View this email in your browser

Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

Notes from August 27
Trails and Blueways Council (TBC) Meeting

The August 27 meeting included updates regarding the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Grant Gap Study for the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST), the Landfill Trail, Dove's Landing Park Design, Rocky Branch Bridge Replacement, the trail along Hoadly Road over the gas line, and Broad Run Greenway

Key info items included:
- Rocky Branch Bridge Replacement: site plans have been approved. Prince William Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is soliciting for a contractor to perform the work
- Doves Landing Park: DPR is finalizing the conservation easement on the 308 acres of parkland owned by the County, and is planning for public / stakeholder meetings in the fall
- Discovery Trail at the landfill: DPR will meet with PWC Solid Waste Management Division staff on future restoration and location of the trail, now that the sewer line construction project is complete

Review of the **FY25 funding** for trails-related projects in the **Capital Improvements Program (CIP)** led to identification of high priority projects including the Broad Run trail, completion of boardwalk through the Metz Wetand (PHNST segment), bridge on utility corridor trail along Bull Run near Mayhew Park, and Catharpin Creek trail improvements. At September TBC meeting, specific priorities will be identified for all magisterial districts.

The Board of Counti Supervisors added $1 million in new trail construction funding to FY25 budget, after advocates showed the high level of public support. County staff has started to draft project proposals for FY26 budget, which will be released for public review in January.

Upcoming events:
September 16/17/18 – Powell's Creek Crossing Stakeholder Meeting
September 18 – Gap Study Stakeholder Meeting (Occoquan - Gap 1)
September 21 - **Parks and Recreation Commission Bus Tour** (indoor facilities focused)
September 24 – next **TBC regular monthly meeting**
September 25 – Gap Study Stakeholder Meeting (Potomac - Gaps 2 & 3)

Metz Wetland Project: Some Assembly Required

A segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) runs from the south end of the **Neabsco Boardwalk** through the **Julie J. Metz Wetlands Preserve** at Neabsco Regional Park to Leesylvania State Park.

Upgrading the boardwalk on that segment (see current status, above) is a shovel-ready ready project and has already received a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant. After final design, however, the project needs an additional $4 million to complete. The design allows for constructing the boardwalk in stages as funding becomes available.

September 8: Second Sunday Hike

This month we'll explore Doves Landing on the edge of Lake Jackson. Hike starts 1:00pm, and we'll go for about 2 hours. Trail is pretty flat, with a natural hard dirt surface. If it's just rained, there will be mud.
Register for driving directions, and so we can alert you if weather (*or a landing by aliens, plague of locusts, whatever...*) forces a rescheduling.

The annual Prince William Trails and Streams Coalition (PWTSC) clean-up on September 21 between 9:00am-2:00pm will include on-land sites, and also launch from nine different sites along 25+ miles of the river. Boaters will go from Cedar Run/Broad Run through Lake Jackson, and from the base of Lake Jackson Dam to Hooes Run south of Lake Ridge Marina.

During the 2023 cleanup, volunteers on both water and land collected over 1,700 pounds of trash. Please register for **water** or **land** cleanup. Feel free to ask homeowners' associations and local businesses to advertise this event and to participate.

4th Annual Tour de VRE

This year's bike ride will cover the Manassas Line of Virginia Railway Express (VRE). The event raises awareness and funding for the Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Foundation. VRE seeks to be a **bike-friendly** commuter railroad.

Date: Saturday October 5, 2024
Full Pull: 35 mile ride from Backlick Road VRE Station to Broad Run VRE Station, starts at 8:45am
Fun Ride: 8 miles from Manassas Park VRE station to Broad Run VRE Station, starts at 10:45am

Register online. To learn more about the event, contact Team TdV at **TourdeVRE@vre.org**

Ground Broken for Featherstone Segment of Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

The **ceremony on August 23** initiated construction of the one-mile segment connecting the Rippon VRE station to Veterans Memorial Park. The segment will pass through the Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge, with boardwalks and bridges to cross over wetlands and streams. Contractor for the new segment also completed the Winter's Branch Trail renovation in Manassas.

Planned completion date is start of December. If not, eagle nesting will restrict construction until June 2025.

New Recreation Mapper App

The Prince William County Parks & Recreation has released **a new app** for finding parks, facilities such as horseshoe pits, historic properties, playgrounds, pavilions, etc.

The app includes just two of the major trails in Broad Run Linear Park and Neabsco Regional Park. Four boat ramps are listed, including Lake Ridge Marina and the Occoquan River access just below Lake Jackson Dam.

Trails in Rezonings and Other Land Use Cases

At its August 27 meeting, the Trails and Blueways Council focused on three land use cases involving bike/pedestrian infrastructure:
Belmont Bay - **Proffer Amendment** and **Special Use Permit**
Manassas Mall
Thomas Farm at Bristow Station

The next version of the **Hoadley Square rezoning application** will remove trails that had been proposed (see above). At an August 13 community meeting, the developer reported that nearby residents had objected to the public access.

The **Bristow Campus** rezoning and Special Use Permit comes tp the Planning Commission in September. Thanks to active work by Department of Parks and Recreation staff, latest proffer includes contributing a portion of the parcel along Broad Run for parkland, and potentially authorizing a right-of-way for a trail on the west side of Broad Run to connect that parcel to Route 28. However, steep slopes along Broad Run could constrain the feasibility of constructing such a trail outside of the area planned for data center construction.

*start of **Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings** hike at Leopold's Preserve on August 17*

In Other News…

- Sure, it's not until October 24… but you can **sign up now** for the next Quarterly Meeting of the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition.
- On August 26, the Prince William County **Office of Community Safety** held a "listening session" on Transportation and Pedestrian Safety. Active Prince William members highlighted the need to retrofit arterial roads to reduce design speeds and make them safe and attractive places for people not in autos.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has released the **2022 Traffic Safety Facts** report on bicyclists and pedestrian crashes. There were 46,195 pedalcyclist injuries in 2022, an 11% increase from 2021. In 2022 there was a 13-percent increase in pedalcyclists killed (1,105) from the 976 pedalcyclists killed in 2021.
- **More bikers than walkers expected to use county's first pedestrian bridge** (Prince William Times, August 19) *The bridge was not originally part of the project, but members of the trails and blueways council, which advises the board of supervisors on pedestrian needs, made a case for it…*
- Interested in making trails, recreation, water and boating facilities more accessible? Eppley Center for Parks and Public Lands will offer a three-day ($525) workshop at Pocahontas State Park, "Foundations of Accessibility for Parks & Recreation Professionals," on September 24-26. **Fill out** the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) survey.
- You can sign up for Virginia and other state-specific newsletters from the **East Coast Greenway**.
- "**What you need to know about e-bikes in national parks**" (*Washington Post*. August 29) Individual park superintendents at Manassas National Battlefield Park and Prince William

Forest Park can continue to determine if e-bikes are authorized in designated areas where traditional bikes are allowed.

- Want to learn about the world of electric bikes? Check out **People for Bikes**.
- Take the **2024 Car Free Day pledge** for September 23 and receive a promocode for a free 30-minute Capital Bikeshare ride on an ebike or classic bike. You'll automatically be eligible to win great raffle prizes too.

Copyright (C) 2024 Greater Prince William Trails Coalition. All rights reserved.

The Greater Price William Trails Coalition is a 501(c)(3) organization (EIN: 92-3087298).
Our mailing address is P.O. Box 1674, Woodbridge, VA 22195
To subscribe/unsubscribe, contact us at info@gpwtrails.org

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>
why did I get this? unsubscribe from this list update subscription preferences
Greater Prince William Trails Coalition · PO Box 6351 · Woodbridge, VA 22195 · USA