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SOUTH COUNTY

South Riverkeeper hoisting anchor

Koslow spent nine years fighting for river

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The man who has spent almost a decade battling to save the South River will step down from his post as riverkeeper this week.

Drew Koslow, who served as the South Riverkeeper for the last four of those years, will leave on July 1, the South River Federation announced in a letter via its Web site and e-mails to members last week.

It was a surprise," said Kinsey Potter, the organization's president.

"He has done a fantastic job for the South River, and will be missed, greatly missed."

Mr. Koslow helped get the organization on its feet back in 1999 while working as a biologist for the Department of Natural Resources. He was the South River Federation's first president as the group got going, holding meetings in South River Park's unheated wooden clubhouse.

"With Drew's leadership, the South River Federation and its partners have planted 10 oyster restoration reefs with millions of new oysters, restored a mile of South River living shorelines, launched a major new tributary restoration project, and brought the river and its issues" into the public eye, the statement said.

He also led the way in a recent lawsuit against Annapolis Towne Centre over construction runoff - the first lawsuit of its kind in Maryland under the Clean Water Act.

Mr. Koslow said he loved his work but had become "burned out" by the time and energy it took to keep numerous projects and day-to-day activities going over the past nine years.



South Riverkeeper Drew Koslow pilots his boat under the Route 50 bridge on the river he protected for almost a decade. Mr. Koslow will step down this week.

File photo by Joshua McKerrow — The Capital

"I am trying to do everything I can for our projects to go on. We have built something great together and I certainly want to see it continue," he said Thursday.

He heaped praise on the scores of volunteers who helped make things happen.

"The most rewarding part of the job was working with the volunteers, at many levels, both board members and people working on projects - moving rock, planting oyster beds, doing the things that have come to define the South River Federation."

One of his most valuable partners has been Chris Trumbauer, who helped compile the South River Scorecards and Snapshots, measures of the watershed's health. He's leaving DNR to become the West/Rhode Riverkeeper on July 7.

"I am going to miss having Drew in the river next door," Mr. Trumbauer said by phone from Seattle, where he was attending a conference. "But I won't lose his cell number."

Ms. Potter said the federation will begin looking for a new riverkeeper tomorrow. Based on the reaction they got from the first search for that position she thinks there will be a good pool of qualified people to choose from.

"Finding the right person with the right passion and background is a challenge," she said. "Drew's knowledge of South River will be hard to replace."

In the meantime, the federation will work fast and hard to keep projects going. "We already have a member who volunteered to do water monitoring," Ms. Potter said. Mr. Koslow will head to Montauk, N.Y. to pursue an opportunity for the summer and ponder his next move.

"Its been quite a ride," he said.

There will be a gathering and toast to Drew Koslow from 5:30 to 7 p.m. tomorrow at CBF headquarters in Bay Ridge. If you'd like to attend, please RSVP the South River Federation at 410-224-3802.

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