

2015

Fairfax County Restoration Project

A Public-Private Partnership



Summary of Activities

January 2015 - December 2015

FCRP Mission

The Fairfax County Restoration Project (FCRP) strengthens the relationship between people and nature through community action. FCRP **connects, creates, and promotes efforts** to restore ecosystem functions in Fairfax County through collaboration with public, private, and volunteer organizations.

Background

With the help and guidance of the Fairfax County Office of Public/Private Partnerships, The Fairfax County Restoration Project (FCRP) began in April 2008. Although the FCRP was formed in response to deforestation along the Capital Beltway/495 Express Lanes project, it quickly widened its scope to environmental issues throughout Fairfax County. As a core group of community organizations, businesses and government staff coalesced, it became evident that another environmental organization that would compete for funding and volunteer time was not needed. What was and is needed is a focal point for a community of practice where organizations and individuals interested in environmental restoration in Fairfax County can meet, share information and take collaborative action. FCRP was chartered to help foster a collaborative approach to environmental restoration in Fairfax County.

In keeping with its broader perspective, FCRP's first step was to meet with Dominion Virginia Power in the spring of 2009 to discuss easement plantings. FCRP sought to expand the use of native shrubs and eliminate non-native shrubs from the approved plant list for transmission line easements. Although we didn't get everything we wanted, FCRP did get Dominion to add a few more native shrubs and eliminate non-native invasive species from the list of approved plants.

In the summer 2009 FCRP also helped homeowners engage with VDOT and potential landscapers to discuss replanting the 495 Express Lanes corridors, resulting in a greater emphasis on replanting and the use of native plants. That fall, FCRP held the first of a conference series called Restoring Lands/Restoring Waters. This conference was a first step in an on-going process of educating Fairfax County landowners, particularly those in the 495 Express Lanes corridor, about the use and benefits of native plants in the home landscape; and about the human, written and electronic resources available to help develop their own native plant gardens.

FCRP has continued its mission to engage the community through projects, outreach, education and providing resources to improve the environment and community.

2015 Activities

Bingo for Bees:

Our partners at Stormwater Management developed “Bingo for Bees” as FCRP’s fall outreach effort to be held at “Fall for Fairfax.” This is an effort to actively engage children in the identification of environmental projects that have been implemented at the Government Center that support pollinators. This is a fun event that will be built upon as a standard outreach each fall during the “Fall for Fairfax” celebration. This is in place of meeting time for the group and all members are encouraged to participate or volunteer.

The goal was to reach out and connect to kids and families about the importance of Supporting our Pollinators from Bees, to Butterflies, Bats, Birds and Box Turtles to mention a few.

Our message was by providing healthy habitats through clean water, native plants and control of pollutants in our yards and on public lands we can invite Monarchs, Honey Bees, and Gold Finches into our gardens year after year.

BINGO for B’sss came together from a variety of partners of FCRP including **Friends of Accotink Creek, Chantilly HS Students for Environmental Awareness, Virginia Native Plant Society, Oakton Wild Bird Center, Fairfax Water, and Stormwater Planning of DPWES.**

Friends of Accotink Creek (FACC) provided informative displays on Stream Health, Monitoring, and Clean-up opportunities including hands on/under the microscope study of aquatic bugs! These displays helped to bring our message inside the tent while the weather deterred us from venturing out.

Virginia Native Plants Society donated native perennial wildflowers that were prizes for completing BINGO! Those who chose plants as a prize had a place in mind for planting them.

The Oakton Wild Bird Center donated the Grand Prize, a bird feeder and coupons to fill it.

The students of **Chantilly HS SEA** connected with the younger kids with fresh excitement and purpose.

Fairfax Water donated reusable water bottles so we can all ‘Drink Responsibly!’ These were a popular prize also.

Amy Gould of Long and Foster Realtors donated beautiful PlantNovaNatives guides as prizes.

A special thanks to **John Burke of DPWES**, for shepherding the BINGO for B’sss through days of revision into a fun and reusable activity for future events – hopefully less rainy.

Thanks to all the volunteers from **Friends of Accotink Creek, Dave, Ted, Sue, and Kris** engaged parents and kids alike in discussions of their favorite flowers, mammals and birds in their yards, adjacent parks and streams.

FCRP appreciates the effort from all of the volunteers and donors who helped make this a success. We look forward to building upon this effort it for the future.

On-going Initiatives

Reforest Fairfax: For each \$35 gift purchased five (5) seedlings are planted during a spring or fall planting season. An on-line locator is available so once the trees are planted the location of the gifts can be identified. There is also an optional on-line registry for supporters of the program. The program can be accessed at www.reforestfairfax.org.

To develop this program FCRP created partnerships with [Xpedex, an International Paper Company](#), [McCabe's Printing Group](#), the [Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District](#), [Eze Solutions](#) and [Fairfax ReLeaf](#) in order to create the Reforest Fairfax Program. Once again, Transurban provided a grant to support the program's initial development. Merchandising items to further support the program are currently being developed.

In 2015 the total number of gifts purchased rose to 102. The total number of trees planted has reached 510 trees. All proceeds go directly to Fairfax ReLeaf.

495 Express Lanes - In 2012 the HOTLANES project was renamed 495 Express Lanes. Spring 2015 represented the end of the planting along the corridor under the original plans. The unfortunate occurrence of unauthorized mowing destroyed much of the growth that had taken place between Braddock Road and Gallows Road had still not been addressed at year's end. There appear to be large numbers of dead trees and erosion problems along the corridor. Several requests for tours of the entire project have been unsuccessful up to now. However, we are hopeful this will occur as spring 2016 approaches.

Tree Coupon Program – This partnership between FCRP and Craven's Nursery and Pottery has ended. We are grateful to Cravens Nursey & Pottery for their support of this program. The facility has been sold and is being developed. FCRP hopes to identify a new partner to continue this program.

FCRP Website - FCRP launched a new website in 2015. This has been structured around our mission statement of Create, Promote & Connect efforts to restore eco-system functions. www.fcrpp3.org

Plant NOVA Natives – this is an initiative of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, the Virginia Department of Forestry, Virginia Native Plant Society, Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, Nature by Design, GMU Office of Sustainability, Virginia Coastal Zone Management and other partners in Northern Virginia. Working through a network of community leaders, the campaign is seeking increased awareness and availability of native plants in Northern Virginia. A guide to plants native to the area is completed and available for download at www.plantnovanatives.org. Full color copies are also available.



This program has been led by Alan Ford and is supported and promoted by FCRP.

Accotink Gorge – A presentation on the status of Accotink Gorge was made at both Quarterly meetings in 2015 describing the overwhelming biodiversity along this area as well as the equally overwhelming problem of wisteria. The presentation may be accessed here: http://www.accotink.org/2015/Accotink_Gorge_PowerPoint.pdf . Friends of Accotink Creek are developing partnerships around this project which is partially located in parkland and other areas that require permission to access. OP3 will help facilitate developing some of these to allow for invasive removal.

Upcoming Initiatives:

- Developing a demonstration Green Streets Project

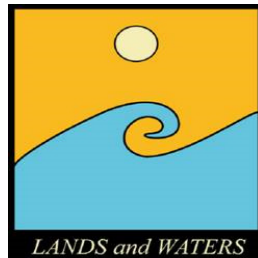
- Outreach on Sustainable Sites Initiative – FCRP has approached NVAR to sponsor a Sustainable Sites Forum. NVAR supports the SITES concept but would like to begin with a Realtor Forum on Sustainable Sites to bring in their membership. Talks are underway to determine a way forward on this event.

Membership Report

Since the FCRP Charter was completed we have 32 Individual Members and 20 Organizational Memberships

The area that continues to be challenging is business membership and more focus needs to be given to this issue.

Organization members:



Friends of Holmes Run



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Individual members:

Diane Artemis
Dorothy Banzon
Brittany Bennett
Judi Booker
Diane Blust
Trish Butler
Karen DuVal
Stacey Evers
Kamol Farid
Alan M. Ford
Suzanne Foster
Judy Fraser
Amy Gould
Sandhe Hrushikesh
Kashka Kubzdela
Terry Liercke
Caitlin Lundquist

Jim McGlone
Pat McMullan
Jamie Minnaert-Grote
Mark Priest
Marie Reinsdorf
Juan Revollo
Kristin Rule
Daniel Schwartz
Kim Scudera
Jayashree Srinivasan
Eva Stern
Emily Swenson
Carol Turner
Ron Tuttle
Ellen Vogel
Elizabeth Walsh