

# Healthy Watersheds, Healthier Communities

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

## Minutes Pohick Creek Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) Meeting #6

Tuesday, July 13, 2010  
Sangster Elementary School, Springfield VA

Meeting Attendees	
<b>WAG Members</b>	<b>Fairfax Co. Stormwater Planning Division</b>
Patrick Gloyd, Burke Centre Conservancy	Shannon Curtis
George Jennings, George Mason University	Darold Burdick
Chris Landgraf, Fort Belvoir DPW	Chad Grupe
Ron Marlow, Burke Presbyterian Church	Erin Abrahams
Kelly Meadows, Lake Braddock Community Association	
	<b>PBS&amp;J (engineering consultant)</b>
	Laura Chap
	Terry Suehr
	<b>Waterford Inc. (public involvement consultant)</b>
	Beth Offenbacher
	Paul Coelus

The meeting convened at 7:05 pm with welcome comments by county staff and public involvement consultant/moderator Beth Offenbacher. Shannon Curtis (Fairfax Co.) thanked the advisory group members for their service and asked them to continue their efforts at disseminating this information to the community.

Laura Chap (PBS&J) reviewed the stages of development of the draft plan and gave an update on the rankings: the cost/benefit analysis and the additional hydrologic and hydraulic modeling for the 10-year group, as well as an overview of the draft plan.

Beth Offenbacher led a roundtable discussion on the current version of the draft plan, a copy of which had been given to the WAG members following the last meeting.

Finally, the team reviewed the next steps in the process. The Draft Plan Forum will be held on July 27, 2010. Landowners adjacent to all projects have been sent postcards informing them of the Forum. There will be a 30-day public comment period following the meeting; a link to the online comment form will be posted on the County website.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.



Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

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[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds)



The following is a summary of the questions asked and comments made by members of the WAG and the answers provided by county staff and consultants. The identities of the persons asking and answering the questions are not included. This is not a verbatim transcript.

Q: What are the differences in the hydraulic modeling versus the hydrologic modeling?

A: Hydrologic modeling determines the flows in the streams over various storm events. Hydraulic modeling uses these flows (in this case the peak of these flows) to determine river levels for these events.

Q: How will the document be organized for the public? I understand the county is considering organizing the projects by project number. People in the community like being able to look at the list by Watershed Management Area (WMA).

A: We'll likely organize it by project number, although if we hear differently then it might change. We are trying to make it easy for people who may not understand what a WMA is to navigate the document.

Comment: The draft plan is well organized and easy to follow, especially the fact sheets on individual projects. The maps are easier to read.

Q: The public may not be interested in how costs were developed [on each fact sheet]. How is cost being used in the rankings?

A: Those are order-of-magnitude costs, which may change once more detailed information about the project is considered. Project cost was used in the cost-benefit analysis, to adjust the rankings to favor lower-cost projects.

Q: When you note the cost on the project fact sheets, you also show the kind of owner. Are you going to indicate who pays for it?

A: The county will pay for those projects. If there are instances where the project is on private property, there may be an easement or other kind of support that is provided by the owner.

Staff comment: These projects will compete with other watersheds for funding, and with other needs (such as repair of existing systems). So the project ranked #1 in Pohick Creek may not get done until, say, 50 others are done in other parts of the county, depending on priorities.

Q: One of my co-workers was a member of another WAG about 7 years ago, and has seen no activity on projects in that watershed. The County should consider how stakeholders will react in the long-term if we have a plan but then there's no visible movement on any projects. You may want to include in your public presentation some examples of projects that have actually been done in other watersheds.

A: That's a good idea. We'll include examples of projects already completed in the County, particularly ones that members of the public can actually look at if they want to.



Q: How was the cutoff of 90 (or so) projects made? Is there an expectation that all 90 will be completed within 10 years?

A: In general terms, this was done based on the average number of projects per area done in the first round of watershed plans. But we need to manage expectations. We have to give the Board of Supervisors our work plan each year, which includes our proposed list of projects to be performed that year. Many things can change which can impact which projects we decide to do. For example, EPA mandates could cause us to change the relative priority of various projects. So the 10 year plan is a general guidance of priorities, not a mandate.

Q: What is the next step after the final plan is adopted? Does your office then do the construction?

A: It stays in our division, but there's a different branch that handles implementation (design and construction).

Q: Do they have a point of contact for non-structural projects?

A: The implementation division is more geared to engineering and construction, so for non-structural projects it's probably best to deal with our branch (the watershed planning and assessment branch) within the Stormwater Planning Division

Q: Project No. PC9127 is a dry pond retrofit next to a school on Burke Center Parkway. I assume the project in this draft plan is above and beyond the work currently being done at that location (installation of a maintenance road, clearing the dam face, etc.).

A: Most likely, but we'll confirm that. The current work probably relates to maintenance issues as opposed to the retrofit called for in the plan.

Q: One of the stated objectives is to improve diversity of native plants and animals in the County. I didn't see anything in the draft plan that would specifically accomplish that.

A: The plan uses the terms "goals" and "objectives" differently. We don't tie objectives to specific projects, so the description of an individual project would not normally discuss how it does or doesn't contribute to achieving an objective. However, in planning projects we do keep these objectives in mind. So, for example, in a project that requires new plantings, we would use native species. But that isn't spelled out in the draft plan.

Comment: Then it would be helpful to include in the draft plan a paragraph or two which discuss how the projects collectively address those objectives.

Q: How can community organizations get involved by providing volunteer labor for non-structural projects?

A: For buffers and obstruction removal projects, there is an effort underway to establish a process in which the County runs a contract, which provides materials and then manages the volunteer labor (which is a required part of the work).

