



June 26 Quarterly Meeting (Hybrid) of Greater Prince William Trails Coalition

Time: 10:00-11:30am

Location: **GMU Potomac Science Center**, 650 Mason Ferry Ave, Woodbridge, VA 22191

Zoom link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87815709694?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87815709694?pwd=lzeO6pNvd2NyXajQfR3tvZCPfggRt0.1)

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Nourishment: healthy (*yeah, right...*) Dunkin donuts and coffee/tea

Register now to reserve your healthy donut.

Join us to discuss topics such as the development of the **Trails Master Plan** by Prince William County (including braids for the **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail**), potential partnering with local health organizations to expand outreach regarding opportunities to use trails for outdoor exercise, and status of planned-but-unfunded active transportation facilities.



Get Healthy(ier) - Take a Hike

The annual **Walk and Talk Wellness** program, which ended on June 8, was a messaging campaign that included signs on trails with QR codes offering opportunities to get some bling. GPWTC partner **REI** was a generous donor.

The Walk and Talk Wellness campaign highlighted National Mental Health Awareness Month, National Prevention Week, and National Trails Day. Along with program organizers including the Prevention Coalition of Greater Prince William, Greater Prince William Trails Coalition Board members walked the Winters Branch Trail in Manassas on June 6.



Second Sunday Hike on July 13, 1:00-3:00pm

We will get a sneak peek at the new Blue Trail of the Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve, which will open to general public use later in 2025. The Virginia Outdoors Foundation is building a new parking lot, adding another mile of trail, and creating a safer crossing of the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks. (The preserve **just expanded** by 178 acres.)

Register so we can notify you in case of a cancellation. (Heavy rains in June forced us to postpone our **exploration of Broad Run** until August 10.)



Play All Day - June 20

You can see all the trail-related activities sponsored by members of the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition on our [calendar](#).

June 20, the longest day of the year, has multiple Play All Day activities. Those sponsored by Prince William include a [Stroller Walk](#), [Walk With a Doc](#), and [Walking Tours of Historic Prince William Towns: Sudley Springs](#). July is [Park and Recreation Month](#).

Check out Play All Day events in [Manassas Park](#) and [Manassas](#).



\$2.9 Million Identified for Route 15 Trail Project

On June 24, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors will consider allocating \$2.9 million in proffer funds to the Route 15 Trail Project. That trail segment will connect the existing shared-use path on Route 15 at Dominion Valley Drive to James Long Park, with a crossing at Catharpin Creek.

Staff report includes:

The general use transportation proffer funding of \$2,900,000, plus the \$67,714 of Magisterial District Office savings in the Capital Reserve, will fully fund design and construction of the crossing at Catharpin Creek, which is part of the larger Project. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will maintain the portion of the trail within its right-of-way area. The small portion of land under the Route 15 bridge will be maintained by the County's Department of Parks and Recreation and funded out of their annual budget, since the cost would be minimal.

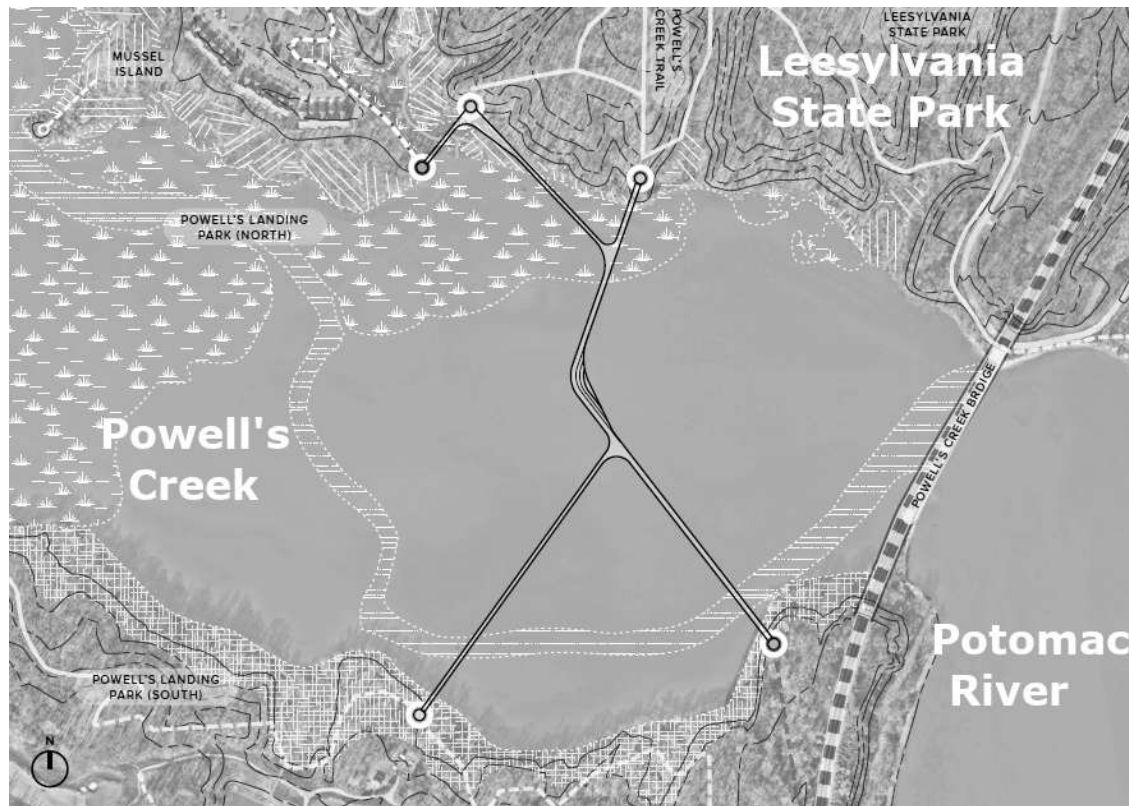


Jefferson Park Connector

Prince William County's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Transportation Department have identified the first project to be funded by the \$1 million addition to the FY25 Prince William County budget for trails construction. According to DPR:

*The Jefferson Park Connector trail will be the first project under the newly added \$1M for trails funded by the Board in FY25. A joint team of DOT and DPR staff reviewed many staff- and TBC-proposed projects for feasibility. The team ultimately selected this timely project which will extend the existing path that runs **from Marumsco Acre Lake Park to the Veterans Park pedestrian bridge** further north to Jefferson Park through County-owned property.*

Staff is coordinating with the developer improving Jefferson Park to ensure the trail connects to the developer's improvements. Once completed, residents of the neighborhoods west of the tracks will be able to easily access Veterans Park via pedestrian trail and bridge. DOT is leading the project, which is entering the design stage.

Segment 4 bridge**Oct 19, 2024**

New Trail Bridges - Status Report

While volunteers have built trails in Prince William County, construction of long bridges has always required heavy equipment, special expertise, and significant funding. The county tends to acquire fiberglass bridges for short spans and steel bridges for longer crossings.

As described on the Department of Parks and Recreation dashboard for Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, four bridges on **Neabsco Greenway** are getting permits for installation.

New bridges have been completed on Segment 2 and Segment 4 of the **Occoquan Greenway**. On Segment 6, the bridge over Hooes Run is still in the permitting phase.

The **Powells Creek Crossing** will be the next major bridge/boardwalk project, and is now at the 35% design phase. The \$9 million project, like the four Neabsco Creek bridges, was funded by a park bond approved by voters in 2019.

Details of other Department of Parks and Recreation construction projects are on the agency's **CIP dashboard**. For status of Prince William County Transportation Department projects, including sidewalks, check out the **Mobility Projects**.



Sierra Club - Potomac Regional Outings

The Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club has a special **Potomac Regional Outings** group. It organizes hikes each week in the DC area, typically 5 or so miles long.

PRO hike leaders explored Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge on May 17, then got a Greater Prince William Trails Coalition briefing on trails planning and development in Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William County.

Next nearby hike of the Potomac Regional Outings Group will be a 6-mile trek on June 22 at Fountainhead Regional Park, 9:00am-12:30pm. **Register online**.

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Enhance and expand public parks, trails, and green spaces to improve accessibility.

Strategies:

1. Prioritize land acquisition across the County to expand park access for all residents.
2. Ensure that all county parks meet a defined level of quality, appearance, and accessibility and prioritize maintenance and expansion where parks are not easily accessible.
3. Improve walkability and bikeability around public amenities and parks.

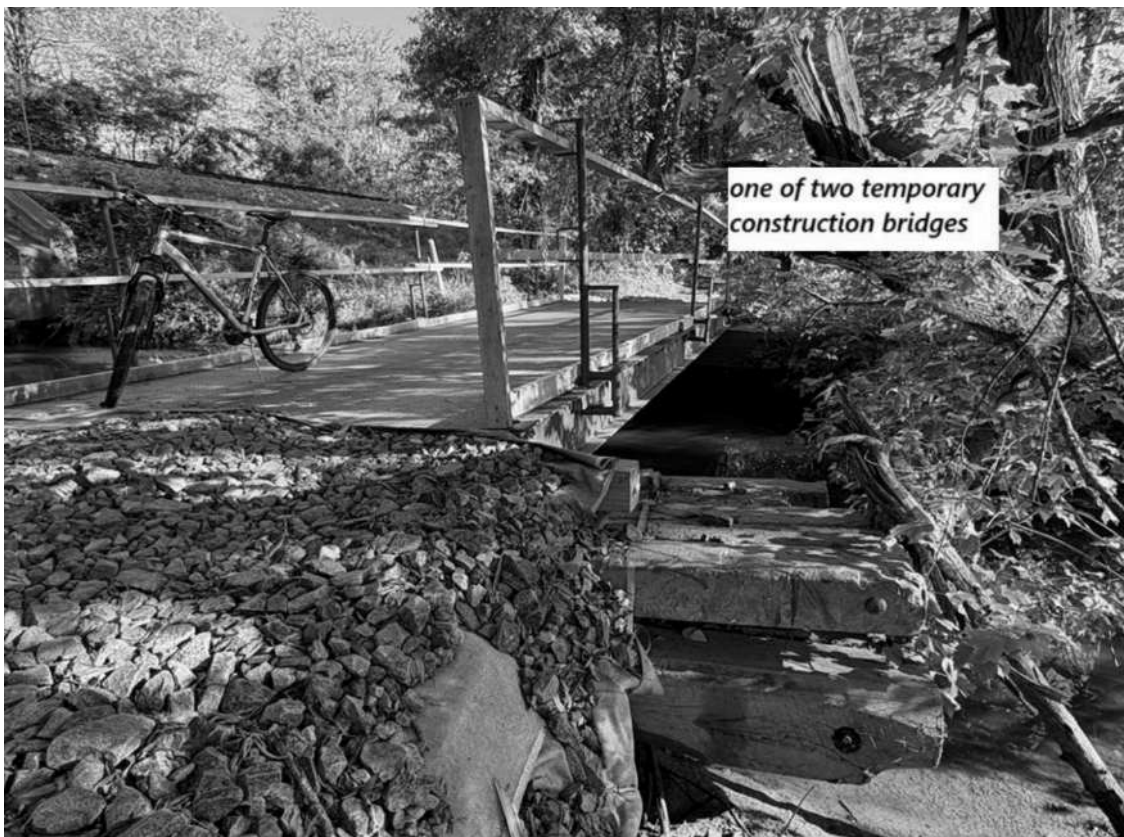
Measure	Baseline	Target (Annual)	SP Success Area
Number of miles of trails in PWC	62 (FY24)	71 (FY26)	Expand parks and trails (objective 2)

How Do We Measure “Success” for Trails?

“Key objectives” in Prince William County’s **2025-2028 Strategic Plan** include attracting residents and visitors with the natural beauty of county parks, trails, and green spaces, and also expanding the trails network.

Organizations manage what they measure.

On June 10, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors received an **update** on implementation of the Strategic Plan. A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is that the existing 62 miles of trail in FY24 should be expanded by 9 miles to a total of 71 miles by FY26.



Status of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST)

Construction continues on the 1-mile segment of the PHNST between Featherstone Road and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station at Rippon (*see above*). Temporary bridges for work crews have been installed and completion date for that trail segment is now December 2025.

Construction was paused due to a nearby eagle's nest. The final **Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge Trail Segment** of the PHNST will include two bridges as well as boardwalk and stone dust trail segments.

In Virginia, the PHNST is planned to stretch from Loudoun County to the mouth of the Potomac River. To close gaps in Loudoun County, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission has released the **Western Loudoun County Feasibility Study**. Kickoff meeting to start that study was in January 2024. (Loudoun County may build trails on identified routes that were not chosen as the preferred alternative, as well as on the chosen PHNST route.)

Prince William County supervisors obtained a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) **grant** to study three PHNST gaps. Next meeting of the **PHNST subcommittee** of the Trails and Blueways Council (TBC). to process deliverables from the contractor and identify preferred routes, will be July 24.

Potomac Heritage Trail Association is exploring making a concerted effort to seek PHNST construction funding from 2026 General Assembly, in time for completion of the most historic sections by the end of the 250th SemiQuincentennial ("Semi Q") of the American Revolution in 2031. Prince William County could attract tourists to visit Occoquan, Dumfries, and places in-between.

Prince William Forest Park is still seeking funding for cultural and natural resource assessment studies that are required before choosing exactly where to build PHNST through the park. Two alternatives using the **Potomac Path** are:

- the roadbed followed originally by Washington and Rochambeau on the march to Yorktown that ended with Lord Cornwallis' surrender in October 1781
- along the edge of the historic roadbed, which is now eroded 10-20 feet deep



Opportunities to Submit Comments

Prince William County is inviting comments on development of its **Trails Master Plan**. That plan, with new canoe/kayak launch sites, is scheduled to be adopted by the Prince William Board of County Supervisors in January 2026.

The League of American Bicyclists are inviting people to **sign a petition** to the U.S. Department of Transportation seeking no interruption in funding for projects that will make roads safer for bicyclists.

Virginia Department of Transportation is conducting a multi-modal “Project Pipeline” study of Sudley Manor Drive. Got suggestions for bike/pedestrian improvements? **Submit comments**.

Manassas is planning to create a **Mobility Hub** at the VRE station, replacing the current OmniRide bus hub adjacent to the courthouse complex. The multi-jurisdictional Rail With Trail project proposes to link the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) stations in Manassas and Manassas Park - see Figure 33 in the city's draft **Mobility Plan**.



In Other News...

- Prince William Board of County Supervisors on June 3 **approved** \$767,000 for building 5-foot wide sidewalks on both sides of Beau Ridge Drive between Legere Court and Cardinal Drive, just west of Benita Fitzgerald Elementary School (*see above*).
- As part of the 5th Annual **Manassas Bee Festival** on June 21, a 2K “Honey Hike” will go from Manassas Museum to Liberia starting at 9:15am.
- Northern Virginia Bird Alliance (NVBA) and Latino Outdoors DMV will lead a **nature walk and birdwatching expedition** in Neabsco Regional Park on June 28, 9:00am-noon.
- **Longtime Charlottesville pedestrian advocate arrested for freelance crosswalk** (*Daily Progress*, May 30) In what could be described as either tactical urbanism or vandalism, he chalked lines on the pavement one block away from where a pedestrian was struck and killed by a car last fall.

- **Woman struck and killed walking her dog along Hoadly Road** (*Inside NOVA*, June 4) The victim "...was crossing Hoadly Road at Token Valley Road at 9:48 p.m.... At the location of the crash, no crosswalk is present." Also: **Pedestrian killed by hit-and-run driver in Gainesville** (*Prince William Times*, June 5)
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) published its latest **Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities** last December. Three webinars on **June 26**, **July 31**, and **September 11** will discuss using the guide to build connected biking networks.
- **The bike industry is adapting after years of uncertainty**. (*Marketplace*, June 9) Demand peaked and dropped after COVID-29, and then tariffs... "All of that uncertainty has a lot of companies in the bicycle market trying to pivot."
- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) has organized a **Dockless Micromobility Workshop** on June 30, 1:00-3:00pm. It will be held virtually on Webex, recorded, and livestreamed on YouTube.
- **Meet "Aerial Alanna": From acrobats to the mayor chair in Manassas Park** (*InsideNOVA*, June 10) "I would like to see [Blooms Park] become a little less passive – maybe mountain bike trails, a pavilion, a playground where the old driving range is – while keeping the hiking trails and natural areas."
- **Plans for Doves Landing Park and Sinclair Mill site moving along in Prince William** (*InsideNOVA*, June 16) "Several ADA trails – consisting of paved or decomposed granite as their main building material – and broader "loops" across the entire park will also be featured."
- **The link between low-stress bicycle facilities and bicycle commuting** (*Nature*, June 2) , Protected bike lanes result in almost twice the use of standard bike lanes.
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is **accepting grant applications** for projects now. DCR is planning to award \$7 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Submissions are due August 28.
- On June 21, Leopold's Preserve is offering a **Freshwater Ecology Naturalist Walk** from 10:00am-noon.
- **Dominion to Resume Tree Clearing Along W&OD** (*LoudounNOW*, June 5) "As we expect these transmission lines to reach peak load capacity during the summer months, and as the weather gets warmer, the conductors, or wires, will sag more. This will bring the trees and the conductor in closer contact which is a clearance risk." See also **NOVA Parks pushes back on Dominion Energy's tree cutting project along W&OD Trail** (WTOP, June 6)
- **Concept Plans Finalized for 40-Mile Trail Loop** (*LoudounNOW* June 3), The Loudoun Trails and Waterways initiative (originally the Linear Parks and Trails initiative) reviewed existing plans and identified where to designate a "40-mile connected trail loop through the heart of Loudoun County which will provide easy access points for 150,000 residents."
- **Fairfax City Council Votes On Hybrid Option For Controversial George Snyder Trail** (*Patch*, June 10) City Council finally decided to build the entire 2-mile trail, just not a portion. See **Frequently Asked Questions** regarding the controversial project.
- **Cadillac Crew: A beautiful Sunday at Prince William Forest Park** (Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Mid-Summer 2025). Five teams replaced 14 old, ineffective waterbars with rolling grade dips. The Cadillac Crew "are always so flexible and joyous when hauling bucket after bucket of the beautiful Virginia red clay."
- **Students in Montclair, NJ started a 'bike bus' riding to and from school together by the hundreds** (WABC, June 6) "...it started with just a small group of parents who wanted to ride with their bikes to school."

- White House Farm Foundation reports that in 2024, **10,000 people** hiked on the 7-mile trails network at Leopold's Preserve (see *below*).



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