

District of Columbia Urban Forestry Advisory Council Meeting Agenda

DATE: Friday, February 16, 2024
TIME: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
LOCATION: Web-Ex

Meeting Chair - DDOT	Earl Eutsler	Earl.eutsler@dc.gov	202.673.6813
Meeting Chair - DOEE	Steve Saari	Steve.saari@dc.gov	202.535.2961
Meeting Scribe	Erica Carlsson	Erica.carlsson@dc.gov	202.934.3307
Meeting Title	UFAC Fall Meeting		

Council Members:

Steve Saari, DOEE	Allison Clausen, comm. rep.	Angela Scott, DGS
Earl Eutsler, DDOT	Maureen Holman, DC Water	Brent Sisco, DPR
Maureen Alonso, GSA	Nathan McElroy, Pepco	Shoshana Sommer, comm. rep
Patrick Campbell, NPS	Brenda Richardson, comm. rep.	

Invited Guests:

Annie Acostia, comm.	Dennis Chestnut, comm.	Nathan Harrington, Ward8Woods	Phillip Rodbell, USFS
Iris Allen, MD DNR	Sally Claggett, USFS	Evan Johnson, GSA	Darryl Ross, comm.
Michael Alonzo, American U	Kelly Collins Choi, Casey Trees	Craig Larcenaire, USFS	Mary Pat Rowan, comm.
Matthew Baker, UMBC	Robert Corletta, DDOT	Joseph Luebke, GSA	Deborah Shapley, RMA
Spenser Balog, Casey Trees	Liz Crafford, comm.	Julie Mawhorter, USFS	Rob Shaut, Casey Trees
John Boland, Casey Trees	Merrit Drucker, Ward 8 Woods	Peter Norden, DPR	Nancy Sonti, USFS
Jeanne Braha, RCC	Stephanie Free, NCPC	Damien Ossi, DOEE	Stella Tarnay, community
Mark Buscaino, Casey Trees	Stephen Gyor, OP	Rasma Plato, GSA	Catherine Stratton Treadway, comm.
Delores Bushong, comm.	Bay Hanson, USFS	Ashlyn Pouvaranukoah, comm.	Matt Weber, DOEE
Matt Chambers, comm.			

SCHEDULE:

TIME	Duration	Agenda Item
1:00-1:05	5 min	Welcome, Introductions, & Minutes - Erica Carlsson, DOEE & Earl Eutsler, DDOT UFD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes approved from previous meeting Earl thanking members for testifying at performance hearings
1:05-1:15	10 min	Forest Health and Urban Wood Reuse - Earl Eutsler, DDOT UFD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitol Christmas Tree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2022 - Ruby - 78 foot tall Red Spruce from Pisgah National Forest (NC). UFD milled and returned the lumber to NC. It has been turned into banjos by Pisagh Banjos to “play on.” See more details in the PDF at the end of the agenda. 2023 - 63’ tall Norway Spruce from the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia. The tree was named wa’feem’tekwi by the Shawnee Tribe, meaning Bright Tree. We have received the tree from the Architect of the Capitol, and are awaiting specifications from the National Forest and Shawnee Tribe. Invasive Species Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only Sightings of Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF) have been reported – wide distribution Substantial decrease in reports since November No reports in 2024 to date

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wide distribution ○ Thanks to community support in reporting! Creative photos! ○ Damien Ossi, DOEE SLF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large group of SLF adults reported from reservation 630, which used to be called Melvin Hazen Hazen Park. Invited USDA Aphs to review. Found, scraped and removed. ▪ At Fort Reno scraped ~30 egg masses from tree of heaven there. ▪ Damien Ossi from DOEE is monitoring for egg masses when out in the field. Usually on the undersized of a limb. Can be high up. Almost light pinkish waxish material not shiny. If you see a tree of heaven look for those egg masses and report on UFD's reporting site. ○ Damien Ossi, DOEE PRISM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Capital Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management ▪ Coordinator moved from DOEE to MCCOG ▪ Offer professional training once a year for invasive species management and for weed warriors ▪ Early Detection Rapid Response ▪ If interested in joining group email Damien Directly at Damien.Ossi@dc.gov ▪ Ailanthus altissima, the preferred host for SLF, has been removed from priority locations like community gardens and schools and looking for more funding for public and private properties.
1:15-1:20	5 min	<p>Legislative Update – John Boland, Casey Trees &</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B25-0487- Office of Natural Area Conservation (ONAC) Establishment Act of 2023 by CM Lewis George <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish the Office of Natural Areas Conservation in DOEE ○ Develop a “Forest Health and Invasive Plant Response Plan” ○ Coordinate volunteer engagement in conservation efforts ○ Develop MOUs with NPS to supplement management of their land <p>Question 1: What is the District's history of developing MOUs with NPS in a timely fashion? Answer 1: Cooperative Management Agreements through Congress that the city can cooperatively manage NPS properties - so the legal route exists. MOUs depend on the administrative unit itself. DOEE has relationships with NACE and ROCR. DDOT MOUs with forest inventory analysis with the capital region and then administration units and all have their own nuances to navigate. It can be quick or take a longer time. Patrick from the National Capital Region NPS – not an expert but agreements are entered into for items like stream restoration. NPS has the authority to treat invasives across unit lines, if adjacent to boundaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B25-472- Tree Preservation Enhancement Act by Chair Mendelson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lowers Special Tree Circumference from 44 to 25 inches ○ Raises the removal fee for those who do not receive the Homestead deduction (higher costs for property owners who are not residents) ○ Allows for removal of Heritage trees for a fee, the fee is lower if the party creates a conservation easement of comparable size <p>Question 1: What was the impetuous for Mendelson's office to request a change for heritage trees; what the rules should be? Do people think Heritage Trees should not be protected? Understand the reasoning for Special Trees. Answer 1: CT worked with Mendelson around revising the heritage tree law. The current bill is not supported by CT. There is nothing to prevent a heritage tree at the end of its life from being paved over and we would like the soil to be preserved as perpetual canopy, hence the request for an easement. However, this law is written differently than CT proposed.</p> <p>Question 2: Is there a discussion about reducing the circumference of heritage trees themselves or basing the eval on tree coverage in a particular geographic area? Can they</p>

		<p>require that trees removed need to be replaced with new trees? Also curious about maintenance.</p> <p>Answer 1: CT has not thought about a circumference change but good feedback. One idea is “Champion Trees” – the largest tree of a species – with greater tree protections to create a proportional scale per species. Maintenance concerns can be reported to CT or DDOT UFD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B25-564-Environmental Justice Act by CM Parker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creates Environmental Justice Division at DOEE ○ Creates a Cumulative Impact Statement that must be completed to obtain permits for environmentally harmful actions in overburdened communities <p>Question 1: Mindful of racial equity East of the River – How does the community know that they are adhering to this environmental justice component?</p> <p>Answer 1: DOEE has an equity committee and framework.</p> <p>Liz Crafford and Catherine Stratton Treadway, APACC Citizens Forest Health Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy suggested during oversight hearings – ONAC is a way down the road and without a funding source. We are continuing to advocate for cross-agency cooperation and awareness across forest health and natural area maintenance issues and continuing to advocate for full funding if not additional funding for forest maintenance grants which have been increased in the last two years.
:45-2:10	25 min	<p>RCC Forest Resiliency Presentation - Jeanne Braha, Rock Creek Conservancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term project and coordination with DC and NPS lands • Climate and Social Resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coolest part in town ○ Community members can’t live without Rock Creek Park (ROCR)! ○ Green spaces in the main body of ROCR and other areas outside of the main body • Research by NPS and others – most forests not in great shape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most forests in ROCR in probably failure, which means some actions can be taken to improve ○ Threats – non-native/invasive plant species, long-term impacts of high deer densities, social trails, erosion, and surface runoff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personnel at ROCR managing invasives and contractors hired ▪ Volunteerism to restore 30 acres in ROCR for mini-oasis through restoration including great volumes of invasive plant management • Rock Creek Resilience Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In partnership with NPS and funding through NPF and NFWF (project management) ○ 6 meetings with ~ 40 experts across the county to create a preliminary trail map for equitable, adaptable management of the forest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses inventory and monitoring data from NPS and strategies regionally and within park for veg man, deer man, and other techniques ▪ Novel questions about adaptation to climate change ○ Resilience Outcome: Increased wildlife biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adjust planting techniques for wildlife needs ▪ Consider plant palettes for wildlife ▪ Prioritize needs for species of conservation concern ▪ Meadow habitat for pollinators ▪ Urban heat islands, well-being, and quality of life indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental justice shows disparities between west and east side of the park including heat island effect ○ Resilience Strategy: Reduce Stressors

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reducing non-native invasive plant coverage to near or less than 5% in the park ▪ Focus on areas of high biodiversity ▪ Continue deer management ○ Resilience Strategy: Increase interior area (i.e., reduce fragmentation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formalize some social trails to reduce pressures on forest ▪ Close many social trails ▪ Improve signage to keep people (and dogs) on trails ○ Resilience Strategy: Maintain canopy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understate afforestation ▪ Think about species composition under future climate scenarios ▪ Capitalize on light gaps that emerge ▪ Plant at edges, especially to close social trails ○ Restoration through partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Volunteers, project management (RCC), philanthropy for ROCR, project funding applications through Dep of Interior ○ Beyond Park Boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transfer knowledge to other national parks ▪ Connect and spread to adjacent land managers ▪ Buffering the park through at home stewardship ▪ Policies and landscape changes outside the park <p>Question 1: Partnership strategies – planting trees; considering assisted natural regeneration and local integrity? Signage for Mycorrhizae?</p> <p>Answer 1: Signage in ROCR interpretive and links to website – redoing this work. Want to make possible regeneration wherever possible but need to move quickly for restoration. ROCR is not seeing reforestation naturally due to deer browsing.</p>
2:10-2:30	20 min	<p>Kingman Island Restoration Updates (Health Forests) - Damien Ossi, DOEE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingman Island restoration project started a few years ago • Island made from dredged material from Anacostia created by Army Corp of Engineers hundreds of years ago. • Natural forest canopy of native Cottonwood and Black Locusts, Sycamore, and Slippery Elm but understory bush honeysuckle. Managing to remove the bush honeysuckle and planting hundreds if not thousands of plantings in the understory during the Fall and Spring planting seasons. • Plantings south of Benning Road (Kingman and Heritage Islands) with plant community types to mimic. The soil is actually from eroded Piedmont in the 1600s because it is dredged from the river. The soils are more basic in pH and high in calcium. Plant communities will be in Piedmont due to this soil construction. Some will be more coastal plain and have higher pH. There will also be vernal pools. Heritage is lower in elevation and will have different communities; it is a flooded forest so requires trees that can be inundated each day. At the south end of the island, there is a listed endangered plant (Virginia Mallow) to conserve the ecosystem. • Pulling out dumping as well. • Invasive plant management will be conducted throughout the summer. • Plans for formalizing trails and adding things like pavilions, an environmental education center, and outdoor classrooms, etc.
2:30-2:40	10 min	<p>Heritage Tree Act and Public Lands (DC and Federal) - Earl Eutsler, DDOT UFD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a general principle, state or local governments may not directly enforce their laws

		<p>against the National Park Service with respect to federal lands and activities within units of the National Park System. This principle originates in the US Constitution. Therefore, DC does not have the authority to enforce the Heritage Tree law on NPS property due to land ownership.</p>
2:40-2:50	10 min	Announcements & Closing Remarks (10 min)

DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

URBAN FORESTRY DIVISION

Urban Wood Reuse & Forest Health Updates

UFAC – February 16, 2024

2022 US Capitol Christmas Tree

Ruby, a 78 foot tall Red Spruce, was harvested from the Pisgah National Forest (NC) in early November 2022.

Prior to being shipped to the US Capitol, Ruby received a tribal blessing from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. UFD received Ruby from the AOC in January 2023. Upon receiving guidance from the Pisgah National Forest team UFD milled Ruby to their specifications, and returned the lumber to NC.



2022 US Capitol Christmas Tree Reuse Update – “Ruby”

The plan for Ruby is super exciting and will hopefully “play” on. Patrick, with Pisgah Banjos, has wood to create three banjos. One will come back to the National Forests in North Carolina to be played by employees at special events that the Forest Service hosts within communities around the Forests. A great example of this will be on the banks of Boone Fork Pond where the Grandfather Ranger District annually hosts a fishing event for Special Needs Children. This event will be one of many where Ruby’s story will live on.

The second banjo will be produced by Pisgah Banjos and raffled off and proceeds will be donated to the Black Reclamation Banjo Project. This information from their website “Pisgah Banjos is proud to support and partner with [The Black Banjo Reclamation Project](#) doing important anti-racism work and uplifting black banjo players and builders in the banjo community. It is extremely important to support the Black Banjo Reclamation Project and their efforts to re-claim the banjo as a historically black instrument born on early American and Caribbean slave plantations.”

The third banjo in production will be produced for Southern Highland Reserve to raise funds for a new greenhouse that will focus propagating red spruce seedlings that will be planted throughout the Southern Appalachians including thousands of trees on National Forests. Southern Highland Reserve is an important partner of the US Forest Service in their spruce fir restoration efforts as they are the sole source of seedlings. [SHR Leads Red Spruce Restoration | Southern Highlands Reserve](#)

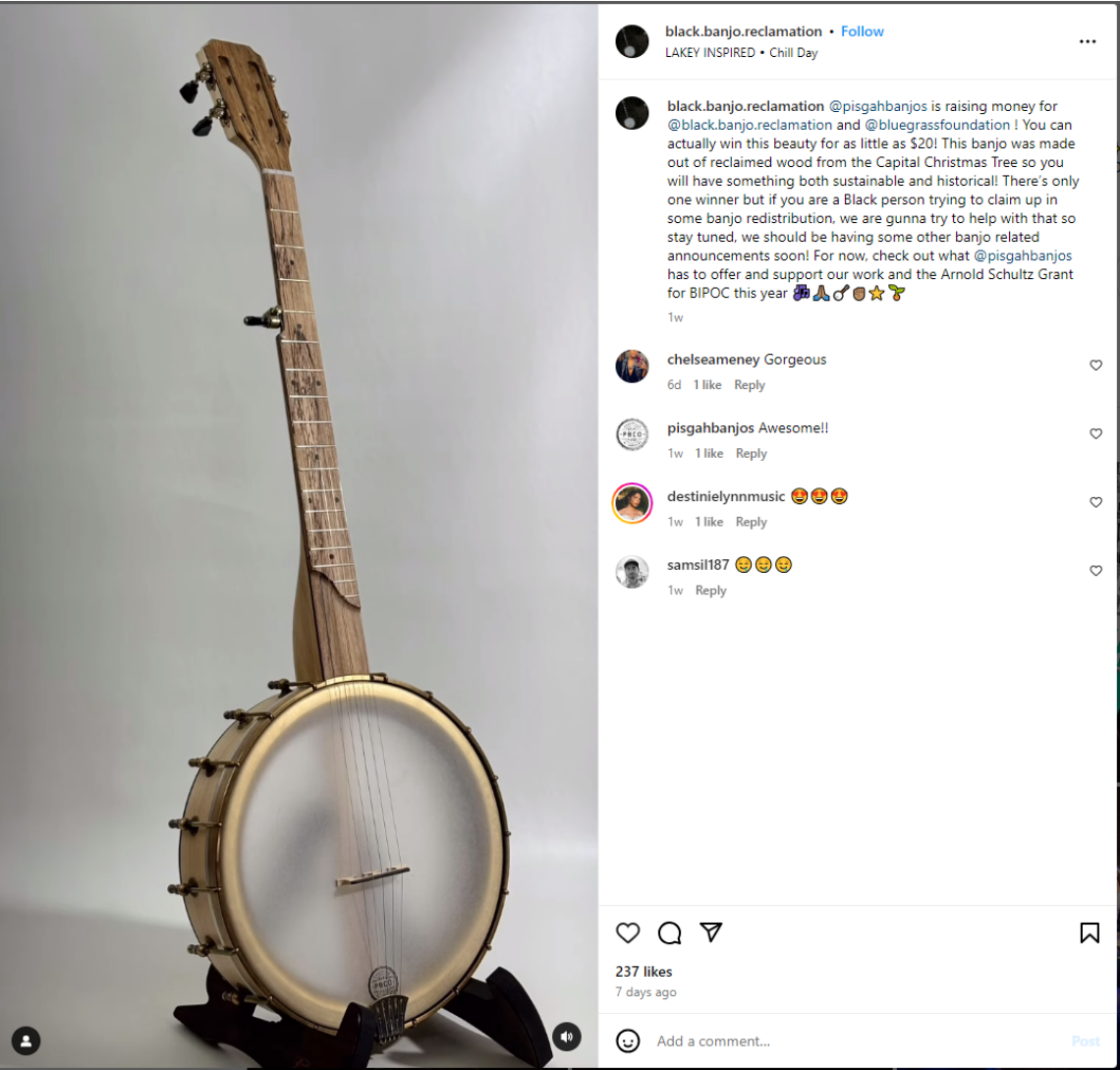
The rest of the wood has been dried and is awaiting several projects including a frame for the truck banner logo that made the journey with Ruby, plaques for the tour team and many small projects for the Southern Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative that will raise funds for restoration efforts in the Southern Apps.





Black Banjo Reclamation Project

Pisgah Banjos



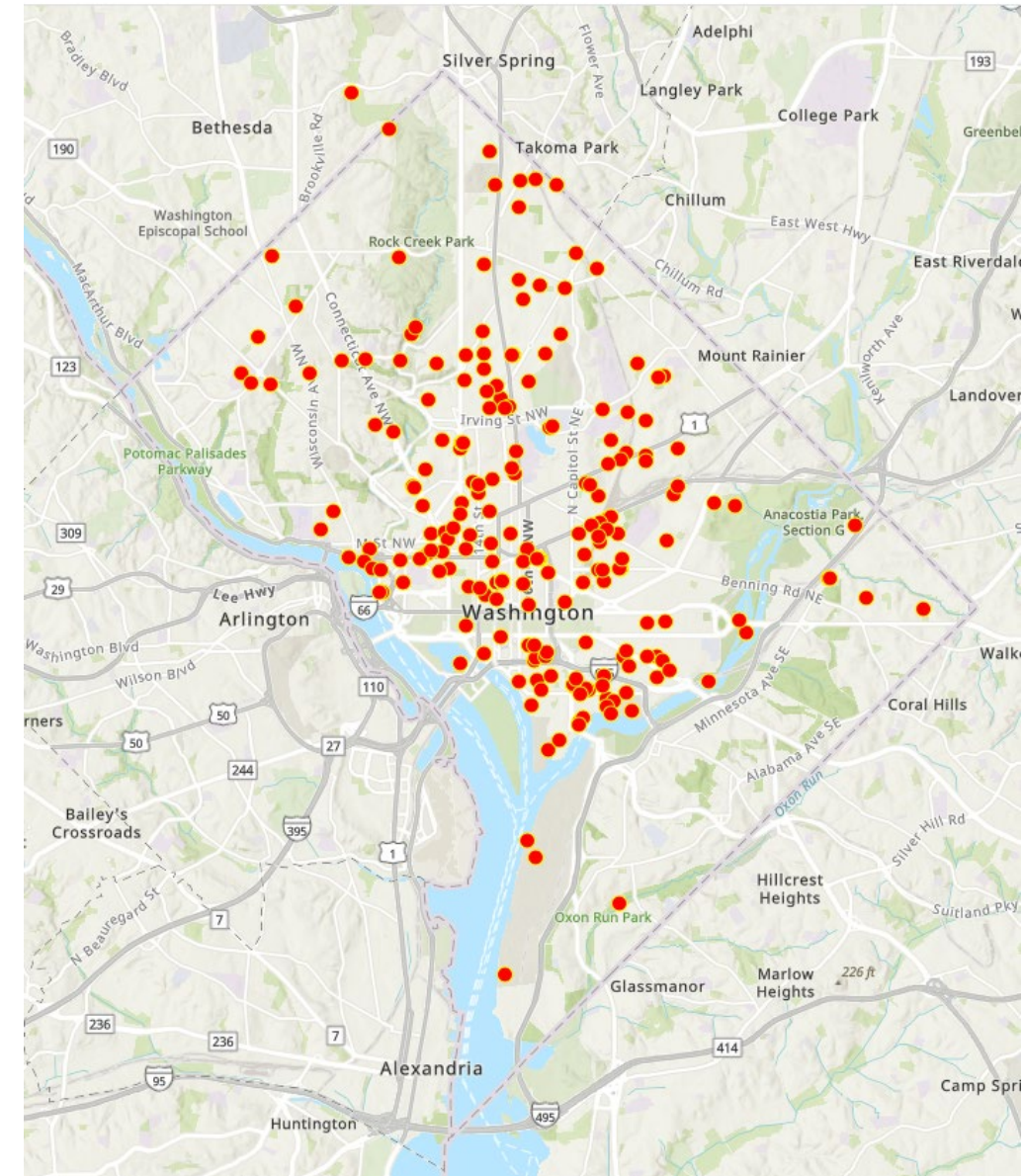
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Invasive Species Reporting

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District Department of Transportation

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