

*Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division*

**NICHOL RUN/POND BRANCH WATERSHED ADVISORY GROUP MEETING  
APRIL 20, 2010**

**The Dranesville District Community Room; McLean Governmental Center**  
1437 Balls Hill Road | McLean, VA 22101

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

*[Please note that the presentation from the April 20, 2010 Nichol Run/Pond Branch WAG meeting is available online at [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/nicholrun\\_docs.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/nicholrun_docs.htm)].*

Juliana Birkhoff, the meeting facilitator, opened the fourth meeting of the Nichol Run/Pond Branch Watershed Advisory Group (WAG). She welcomed WAG members and the members of the public and reviewed the meeting agenda and group expectations.<sup>1</sup>

Joe Sanchirico, Fairfax County, reviewed the process timeline. Mr. Sanchirico said the WAG will meet again to review and comment on the draft watershed plan. There will also be a public forum to engage the public for feedback prior to submitting the final plan to the county supervisor before the end of the year.

**III. Project Prioritization Process**

Melissa Taibi, F.X. Browne, Inc. summarized how the county developed its process to prioritize projects. She listed the following steps to prioritize projects:

1. Field reconnaissance to narrow down potential projects. The initial list included 281 projects.
2. F.X. Browne cut the first projects to eliminate any projects that were low priority or not viable. After the first round of cuts, there were 71 structural projects left.
3. F. X. Browne prioritized the final proposed project list with 65 structural projects for Nichol Run and Pond Branch. F.X. Browne plotted the projects with GIS mapping technology. To prioritize the projects they considered 5 factors;
  - effect on watershed impact indicators,
  - effect on source indicators,
  - location within priority sub watersheds,
  - sequencing,
  - and implementability.
4. F.X. Brown assigned composite scores for each project. The higher the score, the higher the priority of the project (ex; 65=lowest priority, 1=highest priority.) F.X. Browne used a weighted average of the 5-prioritization factors to determine the composite scores.

Ms. Taibi introduced 10 and 25-year implementation plans. The 10-year plan will include the 35 highest ranked projects in Nichol Run and Pond Branch (projects ranked 1-35.) The 25-year plan will include the next 30 projects in ranking order (projects ranked 36-65.) Ms. Taibi emphasized WAG input in

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<sup>1</sup> Attachments: The meeting agenda is available at [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/nicholrun\\_docs.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/nicholrun_docs.htm). Meeting participants are at the conclusion of this summary.

assisting project staff to decide which projects the County would include in the final implementation plan.

Ms. Taibi discussed including non-structural projects in the final implementation plan. County engineering contractors did not rank non-structural projects because it is difficult to quantify their benefits. Ms. Taibi explained that each sub watershed includes non-structural projects. They complement structural projects or provide water quality benefits where it would be difficult to implement structural projects. Non-structural projects also can be implemented through existing County policies or through cooperative agreements with residents and/or other agencies.

After Ms. Taibi's presentation, the WAG members asked questions. During the question and answer session, the engineering team and county staff noted:

- F.X. Browne staff will use best professional judgment (BPJ) to finalize project rankings. For example, engineers use BPJ to rank projects higher that are in a headwaters area and are downstream. The project ranking process does not account for the kind of complexity.
- Engineers calculated project implementability by assessing the; (i) overall complexity of the project (design, maintenance); (ii) types of property ownership (county owned, private); and (iii) number of property owners (shared parcel, single owner.)
- After the first round of project cuts 71 structural projects remained. F.X. Browne dropped six projects from the project list. The draft project ranking includes 65 structural projects.

#### Project Comments: Breakout Groups

The group divided into breakout groups to inspect maps of the watershed depicting potential projects. The project list distributed to the WAG lists the project ID number, sub watershed location, rank, and brief description of the project. Some project sites had multiple potential projects, indicated by alphabetical project components.

Individuals suggested:

- The trail running adjacent to Pond Branch is eroding. While this is not an immediate concern, one WAG member suggested continued monitoring of the erosion.
- Participants approved the project rankings for NI9118, NI9119, and NI9202. A participant said the public would support these projects.
- The farm upstream from the PN9111 project group, contributes fine sediment which builds up in the pond. Project PN9111C adequately addresses the sediment problem, but does not prevent its recurrence.
  - One WAG member was concerned about the impact a County maintenance access road may have.
  - The community surrounding PN9111 is very active. A community and youth education project with outreach through local schools (Thomas Jefferson High School, Whitman Middle School) would compliment these projects.

Projects participants felt F.X. Browne should rank the following projects higher:

- Erosion has deteriorated the access road/trail behind 182 River Park Drive. Excessive water flow has washed out the nearby bridge/culvert (approximately behind 176 River Park Drive.) These two areas constitute both environmental problems and major public safety hazards.

- One WAG members suggested a structural solution to the bridge to restore the crossing for bikes, hikers, and horses.
- The area around PN9400 has seasonal flooding that causes considerable problems.

Projects participants disapproved of or thought would not be viable:

- The draft project ranking does not include PN-PN-002 “148 River Park Lane.” This project should not be included in the final project rankings. The previously proposed project would have adverse affects on adjacent properties and limited environmental impact.

Participants noted the following project map and location problems:

- Maps with road overlays would help WAG members identify project locations.

### Next Steps

WAG members were encouraged to take maps home and share with their communities. The County can accept feedback until May 3. WAG members can send additional feedback (including the project ranking and ID number) to Melissa Taibi ([mtaibi@fxbrowne.com](mailto:mtaibi@fxbrowne.com)) or Joe Sanchirico ([Joseph.Sanchirico@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Joseph.Sanchirico@fairfaxcounty.gov).) FX Browne will consider WAG member feedback to refine the 10 and 25-year plans. Project staff will distribute the final ranking to WAG members before the next meeting.

The County will host the final Nichol Run/Pond Branch WAG meeting in approximately six weeks. The meeting will be an opportunity for WAG members to provide feedback on the draft watershed plan prior to the public forum. F.X. Browne will prepare a fact sheet for each project in the 10-year plan to distribute to WAG members before the meeting.

WAG members should begin to consider targeting members of their community to attend the public forum. The county will mail postcards to residents on a parcel of land, or attached to a parcel of land, that contains a proposed project. The county will send the outreach contacts spreadsheet to WAG members for assistance in identifying missing parties. County staff asked WAG members about newspaper, flyer, and website posting timelines. The county will consider these timelines to develop an outreach strategy for the forums.

A planning process initiated by Fairfax County is underway to improve the quality of the waterways and their watersheds. The Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) provides input to Fairfax County. The WAG members serve as liaisons between their respective communities and the project team. F.X. Browne, Inc. serves as the technical team lead, prepares watershed plan drafts and engineering studies, and facilitates WAG and public meetings for the county. For more information, please contact <[Joseph.Sanchirico@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Joseph.Sanchirico@fairfaxcounty.gov)> or visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/>

The opinions represented herein do not necessarily represent those of Fairfax County or its agents.

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APRIL 20TH, 2010**

**Meeting Participants+**

Bev Geserick\*  
Eleanor Anderson \*  
Robin Rentsch\*  
Thomas Wasaff\*  
Amy Stephan

**Fairfax County Staff**

Takisha Cannon  
Catherine Morin  
Sajan Pokharel  
Joe Sanchirico  
Darold Burdick

**Engineering Team**

Jon-Paul Do, F.X. Browne, Inc.  
Melissa Taibi, F.X. Browne, Inc.

**Public Involvement Team**

Juliana Birkhoff, RESOLVE  
Jason Gershowitz, RESOLVE

**\*WAG member**

+ If you attended the meeting and are not in the participant list above, please inform Jason Gershowitz ([jgershowitz@resolve.org](mailto:jgershowitz@resolve.org)) and he will add you to the list.