

*Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division*

**SUGARLAND RUN/HORSEPEN CREEK WATERSHED ADVISORY GROUP MEETING  
MARCH 9, 2010**

**Reston Community Center Lake Anne**  
1609-A Washington Plaza | Reston, VA 20190

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

*[Please note that the presentation from the March 9, 2010 Sugarland Run/Horsepen Creek WAG meeting is available online at [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/sugarland\\_docs.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/sugarland_docs.htm)].*

Juliana Birkhoff, the meeting facilitator, opened the fourth meeting of the Sugarland Run/Horsepen Creek 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>

**II. Process Update**

Fred Rose, the Chief of the Watershed Planning and Assessment Branch of the Fairfax County Department of Public Works, thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Mr. Rose reported the progress of the overall watershed planning process to WAG members. The county will send the final plan to the Board of Supervisors by the end of the year. Mr. Rose indicated that the county would use a system to prioritize the projects to ensure the county uses its resources efficiently.

The county is developing a watershed data management system to house all of the projects from the watershed management plans. The County will use the system to track implementation progress.

Following Mr. Rose's process update, WAG members asked questions. During the discussion, participants made the following points:

- The county is working to standardize the practices used for round one and two of the county's watershed planning as much as possible.
- Funding may increase for 2010. A county executive put forward a proposal to dedicate an additional half penny of taxes to stormwater this year. The County will make a final funding decision in April.
- The County has installed four monitoring stations in collaboration with USGS. The county will use the stations to illustrate the effectiveness of new projects. This data will help to quantify the effectiveness of county resources.

**III. Project Prioritization Process**

Melissa Taibi, F.X. Browne, Inc. summarized how the county developed its project prioritization

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<sup>1</sup> The list of meeting participants is attached to this meeting summary. A copy of the meeting agenda is available at [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/sugarlandrun\\_docs.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/sugarlandrun_docs.htm).

process. She listed the following steps in the project prioritization process:

1. Field reconnaissance to narrow down potential projects. The initial list consisted of over 580 projects.
2. A first round of project cuts occurred eliminating projects deemed low priority or not viable. 128 structural projects remain.
3. F. X. Browne prioritized the final proposed project list with 59 structural projects for Horsepen and 69 structural projects for Sugarland. F.X. Browne plotted the projects with GIS mapping technology. The project prioritization process considered 5 factors;
  - Effect on watershed impact indicators
  - Effect on source indicators
  - Location within priority sub watersheds
  - Sequencing
  - Implementability
4. Each project was designated an initial project ranking composite score. The higher the score, the higher the priority of the project (ex; 1=lowest priority, 72=highest priority.) Ms. Taibi explained that these rankings are based on a weighted average of the 5 prioritization factors. The final rankings also include planned regional ponds.

Ms. Taibi conveyed that the project prioritization process would be broken down into 10 and 25-year implementation plans. The 10-year plan will include the 70 highest ranked projects in Sugarland and Horsepen (Sugarland projects ranked 37-72 and Horsepen projects ranked 30-62.) The 25-year plan will include the next 50 projects in ranking order (Sugarland projects ranked 9-36 and Horsepen projects ranked 8-29.) Ms. Taibi conveyed the importance of WAG input in assisting to refine the project rankings for inclusion in the final implementation plans. Along with WAG input, F.X. Browne will use the water quality models (STEPL and SWMM) to compose the final rankings for projects.

Ms. Taibi discussed the inclusion of non-structural projects in the final implementation plan. They 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 construct structural projects.

Following Ms. Taibi's presentation, the WAG members asked questions. During the discussion, participants discussed:

- The prioritization rankings account for property ownership. Projects located on public property were ranked highest, project located on private property ranked lower, and project located on several parcels of private property ranked the lowest
- F.X. Browne averaged the indicators to ensure that they could compare projects to other projects across the watershed and the County. This is not a perfect science, but was the most effective way to compare projects of different types.
- The County did use RPA designations for the sub watershed ranking indicators. The county still needs an easement to pursue a project within an RPA on private property.
- The 10-year implementation plan's goal of completing the 70 highest ranked projects is optimistic. The Board of Supervisors will use a financial assessment along with the project rankings and statewide mandates to make the best decision on which projects to focus on.
- The County will address non-structural projects differently outside of the structural plan. These projects are program related, and do not need to be limited to specific areas. They also have

administrative complications that make calculating the cost of non-structural projects difficult.

- The county government's Watershed Planning and Assessment Branch will reevaluate the effectiveness of the implementation plan 5 years into the process.

### 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 offered the following comments;

- Cedar Run – A WAG member asked why F.X Browne did not identify the reach between McLaren Road and Fairfax County Parkway for invasive plant removal and buffer restoration. The member noted that a recent habitat assessment revealed more degradation at this location than the "good" SPA score indicates.
- Folly Lick - Participants noted that there are not many projects proposed for Folly Lick.
- Herndon - The town of Herndon does not like detention ponds, residents perceive them as an eyesore.
  - Herndon promotes bioretention facilities and underground detention vaults as alternatives.
  - One participant proposed more stream restoration projects in Herndon.
- Kling Chase Area – A WAG member noted this would be a good area for a rain barrel project.
- One participant suggested that F.X. Browne has ranked stream restoration projects too high. F.X. Browne should take into account the complexities inherent in stream restoration. F.X. Browne should rank other project types higher in all instances.
- Several participants commented that non-structural projects should retain their importance
  - These participants would like to see non-structural and structural projects ranked together.
- HC9120 – A participant agreed with the high ranking of this project.
- HC9505B – One WAG member asked what generated this project
- SU146 A&B – One WAG member commented that one of these locations is a publically maintained dry pond. The other is a privately maintained rain garden.
- SU9117A – A participant notes that this location is an open area by the road where children come to play.
  - F.X. Browne needs to consider safety.
  - There is a big sycamore tree in the area that the County should protect and ensure that the project will not affect the livelihood of the tree.
- SU9140 A&B – A participant mentioned that these detention ponds are only 8-10 years old and should meet modern standards.
  - These ponds are under private maintenance.

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

- HC9503 – One WAG member suggested ranking the project higher than 29. The project is in Frying Pan Park, this is a good location for public education about low impact development and

stormwater management. Participants recommended that the County put educational signs near the rain garden.

- The participant noted that the County ranked some adjacent projects to include in the 10-year group, so this one should be as well.
- SU9201A – A participant felt that this project should have be higher in priority compared to SU9123.
  - This is a visible Area with clear signs of degradation and erosion on park property

Projects participants felt should be ranked lower:

- HC9200B – A member supported reducing the rank of this project because it is a stream restoration.
- SU9204 A & B – One WAG member noted that these seem to be good projects; however, SU9201A should have a higher ranking.

Projects participants disapproved of or thought would not be viable:

- HC9110 – WAG members noted that this site is located in the middle of a residential neighborhood and is not feasible.
- SU503 A & B - There is already underground detention at these sites. A rain garden would not be desirable.
- SU9188 - Redevelopment will be taking place on this property as a mixed-use private/public partnership.
  - The property will incorporate modern stormwater management.
- SU9201B – One participant noted that there might not be enough space for pond.
- SU9505B – A participant noted that this is a developed area and there may not be enough space for a rain garden.
- SU9510 A, D & E – One participant noted that a green roof is not feasible unless the site undergoes redevelopment.

Participants noted the following project map and location problems;

- SU9142 - This site appears to be missing from the map.
- SU9505C - This site appears to be missing from the map.
- SU9905 - This site is labeled incorrectly. The description does not correspond with the site location.

### Next Steps

WAG members were encouraged to take maps home and share with their communities. The County can accept feedback until March 26. Additional feedback including the project ranking and ID number should be sent 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. F.X. Browne will take SPA water quality modeling into account to adjust ranking for the 10-year plan. We will distribute the final ranking to WAG members before the next meeting.

Several WAG members proposed to draft a cover letter for the final report. This letter will summarize the WAG perspective. A small committee will draft a letter and send it to Dr. Birkhoff. We will circulate it to the WAG before the meeting. The Agenda will include a discussion segment for the cover letter.

The Sugarland Run/Horsepen Creek WAG will next meet in approximately six weeks. The meeting will focus on WAG member feedback of the implementation plans prior to the public forum. WAG members should begin to consider targeting members of their community to attend the public forum.

The Sugarland Run and Horsepen Creek watershed is degraded, mostly due to urbanization. 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.

*Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division*

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**Meeting Participants+**

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Alan Ford\*  
Nicki Foremsky\*  
Richard Gollhofer  
Konrad Huppi\*  
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**Fairfax County Staff**

Takisha Cannon  
Catherine Morin  
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Fred Rose  
Joe Sanchirico

**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 listed as attending, please inform Jason Gershowitz ([jgershowitz@resolv.org](mailto:jgershowitz@resolv.org)) and he will add you to the list.**