

Mattawoman Campaign



- Brief History
- Campaign began in the late 80s, early 90s, based in citizen activism
- Goal: preserve the watershed, prevent destructive development projects, educate citizens
- Victories: Chapman Forest, Eastern By-Pass or Outer Beltway, Cross-County Connector,
- Current campaign emphasis: 2012 Comprehensive Plan Revision, public input phase of the revision, Scenario 1

[The Role of Science in the Mattawoman Campaign]



**SIERRA CLUB, 1000 FRIENDS OF MARYLAND,
CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION, CLEAN
WATER ACTION, MATTAWOMAN WATERSHED
SOCIETY, AND OTHERS**

Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team Meeting

June 11-12th

Annapolis, Maryland



[Mattawoman Campaign]



The Role of Science:

- 1992 Report Fish Egg Sampling in Eight Chesapeake Bay Tributaries by the Chesapeake Bay Research and Monitoring Division
- “Mattawoman Creek represents as near to ideal conditions as can be found in the northern Chesapeake Bay, perhaps unattainable in the other systems, and should be protected from over development.”
- Instilled a sense of local pride, raised awareness of the value of natural resources, inspiring and motivating local activists

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- Citizen activists use scientific information to educate themselves
- Citizen activists have prepare their own documents based on scientific studies, such as the Report Trouble Ahead, the Mattawoman Briefing Booklet, and press releases

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- Meeting with DNR Secretary John Griffin, negotiating development of the South Side of Mattawoman Creek. “What about the fish spawning grounds?” activists asked.
- 2005 Jim Uphoff delivered a presentation to the Charles County Commissioners about the value of the Mattawoman, drawing for lessons on the Severn River and the decline of the Yellow Perch there; provides support to grassroots activists.
- DNR’s annual reports to the Fish and Wildlife Service is significant for the historical record these reports provide on the health of our rivers; makes the connection between development and decline of riverine ecosystems

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- Reports delineating the relationship between impervious cover and watershed decline
- Citizen activists trained in Ichthyoplankton Sampling in the late 90s
- More recently: activists participating in DNR's Streamwaders program
- 2012 Report: The Case for Protection of the Watershed Resources of Mattawoman Creek/Recommendations and Management Initiatives to Protect the Mattawoman Ecosystem

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Despite all of our victories: Mattawoman is in decline! Science is critical in the efforts to protect the Creek.

Recommendations:

- Distribute research reports widely, ensure that watershed organizations and conservancies obtain copies;
- Prepare introductions, executive summaries and conclusions in layperson's terms, perhaps published and distributed as separate documents
- Strong, DNR comments on wetlands and construction permits

Consider:

- Press outreach, press release along with report, press conferences
- Distribute reports to elected officials and planning commission staff

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- Conclusion
- Resources and Relationships

Compared to other watersheds campaigns, the Mattawoman Campaign lacks resources; other Watersheds campaigns are institutionalized; Will there be momentum for institutionalization when the creek is increasingly impaired?

People's relationship to rivers change when they are impacted by pollution, rivers become forgotten.