

POTOMAC WATERSHED ROUNDTABLE
Quarterly Meeting – April 8, 2016
Fairview Beach Fire Station, King George

MINUTES

Members and Alternates

Hon. Penny Gross, Chair, Voting Member, Fairfax County
Hon. Woody Hynson, 2nd Vice Chair, Voting Member, Westmoreland County
Hon. John Adams, Voting Alternate, Tri-County City SWCD
Hon. Ruby Brabo, Voting Alternate, King George County
Hon. Deirdre Clark, Voting Member, John Marshall SWCD
Debbie Cross, Advisory Member, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Curtis Dalpra, Advisory Member, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
Hon. John Flannery, Voting Member, Loudoun SWCD
Hon. Jim Gehlsen, Voting Member, Prince William SWCD
Laura Grape, Voting Alternate, Northern Virginia SWCD
Charlie Grymes, Voting Alternate, Environment
Alan Gray, Voting Member, Agriculture and Forestry (Forestry)
Hon. John Jenkins, Voting Member, King George County
Jim McGlone, Advisory Member, VA Department of Forestry
Daniel Moore, Advisory Member, Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance
Karen Pallansch, Voting Member, Water & Wastewater
Robert Pickett, Voting Member, Northern Neck SWCD
Hon. John Peterson, Voting Member, Northern Virginia SWCD
Michael Trop, Voting Alternate, John Marshall SWCD
Hon. Elizabeth Ward, Voting Alternate, Prince William SWCD
Hon. Bob Wensman, Voting Member, Tri-County City SWCD

Interested Parties

Randy Bartlett, Fairfax County
John Bateman, Northern Neck Planning District Commission
Michael Bennett, Fairview Beach Residents Association
Hon. Meg Bohmke, Stafford County Board of Supervisors
Mimi Faha, Stafford County
Juliette Giordano, Angler Environmental
Eric Gregory, King George County
Maria Harwood, Northern Virginia SWCD
Nicholas Kuttner, Potomac Riverkeeper Network
Etta Lucas, Tri-County City SWCD
Kim McAfee, Tri-County City SWCD
Rebecca Shoemaker, Virginia DEQ
May Sligh, Virginia DEQ
Christopher Thomas, KGCSA

Amy Walker, Virginia DCR
Chris Werde, KGCSA

Call to Order and Introductions. Mr. Hyson called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM and thanked the Tri-County City Soil and Water Conservation District for hosting the meeting. Ms. Brabo recognized Gale Marshall, Branch Sales Manager with Community Bank of the Chesapeake who provided the morning refreshments.

Potomac Council Report. Mr. Peterson mentioned that there are several vacancies on the Roundtable membership and that the Council will be reaching out to individuals and agencies to fill them. He asked that Roundtable members send topics of interest for the forums to Ms. Grape.

Approval of Minutes. A **motion** (Peterson – Wensman) passed unanimously to approve the minutes from the January 8, 2016 meeting in Herndon, VA.

Membership. Mr. Hynson welcomed several new members to the Roundtable, including:

Member Time and Announcements. Mr. Hynson invited members to share events and activities that may be of interest to others.

- Jim McGlone shared that the General Assembly passed legislation authorizing the Legacy Forests program with the Virginia Department of Forestry. The program, similar to the Legacy Farms program, will acknowledge families whose properties have been in active forest management for over 100 years.
- Charlie Grymes shared that the Prince William Conservation Alliance will be hosting the annual Bluebell Festival on April 17, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Merrimac Farms.
- Ruby Brabo shared that the Environmental Protection Agency is convening a task force to develop local targets for the Chesapeake Bay Phase III Watershed Improvement Plan. As a representative on Chesapeake Bay Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) she welcomed input and offered to disseminate information, as it becomes available.
- Jeff Adams shared that Widewater, a new park in Stafford County, has been established. It is located on a former Dominion Power site, along a peninsula to the Potomac River. The property was never developed due to the need for infrastructure and is located near Crows Nest, with potential for public water access. Senator Hanger secured the funding needed to establish the park.

Fairview Beach Watershed Plan. May Sligh, TMDL Nonpoint Source Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Northern Regional Office, provided an overview of the watershed plan developed for the Fairview Beach community. Ms. Sligh explained that the community has had challenges with bacteria, particularly in the beach area and is 97 percent impervious in the Town area. In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency released a manual that outlined an alternative structure to traditional TMDL implementation plans. The watershed plan is a methodical way of installing stormwater best management practices (BMP) during the design of the implementation program. With support from the Interstate Commission of the Potomac River Basin, DEQ established workgroup meetings to collect information, provide

education, and share monitoring results. Ms. Sligh explained that the community was very engaged with 12-25 representatives participating at regularly scheduled meetings. Residents were particularly motivated in resolving the bacteria problem to reduce the number of beach closures and swimming advisories occurring due to elevated bacteria levels. On average, the area spends 18 days during the summer under advisory. ICPRB and DEQ assessed the bacteria levels at the beach and within the Potomac River. The study revealed consistently elevated levels at the beach versus those 25 meters into the Potomac River, reducing the concerns that the river was the primary source of contamination. The Fairview Beach Residents Association monitored bacteria levels using Coliscan and found higher levels of bacteria during rain events. The plan identified controllable solutions to reducing bacteria, including:

- Septic system replacement and repair
- Sewer infrastructure maintenance
- Pet waste management

Recognizing the correlation of stormwater and increased levels of bacteria, there was an interest in reduce runoff throughout the community. The plan identifies stormwater infiltration projects on private lands, since the community has limited public land options. Stormwater solutions include:

- Rain gardens
- Pervious pavers
- Vegetative buffers

Educational programs included efforts to reach out to residents through signs and pet waste stations and to recreational boaters. Bacteria levels continue to be monitored by the community and the Virginia Department of Health. The final plan, which includes an estimated cost of \$1,175,227 to implement, was accepted in December 2014. May shared several grants and funds that could be used to offset implementation costs.

(Mrs. Gross arrived at 11:25 a.m.)

Michael Bennett, Vice President of the Fairview Beach Residents Association shared that the community was primarily concerned about the human sources of pollution in the Potomac River and would like to focus their time and attention on the existing trailer park, since there are gaps in available information. Mr. Bennett explained that as a service authority was established, seven trailers were illegally connected. The landowner did pay for connection fees for those trailers, which costs approximately \$19,500 each. The trailer park is 40 to 50 years old with roughly 30 residents. Originally, the land was zoned for seasonal use, but Mr. Bennett shared that there are several year-round residents. The community is concerned that the implementation of stormwater controls will not fully reduce bacteria levels and that locating rain gardens throughout Town has been difficult due to limited available space.

Value of the Potomac Watershed Roundtable. Mrs. Gross expressed her appreciation to the Roundtable for the last minute change in the agenda. She shared that a group broadly expressed concerns about the representation of individuals discussing the Coal Ash Pond issue and accused

the Roundtable and Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District of not being impartial on the issue. She reinforced that the Potomac Watershed Roundtable is a regional and voluntary body that provides a forum to discuss and learn about a variety of issues, including those that may be controversial such as greywater reuse, acid drainage, fracking, and uranium mining. She shared that the Roundtable rarely collectively take a position on issues, but does provide testimony to General Assembly members on issues that are of interest to the watershed, including enhancement of erosion and sediment controls, support for Crow's Nest, and re-establishment of the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund. Mrs. Gross mentioned that the Roundtable forums are informational sessions, which as public officials they need in order to make informed decisions and respond to questions from their constituents. She expressed her thanks to Mrs. Grape and the staff support from the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, which is an independent agency that aids in the administration of the Roundtable.

Shoreline Erosion and Restoration at Fairview Beach. Mr. Bennett shared that the Town of Fairview Beach has been experiencing severe erosion along its Potomac River waterfront, affecting existing infrastructure including Fairview Road and sanitary sewer lines. In places, the eroding edge of shoreline is only six feet from existing infrastructure. Mr. Bennett mentioned the town's concerns about the potential for failure with a future storm event. The town believes it is the larger public's interest to reduce erosion in Fairview Beach. Eric Gregory, County Attorney for King George County described the threat to public infrastructure and what the County can do. He shared that the county has limited resources to support improvements and have submitted a request to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study through the Emergency Streambank and Protection Program. Under this program, the Corps can pay up to \$5 million and 100 percent of the feasibility study, up to \$100,000. The program requires a local sponsor, which King George County has committed to, providing 50 percent of any overage for the feasibility study. The Fairview Beach Residents Association committed a \$50,000 line of credit to support overages, as well. A conceptual plan has been developed, which includes the establishment of a maintenance easement. However, the beach would remain private. The town has invested in establishing breakwater, which has resulted in significant beach restoration. Mrs. Gross shared that since the Fairview Beach community is established within a contained small watershed, that they may want to work with their local Soil and Water Conservation District and consider establishing a Watershed Improvement District. Mr. Bennett expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to share the issues of Fairview Beach with the Roundtable membership and offered to provide a tour of the eroding shoreline area. Mr. Pickett asked that periodic updates on the progress being made at Fairview Beach be brought at future meetings.

Adjournment. Mrs. Gross expressed her appreciation to Ms. Brabo and the Tri-County City Soil and Water Conservation District staff for hosting the meeting and invited those interested to participate in the tour of Fairview Beach. The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.