

**Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee Meeting, April 25, 2023  
Regarding Lake Accotink Dredging**

[Annandale Today Article on Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee Meeting](#)

**The Walkinshaw Advisory: April 27, 2023**

Dear Neighbor,

This week, at my request, the Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee received a briefing and update on Lake Accotink. County staff shared the history of the project, the results of the community survey, and the staff recommendation to not move forward with the planned dredge. You can watch the video of the meeting [here](#).



The meeting provided an opportunity for me to share how many residents in our community feel – that Lake Accotink is a treasure, beloved by generations of residents, in Fairfax County and beyond. The fact that Fairfax County made a commitment to dredge the lake in 2019, and now there is a staff recommendation recommending the opposite has created anger and distrust. While the 1000+ responses to the [community survey](#) reveal that views are mixed as to whether the benefits of dredging outweigh the costs, clearly there are still many people who feel passionately about the Lake and are not yet convinced that every possible option has been explored.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY**  
VIRGINIA

### Summary of the Public Survey and Comments

Of 1,078 responses

- 84% lived within 5 miles of lake (all but 5 responses in Virginia)
- 89% were somewhat or very familiar with study
- 51% visit weekly or monthly; 32% occasionally; 9% daily; 8% rarely
- Hiking/walking/running most reported use (89%); boating was 8<sup>th</sup> most reported use (26%)

From open-ended comments:

- Nearly equal number support dredging versus not dredging (26% Dredge vs 27% Don't Dredge)
- 20% concerned about dredging costs
- 16% needed more information
- 16% supported return to park visioning
- 14% supported transition to wetland; 5% concerned about wetlands

That's why, along with Chairman McKay and Supervisor Lusk, I announced that we will ask the Board of Supervisors to form a Task Force on the Future of Lake Accotink to review the existing studies, analyses, and

recommendations, participate in a detailed study of the managed wetland option, and explore the possibility of a hybrid approach that maintains an open water feature.

The task force will deliver its findings to the Board of Supervisors to inform our decision. To date, the process has been that staff and consultants conduct studies, then present their recommendations to the community for comment. This task force will enable community members to be at the table to ensure that options are thoroughly explored, and questions from the public are answered.

While other Board members expressed deep concern with the \$395 million cost to dredge and maintain the Lake over 25 years, there was unanimous agreement to withhold making any decisions until the task force can complete its work.

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**My Notes:**

**BOS Environmental Committee**

**4/25/2023**

Supervisor McKay –

I am “not ready to pull the plug” “I have a hard time stomaching the recommendation”

Show us exactly what would be the options for maintenance.

We need really clear picture before deciding.

We cannot do the master plan until the lake’s future is clear

A task force is absolutely essential & must be open to the public.

Is five year dredging the only option? Stretch to ten years?

Response – Charles Smith – Longer than 5 years would be inefficient, involving too much sediment.

Supervisor Walkinshaw –

“I’m not ready to give up.”

“We owe people a lot more explanation”

There has been no study of wetlands.

I recommend a lake task force.

The task force should examine a hybrid approach.

I ask my colleagues to wait for the task force findings.

Supervisor Lusk –

Any known costs of wetland restoration?

Will there be impact of wetland on trails?

Response – FCPA Director Jai Cole – We will always preserve trails.

How do we address TMDL obligations?

Response – Charles Smith – the County has met its Bay TMDL requirements. \$25M has been invested so far on Accotink Creek. The Long Branch project will be another \$40M. There is no finish line date.

Supervisor Gross –

Demonstrate how transition might look.

Supervisor Alcorn –

I remember this discussion from my Park Authority Board days. It was a close call then and was kicked upstairs to the BOS.

I am very sympathetic to the staff recommendation, especially due to cost.

Supervisor Herrity –

Why did we drop stormwater management?

Have we sought federal grants?

We should spend time with congressional folks re funds.

Response – Charles Smith – The lake is not effective at stormwater management. There are no grants for management.

Supervisor Smith –

The cost is prohibitive.

A task force would be beneficial.

What is the effect of quarry disposal on health and groundwater?

Response – Charles Smith - Testing done during the study and required by Luck Stone indicate the sediment is nontoxic.

Supervisor Foust –

It is a huge decision, dramatically changed from the beginning.

The cost is almost equivalent to the entire Park Authority bond funding

Supervisor Palchik-

I would very much appreciate a task force.

Charles Smith –

We can be intentional and direct sediment as desired within the wetland.

There is no practical way to reuse the spoils.

The railroad has no place to take spoils.

The Wakefield Park entrance would be shut down by trucks, ergo a separate entrance and U turn would be needed.

Chris Herrington –

4% of survey respondents were concerned about trucks in neighborhoods.