

Board of Directors

Scott J. Cameron, Chair
 Christopher E. Koerner, Vice-Chair
 Dana Barakat, Secretary
 Rhonda Bitterli, Treasurer
 Adria Bordas, Director-Extension

Wilfred D. Quasie-Woode,
 Executive Director

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Working for Clean Streams and Protected Natural Resources in Fairfax County

Meeting held in person with a virtual option via Microsoft Teams

July 22, 2025

MINUTES

Mr. Cameron called the meeting to order at 9:37 am. Those attending in person and virtually were:

NVSWCD Directors and Associate Directors

Scott Cameron, Director-Chair
 Dana Barakat, Director-Secretary
 Rhonda Bitterli, Director-Treasurer
 Chris Koerner, Director-Vice Chair
 Adria Bordas, Director-Extension
 Jim McGlone, Associate Director
 John Peterson, Associate Director

Cooperating Agency Representatives

Linda Barfield, Fairfax County Stormwater*
 Debbie Cross, Virginia DCR
 Casey James, NRCS
 Jacob Zielinski, Virginia DOF*

Guests

Curtis Anderson, Rotary Club of Bailey's Crossroads
 Peter Anderson, Rotary District 7610
 Joe Nam Do, Rotary Club of Annandale
 Johnna Gagnon*
 Colin Ellis, YCC Participant
 Paige Ellis
 Ron Rubin, Rotary Club of Herndon/Reston
 Amelia Stansell, Rotary District 7610
 Keenan Ulrich, YCC Participant
 Lori Ulrich

**Participated virtually*

NVSWCD Staff Members

Willie Woode, Executive Director
 Eden Anderson, Urban Conservation Specialist
 Scott Baron, Urban Conservation Specialist
 Heather Colter, Urban Conservation Specialist
 Stacey Evers, Urban Agriculture Specialist
 Trish Feth, Communication and Program Specialist
 Judy Fraser, Urban Conservation Specialist
 Rebecca Grossi, Intern
 Heather Hunter-Nickels, Ag. Water Qual. & Cons. Specialist
 Don Lacquement, Conservation Engineer*
 Grace Murdoch, Education Specialist
 Ashley Palmer, Communication and Education Specialist
 Dan Schwartz, Soil Scientist
 Heather Shackley, Operations Manager
 Sophia Wood, Urban Conservation Specialist*

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Cameron welcomed all to the meeting and noted there was a quorum with five board members in attendance.

Minutes – June 24, 2025

Ms. Barakat reported that she had reviewed the minutes of the June 24, 2025 board meeting and that they had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Bitterli said she had two corrections to the minutes.

A **motion** (Barakat-Koerner) to approve the minutes, with the corrections provided by Ms. Bitterli, of the June 24, 2025 board meeting passed by voice vote, with Ms. Bordas abstaining.

Treasurer's Report – June 2025 and Fourth Quarter FY 2025

Mr. Koerner reported that the Treasurer's Reports for June 2025 and Fourth Quarter FY 2025 had been distributed in advance of the meeting. Hearing no comments, the Treasurer's Reports for June 2025 and Fourth Quarter FY 2025 were accepted by consensus to be filed for audit.

Technical Review Committee

Ms. Bordas reported that the Technical Review Committee (TRC) met on July 15, 2025, to review two Soil and Water Quality Conservation Plans, three Conservation Assistance Program (CAP)/Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) applications, three CAP/VCAP reimbursement applications, and one Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMAP) applications. The VCAP applications will be forwarded to the VCAP Steering Committee. The details of these projects were included in the TRC Report in the board package.

Ms. Bordas noted that VCAP will likely run out of funds by October, 2025.

FY 2026 Policy Updates

Ms. Bordas recommended the board approve the FY 2026 CAP policy changes, which had been included in the TRC report in the board package.

A **motion** (Bordas-Barakat) to approve the FY 2026 CAP policy changes passed by voice vote.

Conservation Plans

- Armstrong A&F Renewal
- Dean A&F Establishment

A **motion** (Bordas-Barakat) to approve two conservation plans as outlined above passed by voice vote.

Ms. Bordas said although the TRC does not usually meet in August, due to the amount of rainfall our area has recently received and the resulting increase in applications, an August meeting is warranted.

A **motion** (Bordas-Barakat) to grant the TRC approval to move forward with applications and reimbursements presented at its August meeting unless there is significant review that needs to be addressed, at the discretion of the TRC chair, passed by voice vote.

CAP/VCAP Applications

Applicant	Program	Location	Supervisor District	Watershed	Type	Size	Cost 1. Total Estimated 2. Reimbursement
Watkins	VCAP	Springfield	Springfield	Pohick Creek	CL	3,500 SF	1. \$10,720 2. \$7,000
Kojm	VCAP	Burke	Springfield	Pohick Creek	IF	220 SF	1. \$14,877.96 2. 11,902.37

Colvin Run Estates HOA	CAP	Vienna	Hunter Mill	Difficult Run	CL	392 SF	1. \$9,172.71 2. \$7,000
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CAP/VCAP Reimbursements

Applicant	Program	Location	Supervisor District	Watershed	Type	Size	Cost 1. Total Cost (a. estimate, if different) 2. Reimbursement
Nusbaum	CAP	Vienna	Hunter Mill	Difficult Run	CL	480 SF	1. \$12,092.75 (a. \$12,109.94) 2. \$7,000
Hitlin	VCAP	Reston	Hunter Mill	Difficult Run	CL	1,000 SF	1. \$8,985 2. \$7,000
Sritharan	VCAP	Springfield	Springfield	Pohick Creek	CL	550 SF	1. \$8,916.05 2. \$7,000

Ms. Bordas said there was a clerical error in the Jones conservation landscaping project approved for reimbursement at the June board meeting, and the applicant is due an additional \$478.26.

A motion (Bordas-Barakat) to approve all CAP/VCAP and reimbursement applications plus the correction of the clerical error passed by voice vote.

Flood Mitigation Assistance Program

Applicant	Location	Project Description	Cost 1. Total Cost 2. Reimbursement
Hernandez	Falls Church	Downspout extensions	1. \$1,985 2. \$992.50

A motion (Bordas-Barakat) to approve the one FMAP application as outlined above passed by voice vote.

Next Meeting of the Technical Review Committee

The next meeting of the TRC will be held on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 10:00 am.

Legislative Report

Mr. Cameron noted that the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) has supported the Lake Barcroft Watershed Improvement District (LBWID) for many years. The Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is revising its policy book, and Mr. Cameron suggested the dam safety section specifically reference Watershed Improvement Districts (WIDs). Draft changes to the policy book were included in the board package.

Mr. Peterson noted that we are legally connected to the LBWID and it is vitally important for language explicitly addressing WIDs to be included in the state association policy.

Ms. Cross suggested changing “will” to “may” in the last sentence of the background section referencing federal funding.

A motion (Koerner-Barakat) to forward the draft dam safety policy update to the Area II Legislative Committee as part of the annual policy review, with Ms. Cross’ suggested change, passed by voice vote.

Acknowledgement of Attorney General's Recommendation on Committee Participation by Staff

New guidance from the Attorney General of Virginia states that staff should not be voting members of district committees. There was a discussion about whether the guidance was a recommendation or a directive, and it was noted that it is best practice to comply. Ms. Cross said it will change committee quorum numbers, and she noted staff can still be advisors to the committees.

Mr. Cameron asked Mr. Woode to provide a description of how to modify the committee structures to comply with the attorney general's recommendation at the September board meeting.

Approval of Annual Plan of Work and Strategic Plan

Mr. Woode asked the board to approve the draft strategic plan in order to meet the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) grant deliverable for FY 2025. The draft will then go back to Mr. Foreman, as well as to the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and partner agencies for review before the September 23, 2025 board meeting. The final report will be sent to DCR in September.

A **motion** (Barakat-Bordas) to preliminarily approve the Strategic Plan, to reflect the boards discussed edits, subject to revision by staff and partners, passed by voice vote.

Mr. Koerner suggested edits to the list of government, public, private sector and soil morphology metrics sections.

Mr. Cameron asked about the absence of Living Shorelines in the Strategic Plan and suggested adding it.

Trapa Program Updates

Mr. Baron said Kate Daley from the Fairfax County Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination informed Mr. Baron and Ms. Wood that the next phase (FY 2026) of the Trapa program had been approved; Ms. Daley also said there will be a pause in the EIP grant program due to the county's budget forecast, and that she believes the Trapa program will be funded through FY 2027 but they could not project into FY 2028.

Mr. Baron reported that AQUA DOC has not met the requirements of their contract, including fieldwork and reporting. A "letter of cure" has been sent to the contractor, noting payment will be based on a percentage of the work that has been completed, and that if by July, the terms of the contract have still not been met, the contract can be dismissed.

A **motion** (Koerner-Barakat) to authorize Mr. Woode to send the letter of cure to AQUA DOC urging them to comply with the terms of the contract passed by voice vote.

There was a discussion about which obligations had and had not been met and what communication had already occurred between the contractor and staff.

Approval of Bank Signature Resolution

The change in officer roles, with Ms. Bitterli as Treasurer, requires new bank signature cards.

A **motion** (Bitterli-Barakat) to adopt the resolution of Lodge, Association, and Other Similar Organization passed by voice vote.

Per the resolution, the following individuals will be authorized signatories for NVSWCD's five bank accounts with United Bank: Rhonda Bitterli, Adria Bordas, Scott Cameron, Chris Koerner, Heather Shackley, and Willie Woode.

Approval of Computer Replacement Purchases

Ms. Shackley said six staff computers will reach their end of warranty at the end of October, and she has gotten a quote from Dell Computers through the Fairfax County contract for six replacement computers and one new computer for a staff member who did not yet have a district laptop.

A **motion** (Koerner-Barakat) to authorize the purchase of seven new computers, up to \$11,500, passed by voice vote.

Green Breakfast

Ms. Feth said Matt Gerhart, Conservation Director for the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, gave an engaging presentation entitled, "Mapping a Conservation Vision for Northern Virginia", at the July Green Breakfast, with 38 people attending virtually. The next Green Breakfast will be an in-person meeting on Saturday, September 13, 2025, on the topic of invasive plants.

Tree Commission

Ms. Bitterli reported that the Tree Commissioners had been briefed on stormwater management practices and tree preservation and how there are times in public site development projects that requirements for managing stormwater could preclude tree preservation. She also reported that the Tree Commissioners had reviewed Fairfax County's Natural Landscaping Policy. In the development of the policy, "natural landscaping" was the term chosen after consideration of several other suggested options. She noted that the district's term for natural landscaping is "conservation landscaping."

Other Items—Directors, Associates, Consultants

- Mr. Koerner asked about the line items in the budget for staff training and whether these funds can be incorporated into the general funds for staff training and development; Ms. Shackley said staff would be encouraged to use the funds.
- Dr. McGlone provided an update on the implementation of HB309, enacted during the 2024 Virginia General Assembly session, which directs the State Forester to develop a Forestland and Urban Tree Canopy Conservation Plan by November 1, 2026. He noted that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), on which he represents the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, held its first meeting on February 25, 2025. Since then, VDOF has contracted PlanIT Geo, a nationally recognized forestry GIS consulting firm. Currently PlanIT Geo and VDOF are using the USDA National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) to create forest canopy data for all Virginia municipalities and conducting change analysis from 2018 to 2023, the latest dates of imagery available. One focus of the project is integrating NAIP data with VDOF timber harvest records to distinguish between silvicultural operations and forestland land use changes. The next TAC meeting is scheduled for August 27, 2025.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Woode highlighted some things from his report which had been included in the board package:

- Fairfax County has remitted the NVSWCD's full contributory fund amount of \$697,722 for FY 2026.
- NVSWCD will have submitted all deliverables to DCR once the strategic plan is submitted.
- Recognition of Eden Anderson celebrating her first year with the district.

Staff Presentations, Reports and Announcements

- Mr. Cameron will be urging the National Association of Conservation Districts to send a letter to congress to support agrivoltaics.

- Ms. Bordas said the Virginia State Fair is coming up from September 26 through October 5, 2025.

Cooperating Agencies

Fairfax County Department of Public Works, Stormwater Planning Division

Linda Barfield provided updates from her report. She offered to have a project manager speak to the NVSWCD board on tree preservation on development sites as was discussed during Ms. Bitterli's Tree Commission report above.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Ms. Cross provided updates from her report, which had been included in the board package.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS/USDA)

Ms. James provided updates from her report, which had been included in the board package. She said NRCS has been authorized to fill critical vacancies, meaning current NRCS staff can apply to do a lateral transfer. She said the Virginia State Office does have several vacancies.

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

Mr. Zielinski said the Riparian Forests For Landowners program for residential landowners interested in a riparian buffer is currently open, and in August/September the Urban and Community Forestry Grant for larger forestry projects for localities and organizations will open.

Mr. Cameron recognized Curtis Anderson, a rotary club member, who joined the meeting in person.

A **motion** (Bordas-Koerner) to adjourn the meeting at 11:47 am passed by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Feth, Communication Specialist

Dana Barakat, Secretary

Approved Date

The next regular business meeting of the NVSWCD Board of Directors will be held on
September 23, 2025, at 9:30 am