

## GENERAL UPDATES & UPCOMING EVENTS

### **WATER RESOURCES GENERAL**

#### WEFTEC

COG Staff attended the Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference WEFTEC, September 27 - October 1, 2014. The national professional conference for Wastewater and Stormwater issues provided a forum for sharing best practices and cutting edge technologies, and highlighted various collaborative initiatives to address water resource, sustainability, and innovation for the water industry. More information [here](#).

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#### Water Quality Workshop

COG held a Regional Water Quality Workshop on November 13<sup>th</sup> focusing on *Accomplishments and Challenges in the Potomac and Local Waters*. The workshop was a success on many levels; over 60 people discussed the importance of local water quality monitoring programs and the critical need for baseline water quality data. Speakers included John Jastram from the USGS (regarding a cooperative effort to monitoring streams in Fairfax County, VA) Adil Godrej and Saurav Kumar from OWML (regarding monitoring data from the fall line at Chain Bridge), Tom Parham from MDDNR (regarding the 2014 algal bloom season) and Dr. Chris Jones/Karl Berger - GMU/COG (regarding a Draft water quality/wastewater case study fact sheet that COG prepared) The fact sheet highlights the water quality improvement results in two local estuaries in response to the **significant nutrient reduction efforts that have been made at the Noman Cole plant (Fairfax), and the Mattawoman Creek plant (Charles County)**. For additional information including reports and presentations, please visit COG's [website](#).

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### **HYDRAULIC FRACTURING**

#### Hydraulic Fracturing to be permitted in the George Washington National Forest

The U. S. Forest Service [announced on Tuesday](#) that hydraulic fracturing, the extraction of oil and gas from shale deposits by injecting water mixed with chemicals and sand deep underground, will be permitted in the George Washington National Forest. The federal management plan reverses a ban on hydraulic fracturing that the U.S. Forest Service had proposed in 2011. Federal officials are declaring it a compromise between the energy and environmental communities due to the fact that the controversial high-volume hydraulic fracturing will only be permitted in approximately 16 percent of the land (that covers 1.1 million acres in Virginia and West Virginia). The decision was highly anticipated because of the financial and environmental implications; financially due to the fact that roughly half of the George Washington National Forest sits atop the Marcellus shale formation, an underground deposit of natural gas that runs from upstate New York to West Virginia and yields more than \$10 billion in gas a year. Environmental concerns range from the potential impacts to drinking water supply to infrastructure damage to local roads and highways.

The National Forest includes the headwaters of the Potomac River that serves as the main source of drinking water supply to our region. Officials received over 53,000 public comments on the draft plan and roughly 50,000 supported restrictions on hydraulic fracturing. Starting in 2011, Fairfax Water, the Washington Aqueduct, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac

River Basin and members of U.S. House of Representatives (including Gerald Connolly, Jim Moran, Chris Van Hollen, and Eleanor Holmes Norton) submitted letters supporting the need for additional research to evaluate the impact of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water supply. In 2013, DC Water voiced similar concerns. The uncertainty regarding the potential to pollute Northern Virginia's drinking water supply from the hydraulic fracturing process was a common message throughout their letters.

Note that the new plan eliminates the potential for oil and gas leases on 985,000 acres where they could have been granted, and permits drilling only on 167,000 acres with existing private mineral rights and 10,000 acres already leased to oil and gas companies.

Water utilities in our area are receiving inquiries from the public regarding this decision and the impact it could have on our drinking water supply. COG is currently working with regional water utility managers and public information officers to determine the best way to share and respond to this decision. We will keep the CBPC informed if a meeting or workshop is planned in the near future.

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## **STORMWATER**

### **Metro's Net Zero Stormwater Facility in Largo, MD**

On November 13, COG's Built Environment and Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC) hosted a tour of WMATA's state of the art [net zero Stormwater Treatment Facility](#) in Largo, MD. Prince George's County elected officials and staff, Metro staff, Maryland state staff, COG staff, and the contractor who built the facility went on the tour. The stormwater facility treats 27,000 gallons/day of industrial discharge from Metro tunnels, and must meet total iron, TSS, pH, and flow requirements under its NPDES permit. The building also features a 9.7 kW solar system, green roof, and rain garden. Cleaned discharge water from the facility will be used for on-site irrigation.

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### **Stormwater Management Forum with Great Washington Board of Trade**

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, COG and The Greater Washington Board of Trade co-hosted a Stormwater Management Forum for an audience comprised mainly of the development community (architects and engineers).

The purpose of the Forum was to explain stormwater requirements for new development and redevelopment, under MS4 permits and Bay nutrient load reduction requirements. The discussion included projected costs to local governments to comply with the permit requirements, and the innovative fee/credit structures and financing underway to offset the high costs. The aesthetic and health benefits of stormwater retrofits (as a result of redevelopment) were stressed as part of a necessary paradigm shift.

The panel of speakers included Brian Van Wye from DDOE, Randy Bartlett from Fairfax County, Mark Etheridge from Montgomery County, and Adam Ortiz from Prince George's County. The Forum was very well attended and resulted in a beneficial dialogue between the audience and panelists.

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## CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

### Water Quality Goal Implementation Team Meeting

COG staff (Karl Berger & Tanya Spano) participated in the CBP's Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) meeting on October 7th & 8th. Discussions focused on many technical and policy issues, including a focus on the 2017 Mid-point Assessment, the new Bay Agreement and related Management Strategies, as well as the two new goals related to toxic contaminants and climate change. Highlights of those discussions, the potential implications for COG's members, and COG's staff plans to address the issues will be presented at the November 21<sup>st</sup> CBPC meeting.

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## CLIMATE

### Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

CEEPC met on November 19. The Committee heard presentations on the Rooftop Solar Challenge and streamlining solar implementation and heard from a panel on climate communications and community engagement. CEEPC discussed the next steps from the joint Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee/CEEPC meeting held Oct. 2 -- forming a task force to identify carbon pollution reduction opportunities in several sectors. CEEPC recommended that the task force emphasize transportation opportunities and targets, as part of its work to address all sectors. CEEPC endorsed the continuation of the Climate & Energy Leadership Awards for a second year.

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### Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)

- ACPAC and CEEPC presented the **Climate & Energy Leadership Awards** at the COG Board meeting on Oct. 8. Winners included City of Falls Church, for reaching EPA Green Power Community Challenge goals; City of Rockville, for Energy & Green Buildings; Prince William County Landfill Gas to Energy plant; and Loudoun County Public Schools' Energy and Water Management Policy.
- On October 20, ACPAC received briefings on WMATA's Sustainability Plan, and on the NASA-initiated Climate Resilient National Capital Region project which facilitated collaboration between COG and numerous federal agencies to evaluate climate risks and identify resilience strategies. The committee also discussed the joint MWAQC-CEEPC meeting on October 2 and the challenges and opportunities for greenhouse gas emission reduction in the transportation sector.
- On November 10, the committee heard presentations on the health effects of air pollution by George Washington University public health doctors.
- Community leaders and interested citizens from across the metropolitan Washington region are invited to apply for membership on the 2015 [Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee](#) (ACPAC). Completion of the [ACPAC interest form](#) is due by January 9, 2015. Please share this information with anyone you think may be interested in participating.

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## OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

### Green Purchasing Vendors' Fair

COG will be holding a Green Vendor Purchasing Fair on January 29, 2015 (9:00-3:00) in the COG Ron Kirby Training Center. To register or find out more, visit [MWCOG.org/GreenPurchase](http://MWCOG.org/GreenPurchase).

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WEF news feature: [Deciding on a Natural, Cheaper Way](#) - Texas water district builds a wetland to treat water diverted from the Trinity River, which consists of mostly wastewater treatment effluent from an upstream plant, before release to a reservoir. The wetland also serves as a wildlife sanctuary. The system is the first of its kind, a water-reuse wetland treatment system, in the U.S.

WEF/WERF held a webcast on Nov. 4 on [Wastewater Worker Safety - Addressing Concerns on Ebola in Wastewater](#). This webcast addressed concerns that the Ebola virus poses on wastewater worker safety and included a general overview of what is known about the survival of the Ebola virus in wastewater and what is needed in terms of research. Did you miss the webcast or want to see it again? The [webcast recording](#) is available now, and slides are available for [download](#). Note: COG staff is actively working with national and regional partners and COG's membership on Ebola preparedness.

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EPA published a new guide called [Flood Resilience: A Basic Guide for Water and Wastewater Utilities](#).

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### Upcoming CBPC Meetings & Events

December 3 - Chesapeake Bay Program's Local Leadership Workshop

December 10 - COG's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony

December 10 - Chesapeake Bay Program's Climate Change Workgroup's Inaugural Meeting

January 16 - CBPC Meeting

January 29 - Green Purchasing Vendors' Fair at COG