

Final NDZ Resolution passed unanimously by the SRC on December 12, 2016

The SRC by unanimous vote of the members present at the meeting of December 12, 2016, makes the following statements and recommendations to the County Executive and the Annapolis Mayor concerning applying for and implementing a No Discharge Zone (NDZ) in the waters of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County.

The SRC believes that clean, clear, swimmable, and fishable water in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries is a crucial resource for citizens and an important selling point for marine businesses in the County and is a goal that should guide decisions on development around and discharge into the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

The Commission strongly believes that educating the public, including the boating public, about the benefits of clean water and limiting polluting discharge into the waters of Anne Arundel County is a positive step and should be pursued.

The Commission believes that the discharge from boats significantly degrade the quality of the tributary waters of Anne Arundel County.

In considering the question of whether to recommend applying for an NDZ designation, the Severn River Commission considered input from its own members, who represent a cross section of businesses, marinas, the USNA and scientists, and also heard from experts outside the Commission.

We carefully considered points that have been raised by opponents, among which are:

- Focusing on the City of Annapolis waterways might put an unfair burden on a small part of the County without sufficiently showing that the concentrated burden would truly work to improve water quality.
- Certain existing boats, which are currently EPA compliant, would no longer be able to legally operate in the NDZ, unfairly burdening their owners.
- There are sources of water pollution other than boats, including ones that may be more significant, and that clean-up efforts may be better directed elsewhere.

On balance, the proponents' points are more persuasive to us. These are:

- It is a worthy goal to further reduce bacteria and exposure disease connected to fecal matter and untreated waste, and that marine businesses and residents are negatively impacted each time a warning is necessary due to bacterial levels.
- Water quality, clarity and oxygenation is improved by reducing solids and nutrients that are discharged, and this has a positive impact on the enjoyment of the water, the tourist industry, as well as fisheries and habitat.

- The designation as a NDZ will aid substantially in public education and awareness, and demonstrate the County's commitment to the Quality of Life of its citizens and the health of our waterways.
- Many locations in the United States have already successfully implemented NDZs. An NDZ has also been successfully implemented in Herring Bay, and has improved water quality and has improved business. Another operates successfully in Maryland's Northern Coastal Bays, and yet another in the Chester River has been applied for and is pending final EPA approval.

As a result, the Severn River Commission makes the following recommendations:

- 1) Annapolis and Anne Arundel County would benefit from having their waters declared a No Discharge Zone and an application for such should be pursued.
- 2) The NDZ shall apply to all vessels, with permanently installed marine sanitation devices, in the navigable tributaries, creeks, coves and harbors of Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis.
- 3) Provisions governing NDZs that allow for reasonable phase-in periods should be considered for inclusion.

Respectfully submitted,

The Severn River Commission