

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

**SUGARLAND RUN/HORSEPEN CREEK WATERSHEDS WORKSHOP
OCTOBER 30, 2008**

Herndon High School
700 Bennett St.
Herndon, VA 20170

I. Welcome and Introductions

Fred Rose, the Chief of the Watershed Planning and Assessment Branch, Fairfax County Department of Public Works, opened the meeting, welcoming the members of the public in attendance.

Mr. Rose then gave a brief history of stormwater management in Fairfax County. He noted that the County has been interested in stormwater management since the 1970s, when the County's first set of watershed plans were developed. These comprehensive plans focused on flooding and erosion. In the 1980s, the emphasis of stormwater management shifted. While still looking at flooding and erosion, the focus turned towards water quality. In the 1980s, the County carried out a regional pond study concerned with controlling the water downstream from large facilities. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the focus of stormwater management shifted again towards controlling the source, which involved a change in technology needs. In 2001, the County performed a Stream Protection Assessment Study that assessed and ranked every stream in the County. Over 70 percent of the streams were found to be in "fair" to "very poor" condition. The County took the study results as a call to action, and started developing watershed plans. Over the years, the County has adopted a variety of practices for stormwater management, and constantly changing requirement to keep pace with changing technology. Mr. Rose noted that every person in the watershed contributes to the problem, so every person has to also be involved in the solution.

Mr. Rose talked specifically about the Sugarland Run and Horsepen Creek Watersheds Plan. He explained that the plan has a ten- to twenty-year implementation horizon, and was designed to evolve with changing technology. The Sugarland Run and Horsepen Creek Watersheds Plan is part of Fairfax County's second round of plans. In the first round, approximately 50 percent of the County's land area was addressed in six plans encompassing eleven watersheds. All the plans from the first round have been adopted by the County Board of Supervisors. So far, 100 projects have been completed from the first round of watershed plans. In this second round, the County will complete seven watershed plans encompassing nineteen watersheds. The process has been streamlined from the first round by developing the watershed plans concurrently rather than sequentially. The County has a goal to finish development of all these plans by 2010, consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Agreement. While the stormwater program competes with other funding needs, Mr. Rose reassured the group that the stormwater projects will continue to be funded. Over the past few years, the program has succeeded in securing funds; for example, in 2005, the Board dedicated funding from tax revenue for the stormwater program. .

Mr. Rose then introduced John Foust, Supervisor for the Dranesville District. Mr. Foust thanked Mr. Rose and the staff of Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division for all their work putting together the watershed plans. He said that prior plans were successful because the community was involved in preparing them. He reemphasized Fairfax County's commitment to watershed planning and stormwater management, noting that there are only two projects with committed funding sources: this project and affordable housing. Mr. Foust finished by thanking the members of the public who took the time to come to the forum. He said he looked forward to working with the public over the next year to develop and implement the watershed plan.

Mr. Rose then introduced Juliana Birkhoff, the public forum facilitator. She reviewed the meeting agenda and introduced the teams of Fairfax County staff, technical consultants, and facilitators.

II. Slide Show

Watershed Primer: An Introduction

Joe Sanchirico of the Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division gave a background presentation to the group, reviewing overall concepts and terms related to watershed management. Mr. Sanchirico informed the group that the Sugarland Run and Horsepen Creek watersheds are nested within the Potomac River watershed, which is in turn nested within the 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed. He then noted that for the purpose of data collection, the County divided the two watersheds into sixteen watershed management areas of three to seven square miles, which were then further broken down into subwatersheds of approximately 100-300 acres each.

Mr. Sanchirico briefly reviewed the watershed planning process and then listed the five main steps:

- Evaluate the data to determine the state of the watersheds;
- Identify the issues the plan will address;
- Establish a vision for the watershed and goals that improve, enhance, and protect the watershed;
- Develop specific actions to achieve the goals; and
- Create a framework and timeframe for implementation.

He noted that the County designed watershed plans to address stormwater issues through various means. Fairfax County requires a comprehensive plan because County land is mostly built up and complicated. Stormwater can affect drinking water and community health, and ineffective stormwater management can negatively affect property, recreation, and environmental health. Mr. Sanchirico stated that the goal of watershed planning is to help Fairfax County and its residents make informed decisions about stormwater management.

Watershed Workbook

Melissa Taibi of F.X. Browne presented a brief overview of the watershed characterization of Sugarland Run and Horsepen Creek Watersheds. She noted that the watersheds straddle Fairfax and Loudon Counties, which makes watershed planning more difficult. The watershed plan will focus on the parts of the watersheds in Fairfax County, while keeping in mind that the watershed as a whole influences the water body. Fairfax County has about 60 percent of the Sugarland Run watershed and about 44 percent of the Horsepen Creek watershed, but about 53 percent of the streams of Horsepen Creek.

Ms. Taibi then briefly summarized the structure and contents of the Watershed Workbook and the methods used to develop the watershed characterization presented in the Workbook. She clarified that the subwatersheds were ranked to identify those needing more attention and gave a brief summary of one watershed management area. She then reviewed the various indicators used to develop the rankings, highlighting a correlation between lower scores and urbanization.

Ms. Taibi explained that subwatersheds were ranked with the Fairfax County Goals and Objectives in mind. The goals are to

- 1) Improve and maintain watershed functions in Fairfax County, including water quality, habitat, and hydrology.
- 2) Protect human health, safety, and property by reducing stormwater impacts.
- 3) Involve stakeholders in the protection, maintenance and restoration of county watersheds.

The objectives include the following:

- 1) Hydrology
- 2) Habitat
- 3) Stream Water Quality
- 4) Drinking Water Quality
- 5) Stewardship

There was a short question and answer session following Mr. Sanchirico's and Ms. Taibi's presentations. In response to questions, members of the Fairfax County and F.X. Browne teams made the following points:

- The models were developed based on land use, and the indicators were based on data collected from field tests. Biotic data used are from studies conducted over the last ten years. Results from annual stream monitoring, including *E. coli*, were also integrated into the ranking.
- Only composite scores are included in the Workbook, but the disaggregated scores can be used for individual analyses.
- Some indicators have more complete data than others. For some, a surrogate was used to transfer data to a subwatershed that had incomplete data.

Public Involvement Process

Juliana Birkhoff of the Consensus Building Institute provided a brief overview of the public involvement process, sharing that the Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) will consist of twelve to twenty members representing a diverse set of interests and types of people. The WAG will meet over six sessions to identify problems and possible solutions and issue a draft report.

Following these sessions, there will be another forum where members of the public can offer improvements and suggestions to the WAG report. The County will accept comments throughout the WAG process through the website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/Watersheds/sugarlandrun.htm>.

III. Open House

Dr. Birkhoff then invited meeting attendees to participate in break out sessions based on their location in the watersheds – Horsepen Creek, Upper Sugarland Run, or Lower Sugarland Run – to identify locations of concerns in the watershed.

Individuals identified the following items during the break out sessions:

Horsepen Creek

- 1) At Reflection Homes and Lake Homes, there is runoff from storm drains and the banks were incised, leading to floods and erosion. This runoff is from Herndon Industrial Park, where water flows overland, and from Four Season Homes which has stormdrains. Neither has stormwater control.
- 2) The drainage for a dry pond on Glenbrooke Woods Drive is clogged, and gravel is washing into the creek from the road. This had been redone about a year ago. The dry ponds outlet structure is damaged, with no restriction to water flow.
- 3) The planned regional pond at Chantilly Highlands, Lady Bank Lane, was never built so new development has occurred. There is now no room for the pond and severe erosion along Cedar Run and the path.

Lower Sugarland Run

- 1) At Gilman Lane, there are consistent flooding problems in homeowners' basements. During rainstorms, Gilman Lane floods and becomes a "river." There are soil erosion problems from Gilman Lane down to the creek, and stormwater controls are mainly grates and gutters. There is a dry pond on the south side of Wiehle Avenue.
- 2) There was a plan for new residences being built in a resources protection area near Shaker Woods Road at the confluence of the tributary. This project is possibly dead, after the developers were ordered to start over after they could not defend their plan.
- 3) West of Holly Knoll and north of Leesburg Pike, there is a manmade mountain of construction debris. The artificial wetlands off of Sugarland Run are of questionable effectiveness.
- 4) In the area that used to be Dranesville Road before the road was moved, artificial wetlands were built and these are effective.
- 5) Along Sugarland Run near Route 7, there is a very long and shallow concrete channel that does not allow fish to pass through.

Upper Sugarland Run

- 1) There is raw dirt under Wiehle Bridge over Sugarland Run. High water causes much erosion.
- 2) There is flooding and overflow of the floodplain at a neighborhood pool and clubhouse.
- 3) At Cavendish Spur, a remediation pond has lots of cattails and frequently spills over.

- 4) The Town of Herndon was reported to have inadequate stormwater management in the B&P Inspection Report.
- 5) The CH2M Hill Filtration Project should fix the stream bank.
- 6) In Folly Lick Branch, stormwater runoff has caused property damage and yard loss.
- 7) The VDOT property may need stormwater control.
- 8) There are trash issues at the Target parking lot and Dunkin Donuts at Sunset Hills, Eldon Street, and the Parkway.
- 9) The wooden foot bridge closest to Wiehle Avenue and Rosiers Branch has washed out.
- 10) There are invasives in the riparian corridor at Sugarland and Carlisle Drive.
- 11) The Town of Herndon should inspect its sewer lines.
- 12) The construction of a dry pond at Wiehle Avenue and Sugarland Run involved the removal of trees that provided a necessary buffer. There are kiosks along the running trail that can be used to display public outreach signs.

Forum participants made the following suggestions for WAG memberships during the open house sessions:

- US Geological Survey;
- Herndon Community Golf Course (*Mike Mueller, Golf Course Superintendent*);
- Hilton Development/Construction Group or the owner of the Herndon business park; and
- The Reston Association.

Healthy Watersheds, Healthier Communities

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

Sugarland Run & Horsepen Creek Watersheds Community Workshop

*Herndon High School Lecture Hall, 700 Bennett St
Herndon, VA 20170*

Thursday, October 30, 2008 6:30-9:00 pm

Agenda

- 6:30 p.m. **Watershed Registration – Sign in and find your watershed address**
- 7:00 p.m. **Welcome** by Fred Rose, Chief, Watershed Planning and Assessment Branch, Fairfax County

Supervisor John W. Foust, Dranesville District
Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, Hunter Mill District
- 7:15 p.m. **Slide Show:** Introduction to the watershed and planning Process
- 8:00 p.m. **Watershed Input Sessions** – attend a breakout group and note locations or concerns for the watersheds
- 9:00 p.m. **Adjourn** (*turn in any comment sheets*)

Visit the Virtual Forum at:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/sugarlandrun.htm>



Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

12000 Government Center Pkwy, Ste. 449 • Fairfax, VA 22035 • 703-324-5500, TTY 711

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds



Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

**SUGARLAND RUN / HORSEPEN CREEK WATERSHEDS
INTRODUCTORY AND ISSUES SCOPING FORUM
OCTOBER 30, 2008**

Forum Participants

Zoran Dragacevac

Town of Herndon
zoran.dragacevac@herndon_va.gov

Beverly Elgin

13345 Feldman Place
Herndon, VA 20170
bv_keller@hotmail.com

Alan Ford

1723 East Ave
McLean, VA 22101
amford@acm.org

Jerry Garegnani

12252 Streamvale Circle
Herndon, VA 20170
jerryg@cox.net

Goldie Harrison

12000 Bowman Towne Drive
Reston, VA 20190
goldie.harrison@fairfaxcounty.gov

Diane Hoffman

Northern VA Soil and Water Conservation
District 324-1433
Diane.hoffman@fairfaxcounty.gov

Konrad Huppi

President, Shaker Woods HOA
1241 Gilman Court
Herndon, VA 20170
wfsc@erols.com

Charlie Marts

13400 Catoctin Court
Herndon, VA 20170
cmarts@cox.net

Lynne Mowery

13133 Ladybank Lane
Herndon, VA 20171
Mowweb1@cox.net

Norbert Pink

PO Box 3811
Reston, VA 20195
norbertsierra@aol.com

Dana Singer

777 Lynn Street
Herndon, VA 20170
dana.singer@herndon_va.gov

Robert Soltess

511 Merlins Lane
Herndon, VA 20170
bobbz-55@verizon.net

Dave Swan

302 Marjorie Lane
Herndon, VA 20170
DTSwan@aol.com