

**POTOMAC WATERSHED ROUNDTABLE**  
**Quarterly Meeting – October 2, 2015**  
**Claude Moore Recreation Center, Sterling, VA**

**MINUTES**

**Members and Alternates**

Hon. Penny Gross, Chair, Voting Member, Fairfax County  
Curtis Dalpra, Voting Alternate, Interstate Commission of the Potomac River Basin  
Hon. Michael DeMarco, Voting Member, City of Fairfax  
Hon. Jim Gehlsen, Voting Member, Prince William SWCD  
Harry Glasgow, Voting Member, Environment  
Alan Gray, Voting Member, Agriculture and Forestry (Forestry)  
Jim McGlone, Advisory Member, VA Department of Forestry  
John Peterson, Voting Member, Northern Virginia SWCD  
Michael Trop, Voting Alternate, John Marshall SWCD

**Interested Parties**

Lisa Alexander, Audubon Naturalist Society  
Monica Billger, Audubon Naturalist Society  
Michael Bochynski, Clean Water Action  
Suzie Brown, Loudoun SWCD  
Sandra Caldwell  
Kris Dennen, Loudoun SWCD  
David Ek, Fauquier County  
Jay Frankenfield, Loudoun SWCD  
Laura Grape, Northern Virginia SWCD, Scribe  
Otto Gutenson  
Claire Hannecart, Evergreen Acres Farm  
Glenn Harvey, Virginia Nutrient Credit Exchange  
Maria Harwood, Northern Virginia SWCD  
Diane Hoffman, Northern Virginia SWCD  
Pete Holden, Loudoun SWCD  
Diane Hoffman, Northern Virginia SWCD  
Mishelle Noble-Blair  
James Patteson, Fairfax County DPWES  
Jerry Peters, Northern Virginia SWCD  
Mary Sherrill, Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority  
Rebecca Shoemaker, VA Department of Environmental Quality  
Cindy Smith, PhD, George Mason University - PEREC  
Tanya Spano, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
Veronica Tangiri, Prince William SWCD  
Roy Van Houten, WSSI  
Chris Van Vlack, Loudoun SWCD

David Ward, Loudoun County  
Burwell Wingfield, Loudoun SWCD

**Call to Order and Welcome.** Mrs. Gross called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m., expressed her appreciation to those who weathered the storm to attend and shared her thanks to the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District, especially Suzie Brown, for coordinating the meeting accommodations and refreshments. She asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**Approval of Minutes.** A **motion** (DeMarco-Glasgow) passed unanimously (Gross, abstention) to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2015 meeting in Montross, VA.

**Updates from the Chair.** Mrs. Gross spoke on behalf of the Local Government Advisory Council (LGAC) to the Chesapeake Bay Commission during their September quarterly meeting in Alexandria. She expressed the need for funding authorities and staff at the state level will aid in garnering faster responses from local governments. Delegate Scott Lingamfelter of Loudoun County (District 31) chairs the Chesapeake Bay Commission and asked for specific recommendations on what authorities are needed. Mrs. Gross expressed her concerns over proposed legislation that would remove local authority to establish stormwater fees, which would significantly impact the ability of local governments to do work.

**Potomac Council Report.** Mr. Peterson shared that the Council is reviewing and amending their Charter and Bylaws. He plans to speak with the Executive Committee members of the Roundtable on items of shared interest.

#### **Member Time and Announcements.**

Mr. Glenn Harvey shared that the Virginia Nutrient Exchange Program is monitoring the recent latex spill from a paper mill for its potential impacts on municipal load allocations.

**Empowering Partner Watershed Groups and Individuals through the Communities for Clean Streams Campaign.** Ms. Lisa Alexander, Executive Director and Ms. Monica Billger, Virginia Conservation Advocate with the Audubon Naturalist Society shared their inaugural efforts with the Communities for Clean Streams, a regional campaign designed to inspire individual and community stewardship and advocacy on behalf of clean streams by building online and on-the-ground communities of people and partners for stream stewardship, growing the number of clean stream stewards and advocates, inspiring individuals to take action on private property to produce cleaner streams in the region, and galvanizing citizens to take advocacy actions that support the development of local clean water policies. The campaign is a grassroots effort focused on hyper-local and community-driven events. A suite of tools are in development, including the Creek Critters App, which helps with the identification of benthic macroinvertebrates and is accessible through iOS and Google Play stores. In addition, a dynamic website will include a dashboard to measure a community's progress toward their goals. The site will also feature a calendar of events to promote engagement. The presentation stimulated discussion regarding the ability to use the campaign in communities without a formal structure, such as a homeowners association and how it encourages collaboration among like-minded groups. Ms. Alexander shared that the grassroots

coalition can help connect individuals with other efforts and groups within the larger community and the web-based dashboard will highlight partners and organizations that are already working on particular issues, including local programs and faith-based groups. Several events and programs were shared for consideration on the site, as were suggestions for dashboard enhancements such as geographic searches and sorting options. There was recognition of the challenge in meeting demand now that there has been a significant increase in public awareness of stormwater runoff, native plants and other topics of environmental concern. When asked what the number one practice the membership would like to see on private property, responses ranged from individualized assessments on private property to establishing rain gardens. Mrs. Gross thanked Ms. Alexander and Ms. Billger for an interesting and entertaining discussion.

**George Mason University's Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center (PEREC).**

Dr. Cindy Smith, PhD, Professor with George Mason University's Environmental Science and Policy and K-12 Education Director with the Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center (PEREC) provided an overview of the new Potomac Science Center, a LEED Gold certified building currently under construction in the Belmont Bay community in Prince William County. Dr. Smith shared that the mission of PEREC is to utilize the tools of scientific research, restoration, education, and policy analysis to help society understand and sustain natural processes in ecosystems, watershed, and landscapes. Research focuses on Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay Restoration, Sustaining Natural Ecosystems in Suburban Areas, and the Impact of Global Climate Change on Management of Aquatic Ecosystems. In addition, PEREC provides Environmental Studies courses at GMU and K-12 and Community Education programs with Fairfax County and Prince William County Public Schools. The membership shared topics that the Potomac Research Center could aid in promoting, including landscape options and demonstration gardens, coordination with municipal facilities such as Covanta, the regional connection of the Potomac and NVRC's Conservation Corridors. The facility is schedule for completion in April 2016. Mrs. Gross expressed her enthusiasm for the opening of the center and suggested that a future Roundtable meeting take place there.

**Paper Mill Latex Spill.** Mr. Curtis Dalpra with the Interstate Commission of the Potomac River Basin shared that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources notified them of the spill after being alerted by a citizen who noticed the Potomac River was cloudy. Ten thousand gallons of synthetic coating for paper spilled from a tank. The substance flowed into a containment system and then into a wastewater treatment plant where it was released into the river. ICPRB was able to model the spill for the mainstem of the Potomac River to help authorities determine the location and concentration of the leading and trailing edges of spill. Two intakes shut down in response to the spill and recent tests by Maryland Department of the Environment no longer detect constituents of concern within the river. With the dilution from the river, the contamination will likely not be traceable by the time it reaches Washington D.C. Mishelle Noble-Blair with Fairfax Water shared the water authorities concerns and expressed appreciation for the cooperative that exists to work closely with ICPRB and others to be able to understand the potential issues that the contamination could cause to the water authority's treatment processes and equipment. She shared that they expect this to not be an issue for the Fairfax Water intakes. Mrs. Gross shared that this is another

important example of the importance of Virginia's support of ICPRB and suggested writing a letter to legislators sharing this story and thanking them for re-establishing funding.

**Regional Water Quality Partnerships.** Ms. Tanya Spano, Chief, Regional Water Quality Management with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments introduced the regional water quality partnership programs spearheaded by MWCOG to support a wide range of committees and partnerships that actively address regional water issues: quality, resources, infrastructure, climate, restoration, and security. Ms. Spano highlighted several programs that exemplify this, including the Blue Plains Intermunicipal Agreement, Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership, and Regional Climate Change prevention, preparedness and adaptation. The membership recognized the value in sharing experiences and input regionally among various levels of government and strategically build relationships to influence change.

**Virginia Master Naturalist Program – Celebrating 10 Years of Service to Virginia.** Mr. Jim McGlone, Local Chapter Coordinator with the Fairfax Master Naturalists shared an overview of the Virginia Master Naturalists program, which celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2015. In 2005, Virginia's Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Cooperative Extension, Department of Forestry and Museum of Natural History set out to create a force multiplier. Together, they established basic guidelines and structure of the programs, recruited the first set of 10 chapters, hired a statewide coordinator, and funded the statewide efforts of the program with support from founding sponsoring agencies. Since then, sponsors, local partnering organizations, and volunteers have helped VMN grow to a thriving program with 29 chapters having significant positive impacts on Virginia's natural resources, including the contribution of over 526,000 hours of service with a value of \$12.4 million (Admin – 22%, Stewardship 26%, Education 26%, Citizen Science 26%). In the Potomac Watershed Roundtable area, there are over 500 local master naturalists that are expected to know a variety of topics and participate in volunteer service projects. Mrs. Gross acknowledged the important work that volunteers do and congratulated the Master Naturalists on their successful first 10 years.

**Adjournment.** Mrs. Gross asked that the membership reserve the following dates for Roundtable meetings in calendar year 2016: January 8, April 8, July 8, and October 7. A confirmation of the 2016 schedule will be sent out at a later date, along with general meeting locations. She thanked the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District for their hospitality and the speakers for their time. The meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Grape