Urban Waters Federal Partnership: Catalyzing Redevelopment Opportunities for Thrivable Communities

Panel Presentation – New Partners for Smart Growth

January 29, 2015; 4-5:30 pm
Baltimore, Maryland
Panelists

* Dana Coelho, Urban & Community Forestry, Rocky Mountain Region, US Forest Service (moderator)
* Roy Simon, Office of Water, US EPA
* Michael Rains, Northern Research Station and Forest Products Laboratory, US Forest Service
* Devon Buckels, Colorado State Forest Service
* Mike Galvin, SavATree
THE URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP & THRIVABLE COMMUNITIES

14TH ANNUAL NEW PARTNERS FOR SMART GROWTH CONFERENCE
BALTIMORE, JANUARY 29, 2015
Urban Waters Federal Partnership

◆ Key initiative of EPA’s Urban Waters program
◆ EPA, DOI and USDA co-leads
◆ **Vision:** “Through our Partnership, we will **revitalize urban waters and the communities that surround them**, transforming overlooked assets into treasured centerpieces and drivers of urban revival.”

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**Partnership Principles**

- Promote clean urban waters
- Reconnect people to their waterways
- Promote water conservation
- Use water to promote economic revitalization
- Encourage community improvements through active partnerships
- Be open & honest; Listen to communities to learn.
- Measure success & evaluate to fuel future success
Urban Waters Federal Partnership
Powerful Inter-Agency Platform supported by WH CEQ and DPC
Breaking down federal program silos; Engaging communities first.
What can a local Urban Waters Partnership initiative achieve?

Imagine...

- All waters clean for fishing and recreation and for cleaner intake water for drinking
- All Urban Waters locations with economic progress in communities that surround them, including distressed communities
- That people’s lives are better in communities surrounding urban waters
- The people in urban, suburban and rural communities on the same river or lake collaborating to clean up the river or lake and connect culturally
Imagine Clean Water for Fishing and Recreation, and Cleaner Intake Water for Drinking

• Urban rivers and lakes are clean enough in cities to be fishable and support recreation, and if used for drinking water, cleaner water for intake to drinking water systems

• Fish caught are eatable and families can fish for free (with reasonable restrictions)

• Urban residents can enjoy the river through boating or sitting by the river or walking on a trail through wonderful trees on wonderful clean trails
Imagine Economic Progress in All Communities that Surround Urban Waters Locations

- New businesses and projects, like green infrastructure, green streets, playgrounds & roofs are driving new jobs for urban residents
- Water-friendly manufacturing businesses are opening or expanding near urban rivers and lakes and supplying new middle-class paying jobs because businesses want to be near beautiful urban waters
- New projects and jobs for urban residents are being created near urban waters to build public housing, weatherize old buildings, build trails, establish urban farms and food distribution, re-green vacant lots, plant trees, establish orchards
Imagine that People’s Lives are Better in Communities Surrounding Urban Waters

We could have better physical surroundings in neighborhoods with:

- New refurbished housing
- Clean streets
- New green infrastructure for green streets, green playgrounds, green sidewalks, green buildings/roofs
- New trails, trees and parks
- Weatherized public housing or housing for middle-class families
- Green schools
- Green restored vacant lots with trees and parks
Imagine Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities Connecting Culturally and Collaborating to Clean Up Shared Rivers and Lakes

• From the headwaters of the South Platte River in Denver through to the City of Denver – collaboration between the urban, suburban and rural-based people near the river, working together on the same day to clean up “Their River” for multiple goals such as recreation on the whole river and clean drinking water.

• Or here in Baltimore, from the headwaters of the Patapsco through into the City, people from rural to suburban to urban working for and on the River.

• Developing a joint cultural interest among these three segments of American Society (urban suburban, rural) using the River as a Cultural Collaboration Vehicle.
National Urban Waters Actions and Approaches

2010 – Present
National Urban Waters Federal executives and appointed workgroup launched:
- Partnership Vision, Mission & Principles
- Locations Learning Network
- Partnership Work Plan

2011 – 2014
Designating and building 19 Partnership locations with federal, state and local government, local NGOs and businesses
- Establishing Ambassadors
- Working with national NGOs, foundations corporations

2015 – 2016
Advancing and documenting progress in 19 locations
- Publishing a “How To” Handbook & sharing this tool for all urban locations in the nation
- Identifying and spreading best practices with locations
Examples of Accomplishments from Partnership Locations

In **Atlanta, GA**, the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance is working in underserved communities and engaging residents and youth in outdoor and volunteer activities to protect and restore local green spaces.

In **Los Angeles, CA**, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership is cleaning up the Los Angeles River upstream to downstream with local partners. One primary goal is to restore sections of the river to its natural state and promote use of the riverfront.

In **Philadelphia, PA**, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is training and educating local residents through its job training program. The program has a course on stormwater and green infrastructure to train skilled workers and expand Philadelphia’s workforce.
What’s Next?

Building the Partnership. Growing our Impact:

• Launch the Partnership’s Handbook for communities nationwide
• Work with the 28+ national NGOs signed on to the Partnership
• Deepen our work within the 14 federal agencies in the Partnership

Questions? Please visit: www.urbanwaters.gov
The Partnership…What This Segment Will Cover:

- Conclusions
- Shared Benefits
- Shared Outcomes
- USDA Goals for the Partnership
- Why the USDA?
- The USDA Forest Service
- The Partnership: What it Advocates
- USDA Goals

Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities
The Partnership…The USDA Forest Service

“…To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”

Mission Statement of the USDA Forest Service

Simply put, the USDA Forest Service slogan:

”…caring for the land and serving people.”
The Partnership…What is Advocates

Creating opportunities for new jobs leading to careers in conservation.

Restoring rural and urban forests and their related streams, wetlands, and riparian areas.

Adopting water conservation measures to ensure sufficient quantities of clean water.

Deploying science-based “best management practices.”

Improving Environmental Literacy.

Leveraging the combined authorities and resources of the federal agencies.
The Partnership...Why The Forest Service?

“...The Forest Service has a direct and indirect role on about 80 percent of our nation’s forests: 885 million acres, including 138 million acres of urban forests where most Americans live.”

Simply put, we are a dominant conservation agency along a complex rural to urban land gradient.
The **Partnership**…The Forest Service **Goals**

- **Organization**
  - Stewardship
  - Cohesive Service
- **Capacity**
  - All-lands

**CRADIL**

**URBANWATERS**

Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities
The *Partnership*...Shared **Outcomes**

Strategic Framework

- Technical Assistance
- Financial Assistance
- Tools For Teachers

**Outcomes**

**CRADIL**

Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities

**UWFP.7**
The Partnership...Shared Benefits

- More Livable Urban Areas
- Improved Ecosystem Services
- Cleaner Air and Water

Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities
The *Partnership*…Conclusions

1. This is a *Conservation Legacy Event*

2. Improves people’s lives by banding together

3. Improves the resiliency of our natural resources

4. Illustrates how a *Public-Private Partnership* can and should work
The **Partnership** ... Questions?

The **Urban Waters Federal Partnership**

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ♦ Department of the Army (Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)) ♦ U.S. Department of Commerce (Economic Development Administration (EDA) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)) ♦ Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) ♦ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ♦ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)) ♦ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) ♦ U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) ♦ U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT); U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) ♦ U.S. Department of Education (DE) ♦ and, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) ♦

...as of January 2015
South Platte River
Urban Waters Partnership

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference
January 28-31, 2015
Baltimore Maryland

Devon Buckels, AICP
Urban Waters Partnership Coordinator
Colorado State Forest Service
Devon.Buckels@colostate.edu
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<td>2011-12</td>
<td>- Pilot launched</td>
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<td>- Quarterly meetings with networking and relationship building</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Geomapping Project</td>
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Water Quality Assessment

Partners

EPA
USGS
ATSDR
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Denver Environmental Health
Metro Wastewater Reclamation District
Littleton / Englewood Wastewater Treatment Plant
Groundwork Denver
South Platte CURE (non-profit)
Coalition for the Upper South Platte
Green Infrastructure
Natural Capital

Assessment of Ecological Infrastructure

Ecosystem Services
The Water Connection
Who? Urban Waters Partnership +

Why?

- Share responsibility for action.
- New voices.
- Grow the pie.
- Maximize visibility and access.
- Presentation / Image.
- Hedge against uncertainty.
Engage with the National Western Center Partners to implement projects that are directly in line with UWP goals and priorities.
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Mike Galvin
How does the network change over time?

Graph showing the number of organizations and ties across different levels of degree centrality over time.
50 Row homes
Deconstructed v. demolished

Per Unit:
3,000 bricks
400 sq ft flooring
800 bd ft framing
The Sustainable City

• Voluntary program
  – Coalition of the willing
  – Fed/State/Local/NGO

• Science-based

• Multifunctional approaches

• Human-dominated system
  – People, planet, prosperity
Discussion

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Thank you!

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