




FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Chairman and Members
Park Authority Board

VIA: John W. Dargle, Jr., Director 

FROM: Cindy Walsh, Director
Resource Management Division

DATE: June 18, 2009

Agenda

**Resource Management Committee
Wednesday, June 24, 2009 – 6 p.m.
Board Room – Herrity Building
Chairman: Frank Vajda
Vice Chair: Harry Glasgow**

1. Park Authority Stewardship Update – Information*
2. New Interpretive Exhibits at Resource Management Sites (with presentation) – Information*
3. American Association of Museums Accreditation – Information*

*Enclosures



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Board Agenda Item
July 8, 2009

INFORMATION

Park Authority Stewardship Update

The purpose of the Stewardship Update is to provide information on a quarterly basis on current museum collections and cultural and natural resource issues, to highlight projects of note and to provide updates on activities related to the implementation of the Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and the Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP). This includes both Park Authority-specific and countywide activities.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

Attachment 1: Park Authority Stewardship Update dated June 24, 2009

STAFF:

John W. Dargle, Jr, Director
Cindy Messinger, Deputy Director/COO
Cindy Walsh, Director, Resource Management Division
David Bowden, Director, Planning and Development Division
Barbara Nugent, Director, Park Services Division
Todd Johnson, Director, Park Operations Division
Miriam Morrison, Director, Administration Division

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**Park Authority Stewardship Update
Cultural Resource Management and Protection
June 2009**

Item	Background	Status	Lead Agency
POLICY & PLANNING Furnishings Plans	Furnishings Plans are based on extensive historic and material culture research. They detail what objects are displayed, where they are placed and how they are arranged in period room exhibitions at RMD historic sites.	Susan Clark is working with the contractor in the research of Sully Laundry/Kitchen Furnishings Plan and assisting in the subsequence review and evaluation of the existing historic objects located in these interpretive exhibit areas. Colvin Run Mill staff are also consulting with Susan on selection of the appropriate reproductions and reinterpretation of room furnishings for the Miller's House.	Park Authority
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH			
Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee	Cultural Resource staff participates in local, regional and national professional conferences.	Liz Crowell and Patrick Lennon from Visit Fairfax are coordinating the Fairfax County Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration. Members of the Steering Committee attended the first Civil War Signature Conference in Richmond. The Co-Directors have met with Sesquicentennial Organizers from Prince William County, the Manassas Battlefield Park, Arlington County and Alexandria. Staff is coordinating with a History Commission Sesquicentennial Committee and will be meeting with a Park Authority Resource Management steering committee in the near future.	Park Authority/FXVA
American Association of Museums Subsequent Review and Accreditation	The Park Authority maintains accreditation with the American Association of Museums (AAM).	Cultural Resources and Museum Collections Management staff are working with site staff and others to begin the process of AAM subsequent review (reaccreditation). Sully Historic Site, Greenspring Gardens and Colvin Run Mill are applying for reaccreditation. Frying Pan Farm Park and Archaeological Collections are seeking accreditation.	Park Authority/AAM

**Park Authority Stewardship Update
Cultural Resource Management and Protection
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Item	Background	Status	Lead Agency
Virginia Association of Museums/Museum Emergency Support Team	The Cultural Resource Staff participates in educational and training opportunities which demonstrate our expertise and availability to regional cultural institutions and museums.	Susan Clark hosted the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM) Northern VA regional members of the Museum Emergency Support Team (MEST) in a cultural collections recovery workshop session. Certification in cultural collections salvage techniques, damage assessment methods and management is required for museum responders during recovery operations after a disaster has occurred.	Park Authority/ Virginia Association of Museums
<u>PARTNERSHIPS</u>			
Cemetery Committee	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section partners with the Fairfax County History Commission and other agencies to protect cultural resources.	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section staff is working with the members of the History Commission, local historians and concerned citizens to identify, clean up and protect historic cemeteries in the county that have been subject to neglect. The group is conducting a survey to determine the current condition of cemeteries that Brian Conley, formerly of the Fairfax Regional Library, identified in his research over the past 20+ years. Members of the Stewardship Education Team will be identifying cemeteries on parkland that they can clean up as part of this effort.	Park Authority/ History Commission/ citizens
Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources Friends Group	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section partners with the Fairfax County History Commission and other agencies to protect cultural resources.	Interested members of the history and archaeology community are forming a Friends' group to support the Park Authority's archaeology and cultural resources in the county. A steering committee for this group was established. The group has had several meetings and have established a mission statement, draft bylaws and are working on an MOA with the Park Authority.	Interested Parties/ Park Authority

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George Mason University Anthropology Department	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section partners with the Fairfax County History Commission and other agencies to protect cultural resources.	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section is continuing to work with George Mason University to have students intern during the academic year and summer. Students work with the archaeological collections or on archaeological field projects and in turn get course credit. Three students participated in the spring semester. Staff is anticipating that up to five GMU students will participate as summer interns.	Park Authority and George Mason University
CULTURAL RESOURCES/RESEARCH			
Section 106 Compliance/ Clarks Branch Crossing, Riverbend Park	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section works with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and federal agencies to conduct review in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.	Staff is working on Section 106 compliance for the National Register eligible archaeological site at Clarks Branch in Riverbend Park. Staff prepared letters for the National Park Service (NPS) to invite the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), seven Indian tribes, the Fairfax County History Commission and the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archaeological Society of Virginia to be consulting parties. Staff prepared a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which was sent to those organizations wishing to be consulting parties. The MOA was signed by the NPS, Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), the Park Authority, the Virginia Council on Indians (VCI), the History Commission and the Chapter. Data recovery archaeological investigations are underway.	Park Authority/DHR/ NPS/VCI/ History Commission/ NVC ASV

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Section 106 Compliance/ Royal Lake	The Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section works with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and federal agencies to conduct review in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.	Staff is working to complete Section 106 compliance for the National Register eligible archaeological site at Royal Lake. This project for DPWES was completed under an MOA among the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)/USDA, DHR, the Park Authority, and the Catawba and the Tuscarora Indian Nations. Currently, public outreach components of the project are underway.	Park Authority/NRCS-USDA/DHR/Tuscarora and Catawba Indian Nations
Nominations to Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites and National Register of Historic Places	Cultural Resource staff nominates sites on parkland to the Inventory of Historic Sites, Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places, as appropriate.	Cultural Resource staff is preparing nominations for 15 sites to be listed in the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites. The prehistoric steatite quarries at Fairfax Villa Park are now listed in the Inventory. A summer intern specializing in Historic Preservation at the University of Delaware will be working to have the other resources listed. In addition, staff is completing a National Register nomination for the Manassas Gap Railroad.	Park Authority, DPZ, History Commission
Open Ended Contracts for Archaeology and Cultural Landscape Reports	The Cultural Resource Section maintains open-ended contracts with qualified firms to provide professional services for Archaeology and Cultural Landscape projects.	Advertisements requesting professional qualifications were placed in the Washington Post and sent to firms listed on the Virginia Department of Historic Resources List of Consultants as qualifying to conduct archaeological services and cultural landscape studies. Eight firms replied for the Cultural Landscape Open Ended Contract and sixteen replied for the Archaeology Open Ended contract. The selection teams for each specialty are reviewing the submittals and interviews will occur in June. Three consultants will be selected for each specialty.	Park Authority

Park Authority Stewardship Update
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Item	Background	Status	Lead Agency
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT Museum Collections Storage	Improvement of collections storage has been identified as a key strategy (2.5) for the "Protecting Park Resources" issue under the Stewardship Opportunity Area of the PA Strategic Plan. It is also an issue that will strongly influence the future re-accreditation of the agency museum sites. Existing spaces for storage of the Museum Collections has been reported as grossly inadequate and beyond capacity, especially for oversize objects and farm equipment.	Susan Clark purchased conservation safe pallets for installation in the auxiliary storage area located at Ash Grove for large farm tools and equipment. Continued improvements in the Collections storage facility are on-going as a preventative conservation project. Selected hardware from the Moffitt Blacksmith Shop was transferred, cleaned and rehoused in conservation safe materials at the Collections storage facility.	Park Authority

**Park Authority Stewardship Update
Natural Resource Management and Protection
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Item	Background	Status	Lead Agency
<p>EDUCATION AND OUTREACH Envirothon</p>	<p>The Virginia Envirothon is a natural resources competition for high school students. Students learn about stewardship and management concepts and work to solve real and hypothetical environmental problems. Teams are made up of five students in 9th through 12th grades. Throughout the school year students prepare for competition with a coach, usually a teacher or natural resource professional in the community. Students are tested on their knowledge of soils/land use, forestry, wildlife, aquatic ecology and a current environmental topic that changes every year. Teams from Fairfax County high schools participate in local competitions each spring. The top teams advance to the regional and state levels.</p>	<p>This year a team from Hidden Pond Nature Center won the Fairfax County competition and competed at the state competition on May 17 and 18 in Wakefield, VA. Site staff sponsored and trained the team, and staff from the Natural Resources Management and Protection section provided advanced training as well as prepared questions for and judged the wildlife portion of the local competition on March 30.</p>	<p>Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District</p>
<p>Stewardship Education</p>	<p>This Environmental Agenda funded project is a campaign to advertise county stewardship of environmental resources.</p>	<p>The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District collaborated on the latest addition to the stewardship education projects: 'Rain Garden: Design and Construction'. This 20-page guide is a thorough introduction to the how-to's of creating a homeowner sized rain garden. The technical guide will be available by request through Resource Management Division, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and online. The next Stewardship Series brochure will be hitting Park Authority brochure racks by mid-July. This new brochure 'Pollen' highlights local wildflowers and pollinators. The Non-Native Invasive Identification and Control guide book was recently recognized with a Communicator Award by the International Academy of the Visual Arts. The handbook was recognized with an Award of Excellence as one of 7,000 entries to this program which recognizes excellence in the visual arts.</p>	<p>Park Authority</p>

**Park Authority Stewardship Update
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<p>PARTNERSHIPS Forest Pest Monitoring and Control</p>	<p>Each year the Park Authority works with Urban Forest Management to support county efforts to control and monitor for forest pest species.</p>	<p>In mid-April, the first of the emerald ash borer monitoring traps were deployed in Fairfax County. These traps will act as sentinels all summer long to tell the local, state and federal entomologists the extent and range of this invasive, non-native insect in the county.</p> <p>Gypsy moth spraying is now complete, but was slightly delayed this spring due to the extremely wet weather.</p> <p>Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Virginia Department of Forestry have partnered with Hidden Pond Nature Center and the Natural Resource Management and Protection Section to collaborate on a test release of a biocontrol for the non-native, invasive plant, mile-a-minute. This release will be monitored by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.</p>	<p>Department of Public Works and Environmental Services</p>
<p>County Wildlife Biologist</p>	<p>The Fairfax County Wildlife Biologist works under the Department of Animal Control to establish and implement Fairfax County's urban wildlife program to include deer management. The position has been vacant since Earl Hodnett left the county for a position with the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services in February 2009.</p>	<p>The County Wildlife Biologist position was advertised through April 2009. Natural Resource Management and Protection staff participated on the interview panel along with Lt. Mike Lucas, Chief Animal Control Officer for Fairfax County, and John Rohm, Regional Wildlife Biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Seven candidates were interviewed and Vicky Monroe, formerly with the Animal Shelter, was selected. She began her new role on June 8th.</p>	<p>Fairfax County Police Department</p>

**Park Authority Stewardship Update
Natural Resource Management and Protection
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<p>WATER RESOURCES Stormwater and Watershed Planning</p>	<p>Fairfax County has a comprehensive stormwater program that includes assessment and monitoring of stream conditions; maintenance of current and future stormwater management facilities; retrofit and upgrade of stormwater conveyance systems and stabilization of streams to improve water quality; watershed planning efforts to establish baseline information and propose efforts to improve streams countywide; and compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and permitting programs.</p>	<p>Watershed planning efforts are underway for the following watersheds: Accotink, Pohick, Dogue/Four Mile Run/Belle Haven, Pond Run/Nichol Branch, Johnny Moore/Little Rocky Run, Sugarland Run/Horsepen, and the Lower Occoquan area. Park Authority staff provided input for the County's 2008 MS4 Permit annual report in January 2009. The Department of Public Works and Environmental Services Stormwater Division has recently completed or is working on projects at the following park locations: Collingwood Park, Bucknell Manor, Mason District, Mt Vernon District, Cub Run Stream Valley, Pohick Stream Valley, Ville D'Este, Clarks Landing, Ellanor C. Lawrence, Pinecrest Golf, Timberly, Hickory Forest, Dranesville and Flatlick Branch.</p>	<p>Department of Public Works and Environmental Services</p>
<p>2004 Bond Stream Stabilization Plans - Huntley Meadows Wetland Restoration</p>	<p>Funding from the 2004 park bond was allocated for the restoration of the central wetland at Huntley Meadows Park. An additional \$2,250,000 in funds for this project were approved in the 2008 park bond.</p>	<p>On April 22, the staff team and consulting engineer, Dennis Thomas of Burgiss and Niple met with the Regional Dam Safety Engineer Rob VanLier of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The engineer is now conducting an analysis of what would happen down stream if the future dam at Huntley Meadows were to fail. This analysis is necessary to establish the dam hazard classification. Once this is done, staff will work with the engineer and the state to design an appropriate dam, and then go back to Fairfax County Land Development Services staff to work with them on getting the design permitted.</p>	<p>Park Authority</p>

Park Authority Stewardship Update
Natural Resource Management and Protection
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RESOURCE MANAGEMENT		Park Authority
<p>Board of Supervisors Environmental Agenda - Invasive Management Area Program</p>	<p>This Environmental Agenda funded project is to remove invasive species from parkland. This program fits neatly with the goals of the Natural Resource Management Plan to educate the public about natural resource issues and to take management action with regards to invasive species.</p>	<p>The Invasive Management Program has welcomed three new sites this spring at Ravenel (part of Accotink Stream Valley), White Oaks, and Piney Branch Stream Valley parks. One of the volunteers is branching out to help survey for species that may be newly invading the county such as wayleaf basket grass.</p> <p>Kathy Frederick, Invasive Management Area Program Volunteer Coordinator was the recipient of the 2009 Stewardship Award for her excellent work managing the volunteer program.</p>
<p>Laurel Hill Resource Management</p>	<p>A portion of the funds allocated for Laurel Hill from fund 303 were set aside for natural resource management services at Laurel Hill Park. The focus of those services will be to assess existing resources, develop a management plan for the meadow and old field areas covering much of the site, and begin implementation of that plan.</p>	<p>The project kicked off in February 2009. On March 6, staff from the Park Authority, Lardner Klein and their sub-consultants, Environmental Services Associates, and members of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia conducted a field survey to select demonstration meadow sites. Two locations at Laurel Hill Golf Course were chosen and staff worked out a protocol for preparing the site for meadow planting. Staff from Environmental Services Associates conducted several days of field surveys in May in order to prepare the site vegetative map and develop management recommendations. This project will be completed in winter 2010.</p>

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New Interpretive Exhibits at Resource Management Division Sites (with presentation)

In 2008 the Fairfax County Park Authority solicited Requests for Bids for interpretive museum exhibits at Frying Pan Farm Park and Riverbend Park. Since that time staff has been working with exhibit design and fabrication contractors, Taylor Studios of Rantoul, Illinois, on these bond-funded projects that are near or at completion. Frying Pan Farm Park's exhibits were opened on June 13, 2009, and Riverbend Park's opening is targeted for the end of July.

Staff will present the process from a concept to a hands-on interpretive exhibit including theme development, building a vision, embracing fiscal reality, and the nuts and bolts of construction and installation.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

None

STAFF:

John W. Dargle, Jr, Director
Cindy Messinger, Deputy Director/COO
Cindy Walsh, Director, Resource Management Division
Todd Johnson, Director, Park Operations Division
Dave Bowden, Director, Planning and Development Division
Todd Brown, Operations Branch Manager, Resource Management Division
Yvonne Johnson, Historian, Frying Pan Farm Park
Marty Smith, Manager, Riverbend Park

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American Association of Museums Accreditation (with presentation)

Resource Management Division (RMD) staff will provide a brief overview on the American Association of Museums (AAM) accreditation process that involves four RMD sites and two sections. Since 1979 the Park Authority has accredited its historic sites through AAM. AAM Accreditation is a widely recognized seal of approval that brings national recognition to a museum for its commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued institutional improvement. Colvin Run Mill and Sully Historic Sites, Green Spring Gardens, as well as the historic artifact collections are due for their 10-year re-accreditation review. Frying Pan Farm Park will be applying for museum accreditation for this first time, as well as the archaeology department and collections. Resource Management staff have formed a division-wide committee to begin the process of accreditation. Staff will provide a time line of milestones for the next 1.5-year self-study process, as well identify the Park Authority Board and senior management support and involvement.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

None

STAFF:

John W. Dargle, Jr, Director
Cindy Messinger, Deputy Director/COO
Cindy Walsh, Director, Resource Management Division
Todd Brown, Operations Branch Manager, Resource Management Division
Carol McDonnell, Manager, Sully Historic Site
Liz Crowell, Manager, Cultural Resource Management Section

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