

Slide 1



Slide 2



The Patuxent Riverkeeper is an affiliate of Waterkeeper Alliance which is an international organization of local advocates including several in China and in Indonesia. There are 1976 Waterkeepers worldwide. Patuxent Riverkeeper was founded in 2004. We are grassroots community advocates where “community” is defined by a watershed. Among the 19 Chesapeake Waterkeepers ours is the only one run by an African-American. We think this is relevant because environmental sensibilities are influenced by race and class. We seek to practice what we call compassionate environmentalism. Working to empower communities, restore justice to where it has been denied and champion on behalf of people and communities who often enough have never joined an environmental group. They are victims of an uncaring economic system and ignored by environmentalists who generally are funded by wealthy interests.

Slide 3

What Riverkeepers do:

- Conduct firsthand patrols
- Serve as zealous advocates
- Work on issues that are inclusive
- Restore justice to those under-served
- Eyes, ears and voice
- Monitor and investigate
- Confront polluters
- Lobby for better laws
- Demand vigilant enforcement

Slide 4

Some of our tools:

- Civic Activism
- Water Quality Laws
- Grassroots Alliances
- Constructive convening
- Engaging stakeholders
- Mediation
- Litigation
- Public Outreach
- Community Building

Slide 5

Contaminants found in rivers

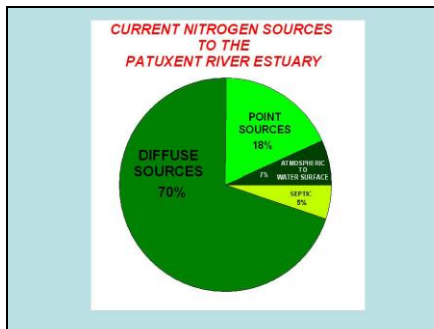
- Estrogen
- Anti seizure medication
- Anti-depressants
- Acetaminophen
- Mercury
- PCBS
- Pathogens (intestinal parasites)

Slide 6



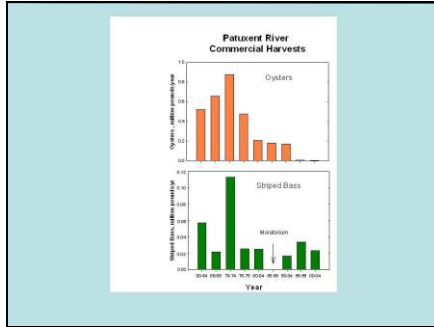
The Patuxent is 110 miles long and includes seven separate County political jurisdictions. It is Maryland's longest and deepest intrastate river (it starts and ends in MD). The river drains to the Chesapeake Bay and is sometimes called "Chesapeake Bay in miniature" { due to the variable terrain and viewsheds on our river that are similar to virtually anywhere else in the Bay. Ours is the deepest water in the Bay at nearly 200 feet in the South. The Patuxent was the first and only river community that sued the State government in the 1980's to enforce laws that brought our river back to life-- only to have those wins subsumed again by growth and other factors. Ours is a braided river that twists and crosses itself forming a "Little", and "Middle" Patuxent in addition to the main river

Slide 7



The river is urbanizing in the North and suffers overwhelmingly from diffuse run-off sources of pollution. There are 36 separate waste water treatment plants that discharge to the river. The sewage plants are better regulated than the non-point sources. Some of the wastewater treatment plants are governmentally owned and harder to regulate. There is mercury from air deposition of coal combustion and other impairments.

Slide 8



The “system” is dying. The marine industries that rely on clean and viable water have been in steady decline. The Patuxent was once one of the most productive shellfish rivers in the Chesapeake Bay. No more.

Slide 9



The plant you visited today is a major source of hot water discharges to our river. The resulting de-oxygenated zones kill lots of fish. Also airborne contaminants flow from the smoke stacks, and it was the site of Maryland’s worst ever manmade ecological disaster in year 2000 when nearly 12,000 gallons of deisel fuel leaked into the river from the Chalk Point Plant.

Slide 10



Our organization has sued the operators of Chalk Point multiple times for a variety of infractions. Most of them are foreseeable and negligent. The coal waste from the plant is currently contaminating the ground water in a nearby predominantly african-american community at over 50 times the allowable standards for Cadmium, arsenic, Selenium and other heavy metals. Some of the contamination blows off the site and becomes airborne, some leaches into the ground water from unlined disposal areas. Workers on these sites wear no protective gear at all.

Slide 11



The Patuxent is also the site of the largest recreational sailing port in Maryland at Solomons.

Slide 12



Ours is a vast resources which is habitat to over 90 different fish species. We run through several metropolitan areas. Patuxent Riverkeeper is challenged by organizing vigilant communities, each with very different needs and sense of place. Urban, suburban, rural.

Slide 13



Ours is a river with fantastic diversity, beauty and also incredible challenges.

Slide 14



Slide 15



Slide 16



This is an aerial view of where you are today. Nottingham is a historic site that dates back to the 1700's. It also happens to be the point of highest tidal influence on the entire river. The river's bed and the surrounding fields are filled with rich cultural history that is closely linked to the river.

Slide 17



This is the river as it appears where I grew up and where I played as a boy. It is about 15 miles north of Nottingham. This area once welcome deep water shipping directly from England with depths of 14 feet or more. Now from sediment, we are lucky to find 5 feet of water depth.

Slide 18



These are areas that contain incredible biodiversity and the scarce remaining natural resource wealth of our region. Our river also provides drinking water for two Counties. Food for the belly and for the spirit. A complex ecosystem.

Slide 19



We defend our river against the ravages of the rich, and we strive to bring justice for people of modest means who bear more than their share of pollution and environmental health risks. The dwelling sits in a buffer area the was legislated to be unbuilt in order to protect the waterfront and the water quality. Rich and connected people scoff at these rules with tacit support (through lack of enforcement) of the government regulators.

Slide 20



We fight to enforce violations such as sewage discharges from a non compliant privately run wastewater plants.

Slide 21



Run off, mud and silt from poorly designed and weakly enforced construction sites.

Slide 22



These are exposed and leaky sewage manhole in the Little Patuxent. One of the richest counties in the world sewage system no better than those in the world's poorest nations.....

Slide 23



See the damage to the bank area caused by the new housing development perched on the top of the hill? Prince George's County says this damage to the watershed is perfectly legal since the builder has a permit....

Slide 24



An Amtrak bridge poorly maintained and blockages that prevent a free flowing spawning river.

Slide 25



Our volunteers and staff work to retain navigable areas of the river

Slide 26



Debris fields like this one blockade the river and create dying areas devoid of flow, lean on oxygen and a memorial to trash that has washed into the river...

Slide 27



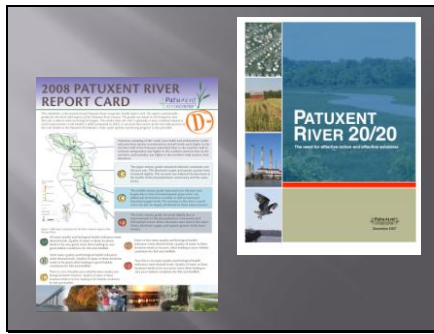
We patrol the river by water and land....

Slide 28



And also from the air...

Slide 29



We publish reports cards and policy reports to raise better public policy to protect the river for future generations.