

Potomac Riverkeeper Network Receives Grant From VA Environmental Endowment

Funds Will Support "Virginians For Swimmable Waterways" Campaign

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 20, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Potomac Riverkeeper Network](#) (PRKN) has been awarded a grant of \$15,000 by the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) to implement the "Virginians for Swimmable Waterways" program through which citizen volunteers will be trained to collect samples and test the Potomac River for enterococci bacteria. Results will be shared on [Swim Guide](#), a popular phone app which provides information on water quality for swimmers and other recreators on the water.



Water Testing

"This grant is key to our ability to execute our goal of making all of the Potomac, in both Virginia and Maryland, swimmable again," said Dean Naujoks, Potomac Riverkeeper. "People are determined to swim, but because of sewer overflows, pet waste, and other contaminants, the Potomac River is not always safe for human contact. Our summer-long water quality monitoring program will gather the necessary data and make it available weekly through the Swim Guide App and via the [Chesapeake Monitoring](#) Collaborative so that anyone can determine whether recreation in or on the river is safe."

The Alliance for the Chesapeake will provide training for volunteers who will collect water samples once a week from May 23 through the end of September and test the water for the presence of enterococci bacteria on the Sea Dog, PRKN's floating laboratory. The first volunteer training day was held on May 15, 2019 at National Harbor and was attended by nearly two dozen volunteers. For more information about the program visit our website.

In addition to VEE, other funders include Hunting Creek Garden Club, Peterson Companies, National Harbor Marina, and SP Marine Management, and an anonymous family foundation.

The Swimmable Waterways campaign will support efforts to verify whether the water is clean enough to lift the ban on swimming in DC waters by 2022, the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act.

"We have a lot of work to do to accomplish our goal of making the Potomac swimmable again. We simply could not undertake this important program without the financial support of the Virginia Environmental Endowment and we thank them profoundly," Naujoks concluded.

Potomac Riverkeeper is also testing in DC waters with partnership with DC Department of Environment (DOEE), Anacostia Riverkeeper, Rock Creek Conservancy, Audubon Naturalist Society, and Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

About Potomac Riverkeeper Network

Potomac Riverkeeper Network is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization with three regional Waterkeeper branches: Potomac Riverkeeper, Upper Potomac Riverkeeper, and Shenandoah Riverkeeper. Our mission is to protect the public's right to clean water in our rivers and streams. We stop pollution to promote safe drinking water, protect healthy habitats, and enhance public use and enjoyment.

For more information, visit www.potomacriverkeepernetwork.org

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