



## Nestlé Meeting Memo – December 17, 2018

**Members of FACC and Friends of Little Hunting Creek met with three Nestlé representatives at their Rosslyn headquarters. Two memos of that meeting:**

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Our meeting yesterday with Nestlé was very good. We met with Josh Morton (Communications), Kent Wilson (Policy and Public Affairs Manager, who seems to specialize in packaging and knew a lot about it), and Kim Pagel, Community Relations. "We" were Philip Latasa, Eleanor Quigley, Paul Siegel, and Betsy Martin.

We were astonished to learn that Nestlé has dropped its opposition to bottle deposit laws--it has adopted a neutral position, and is actively considering supporting bottle deposit laws. In April Nestlé will be making a commitment to make all of its packaging recyclable, and to have 50% recycled PET in water bottles. It needs a way to get good clean PET to meet this goal, and bottle deposits are under active consideration as a way to get there. Nestlé has also established an Institute for Sustainable Packaging in Switzerland. They already plan to put a larger recycling logo on water bottles that explains how to recycle. Their effort was clearly serious and has been underway for quite a while. We discussed all our requests, asked for a follow-up meeting after they've discussed our requests with higher-ups, and they agreed.

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The Nestlé people were cordial and sympathetic. Kent even recalled having volunteered with FACC at one of our cleanups a few years back.

The Nestlé side noted that Nestlé USA in Rosslyn is separate from Nestlé Waters North America, headquartered in Connecticut, but they can and will communicate our message to them.

Nestlé's decision to not oppose bottle bills is a very welcome development. They also did not say "no" to the idea of appearing in Richmond (or submitting a letter) to state their non-opposition in the General Assembly. Kent has had many discussions with Virginia Senator Adam Ebbin on the topic of trash legislation. Nestlé is thinking about how to expand bottle bills to include all beverage containers.

It seems there is serious discussion within the IBWA of changing their position on bottle deposits. Betsy suggested Nestlé could leave IBWA, but Kent countered by asking who then would be left.

They were proud to be making all their packaging 100% recyclable by 2025, but I made the point that their bottles are already recyclable and yet our creeks are filled with them. A change in behavior needs to happen and I urged that Nestlé use its packages and its advertising as powerful places to influence behavior. Josh noted that Nestlé brand Häagen-Dazs has a pro-pollinator initiative to plant wildflowers in supplier's fruit orchards and has included this in some advertising.

Paul asked about Nestlé changing its position on banning bottled water in National Parks, but I don't recall a direct response.

Eleanor brought up the example of recycling in Europe being more advanced. Kent noted yes, but not all places are doing so well by all measures.

Some random Nestlé points:

- Nestlé is joining [The Recycling Partnership](#)
- Kent mentioned the [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#) (but not sure if he said Nestlé is joining), which is working on a closed loop economy, including true bottle-to-bottle recycling.
- Nestlé participated in a recent dinner forum organized by The Atlantic and attended by parties such as the U.N., Anacostia Watershed Society, Center for American Progress, etc. Fairfax County was invited, but did not attend.

We asked if Nestlé was familiar with the Alice Ferguson Foundation. Disappointingly, they were not, but took note. I mentioned the AFF's annual regional Trash Summit as something Nestlé should consider participating in.

Pointing out that the Nestlé folks were relatively young, Eleanor made a good point when she posed the question "What's it going to be like when you are 71?"

Paul asked afterward if we all "felt manipulated". Yes, that thought was in my mind throughout the meeting. I'm not in a position to judge what impact any of Nestlé's steps will have, but at least they are aware and doing something. If they are moving in the right direction, perhaps it will be possible to build momentum to keep them and others moving in that direction.

## Friends of Accotink Creek

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