



## 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 – December 19, 2023

Next Meeting: January 18, 2024 (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, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, Dave Lincoln, Sandy Collins, Brian Slawski, and Beverley Rivera all via on-line meeting.

#### • **Represent FACC:**

• [George Snyder Trail](#): Philip stated that a group of concerned neighbors have [continued to speak](#) at City Council meetings so the Council knows the issue has not been forgotten. The [petition](#) is still open for signatures. Channel 5 news did a [short report](#) on the issues with the trail.

• [Stafford Drive Stream Restoration: Plant Rescue](#): Philip said that a group from the [World Citizen Club](#) of GMU helped with replanting on December 9<sup>th</sup>. We are now collecting pretty much only evergreen plants, such as sedges and Christmas ferns.

• [Woods and Field](#): Brian reported that the turnout for the December 5<sup>th</sup> reading at Fairfax Regional Library was small, but the attendees were enthusiastic. It was suggested by the librarian that better attendance may occur during one of their plant exchange days. Further consideration is being made for other potential libraries.

• [Lake Accotink Dredging](#): Sandy reported that the citizens Task Force released its [Findings Report](#), which has been presented to the Board of Supervisors. [\[VIDEO\]](#) The Task Force was specifically told not to make recommendations, but the report did emphasize options for a smaller lake that may reduce costs, and for a promising new option for a dewatering site at an industrial park farther east along the railroad

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tracks. It may not be clear what steps the Board of Supervisors will take next, or when. The Save Lake Accotink effort, which is advocating for dredging, followed up with a [press release](#) pushing the Board of Supervisors to immediately conduct a maintenance dredge while planning future options.

Sandy addressing Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee



- [Elly Doyle Awards](#): Philip stated that on November 17<sup>th</sup>, as part of the Fairfax Parks Coalition, the Friends of Accotink Creek were recognized for the [Sally B. Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award](#) of the Fairfax County Park Authority.



Also in our watershed, the Friends of Hidden Oaks Nature Center received the [Eakin Philanthropy Award](#), and Jo Doumbia received recognition as an [Outstanding Volunteer](#) at Hidden Oaks.

- [State of Streams](#): Gary stated the third and probably final workshop reviewing the data for the chosen indicators as well as scoring methodology occurred on December 11. Representatives from all three streams included in this report attended: Rock Creek, Sligo Creek, and Accotink Creek. Report is being drafted and anticipated release is April 2024. Four indicators will be scored (climate, water quality, biodiversity and habitat, access). Philip asked what will be expected of FACC after the report is released, and Dave said that it is unclear other than being included in Nature Forward's planned media release, and then whatever individual usage can be made of the report by each individual watershed groups.

- [Vernal Pool Contamination](#): Philip reported that another exchange of emails with Land Development Services has yielded nothing more than the same complacent excuses we heard in September when we reported the failure of the latest temporary fix. Gary reported that he did see someone in a county truck looking at the site from the road on December 15. Matthew Hansen, Chief Site Development and Inspection Division, had stated in his email December 15 that Keith Anthony (Site Inspection Supervisor) will be visiting the property today to followup on the email chain and in anticipation of the upcoming rain forecasted.

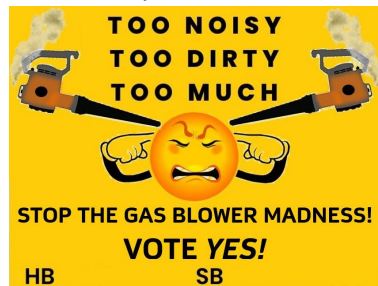
- [Invasives Disclosure Regulation](#): Avril had nothing new to report on the disclosure regulation however there are several legislative bills being proposed worth reporting on. As discussed before there is a draft for allowing limited usage of nonrestricted herbicides by volunteers on public properties. It appears this will come from Delegate Bulova and a zoom call will occur with him on December 21.

Additionally the other invasives control proposal for a VDOT project with dedicated funding as a pilot needs to be a budget amendment as opposed to legislation. That is still being worked on.

The proposal to require retail nurseries to post warning signs indicating certain plants are invasive has been drafted and ready to be submitted, but much resistance is expected against this.

Nature Forward has proposed a bill restricting HOA's from prohibiting native plant gardens through Delegate Krizek. Separately we have been told Krizek is proposing to add English ivy to the previously approved legislation on running bamboo.

And finally, Clean Quiet NOVA will be having a Day of Action in Richmond in support of their bill to ban gas leaf blower equipment in Virginia on January 11.



- [Rod Simmons](#): Philip stated that Rod Simmons, an exceptional botanist who has used his expertise and experience to benefit preservation of natural habitats throughout our region, including the Accotink Gorge and Cinder Bed Woods has resigned. His passion for protection caused conflicts with his employer, the City of Alexandria that led to his early retirement earlier this month. There is not much we can do but be vigilant against similar situations in our area. There is an [online petition](#) to protest the City's actions and ask that Rod receive full pension benefits.

- [Donations](#): Philip said that we received donations of:

- o \$1000 from Betsy Martin of Friends of Little Hunting Creek, who has made such donations for several years.
- o \$1000 from CareFirst for participation in their July Equity Week, which we belatedly noticed last week. Since Lands and Waters was actually the main organizer, we split it with them giving them \$600 like last year.

- [Whither FACC:](#)

- o [FACC Newsletter](#)

Thanks to Beverley for again producing our year-end newsletter.

- o *FACC Elections*

By acclamation, Dave was elected Purser and Brian was elected Conservator-at-Large. Many thanks to Beverley and Julie for their years of service on our board.