



Working Group Name: NATURE

Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 21st, 2012

Meeting Location: Downtown DC Business Improvement District (BID), 1250 H St, NW

Attendees: Rebecca Scott, Alexandra Beresford, Will Roberts, Kent Slowinski, Anne Lewis, MonaCheri Pollard, Brian Gober, Mike Cowden, Kara Reeve, Anthony Jones, Ian Leahy, Brian Rodgers, Sharon Reinckenss, Janine Harris, Nancy Libson, Matt Harper, Megan Kanagy, Cathy Wiss, Kristina Byrne, Ella Faulkner (Working Group Co-Chair), Polina Bakhtearov (Facilitator)

Main Points/Discussion: The focus of this meeting was to review feedback from the February 8th Joint Working Group Meeting and to use that input to refine and reprioritize the goals and actions for Nature in the Sustainable DC plan.

Prior to looking at our working group priorities, we presented the vision statement that received the most votes in our online poll. We made a small change to the vision, adding the words “connection to” at the end. The vision statement is as follows:

The District of Columbia will increase the conservation, management, and health of the city’s natural resources to enhance and improve the quality of life of its residents, and build a green city where our collective actions reflect a connection to, an understanding of, and appreciation for nature.

We will use the above vision statement moving forward.

Next, the working group reviewed the prioritized goals and actions from the last individual working group meeting – Meeting 4. Participants examined the ranked recommendations and pointed out that several themes were repeated throughout the priorities, including the following:

Stormwater management

Education

Habitat and wildlife

Open space and parks

Tree canopy

Outreach and stewardship

Further feedback from the participants is outlined below:

- See PlaNYC for an ambitious tree canopy goal
- For native trees, may use regional trees/eastern boundary



- Look at invasive fish habitats
- Look at restoring wetlands

Next, the working group reviewed feedback from the February 8th Joint Working Group Meeting. The group noted that there were four recommendations that other working group members ranked in the “top 25” during the Joint Working Group Meeting but that had not made it onto the original top 25 list from our Meeting 4; those four priorities are as follows:

- (1) Restore DC’s tree canopy: 40%+ tree canopy throughout the District
- (2) Get every public school linked to a park/open space for education
- (3) Increase native fish populations by x% by 20__
- (4) Increase fines and enforcement of littering laws

After reviewing feedback from the February 8th Joint Working Group Meeting, the working group reviewed and reprioritized the Nature goals and actions. Much of this process involved identifying redundancies in the list of recommendations and categorizing recommendations by the themes listed previously. The group reviewed the top 25 priorities as established by the working group during Meeting 4 and identified similar recommendations, which we note below by ID# (from the Draft Recommendations spreadsheet):

Stormwater management

ID# 2: Increase permeable surfaces by 10% by 2020 and by 20% by 2030 (green streets to incorporate nature into neighborhoods and manage stormwater)

Similar recommendations: ID#’s 4, 12, 16, 17, 50, 91

Education

ID# 1: The DC school system will incorporate environmental education (literacy) and service to the core curriculum of every student

Similar recommendations: ID#’s 20, 32, 35, 50, 52, 87-90

Habitat and wildlife

ID# 5: [HABITAT] Increase habitat restoration across DC by 8,000 acres by 2025

Similar recommendations: ID#’s 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 33, 43, 44, 46, 59, 60, 103-106

ID# 10: Create a connectivity map – wildlife and people corridors to increase accessibility (master planning)

Similar recommendations: ID#’s 30, 40, 41, 47, 49, 51, 76, 77

ID# 15: [WILDLIFE] No net loss of wild species

Similar recommendations: ID#’s 18, 33, 43, 46, 60, 103, 104, 106



Open space and parks

ID# 8: Revitalize RFK Stadium parking lots into usable green space (Oklahoma Avenue and Benning Rd NE) – turn asphalt lots into green space for use by all DC youth and adults

ID# 19: Require developers to fund green space by Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Similar recommendations: ID#'s 16, 34, related to built environment

ID# 23: Return some fraction of lawn-type parkland to natural prairie/forest/native landscaping and promote/invest in stewardship partnerships

Similar recommendations: ID# 22, related to habitat

ID# 24: Increase park space – acquire more land for parks/natural areas (connectivity, zoning, incentives); promote green-oriented development with Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Similar recommendations: ID#'s 19, 31, 38, 58, 95

Tree canopy

ID# 3: Plant 250,000 native trees by 2030; focus along streets, parks, private and non-profit reforestation; use incentives, lining stream and river systems - include climate change considerations in tree selection

Similar recommendations: ID#'s 11, 18, 25, 29, 33, 43, 59, 60, 101

Outreach and stewardship

ID# 7: Connect every DC resident to safe, sustainable green spaces and waterways to advance lasting environmental, physical, and economic health

Similar recommendations: ID#'s 9, 10, 22, 30, 39, 40, 58, 77, 79, 85

ID# 21: Promote/create a “Sustainability secretary” position in all ANCs or neighborhood associations

Similar recommendations: ID#'s 7, 37

After this whole group discussion, participants split into smaller groups by each of the themes listed above to refine the “top 25” list of priorities. Participants were instructed to consolidate similar recommendations, and to word each recommendation to include three elements:

- (1) An action verb – what will happen
- (2) A timeline – when this will be accomplished
- (3) Actors – who will accomplish this and who is the goal/action directed towards



Upon completion of this small group exercise, the entire working group came back together to present their refined recommendations, which are listed below by theme:

Stormwater management

- (1) For new construction: through the building permit process, all builders/construction projects in DC will adhere to the goal of increasing permeable surfaces by 10% by 2020 and by 20% by 2030.
- (2) For existing construction: expand permeable surfaces in the existing built environment through a District-wide depave campaign (immediately identify opportunities for removing pavement by neighborhood) and by revitalizing the RFK Stadium parking lots into well-maintained green space for safe and enjoyable use by all DC youth and adults.

Education

The DC education system (pre K to university level) will incorporate environmental education/literacy into the existing curriculum with a focus on community and outdoor components.

When: after pilot phase, full implementation by 2016

Who: DCPS, DDOE, DDOT, DPR, DGS, local non-profits

Target: pre K through university level students

Habitat

1. Conserve, restore, and increase DC's ***Aquatic wildlife habitat*** by having DDOE, NPS and DPR follow the DC Wildlife Action Plan to: 1) remove all invasive plant and animal species (including geese) from wetlands by 2023; 2) restore all current wetlands (mudflats, underwater grass beds, and vernal pools/ephemeral wetlands) by 2017; 3) restore DC's natural stream channels; and 4) increase wetland areas by 200% by 2020 for the benefit of DC's wildlife and safe and responsible enjoyment of its human population.

2. Conserve, restore, and increase DC's ***Terrestrial wildlife habitat*** by having DDOE, NPS and DPR follow the DC Wildlife Action Plan to: 1) restore forest understory by replacing invasive plants with native plants and controlling the deer population by 2023; 2) increase grassland health by converting 80% of mowed space and 10% of rooftops to native wildflower meadow habitat; and 3) increase connectivity between habitats for the benefit of DC's wildlife and safe and responsible enjoyment of its human population.



Wildlife

Goals:

- (1) No net [further] loss of species and biodiversity (ID#'s 15 and 46)
- (2) No net loss of wildlife habitat

Actions:

- (1) Implement the Wildlife Action Plan (including climate change) (ID# 18)
- (2) Enhance and restore wildlife corridors (ID# 10, 16)
- (3) Create wildlife connectivity map (ID# 10)
- (4) Implement "Lights Out" program (ID# 43)
- (5) Removal of invasive plants and animals (create management plan) (ID# 44)
- (6) Increase native fish populations (ID# 60, 103)
- (7) Set up fish ladders (ID# 104)
- (8) Perform bird counts (ID# 106)
- (9) Erect fences to control geese (ID# 33)

When: 2013 Wildlife Action Plan Review

Who: DDOE, NGOs, ANCs

Open space and parks

- (1) Revitalize RFK Stadium lots into safe, enjoyable, and usable green space
 - a. When: 2017
 - b. Who: federal government
- (2) Require developers to fund or provide for green space by Green Area Ratio (GAR) and natural space set-asides in new developments that would help create or maintain wildlife corridors
 - a. When: 2013
 - b. Who: Office of Planning/Zoning
- (3) Return some fraction of lawn-type parkland to native landscaping
 - a. When: 2017
 - b. Who: NPS, DPR, neighborhood/partner groups
- (4) Increase and maintain safe and enjoyable park space; safe access, walkability, decrease "park deserts"
 - a. When: 2017
 - b. Who: NPS, DPR, Office of Planning, DDOT

Tree canopy

Have DDOT increase the District's tree canopy to 40% using 250,000 appropriate native trees through engagement of landowners including government



departments, businesses and residents, by 2035 for the purpose of improving the health, enjoyment and wellbeing of the District's residents (wild and otherwise). (ID#3)

Outreach and stewardship

Goal: promote an integrated outreach of policy, economy, and social activity in a way that values the protection of nature through safe use and responsible stewardship

Actions:

- (1) Execute awareness campaign
 - a. PSA's
 - b. Volunteerism
 - c. PR about what DC is doing and existing regulations
 - d. Promote positive aspects of outdoor recreation and safe park use
 - i. Safe use of parks (signage, rules, etc.)
 - ii. Safety of parks (maintenance, patrols, etc.)
- (2) Promote safe and responsible connectivity between people and nature
 - a. Increase access to parks: signage, trails
 - b. Mapping of parks
 - c. Promote safe and responsible park use and stewardship (i.e. stay on marked trails, pick up your trash, don't feed the animals, don't hike alone, etc.)
- (3) Ensure parks have sufficient resources to maintain and patrol public facilities to ensure public safety and security

Who: NPS, other park organizations, community organizations (i.e. "Friends of...", grassroots), DDOE, Deputy Mayor for service and volunteerism

When: start FY13 with 6-month promo and then re-evaluate

Target (both): DC residents and info available for visitors

Upon incorporating additional working group feedback (that was submitted virtually), we now have 19 refined recommendations as listed below. The working group did not have time to rank these recommendations during the meeting. Thus, the facilitators attempted to match the refined recommendations to their original counterparts in the Meeting 4 working group ranking. The proposed ranking of the refined recommendations is outlined below:

Proposed Rank	Recommendation
1	<p>The DC education system (pre K to university level) will incorporate environmental education/literacy into the existing curriculum with a focus on community and outdoor components (i.e. schoolyard and backyard habitat workshops and certifications).</p> <p><i>When:</i> after pilot phase, full implementation by 2016 <i>Who:</i> DCPS, DDOE, DDOT, DPR, DGS, local non-profits <i>Target:</i> pre K through university level students</p>
2	<p>For all new construction (residential and non-residential): through the building permit process, all builders/construction projects in DC will adhere to the goal of increasing permeable surfaces by 10% by 2020 and by 20% by 2030.</p>
3	<p>Have DDOT increase the District's tree canopy to 40% using at least 250,000 appropriate native trees through engagement of landowners including government departments, businesses and residents, by 2035 for the purpose of improving the health, enjoyment and wellbeing of the District's residents (wild and otherwise).</p>
4	<p>Conserve, restore, and increase DC's terrestrial wildlife habitat by having DDOE, NPS and DPR follow the DC Wildlife Action Plan to: 1) restore forest understory by replacing invasive plants with native plants and controlling the deer population by 2023; 2) increase grassland health by converting 80% of mowed space and 10% of rooftops to native wildflower meadow habitat; and 3) increase connectivity between habitats for the benefit of DC's wildlife and safe and responsible enjoyment of its human population. Conduct species vulnerability assessment. Inform decision making with climate impact information.</p>
5	<p>For all existing construction (residential and non-residential): expand permeable surfaces in the existing built environment through a District-wide depave campaign (immediately identify opportunities for removing pavement by neighborhood).</p>
6	<p>Revitalize RFK Stadium lots into safe, enjoyable, and usable green space</p> <p><i>When:</i> 2017 <i>Who:</i> federal government (NCPC)</p>
7	<p>Promote safe and responsible connectivity between people and nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase access to parks: signage, trails - Increase and maintain safe and enjoyable park space - Promote safe access - Increase the proximity of parks to all residents within a 10-minute walk - Decrease "park deserts" - Mapping of parks - Promote safe and responsible park use and stewardship (i.e. stay on marked trails, pick up your trash, don't feed the animals, don't hike alone, etc.) <p><i>When:</i> 2017 <i>Who:</i> NPS, DPR, Office of Planning, DDOT, Washington Parks and People</p>

8	Conserve, restore, and increase DC's aquatic wildlife habitat by having DDOE, NPS and DPR follow the DC Wildlife Action Plan to: 1) remove all invasive plant and animal species (including geese) from wetlands by 2023; 2) restore all current wetlands (mudflats, underwater grass beds, and vernal pools/ephemeral wetlands) by 2017; 3) restore DC's natural stream channels; and 4) increase wetland areas by 200% by 2020 for the benefit of DC's wildlife and safe and responsible enjoyment of its human population.
9	Enhance and restore wildlife corridors. Locate which of the open existing spaces must be reserved for corridors to provide species movement pathways for migration and for species to seek refuge, move to cooler locations, etc. Create wildlife connectivity map to establish a baseline and then update at regular intervals as activities to increase connectivity are implemented.
10	No net [further] loss of species and biodiversity <i>When:</i> 2015 Wildlife Action Plan Review <i>Who:</i> DDOE, NGOs, ANCs
11	No net loss of wildlife habitat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of invasive plants and animals (create management plan) - DC obtains community habitat certification <i>When:</i> 2015 Wildlife Action Plan Review <i>Who:</i> DDOE, NGOs, ANCs
12	Require developers to fund or provide for green space by Green Area Ratio (GAR) and natural space set-asides in new developments that would help create or maintain wildlife corridors <i>When:</i> 2015 <i>Who:</i> Office of Planning/Zoning
13	Promote an integrated outreach of policy, economy, and social activity in a way that values the protection of nature through safe use and responsible stewardship <i>Who:</i> NPS, other park organizations, community organizations (i.e. "Friends of...", grassroots), DDOE, Deputy Mayor for service and volunteerism <i>When:</i> start FY13 with 6-month promo and then re-evaluate <i>Target (both):</i> DC residents and info available for visitors
14	Convert XX% of acres to native landscaping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convert 80% of mowed space to native landscaping/meadow - Convert abandoned/vacant lots into urban agriculture and wildlife gardens <i>When:</i> 2017 <i>Who:</i> NPS, DPR, neighborhood/partner groups
15	Erect fences to control geese
16	Implement "Lights Out" program
17	Increase native populations, including fish, birds, and other wildlife. Set up fish ladders.
18	Perform bird counts
19	Execute awareness campaign



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- PSA's- Volunteerism- PR about what DC is doing and existing regulations- Promote positive aspects of outdoor recreation and safe park use<ul style="list-style-type: none">Safe use of parks (signage, rules, etc.)Safety of parks (maintenance, patrols, etc.)
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After the meeting, one working group member submitted another recommendation regarding green infrastructure maintenance, which is detailed below:

Goal: To assure that the District's greenspace and green infrastructure is managed and maintained in a sustainable manner by creating a structured and sustainable educated workforce to maximize effectiveness and protection.

Actions:

- (1) By 2014, every government agency that has responsibility for public greenspace areas will have a dedicated department and/or one dedicated city employee to oversee greenspace/infrastructure management.
- (2) By 2013, a "Green 311" call line/website will be implemented for reporting greenspace public safety concerns. Confirmation/call back will be assured for each reported incident.
- (3) By 2013, an updated and current maintenance schedule for parks and public greenspaces will be accessible to the public.
- (4) By 2013, green infrastructure on government/federal property will have an updated and current maintenance schedule/scheduled maintenance plan.
- (5) By 2014, government agencies will be encouraged to partner with non-profits, CSOSA, volunteer organizations, CSO's, DCPS and college community service groups to help with greenspace maintenance.
- (6) By 2016, job training programs/college/high school curriculum will be required to educate and provide certification for green infrastructure maintenance and related green job skills.
- (7) ANC offices should become conduits for reporting maintenance issues.

Actors:

DGS, DPR, DPW, DDOE, DDOT, DCPS, CSOSA, NPS, AWS, ECC, SCC, Anacostia River Keeper, Groundwork Anacostia USA, Washington Parks and People, Casey Trees, ANC's, BIDs, etc.

Date for next meeting: Monday, March 5th, 6:30PM

Location for next meeting: Deanwood Community Center and Library – Multipurpose Room, 1350 49th Street, NE

Questions? Email sustainable.nature@dc.gov