



Bulletin of the Proceedings of the Friends of Accotink Creek

Our meeting notes serve as bulletins of our activities, interests, and discussions, supplemented by your submissions.

Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting – April 19, 2022

Next Meeting: May 17, 2022 (Third Tuesday of each month via on-line meeting: Login info will be posted with the meeting notice in the [Friends of Accotink calendar](#).)

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Present: Gary Bangs, Julie Chang, Doug Craun, Sandy Collins, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, Dave Lincoln, Kim Schauer, all via on-line meeting, due to COVID 19 closures and precautions.

Opportunities to represent FACC:

Mt Vernon Environmental Expo: Dave and Sandy tabled at the [2022 Environment Expo](#) on Saturday, April 23 at Fort Hunt Park.

Annandale Greenway Alliance Earth Day Event, April 23, 2022: Philip tabled at the event. It looks like the idea to extend across the Beltway has been dropped, so we will have to see if it can be revived.

Lake Accotink Park 60th Anniversary Celebration, August 27, 2022: Gary and Philip attended the FLAP quarterly planning meeting. Gary noted that FLAP already has a committee in place. They will be asking for volunteers later, so that might be an opportunity to insert ourselves.

Save the Dandelions: Avril and Philip staffed a table at MOM's Organic Market's annual Save the Dandelions event at their Merrifield store April 10. One lesson learned: Avril found a surprising trick for putting our handouts in people's hands. The simple generic phrase "Would you like a flyer?" got everyone to take one and also say "Thank You".

Earth Day Egg Hunt, April 30, Frying Pan Park, 11am-1pm: Gabrielle Jordan had asked for our support with an environmental station for an Earth Day egg hunt for the Fairfax County Family Services Befriend a Child program on April 30th. She indicated to Philip that all is on track for the event. Gary and Kim have offered to help Gabrielle with this project.

FACC Subjects of Interest Discussion:

Friends of Dyke Marsh event May 19, Subject: Plastic pollution: FACC is a co-sponsor of an event on May 19 at the Mt. Vernon District Government Center, with a guest speaker from Ocean Conservancy. FODM will provide more info, asking for help with publicity.

Cinder Bed Road Bikeway: Philip reported that Virginia Native Plant Society is leading a series of nature walks April 10, May 15, and June 19, 1:30 pm at the basketball court on Crestleigh Drive.

The group of the interested sent a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers asking that the project be required to seek an individual permit, rather than a categorical exclusion permit. The difference is a higher level of documentation of environmental impacts, but not necessarily a different outcome. We've learned the project has not yet applied for its permit.

The project has also not yet contacted the Amberleigh Homeowners Association for an easement on their land. Since most of the project will be on their property, this is quite astounding this far into the planning.

Potomac Watershed Cleanup: We got an early start on cleanups March 26th with the [Country Club Hills Civic Association](#) cleanup and March 27th with a private cleanup we arranged for the [West End Rugby](#) team.

In our regularly scheduled cleanups, we've so far had 155 volunteers, including groups from [American Councils for International Education](#), Cub Scout Packs 817 and 868, Boy Scout Troop 702, Chi Upsilon Sigma sorority, and Phi Iota Alpha fraternity, both of George Mason University. Providence District Supervisor Palchik joined us at our Barkley Road site.


Philip was especially pleased that we were able to remove "Moby Tire", a monster deeply embedded in the gravel that has defied us for years. It took about an hour of digging and pulling for Boy Scout Troop 702 to accomplish the job.

There is one more week to go.

This year we had to switch from Alice Ferguson Foundation to Clean Fairfax Council as a source of supply for bags and gloves. So far, we've not run out of the old bags, but when we do, the new ones are much thinner and a dull black color.

Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley will have their cleanups April [23rd](#) & [30th](#).

Lake Accotink Park will have its big spring cleanup on [May 8th](#).



SAVE CINDER BED WOODS!

- The Cinder Bed Road Bikeway is promoted as a shortcut to Metro, but the path would cut through wooded habitat and wetlands including rare Magnolia Bogs.
- No-trees-harmed alternatives are in place, making this trail redundant and arbitrary.
- We cannot build more forests and streams. The worthy goal of enhanced bicycle transportation need not always follow the path of least resistance through our forests.
- Climate change is upon us now, so why do we persist in business-as-usual by converting carbon-sink trees to heat sink asphalt?
- Our dwindling supply of forests and streams cannot provide a parallel transport system. All our streets should be made safer for bike traffic and pedestrians instead of making our dwindling natural heritage safe for asphalt.

BE HEARD – BE THE VOICE OF THE FOREST

- Tell your Fairfax County Supervisor to provide all our neighborhoods with people-friendly connections, but spare forests from paving.

[#SAVECINDERBEDWOODS](#)



The crew of Troop 702 drives their harpoons into Moby Tire

Illegal Discharge: On March 29 Philip noticed an opaque white discharge coming from a storm drain along Telegraph Road in Lorton. I used our [Watershed 911](#) page to call Stormwater Planning. An inspector came out right away and traced the source to a nearby marble cutting operation. The business was ordered to stop, and as usual, there was no penalty.



Opaque white discharge – never a good sign

Water Main Break: Just about a year after a water main break affected Daniels Run with a large sediment runoff, the same thing happened again on March 24th, but on the opposite bank. These breaks happen on a daily basis, according to the Fairfax Water [Leaks & Breaks webpage](#)



Daniels Run filled with sediment from the water main break

[Accotink Gorge](#): We are still planning our April 30th workday, focused on eradicating invasive wisteria. Dave will contact Boston Properties about the activity.

[Park Authority Budget](#): The Alliance of Park Friends is coordinating an effort to reverse cuts proposed by the county executive to the requested 2023 Park Authority appropriation. The budget was low enough already, after being cut back during the financial crisis of 2008 and never restored. We sent our own [comment letter](#) to the Board of Supervisors.

[#FundFCPA](#)

[Rt. 50 to Thais Park Trail Paving](#): A repaving project was supposed to begin along the trails from Thais Park to Rt. 50 at Nutley Street. However, we notified the Park Authority of danger to the [active vernal pool](#) right next to the trail. The project has been delayed until after the breeding season, but we haven't heard back on our suggestions for long term protections.

[Quill Camp](#): On June 30th from 10:30 to 12:30, a group of 40 incoming George Mason University students will be volunteering at Daniels Run Elementary school to remove invasive plant species for the outdoor classroom areas our sister group, Lands and Waters, has constructed over the years. We need a half dozen leaders to help guide the volunteers.

[Northern Virginia Conservation Trust appeal](#): The Spicewood Court properties will go back on the block for a public auction beginning May 13th and ending May 31st. These are seven lots entirely in floodplain and Resource Protection Area on Accotink Creek just downstream from Woodburn Road. The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust will be bidding.

In October last year, we authorized a \$2500 contribution to the purchase fund, but the auction was cancelled. Do we still want to make that contribution? "Board members agreed on a \$2500 donation, specifying that it is for the project described in the appeal." – [October 2021](#)

[Long Branch Central Project](#): The April 11th public meeting presented the list of proposed projects for nearly the next decade. Disappointingly, all of them are in-stream work, plus some stormwater ponds. There is essentially nothing addressing stormwater at the source. The public engagement and education component that was much talked of at the inception was only mentioned as something that should be revived.

On the bright side, the name of the contractor, [Biohabitats](#), is promising and it's a [certified B corporation](#) with a website that makes it sound as if they do all their work by means of drum circles

and incense. During the meeting they talked of avoiding clearing away trees and maintaining ease of movement for fish.

Philip will draft some comments for the board to look at and update our webpage.

In other news from Long Branch central:

- A renewed version of [Follow the Water](#) is happening April 29th at Canterbury Woods Elementary organized by a teacher with cooperation from Stormwater Planning and Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley.
- There was a [fish and salamander kill](#) on the stretch behind Old Creek Elementary on March 23rd. A neighbor alerted DEQ, but the inspector saw no obvious cause and let it drop.



- *Slaughter of the Salamanders*

DWR Fish Survey: The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources plans an electrofishing fish survey on Accotink Creek in Wakefield Park, likely in June. Volunteers are welcome to participate, mostly as “gofers.” This survey will take place near the recently completed Wakefield Restoration on Accotink Creek.

Donations: Philip reported that FACC received a \$150 donation \$150 from Country Club Hills Civic Association during their March 26th stream cleanup.



[Whither FACC:](#)

Philip brought up the fact that FLAP has returned to meeting exclusively in person. Is there any interest in changes?

Website Modification: [WordPress Alternative.](#) Another website collaborator has appeared, Anisah Kabli, an information technology professor at GMU. She has started with some cleanup of our [Posters](#) page.