

2011

Fairfax County Restoration Project

A Public-Private Partnership



Photo by Laura Beaty and Marianne Mooney, Virginia Native Plant Society

Summary of Activities

January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011

Background

Convened by the Office of Public/Private Partnerships, The Fairfax County Restoration Project began with preliminary discussions in April 2008 followed by a meeting with Dominion Virginia Power in the spring of 2009. A summer of homeowner outreach followed, with notices sent through the NVSWCD to homeowners along the corridor and two meetings with VDOT and the landscapers hired to refoliate the HOTLANES. Chartering meetings were held over the summer and fall months with a final charter being issued by year-end 2009. Also in the Fall of 2009 the first of a conference series called Restoring Lands/Restoring Water was held. This conference featured guest speakers that included Professor Susan Piedmont-Paladino, a Curator at the National Building Museum; Richard Street, Code Enforcement Officer for the Chesapeake Bay in Spotsylvania County; Jim McGlone, Urban Forest Conservationist with the Virginia Department of Forestry; Danielle Wynne with Stormwater Planning in Fairfax County; and Alan Ford, President, Potowmack Chapter of The Virginia Native Plant Society. A grant from Transurban was applied for and received by a business partner, Eze Solutions, who agreed to develop an on-line calendar and website for the FCRP. 2010 began with a new Leadership Team and goals set forth for a March public launch, as well as 6 month and 1st year goals.

As we convened in 2011 many of our initiatives are in process and our focus was to strengthen these efforts. Goals that had been longer range were moved to a higher priority.

Our Mission

The Mission as set forth in the Charter is as follows: The Fairfax County Restoration Project (FCRP) will strengthen the relationship between people and nature through community action. FCRP will **connect, create, and promote efforts** to restore ecosystem functions in Fairfax County through collaboration with public, private, and volunteer organizations.

Our Actions

New Initiatives:

1. Outreach to HOA's: In 2011 a brochure to be sent from District Supervisors offices to the HOAs along the HOTLANES project was completed (See Appendix B). By describing the type of assistance FCRP can offer homeowners and encouraging them to contact us we hope HOAs will be able to utilize the type of technical assistance FCRP can offer. Partners assisting in this effort include Banzon Designs, NVSWCD, VA Department of Forestry, and Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. This brochure was mailed to HOA's with a follow up conference took place on October 8th. Homeowners learned about watershed friendly landscapes, low maintenance yards, native plant and tree benefits.

2. PSA campaign – At the beginning of 2011 a PSA Committee was tasked with developing an effective campaign to raise awareness of runoff issues, tree planting issues, why native plants are so important as well as other items determined to be a priority. Subsequently, we became aware of similar efforts already underway by The Chesapeake Club called www.plantmoreplants.com which had an existing campaign we felt was extremely effective. By joining forces with this group we felt it was a better utilization of resources and effort. At this writing, a request has been sent to Cox Communications requesting airtime to promote the message and we will do subsequent video clips to be streamed through our website to further develop the concepts in the PSA and to offer technical assistance through “how to” videos. Supporting materials developed by The Chesapeake Club are being distributed

at functions and promoting them at every opportunity as well as developing new partnerships around this theme.

3. Vernal Pool Conference – March 21st. This professional development workshop targeted county and state agencies, developers, engineers, and environmental consultants, addressing the ecological services provided by vernal pools and surrounding areas as well as challenges vernal pools may pose from a development perspective. Lands and Waters is planning a similar event for spring 2012.

4. Reforest Fairfax: Originally forecast for Spring 2011 Reforest Fairfax was finally launched on October 13th, 2011. Reforest Fairfax is a tree-gifting program designed to help replenish the tree canopy and to help the County achieve its tree canopy goals. For each \$35 gift purchased five (5) seedlings will be planted by Fairfax ReLeaf in the upcoming 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 on-line at <http://www.fcrpp3.org/reforestfairfax/>.

To accomplish this program Partnerships were developed with Xpedex, an International Paper Company, McCabe's Printing Group, the Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District, Eze Solutions and Fairfax ReLeaf. This program received initial funding from the Transurban Fluor grant fund. Merchandising items to further support the program are currently being developed.

5. Dirt! The Movie was shown by Sustainable Reston on 11/11/11. Dan Schwartz, a Soil Scientist with the Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District was a guest speaker for audience questions. The NVSWCD has purchased the educational version of this movie with an unlimited viewing license, so all of the FCRP family can schedule and view the movie. Additionally, the package includes a 40 minute classroom version so schools, local colleges and universities may also utilize this resource. As we print, we are currently in talks with NVCC and GMU to hold Earth Day 2012 viewings there as well. Get Dirtified!

6. Stormwater Ponds along HOTLANES. Virginia Megaproject partners, Fluor-Transurban and VDOT worked with Supervisor Foust and county staff to develop more environmentally comprehensive strategies for some of the stormwater ponds being constructed as part of the HOT Lanes project. Discussions focused on the grading design within the ponds and a mixture of compost and seed that will create habitat for native species. Agreement that five of the twenty-nine planned ponds will be upgraded with the recommended compost and seed mix while the remaining nineteen ponds will receive only the seed mix as far as the supply lasts.

During our 3rd year the following items were in process:

1. Chesterbrook Greening Project. This on-going project is a conversion of turf to forest at the Falls Church Pumping Station. While volunteer recruitment has been challenging at times, this project is proceeding well. A regular schedule of workday volunteer events has been established and this past year six events were held with about 50 total participants. This Fall FCRP partners Alan Ford of VNPS and Kris Unger and Jeanette Stewart of Lands and Waters met with City of Falls Church officials to discuss the project and plan the next steps. A preliminary schedule was approved for 2012. The involved parties continue in active conversation with local partners, primarily Chesterbrook Elementary School and Vinson Hall Retirement Community, on how best to collaborate. Site and funding restrictions have complicated the environmental education component of this project but efforts continue to build local community involvement and support.

2. GMU Garden – Administered by the GMU Office of Sustainability, and funded last year by TransUrban, the garden has yielded hundreds of pounds of vegetables that have been used by Food for Others in Fairfax. This year’s garden expanded and a farmer’s market was implemented every Thursday during the summer. Food for Others continues to receive fresh produce from this effort.

A Permaculture Design Certification course will be taught to Mason (and non-Mason) community members this coming March. Permaculture is the practice of 'permanent agriculture' and looks at creating sustainable ecosystems that produce food. The Potomac Heights Vegetable Garden will lend itself to planning and incorporation of various permaculture principles for the sake of the course.

The 2011 growing season was a very successful one! About 150 pounds of fresh produce were delivered (more still to come) and approximately 75 pounds sold at the Produce Kiosk. Many area school groups (VISTA, Mountain Laurel Residential School) visited and helped with the garden. Amazingly, over 20 volunteers showed up to help over the summer months. For the 2012 growing season, there will be involvement and help with seed-sowing by two separate freshman classes. Lastly, there will be the usual support from the George Mason Organic Garden Association (student club) and Service Learners.

3. Tree Coupon Pilot Program – This on-going program allows homeowners to download a coupon and bring it to [Cravens Nursery & Pottery](http://CravensNursery.com) to purchase native trees. Native tree fact sheets can be found on our website at www.fcrpp3.org. Over the spring of 2010 nine homeowners had taken advantage of this program. By Fall 2010 an additional 32 had been utilized. For 2011, 12 trees were purchased with coupons for a total of \$2,569.

4. Unitarian Church, Oakton, VA: FCRP partners Asad Rouhi and Dan Schwartz of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and Ron Tuttle of Fairfax County Public Works have worked extensively with members of the UUCF community to plan and design a retrofitted parking lot on church property that would eliminate most, if not all, stormwater runoff. The existing parking lot is over an acre in size, “paved” with gravel, and steeply sloping.

The preliminary plans for the parking lot retrofit included areas for capturing water throughout the proposed paving, rain gardens, and an infiltration trench. While the church community would like to have incorporated all of the retrofits, their budget was not large enough to allow that. It appears they will keep rain gardens and an infiltration trench, but will forego the pervious paving, which was the most expensive component. The church has already paid for the preliminary geotechnical soils testing and seems very serious on completing this project. While they would have liked to increase the scope of the LID onsite, what they are planning to do is extensive and will make a very good demonstration project for other religious institutions and county homeowners.

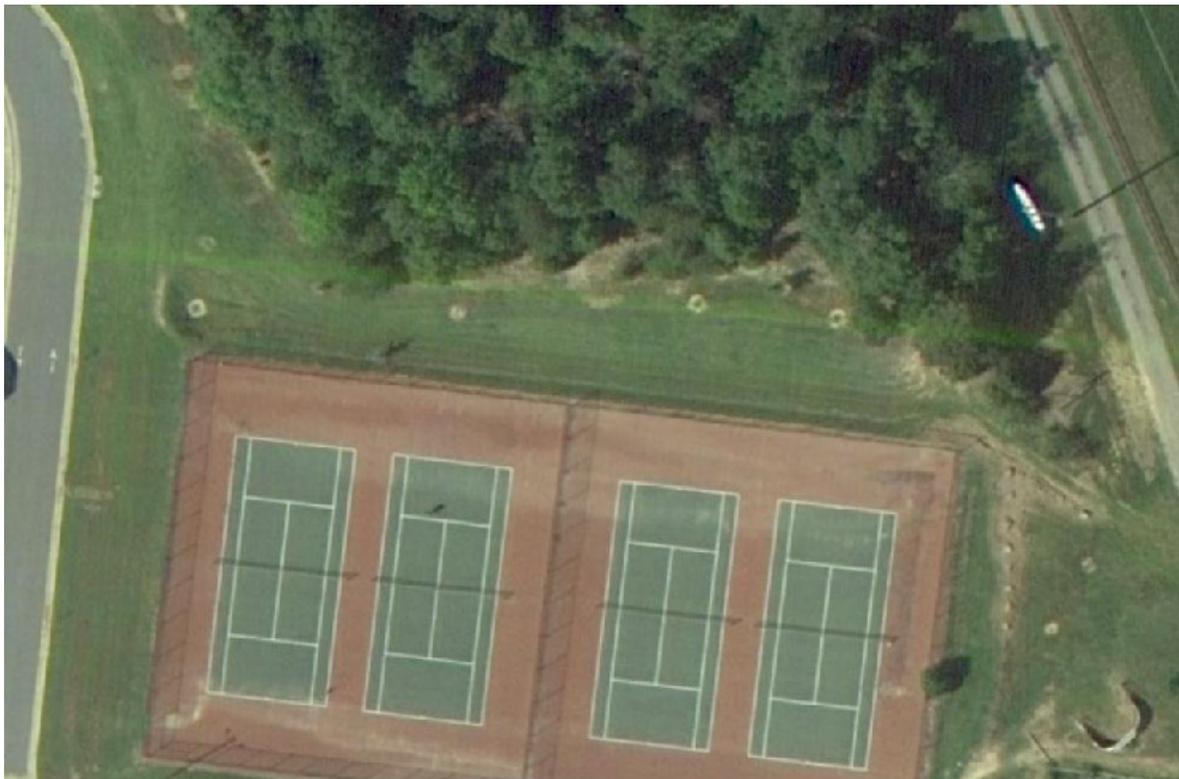
In addition, there is another church just down the street, Unity Church of Fairfax, that has a green roof and extensive native plants throughout their stormwater pond. There is a strong possibility of the two churches partnering to create combined demonstration project.

5. Raintree HOA: Assisted in securing a Transurban grant for this HOA that is adjacent to the HOTLANES. FCRP has also assisted in the application for a Fairfax County Neighborhood Enhancement Program. Support thus far has included outreach to Delegate Watts office to help intervene in damage created by the northbound entrance to 495 resulting in traffic overflow into their complex with consequential damage to sidewalks, parking lot, signage within the complex and traffic damage to soil & turf. Additionally, construction vehicles are using easement areas under the Dominion Power lines as

parking and working areas. These are not VDOT rights of way and are areas being managed by the Raintree HOA. Delegate Watts has secured barriers to force vehicles to slow down to make the turn into the complex. She is working with the Police Department to determine why trespassing laws are inadequate. Other support has included visits and walk-throughs by VA Department of Forestry and NVSWCD, outreach to confirm gas line locations, attendance at an HOA meetings to help formulate a plan for reforesting, addressing the stormwater issues resulting from the deforestation, and guidance and technical assistance through the grant process.

Audubon and the Virginia Native Plant Society met on site and offered advice on getting the project started. Lands and Waters is now an active partner with Raintree HOA, providing consulting and volunteer management services. Lands and Waters has coordinated several volunteer workdays at Raintree in partnership with DC Cares volunteers and Raintree HOA volunteers. Several areas have been planted already and Lands and Waters is on-track for completing Raintree HOA's goals for 2011.

6. Centerville HS modifications. Living Classrooms of the National Capital Region and Fairfax County Public Schools are currently working with Jeanette Stewart, Charles Smith, Ron Tuttle and others to make environmental improvements to runoff conditions on the school's campus. The modifications, although not fully finalized at this point, will include the use of a compost blanket with native wildflower and grass seed mix to improve stormwater runoff conveyance while creating wildlife habitat. Further upland reforestation is also being considered, as shown on attached below. (Double Click picture for notes on electronic version).



Other 2011 Acknowledgements:

Presented by the Environmental Quality Advisory Council and the Department of Planning & Zoning
FCRP was awarded the Environmental Excellence Award for 2011 for the following efforts:

“During the eligibility period of the Environmental Excellence Award, the FCRP has finished or started work on many projects that benefit Fairfax County, including, but not limited to the following:

1. The Restoring Lands/Restoring Water Conference Series. The second presentation of this conference series was held at the Braddock District Office for approximately 40 homeowners from throughout the County. A surprise introductory speech by Supervisor Cook helped set the tone for a vibrant exchange between the participants and presenters. Participants left with a better sense of their impact on local watersheds, the responsibility that each citizen has to help ensure a clean environment for all, and various ways to become a better steward of the land. Speakers included staff from Stormwater Planning, the Virginia Department of Forestry, and the Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District (NVSWCD).
2. Schoolyard Greening Project. This project converted under-utilized turf areas to forest at the Falls Church Pumping Station and will be used in the continuing education and living classroom efforts of both Falls Church City Schools and Fairfax County Public Schools, particularly Chesterbrook Elementary located across the street. Officials from Falls Church City, Fairfax County and both school systems highlighted the day with a ceremonial tree planting along with lessons on the proper method of tree planting.
3. Native Tree Discount Coupon Program. This program allows homeowners to download a coupon from the FCRP website and redeem it at Cravens Nursery & Pottery for a discount on the purchase of native trees. Native trees need less water, fertilizer and care and provide more food and habitat for wildlife than most non-native ornamentals. Fact sheets about the benefits of native can be found on the website alongside the coupons.
4. Reforest Fairfax. The FCRP is currently developing a tree gifting program called Reforest Fairfax which is set to launch in summer 2011. The program will allow people to plant trees in Fairfax County in honor of friends, family, or clients. The recipient of the gift will receive a professionally designed gift card and certificate and will be able to locate when and where their trees are planted using the FCRP website. The program will work in partnership with International Paper, McCabe’s Printing, and Fairfax ReLeaf. A grant was requested and received from Transurban to fund this program’s web presence and merchandising potential.
5. Raintree HOA. FCRP assisted in securing a Transurban grant for this HOA that has been negatively impacted by the deforestation and construction along the HOTLANES. FCRP has also assisted the HOA in applying for a Fairfax County Neighborhood Enhancement Program grant. Additional support has included outreach to Delegate Watts’ office to help intervene in damage created by traffic overflow from the altered northbound entrance to 495, visits and walk-throughs by FCRP partners such as the VA Department of Forestry and NVSWCD, outreach to confirm gas line locations, attendance at HOA meetings to help formulate a plan for replanting the grounds, addressing the storm water issues resulting from deforestation, and guidance and technical assistance through the grant process.

As is evidenced by the examples above, the value of the FCRP is not just in the work it accomplishes, but in the collaborative nature of that work which results in stronger partnerships between government, non-profits, businesses and individuals in Fairfax County. As a result of these dual benefits, the FCRP is deserving of the Fairfax County Environmental Excellence Award.”

Upcoming Projects currently in development:

Mantua Stormwater Project
Congressional School Projects
Whole Foods Garden Project
Bailey’s Crossroads Community Garden Project
Native Plant promotion efforts
Edgar Allen Poe Middle School Garden, Meadow & Stormwater projects

Membership Report

Since the FCRP Charter was completed we have 27 Individual Members and 18 Organizational Memberships

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

Organization members:



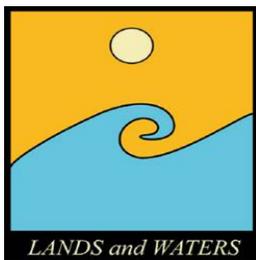
[The Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnerships](#)



[Transurban](#)



[Eze Solutions Inc.](#)



[Lands and Waters Inc.](#)



[Clean Fairfax Council](#)



[Virginia Native Plant Society](#)



[Friends of Accotink Creek](#)



[Audubon Society of Northern Virginia](#)



[George Mason University, Office of Sustainability](#)



[Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning](#)



www.dbanzondesign.com www.stopthinkgreen.com



Northrop Grumman Corporation

<http://www.northropgrumman.com/>



Rebuild Recycled Building Network

<http://www.rebuildwarehouse.org>



Deconstruction Services, LLC.

<http://www.deconstructionservices.com/>



FreeState Farms



Earthshare.

<http://www.earthshare.org/>



Virginia Master Naturalist – Fairfax Chapter

<http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/fairfax.html>



Edgar Allan Poe Middle School

www.fcps.edu



Northern Virginia Conservation Trust

<http://www.nvct.org/>

Individual members:

Diane Artemis
Dorothy Banzon
Brittany Bennett
Judi Booker
Diane Blust
Trish Butler
Stacey Evers

Alan M. Ford
Suzanne Foster
Amy Gould
Sandhe Hrushikesh
Kashka Kubzdela
Terry Liercke
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
Elizabeth Walsh

APPENDIX A – PROJECT LIST & RETURN ON INVESTMENT TABLE
Data updated regularly. Please check for latest version
On-Line at www.fcrpp3.org

APPENDIX B – HOA BROCHURE
Also available on-Line at www.fcrpp3.org

Restore & Beautify Your Property

Landscaping in Balance With Nature

As Fairfax County develops, trees are lost. Here and everywhere else, replanting the *right* way can restore beauty to the landscape while also providing a home for beneficial wildlife.



An initiative of the
Fairfax County Restoration Project
A Public-Private Partnership
www.fcrrp3.org



Brochure-final.pdf