



Chapter 11

Pohick Planning District

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**GREAT PARKS, GREAT COMMUNITIES
2010 – 2020 Park System Plan**

Fairfax County Park Authority

POHICK PLANNING DISTRICT

Location & Character..... 1
Park System Summary..... 1
Park Classification..... 5
Park Master Plans..... 7
Themes, Issues and Strategies 8
 THEME: Connectivity..... 8
 THEME: Community Building 13
 THEME: Service Delivery 14
 THEME: Facility Reinvestment 16
 THEME: Land Acquisition..... 17
 THEME: Resource Interpretation..... 20
 THEME: Cultural Resource Stewardship..... 20
 THEME: Natural Resource Stewardship..... 22

Maps, Figures, and Tables
Map 1: Public Parks by Class in the Pohick District 3
Map 2: Protected Land in the Pohick District..... 4
Map 3: Non-motorized Connections and Points of Interest in the Pohick District..... 11
Table 1: Parks in the Pohick Planning District..... 6
Table 2: Pohick Planning District 2020 Facility Needs Analysis 14
Table 3: Pohick Planning District 2020 Parkland Needs Analysis 18

POHICK PLANNING DISTRICT

Location & Character

The Pohick Planning District is located in the southwestern part of the county near the Occoquan River and surrounds the Town of Clifton.



Pohick is predominantly a residential area in which the eastern portion has a typical suburban character, with single-family homes and townhouses, and the western part is predominantly large lot residential development on five acre lots and larger.

Park System Summary

Map 1 depicts the public parkland in the Pohick Planning District. There are 54 public parks with a total of over 8,500 acres in the district. About half of all the public park acreage in the district is owned by the Park Authority, and is within Park Authority Maintenance Areas 4 and 5. The rest is owned by other providers, primarily the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA), which provides a significant amount of recreational parkland and facilities along the Occoquan River.

The parks in the district include special uses, lakefronts, historic sites, local- and district-serving recreational facilities, and stream valleys. Facilities include a RECenter, rectangle and diamond ball fields, golf, mini-golf, disc golf, tennis and multi-use courts, off-leash dog park, playgrounds, trails and picnic facilities.

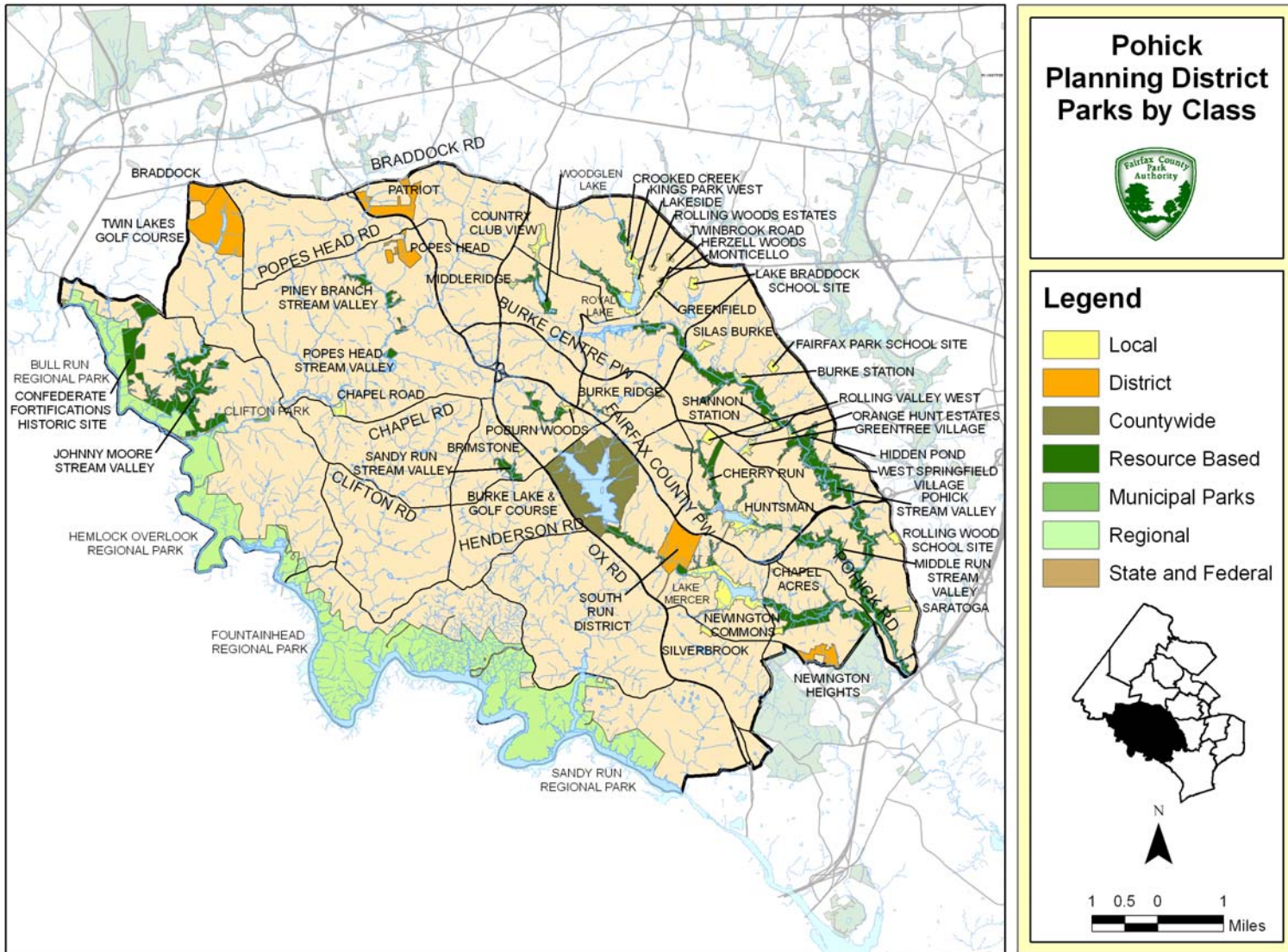
The largest parks in the district, Fountainhead, Hemlock Overlook, and Sandy Run Regional Parks, are located along the Occoquan River shoreline. Burke Conservancy owns and operates over 470 acres of common lands with trails and recreational facilities for the Burke Centre planned community.

Most of the County parks are located on the eastern side of the district and include some local parks, large stream valley holdings along Pohick and Middle Run streams and several parks that surround large regional stormwater detention ponds, such as Huntsman, Royal and Mercer Lakes. Burke Lake Park is a countywide lakefront park centered on a state-owned fishing lake that also features a golf course, mini golf, campground, miniature train, boating and other family-oriented facilities. South Run District Park offers sports facilities, a dog park and a RECenter. Twin Lakes Golf Course, Braddock Park and Patriot Park provide golf and sports facilities in the northwest portion of the district.

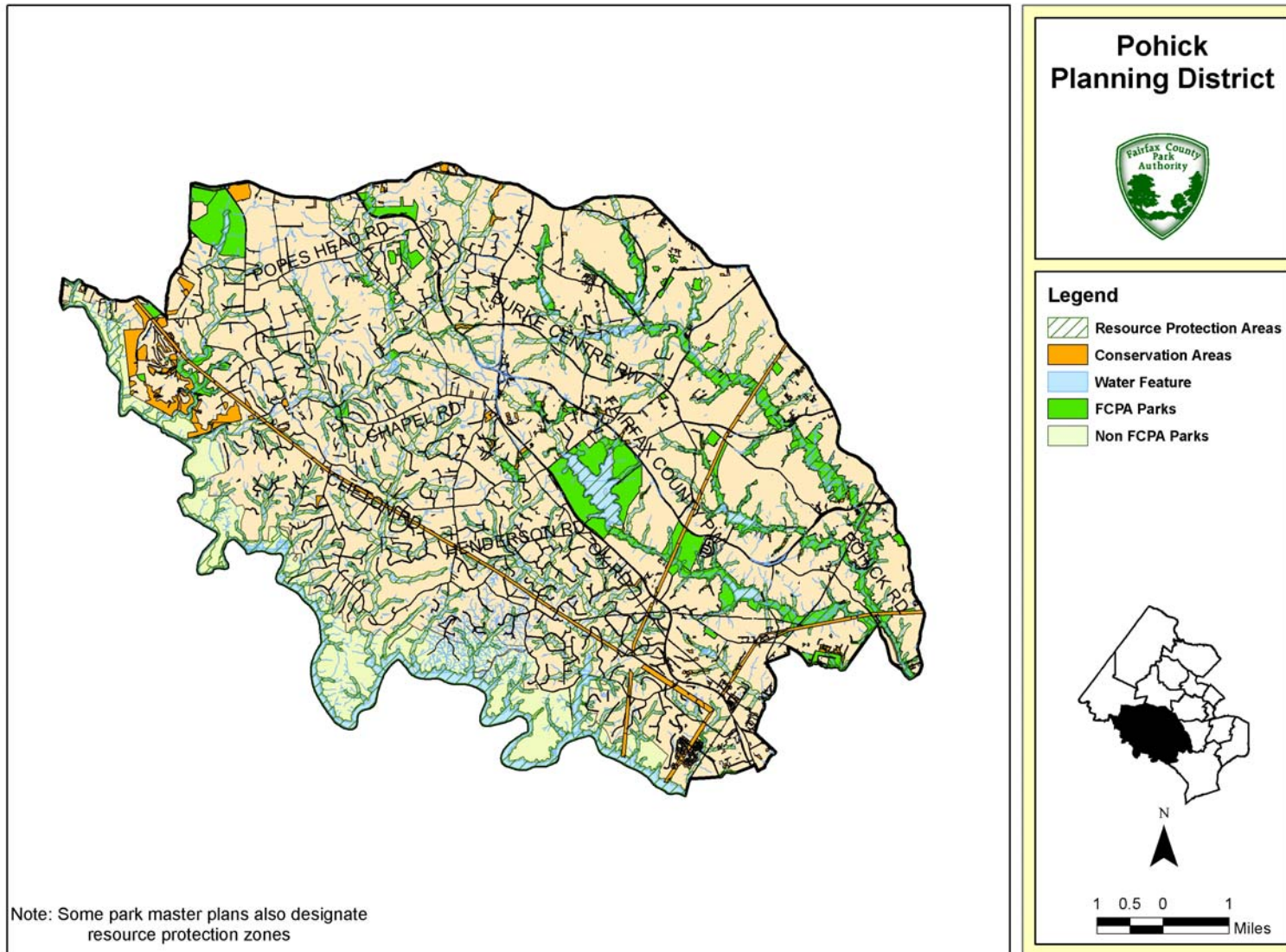
Cultural resources throughout the district are abundant especially as they relate to the Civil War. Confederate Fortifications Historic Site in Clifton is a significant park site that provides interpretive features. Map 2 identifies parkland and areas that contain

regulatory or other protections, including conservation easements, and Chesapeake Bay Ordinance designated Resource Protection Areas (RPA).

Map 1: Public Parks by Class in the Pohick District



Map 2: Protected Land in the Pohick District



Park Classification

In June 2005, a new Park Classification System was adopted and incorporated into the Park and Recreation chapter of the Countywide Comprehensive Policy Plan. The Park Classification System is a general framework intended to guide open space and public facilities planning by grouping parks according to certain common typical characteristics. The park classification gives an indication of the intended use, general park size range, typical facility types, and the general experience a user may expect at a park:

Local Parks serve surrounding neighborhoods and communities and offer a variety of local-serving recreation opportunities, such as playgrounds, trails, athletic facilities, picnic areas and natural areas. Typically these parks are designed to serve up to a 3 mile radius depending on the facilities and can range from 2 to 50 acres in size.

Local parks may be urban or suburban in character. Urban parks (including pocket parks, civic plazas and common greens) are a type of local-serving park that are generally more compact and located within an urban or transit-oriented setting. These parks generally consist of high quality design and construction, are well integrated into surrounding development, uses and the public realm and primarily serve to define local urban character, support outdoor enjoyment, social gatherings, recreation needs and special events. These parks may be privately or publicly owned and are usually privately maintained.

District Parks are larger parks that serve greater geographic areas of the County (3 to 6 miles) and provide a wide variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and park experiences. Generally, these parks are more than 50 acres in size. These parks typically accommodate visits of up to a half day, longer operational hours and a larger number of users. Many district parks also have extensive natural areas.

Countywide Parks are larger parks that serve the whole County and provide a variety of larger-scale indoor or outdoor recreation facilities, or both, and facilities or resources that are unique within the County. Typically, these parks are greater than 150 acres and provide opportunities for passive and active recreation to a wide range of simultaneous users for experiences of up to a day in length.

Resource-Based Parks have significant cultural and natural resources. These parks support nature, horticulture and history programs, gardening, nature watching and appreciation of local, regional, state and national history. Extensive stream valley parks are part of the resource-based parks network. Typically, trails and interpretative features and facilities are the primary uses. Some resource parks may have separate areas designated for recreation purposes.

Regional Parks are lands and/or facilities administered by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA). These parks have region-wide significance that supplement and enhance the County and municipal park systems.

While some parks are Resource-Based, note that all park types may include areas designated for natural and/or cultural resource protection. In addition, many state and federal parks augment local and regional parks and also serve to protect natural and cultural resources within the County. Table 1 lists and classifies the parks in the Annandale district according to the County parks classification system or by state or federal ownership. Table 1 also includes information about whether and when parks were master planned and if a master planning action (new master plan development or plan update) is needed.

Table 1: Parks in the Pohick Planning District

Park Name	Acres	Supervisory District	Park Classification	Approved Master Plan Date	Master Plan Action Needed
Braddock	227.05	SP	District	1997	
Brimstone	4.94	SP	Local		
Bull Run Regional	1,300.00 ⁺	SP	Regional		
Burke Lake & Golf Course	614.16	SP	Countywide	2002	
Burke Ridge	3.79	SP	Local	*	
Burke Station	18.06	SP	Local	1976	
Chapel Acres	0.87	MV	Local		
Chapel Road	25.64	SP	Local	1985	
Cherry Run	3.98	SP	Local	*	
Clifton Park	8.40		Town of Clifton		
Confederate Fortifications	161.43 ⁺	SP	Resource-Based	2005	
Country Club View	39.33	BR	Local	1970	
Crooked Creek	12.20	BR	Local	*	
Fairfax Park School Site	13.20	SP	Local		✓
Fountainhead Regional	2,310.00	SP	Regional		
Greenfield	4.74	BR	Local	*	
Greentree Village	19.13	SP	Local	*	
Hemlock Overlook Regional	804.00	SP	Regional		
Herzell Woods	3.00	BR	Local	*	
Hidden Pond	25.60	SP	Resource-Based	1974	
Huntsman	105.47	SP	Local	1985	
Johnny Moore S.V. ¹	353.75	SP	Resource-Based		
Kings Park West	40.66	BR	Local	*	
Lake Braddock School Site [^]	13.20	BR	Local		
Lake Mercer	196.55	SP	Local	1990	
Lakeside	11.84	BR	Local	1969	
Middle Run S.V. ¹	210.73	SP, MV	Resource-Based		
Middleridge	7.79	BR	Local	1979	
Monticello	8.85	BR	Local		✓
Newington Commons	8.71	MV	Local		

Park Name	Acres	Supervisory District	Park Classification	Approved Master Plan Date	Master Plan Action Needed
Newington Heights	69.34	MV	District	1986	
Orange Hunt Estates	8.11	SP	Local	1967	
Patriot	130.54	SP	District	2003	✓
Piney Branch S.V. ¹	184.24 ⁺	SP	Resource-Based		
Poburn Woods	11.31	SP	Local		
Pohick S.V. ¹	822.88 ⁺	SP, MV	Resource-Based		
Popes Head	75.62	SP	District	1981	
Popes Head S.V. ¹	20.30	SP	Resource-Based		
Rolling Valley West	20.69	SP	Local	1978	
Rolling Wood School Site	13.10	MV	Local	1976	
Rolling Woods Estates	3.34	BR	Local		
Royal Lake	46.21	BR	Local	1973	
Sandy Run Regional	342.00	SP	Regional		
Sandy Run S.V. ¹	39.51	SP	Resource-Based		
Saratoga	7.18	SP	Local	1983	
Shannon Station	13.66	SP	Local		
Silas Burke	10.27	SP	Local	1983	
Silverbrook	10.70	SP	Local	*	✓
South Run District	192.17	SP	District	2001	
South Run S.V. ¹	360.27	MV	Resource-Based		
Twin Lakes Golf Course	186.85	SP	District	1993	
Twinbrook Road	4.48	BR	Local	*	
West Springfield Village	12.99	SP	Local	*	
Woodglen Lake	63.02	BR	Resource-Based	2004	

1. Resource-Based Stream Valley parks by practice do not have Master Plans.

* This park was dedicated by a private developer and may be subject to a Conceptual Development Plan associated with an approved rezoning that takes the place of a park master plan.

+ A portion of this park lies outside of the Pohick district.

^ School Sites operated on an interim basis as parks by the Park Authority do not have master plans as they are owned and governed by the Fairfax County Public Schools.

Acres for non-FCPA parks are estimates derived from GIS.

Park Master Plans

A park master plan is a general guide for appropriate park uses and their approximate location within a specific park site. The plan serves as a long-range vision (10-20 year timeframe) for future development and programming. Issues typically addressed include planned park elements, natural and cultural resource management, and general design concerns. The plan is conceptual in nature and not intended to address detailed issues related to engineered site design or park operations. The plan is just one of many steps in the process that leads to the development of a public park. An archive of park master plans is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/mparchives.htm.

Themes, Issues and Strategies

In early 2008 the Park Authority interacted with citizens at ten *Great Parks, Great Communities* public workshops in all Supervisory districts and at a variety of community festivals and events in the parks to gather input on **long-term planning for the land, facilities and natural and cultural resources of the park system**. In addition, the Park Authority received public feedback on the park system throughout the year via email and the project web site.

Based on the public feedback and staff expertise, staff identified 26 key issues that fit within eight themes relating to the land, resources and facilities of the Park Authority. **The themes are Connectivity, Community Building, Service Delivery, Facility Reinvestment, Land Acquisition, Resource Interpretation, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Natural Resource Stewardship.**

This section describes how the eight themes relate to the park system in the Pohick District and presents strategies for addressing the issues as they apply to the parks in the district. Some strategies include recommendations for construction of facilities, infrastructure and amenities at parks in the district. As part of the planning process for any proposed construction, the project area should first be assessed for possible impacts to natural and cultural resources.

THEME: Connectivity

Better integrating parks with surrounding land uses (neighborhoods and employment centers) and increasing park-to-park connections within the system will allow for greater access and enjoyment. Strategy suggestions include adding trails, trail connections, bridges and other forms of improved access to and between parks.

Map 3 illustrates existing and planned connections and points of interest within the Pohick Planning District. The map depicts high-level, conceptual connections and incorporates elements from the adopted Countywide Trails Plan and Park Authority Trail Strategy Plan. Connections link natural and cultural resources and recreational destinations, supporting recreational activity and frequently offering alternative transportation options.

Issue: *The Park Authority should work to improve non-motorized access to parks from commercial and residential areas and to increase connectivity between park sites.*

Heard from the public:

“I am a horseback rider and would like to see more trails open for equestrian use. I would also urge preservation of those that we already have.”

The Pohick district varies in terms of land use patterns and connections. In the area located east of Ox Road, suburban residential uses exist with higher densities. In this area of the district, the existence of non-motorized trails and sidewalks form an extensive network, especially in the Burke Centre

area. A portion of the Cross County Trail is located along Pohick Stream Valley in the far eastern corner of the district. Other stream valley trails in the more northern sections of Pohick and Middle Run Stream Valleys provide a well-connected natural greenway in this area of the county. Trails provided in Burke Centre and operated by the Burke Conservancy provide an additional local network and connections. There is an extensive trail network around Burke Lake that connects to South Run District Park and Lake Mercer and through South Run Stream Valley to South Run Road. Roadside trails along the Fairfax County Parkway, Ox Road and Braddock Road supplement the trails system and provide options for non-motorized mobility.

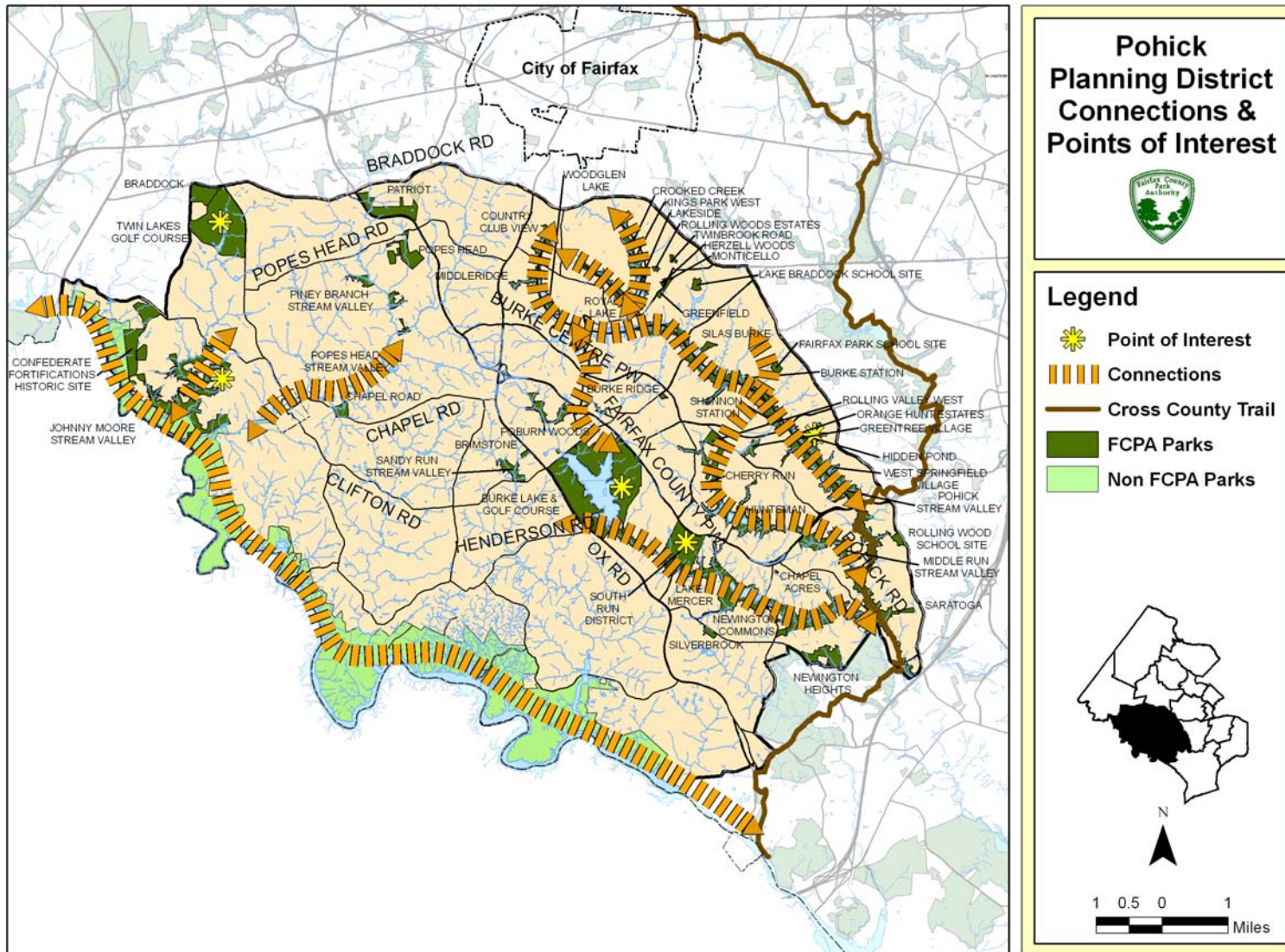
A well established water trail exists along the Upper Occoquan River and Bull Run. Between the shoreline and the west side of Ox Road, relatively little County parkland or trails exist, offering little opportunity for connectivity. Equestrian trails exist in private communities in this area and in the Regional park system. A stream valley trail is planned through the Town of Clifton along Johnny Moore Stream Valley. Map 3 illustrates planned connections and points of interest within the Pohick Planning District.

Strategies:

- P-C-1. Use criteria provided in the Park Authority's Trail Strategy Plan to evaluate potential new trails and non-motorized connections as well as improvements to existing trail sections;
- P-C-2. Support creation of trail from Burke Road to Old Keene Mill Road within Burke power line easement;
- P-C-3. Connect the Pohick stream valley to the South Run stream valley with a trail in the South Run Road area;
- P-C-4. Connect Burke Lake Road to Old Keene Mill Road via a Pohick stream valley trail;
- P-C-5. Connect Gambrill Road to the Cross County Trail via a Middle Run stream valley trail;
- P-C-6. Connect Hunstman Boulevard to Thorncliff Court via a trail from Huntsman Lake Park through the Middle Run stream valley;
- P-C-7. Connect the loop trail at Mercer Lake to South Run District Park on the north side of South Run Stream Valley Park;
- P-C-8. Connect the Fairfax County Parkway and Hooes Road to the CCT via the Pohick stream valley;
- P-C-9. Connect Pohick Stream Valley Park Trail system below Hidden Pond to the CCT;
- P-C-10. Connect Rolling Valley West park to Cottontail Court via Middle Run Stream Valley Park;
- P-C-11. Connect Commonwealth Boulevard and Royal Lake via Crooked Creek Park and Rabbit Branch;

- P-C-12. Connect Commonwealth Boulevard North and Wavell Road via Crooked Creek Park and Rabbit Branch;
- P-C-13. Connect Old Keene Mill Road to Hidden Pond via Pohick Stream Valley;
- P-C-14. Connect existing Burke Lake Park trail to Burke Lake Road;
- P-C-15. Connect Cottontail to Huntsman Boulevard via Middle Run Stream Valley Park;
- P-C-16. Connect Fairfax County Parkway to Gambrill via Middle Run Stream Valley Park;
- P-C-17. Connect Laurel Hill trail with the South Run Trail near South County High School via Newington Forest Park;
- P-C-18. Connect Hunstman Lake Park to Fairfax County Parkway via Middle Run Stream Valley Park;
- P-C-19. Connect Sydenstricker Road to Middle Run via Middle Run Stream Valley Park and the power line easement;
- P-C-20. Connect Millstone Pond and Burke Lake Road to Pohick Stream Valley Park trail;
- P-C-21. Connect Royal Lake Trail to Roberts Road sidewalk to Robinson Secondary School via Pohick Stream Valley Park;
- P-C-22. Provide natural surface trails and connections in the Balmoral Green and Johnny Moore Stream Valley area that connect to NVRPA trail system and Confederate Fortifications Historic Site; and
- P-C-23. Through partnerships with landowners, volunteers and the Town of Clifton, implement stream valley trail planned through the Town of Clifton and east through Popes Head stream valley.

Map 3: Non-motorized Connections and Points of Interest in the Pohick District



Issue: *Multiple, separate park sites located across Fairfax County should be linked through thematic interpretive connections.*

Thematic connections, emphasized through elements such as signage, maps, or website information, can foster greater public awareness of important features. Increased knowledge of site features could encourage greater support for stewardship and management activities.

The large amount of lakes in and around Pohick District, many of which are connected or planned to be connected by trails offers an opportunity for a lake-to-lake thematic connection. Associated nature and environmental themes are appropriate as well. In addition, the area has a significant railway history including Fairfax Station, Burke Station and the Town of Clifton. A railway connectivity theme with connections at these points and other rail related sites in the southern part of the County may provide significant connections. Most of the rail related sites, however, are not located on or near parkland so implementation of such a trail system may be challenging.

Strategies:

P-C-24. Include the Confederate Fortifications site as part of a Civil War interpretive trail;

P-C-25. Plan a lake themed trail to connect the multiple lake based parks in and around Pohick District; and

P-C-26. Support the planning of a railway themed trail to connect various rail related features such as the Town of Clifton, Fairfax Station Train Museum and Burke Station.

Issue: *District and Countywide parks and the Cross County Trail should be served by the public transportation system to provide equitable access to recreational facilities.*

District and Countywide Parks within a half mile of public transportation stops include South Run, Braddock and Burke Lake Parks. Pohick Stream Valley is located near the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter train station. Trails are located within this park and may provide access between neighborhoods and the VRE station. The eastern side of the district is also served by extensive public bus routes and a VRE station in Burke.

Strategies:

P-C-27. Improve trail connections to VRE train station from existing and planned park trails.

Issue: *The Park Authority should work to improve access to waterways and promote the use of “water trails” throughout the County.*

Pohick District enjoys excellent water access opportunities especially from points along the Occoquan River and Bull Run, primarily from regional parks that line the shoreline. NVRPA has established the Occoquan Water Trail that is maintained and operated by a volunteer group called Occoquan Watertrail League (OWL).

Strategies:

P-C-28. Support the established Occoquan Water Trail and explore potential connections on Park Authority owned shoreline properties.

THEME: Community Building

Local parks are places where people can interact and build community. Well-designed and located parks, park facilities and programs support greater social interaction. Community-building park facilities and activities include reservable picnic areas, amphitheaters, dog parks, garden plots, farmers markets, performances and special events. Collocation of facilities with other community uses can also assist in strengthening communities. Strategy suggestions include ways to increase the community-building role of local parks in residential neighborhoods and providing parks and recreation facilities near other civic uses.

Burke Lake offers the best opportunities for large scale community building opportunities due to its size, location and variety of facilities. The group picnic areas support large group gatherings of various types and the amphitheater supports a summer concert series and other events. An off-leash dog park is provided at South Run District Park.

Issue: Local and urban parks should include a combination of facilities, amenities and gathering spaces to attract and promote social interaction among community members.

Many local parks support neighborhood functions, such as Chapel Road Park that supports parking needs for the popular annual Clifton Day event in October. Middleridge and Lakeside Parks host annual community picnics. A new picnic shelter is needed at Hidden Pond Park to support community events and outdoor education programs.

Strategies:

P-CB-1. Build a new picnic shelter/outdoor classroom at Hidden Pond Park.

Issue: Parks should be collocated with other civic uses (libraries, community centers, senior centers, etc.) to promote social interaction among community members.

Many parks are located adjacent to schools, such as Saratoga, Silverbrook, Newington Heights, Braddock and Twin Lakes Parks. Patriot Park is collocated with the Mott

Community Center. Rolling Valley West Park is located next to Pohick Library. These collocations enhance opportunities for joint community programming and facility use.

Strategies:

P-CB-2. Identify needed facilities that support community partnerships between parks, schools and libraries in the Pohick District.

THEME: Service Delivery

The Park Authority provides quality facilities that are well used, but may not be equitably distributed across all parts of the County or accessible to all groups. Countywide and specialty facilities, in particular, may not serve a true county-wide service area. Residents desire recreational facilities and opportunities at parks near where they live and for all age groups and socio-economic populations. Strategy suggestions include creating more facilities, better distributing facilities across the County, and reducing barriers to use.

Service level standards for over twenty park facility types were established through the 2004 Needs Assessment (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/needsassessment.htm>) process and incorporated into the Countywide Policy Plan (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/parksrec.pdf>) in 2005. Facility standards are countywide goals for providing park and recreation facilities that reasonably satisfy community needs. Standards are expressed in units per population, and are based on extensive analysis of citizen demand and preferences compared with the existing public facility inventories. Based on the Countywide adopted facility service level standards and projected population growth, Table 2 shows the projected surplus or deficit of several key local serving facilities in the Pohick Planning District for the year 2020. While overall facility needs are quantified in Table 2, the location of needed facilities is determined through the site specific master planning process that considers site conditions, context, resources, and community input. For more detailed information on existing facilities in each park and service levels, please see the Existing Conditions Report.

Table 2: Pohick Planning District 2020 Local Serving Facility Needs Analysis

136,763		2010 population			
138,296		2020 population			
Facility	Service Level Standard	2010 Existing Facilities	2020 Needed Facilities	2020 Projected (Deficit)/ Surplus	2020 Projected Service Level
Rectangle Fields	1 field / 2,700 people	41.1	51.2	(10.1)	80%
Adult Baseball Fields	1 field / 24,000 people	7.5	5.8	1.7	130%
Adult Softball Fields ⁺	1 field / 22,000 people	8.0	6.3	1.7	127%
Youth Baseball Fields ⁺		16.0	19.2	(3.2)	83%

	1 field / 7,200 people				
Youth Softball Fields ⁺	1 field / 8,800 people	10.0	15.7	(5.7)	64%
Basketball Courts	1 court / 2,100 people	17.5	65.9	(48.4)	27%
Playgrounds	1 playground / 2,800 people	24.0	49.4	(25.4)	49%
Neighborhood Dog Parks	1 dog park / 86,000 people	1.0	1.6	(0.6)	62%
Neighborhood Skate Parks	1 skate park / 106,000 people	0.0	1.3	(1.3)	0%

⁺ 60 ft and 65 ft diamond fields are assigned to the sport where primarily allocated.

Issue: The Park Authority should provide and equitably distribute facilities to meet established facility service level standards.

Pohick District is greatly underserved by typical park facilities, especially rectangle fields, sport courts and playgrounds. Burke Conservancy and Regional parks provide additional courts and playground facilities that supplement public Park Authority facilities in the district.

Strategies:

- P-SD-1. Implement planned athletic facilities at Patriot Park;
- P-SD-2. Implement planned athletic facilities at Laurel Hill Park and South County Middle School that will serve community use needs in the Pohick District; and
- P-SD-3. Pursue conversion of the rectangle fields at Rolling Valley West to synthetic turf.

Issue: The Park Authority should provide new kinds of parks and facilities and in new ways to meet the needs of the County's changing population.

Existing unique facilities in Pohick District include mini-golf, train and disc golf at Burke Lake, an indoor turf field in the field house at South Run District Park and water-related facilities offered at Burke Lake and regional parks along the shoreline. No district or park-specific strategies exist for this issue in the Pohick Planning District.

Issue: The Park Authority should re-examine park master plans to determine if parks are planned to best serve the needs of Fairfax County residents.

While planned facilities at the larger parks are mostly implemented, Braddock, South Run and Burke Lake Parks may offer potential for new kinds of facilities through conversion of existing underutilized facilities. These parks are larger, have existing infrastructure and are suitably located to offer facilities that draw from a larger service area. Unplanned parks include Fairfax, Monticello and Silverbrook Parks that may provide potential for new facilities.

Strategies:

- P-SD-4. Examine existing facility utilization rates, especially at the district parks, to determine opportunities for facility conversion to new facility types that may have greater utilization and/or address emerging needs;
- P-SD-5. Work with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to develop a master plan for Fairfax Park that will provide for both affordable housing and park and recreation needs in the Pohick district; and
- P-SD-6. Develop master plans for Monticello and Silverbrook Parks to allow for development of new recreational facilities to meet the needs of Pohick residents.

THEME: Facility Reinvestment

The Park Authority has a great diversity of facilities and resources in various lifecycle stages. Funding and schedules for replacement or reinvestment are inconsistent and adding new facilities has sometimes taken precedence over renewal of existing facilities. Strategy suggestions include repairing, replacing, upgrading, and improving utilization of existing facilities and equipment.

Issue: Repair, replacement, and upgrading of existing park facilities should be addressed through a system-wide lifecycle replacement program that takes into account changing facility needs.

The vast amount of parkland in Pohick District includes a wide variety of facilities that range in age from less than 10 years to more than 50 years. A recent addition to the South Run RECenter, the County's first RECenter expansion, is a successful model for demonstrating a positive impact on customer service as well as revenue production. Extensive road repairs in Burke Lake Park were done in the mid 2000s. A clubhouse redesign for Burke Lake Golf Course was funded in the 2008 park bond. Clubhouse expansion at Twin Lakes has been identified as needed for revenue expansion and improved customer service.

Facility lifecycles are continually expiring across the district with varying degrees of attention. Deferred and makeshift maintenance can lengthen these lifecycles, but ultimately will need to be addressed. The district has a large number of picnic shelters that have served for more than 30 years at Burke Lake. Campground and septic system upgrades at Burke Lake are overdue. Pohick Stream Valley and Crooked Creek playgrounds are located in the resource protection areas in or near the floodplain. These playgrounds are underutilized, due to poor location, access, safety concerns and vandalism. Basketball courts at Newington and Burke Village Parks are underutilized.

Strategies:

- P-FR-1. Implement the planned clubhouse redesign at Burke Lake Golf Course;
- P-FR-2. Consider expanding the clubhouse at Twin Lakes Golf Course;

- P-FR-3. Evaluate the need to upgrade or replace picnic shelters at Burke Lake Park;
- P-FR-4. Consider upgrading the campground and septic system at Burke Lake Park;
- P-FR-5. Renovate the Hidden Pond Nature Center including upgrades to restrooms, office and storage space, and visitor services areas;
- P-FR-6. Remove playgrounds from Resource protection Areas in Pohick Stream Valley and Crooked Creek that are underutilized and poorly located;
- P-FR-7. Evaluate utilization of basketball courts at Newington and Burke Village with the community and determine if courts should be converted to other uses; and
- P-FR-8. Repair and reinvest in trails within the district

Issue: Parking standards and levels of service should reflect user patterns to minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

During peak times Burke Lake, Braddock and South Run Parks experience parking shortages. Temporary overflow parking is generally managed on-site; however, more permanent solutions are needed for long term growth in these parks.

Strategies:

- P-FR-9. Identify permanent and overflow parking areas to handle peak visitation at Burke Lake, Braddock and South Run Parks; and
- P-FR-10. Improve parking lots, roads, and trails at Hidden Pond Park.

THEME: Land Acquisition

Additional parkland is needed to protect and buffer natural areas and historic sites and to provide room to develop new recreational facilities. Strategy suggestions include ways to continue to add appropriate land to the Park Authority's land holdings to expand the park system.

Service level standards for both local and district/countywide parkland were established through the 2004 Needs Assessment and incorporated into the Countywide Policy Plan in 2005. Parkland standards represent countywide goals for providing land for the two types of parks (Local and District/Countywide) that support service delivery and facility development and are expressed in units per population. Local parks include both suburban and urban park types. Resource-based parks occur where resources are located and therefore do not require quantitative service level standards. Please refer to the Park Classification discussion earlier in this chapter for additional information on park classification descriptions.

Based on adopted service level standards and projected population growth, Table 3 shows the projected surplus or deficit of parkland in the Pohick Planning District for the year 2020.

Table 3: Pohick Planning District 2020 Parkland Needs Analysis

136,763	2010 population					
138,296	2020 projected population					
45,532	District Size (acres)					
	Parkland/Open Space Type	Service Level Standard	2010 Existing Acres	2020 Needed Acres	2020 Projected (Deficit)/ Surplus	2020 Projected Service Level
Public Parkland	Local Suburban	5 acres / 1,000 people	623	691	(96)	90%
	Urban	1.5 acres / 1,000 people plus 1 acre / 10,000 employees				
	District/Countywide ⁺	13 acres / 1,000 people	2,574	1798	776	143%
	Resource-Based	*	5,381			
	Parkland Total		8,578			
Private Open Space	Private Recreation		150			
	HOA Property		3,744			
	Private OS Total		3,894			
Public & Private Total			12,472			

+ The District and Countywide Parks that serve this Planning District may be located outside the Planning District and this outlying acreage is not reflected in this table.

* There is no service level standard for Resource-Based parkland. The amount of resource based parkland owned and/or protected is based on the existence and sensitivity of the resources.

Issue: Parkland for recreation should be provided according to adopted service level standards and distributed equitably throughout the County.

The western portion of the district has more rural land uses with a gently rolling landscape, large lot residential developments, rural road sections and extensive shoreline primarily protected in regional parks.

Overall, Pohick District is well served by various types of parkland, especially by larger parks, such as the regional parks, Burke Lake and district parks. Few local parks are located in the rural part of the district near Fairfax Station; however, home sites are large in this area and near regional parks that line the southern County border. Local parks in the eastern part of the district are supplemented by the parks and trail network provided in Burke Centre and other private homeowners' associations.

Heard from the public:
 "As a parent of two young children, I would love to see more "neighborhood" parks - places where just about anyone could walk to from their neighborhood."

Strategies:

P-LA-1. Seek dedication of local serving, publicly accessible parkland as new residential development occurs in the district.

Issue: *Urban parks should be provided in higher density/mixed use areas of the County (i.e. Tysons Corner, Transit Station Areas, Commercial Revitalization Districts).*

Pohick District has a suburban and rural character and therefore has few areas that are appropriate for urban parks. A town square park may be appropriate in the Town of Clifton and near Burke Station if future land use planning and implementation supports a town center character.

Strategies:

P-LA-2. Support the establishment of central park areas in Clifton and Burke to enhance town center character.

Issue: *Property acquisition is important for protecting historic resources in Fairfax County and ensuring their preservation for future generations.*

An extensive portion of shoreline makes the occurrence of cultural resources from many eras of significance likely. Civil War-related cultural resource sites such as Confederate Fortifications Historic Site are protected in public landholdings. As the majority of the district is mostly developed, opportunities may be limited for additional acquisitions of cultural resource sites.

Strategies:

P-LA-3. Identify significant cultural resource sites in the district that are appropriate and sustainable for public ownership.

Issue: *Property acquisition is an important strategy for protecting natural resources in Fairfax County and ensuring open and natural areas for future generations.*

Over 5,300 acres of resource-based lands are in public ownership in the Pohick district. The majority of this land protects extensive natural resources, especially along the Occoquan and Bull Run shorelines. Public ownership of large amounts of land in the Occoquan Watershed is extremely important to maintain and increase. High quality forest stands exist in many parks (Burke Lake, Patriot and Confederate Fortifications Parks). In addition to the large percentage of resource-based parkland, many of the local parks are planned and developed in compact, clustered facility areas that preserve portions of these sites in natural conditions.

Strategies:

P-LA-4. Seek to acquire and/or protect through purchase, donation, development dedications, or conservation easements remaining natural areas in the district, especially large tracts connecting to other natural areas and those containing unique or significant natural resources; and

P-LA-5. Identify significant natural resource sites that are appropriate and sustainable for public ownership.

THEME: Resource Interpretation

Residents may not be aware of or understand the importance of the vast number of natural and cultural resources the Park Authority holds in public trust. Strategy suggestions include adding to the existing interpretive facilities, signs, and programs. Roadway and trail waysides permit park visitors opportunities to stop and view interpretive signage.

Issue: The full range of natural and cultural resources within Fairfax County should be interpreted through facilities as needed.

Hidden Pond is a key nature interpretive facility in Pohick District and offers nature related community outreach, programs, exhibits and education. Growth in visitors and programs at nature centers reflects increasing public interest, appreciation and demand to learn more about the community's natural resources. Hemlock Overlook and the Regional Parks support nature programs across the district as well, some of which are combined with water-related recreation activities.

Cultural interpretation facilities primarily consist of interpretive signage at the Confederate Fortifications Historic Site.

Strategies:

P-RI-1. Develop new and improve existing interpretive exhibits at Hidden Pond Nature Center, including waysides, signs, and kiosks to support nature interpretation opportunities for residents of the Pohick district.

THEME: Cultural Resource Stewardship

Many factors threaten the health, protection and viability of natural and cultural resources on county parkland. Strategy suggestions include focusing on managing threats and actively managing existing natural and cultural resources consistent with guidance provided in the countywide [Cultural Resource Management Plan](#) and [Natural Resource Management Plan](#).

The Pohick Planning District contains the Robey's Mill Historic Overlay District and the St. Mary's Church Historic Overlay District and many important cultural resources. The most important of these are Civil War features, a number of 18th and 19th century mills and domestic sites, as well as many Native American sites. These Native American sites exist in abundance in the undeveloped portions of park lands. Site types include Native American campsites, hunting stations and stone quarries. The Native Americans used outcrops of quartz and steatite for the manufacture of many types of tools, including spears, knives, arrow points, scrapers, axes and awls. Also located in the

Pohick District are outcrops of high quality steatite (soapstone) used to create bowls, prior to the advent of ceramics, as well as ceremonial items. The district contains Native American sites that date from the earliest known occupations in the county, some 12,000 years ago up to European contact.

Civil War sites include a series of well-preserved earthen fortifications, encampment tent platforms, a battery fort, trenches, powder magazines, and breastworks as well as the historic road traces. The earthworks in this district are among the best surviving examples of the network of fortifications, and last remaining fortifications constructed by the Confederate Army of the Potomac in Fairfax County. Many of these resources are preserved on parkland and allow the opportunity to preserve and interpret these significant Civil War features.

The remains of the Clifton Quarry, a steatite quarry discovered and first documented in the 19th century by William Henry Holmes, Chairman of the Department of Anthropology at the US National Museum (Smithsonian) are located in the district. This was the site of what are probably the earliest archaeological investigations in the County.

Issue: Historic structures should be stabilized, repaired, renovated and/or restored to ensure their preservation and availability for public viewing and interpretation.

Currently, no historic structures in the Pohick District are in County Park Authority ownership. Restoration of Civil War earthworks at Confederate Fortifications Historic Site can be treated in a similar way to historic structures that provide public viewing and interpretation.

Strategies:

P-CR-1. Use an appropriate treatment to preserve Civil War earthworks in County ownership and incorporate treatment plan implementation into the cultural resource work plan.

Issue: Cultural Resources should be identified and evaluated prior to any proposed construction activity.

Strategies:

P-CR-2. For any site subject to proposed construction activity, a preliminary assessment of the property will be carried out using GIS and pedestrian reconnaissance. Should potential resources be present, a cultural resource survey will be conducted and mitigation measures will be developed, as necessary.

Issue: Impacts to National Register eligible cultural resources should be avoided where at all feasible. If impacts cannot be avoided mitigation level documentation or data recovery should occur.

Strategies:

P-CR-3. Document and record buildings and structures using Historic American Buildings/Historic American Engineering methods (research, measured drawings and archival photographs) and conduct data recovery excavations for archaeological sites, as appropriate.

Issue: *New, expanded and upgraded facilities are needed to house artifact collections to ensure their preservation for future generations.*

No district- or park-specific strategies exist for this issue in the Pohick Planning District. This is an issue of countywide concern that should be addressed with centralized facilities.

THEME: Natural Resource Stewardship

The Pohick Planning District contains diverse land use patterns and as a result has a variety of natural resource conditions and issues. The more rural areas in the western portion are primarily in private ownership with the exception of the regional parks along the shoreline and a few County parks in the northwest corner. These less developed areas provide significant natural and cultural resource protection. Wildlife corridors and natural resources are less fragmented and water quality and stream conditions are generally of higher quality in this area. Clean streams support unusual species such as two-lined salamanders and river otter. Geologic variability with underlying diabase rock on the west and granitic rock on the east combined with large intact private and public land holdings has resulted in a great deal of variability and richness within the plant communities. Additional unique forest stands exist in Patriot and Confederate Fortifications Parks.

The eastern portion of the district is highly developed and resources are more impacted as a result. Pohick Creek is the largest stream valley in the district. It is generally divided into three branches; the Park Authority owns a great deal of land along all three. The dominant features in the Pohick watershed are large lakes constructed as early as the 1960s to control stormwater and the relatively high density of suburban residential development. There are several park properties surrounding large lakes in the Pohick watershed. The largest of these, Burke Lake, contains very mature upland hardwood forest and riparian corridors but also faces significant challenges due to human activity, invasive plant species and encroachments. Significant wetland resources are known to exist. These wetlands provide wildlife habitat to several amphibian species and educational opportunities for park visitors.

Heard from the public:
“Provide more natural meadows for wildlife (with interpretive trails). It is one of the rarest forms of habitats in the county and critical for many birds and other animals.”

Issue: *Natural habitats and the wildlife they support are disappearing due to development and are fragmented from development, trails, easements and utilities. Meadow and upland habitats are especially scarce.*

Pohick District is generally built out with many natural resources preserved in public ownership along large lakes, stream valleys and the southern shoreline. Large lot development in the western portion of the district provides additional protection to wildlife and natural habitats. An extensive trail network along stream valleys exists.

Strategies:

- P-NR-1. Seek to acquire and protect remaining natural areas in the district especially large tracts, those connecting to other natural areas and those containing unique or significant natural resources;
- P-NR-2. Protect and improve existing corridors, linkages and watersheds;
- P-NR-3. Provide new linkages between remaining public and private natural areas;
- P-NR-4. Manage utility corridors and other easements consistent with natural resource goals, not just utility service goals; and
- P-NR-5. Designate permanent resource protection zones on parkland that define appropriate uses and development.

Issue: *Water resources and stream valleys are degraded due to development and associated stormwater runoff.*

Due to the Occoquan Basin Watershed efforts in the Pohick District, the water resources and stream valleys east of Ox Road are in good condition. This is less true in the eastern portion of the district where stream valleys are impacted by more dense development and stormwater runoff. Large stormwater retention lakes provide some defense to the impacts. Many of the stream valleys are in public ownership and stream quality assessments have been done to inform future improvements. It is especially important that further degradation to these public resources be addressed. In the short term, construction of new stormwater controls could be disruptive to natural resources and park activities. However, in the long term, benefits to water quality and in-stream habitat should be significant

Strategies:

- P-NR-6. Work with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) and private land owners to capture and treat stormwater. This could take the form of incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) methods on residential and commercial lots and renovation of larger properties to provide new or enhanced stormwater facilities;
- P-NR-7. Encourage private property owners to adopt wildlife and water friendly landscaping practices to improve water quality and habitat; and

P-NR-8. Restore riparian buffer vegetation within the Pohick Planning District, including Pohick South Run and Middle Run Stream Valleys.

Issue: *The Park Authority does not have an adequate inventory of natural resources on parkland, nor the capacity to actively manage and protect natural resources.*

There has been limited study of natural resources on parkland within the District. Natural resource inventories currently only exist for Patriot, Confederate Fortifications and South Run Parks. As a result, very little is known about what resources exist on park land and the threats they face.

Strategies:

P-NR-9. Direct development of park infrastructure to areas that, when inventoried, reflect few or poor quality natural resources, unless otherwise incompatible;

P-NR-10. Ensure that natural resources are assessed prior to any park development. Use design principles that minimize natural resource impacts and include monitoring and restoration of impacted natural areas as part of development plans; and

P-NR-11. Conduct natural resource inventories and develop and implement natural resource management plans for natural areas.

Issue: *Non-native invasive plants are threatening natural resources by reducing the diversity of native species and impacting wildlife habitat.*

Strategies:

P-NR-12. Educate citizens on the problems associated with invasive plant species. Work with them to eliminate or limit invasives on private property near parks and to prevent new introductions of invasive species; and

P-NR-13. Expand non-native invasive plant management and habitat restoration on parkland by implementing the Non-Native Invasive Plant [Prioritization Plan](#) and [Assessment](#).

Issue: *The County has a goal to expand tree canopy. The Park Authority should contribute to this goal wherever possible by ensuring existing forested areas are sustainable and expanding canopy where possible.*

A large proportion of parkland in Pohick District is forested and protected as resource-based parks or in designated resource management areas within the local and district parks. Parkland holdings contribute significantly to the tree canopy and forested areas in Pohick District. Large lot private landholdings in the western portion of the district contribute to additional forested areas and tree canopy.

Strategies:

- P-NR-14. Ensure sustainability of tree canopy on parkland by developing and implementing management plans and controlling threats such as non-native invasive plants and deer herbivory;
- P-NR-15. Encourage tree planting and natural landscaping techniques on private land;
- P-NR-16. Incorporate natural landscaping techniques on parkland, avoid tree loss from development and where possible increase tree canopy; and
- P-NR-17. Designate permanent resource protection zones on parkland that define appropriate uses and development.

Heard from the public: “Please add more trees to shade playgrounds.”

Issue: The Park Authority should utilize innovative practices in construction of recreational facilities and buildings to minimize impacts to the environment and demonstrate stewardship.

No district- or park-specific strategies exist for this issue in the Pohick Planning District.