed Society for the District Department of the Environment showed that much of the trash entering the Anacostia River's tributary streams and creeks is composed of single-use plastic bags that both damage the environment and create a major eyesore. Thankfully, there's a solution at hand that's suitable for everyone. Each one of us here in the D.C. metro area can end dependence on single-use bags by carrying reusable and recyclable canvas bags to the grocery store. What is even better; the Anacostia Watershed Society and more than 60 other local businesses and agencies want to speed this change along with no out-of-pocket cost to anyone.

Each area resident who volunteers to help clean up the Anacostia River during the Annual Anacostia River Cleanup and Earth Day Celebration on April 18, 2009, will receive a free canvas shopping bag for their efforts (available while supplies last). Volunteers also will leave with the knowledge that they have personally helped remove some of the 20,000 tons of trash finding its way into the Anacostia each year. To become a volunteer and start using a reusable canvass bags for grocery store visits, see the AWS Web site at [www.anacostiaws.org](http://www.anacostiaws.org) and click on the **2009 Anacostia River Cleanup & Earth Day Celebration** link. To learn the facts about the environmental and economic problem caused by single-use bags, visit the Questions & Answers section at [www.trashfreeanacostia.com](http://www.trashfreeanacostia.com).

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