



Birding Hotspot Fact Sheet

JULIE J. METZ WETLANDS BANK

LOCATION: Prince William County, Virginia, 24 miles south of Washington, D.C. The wetlands bank borders Neabsco Road and Neabsco Creek.

DIRECTIONS: From Interstate 95, take exit 156 (Dale City Boulevard/Rippon Landing/Rte. 784) and travel east to U.S. Route 1. Turn right on U.S. Route 1, get in the left lane as soon as possible. Turn left at the Route 1/Neabsco Road intersection and travel about a mile to the parking lot entrance on your left.

ACREAGE: Approximately 227 acres

HISTORY: The area is rich in history. John Smith first mapped Neabsco Creek in 1608. The surrounding area was the site of tobacco farming and lumbering. This is the first wetlands bank in Northern Virginia approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This area is named in memory of Julie J. Metz, an environmental scientist employed by the Corps.

ECOSYSTEM TYPE, HABITATS, & ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE: This wetlands bank features a diverse mixture of forested, shrub-scrub, and emergent wetlands.

BIRDS AND BIRDWATCHING: The varied habitat at Julie J. Metz provides diverse bird life year round. Since it is just outside the entrance to LEESYLVANIA STATE PARK (a separate Fact Sheet), it is productive to visit both sites while in the area. There is a wood chip and boardwalk nature trail that loops thru the area with connecting paths between several of the sub-areas (referred to as Pods in the Nature Trail brochure). Northern Parula, Black and White, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow are among the many species of Warblers found here. In addition to Warblers, the wetlands and adjacent areas are good places to look for various species of Ducks, Gulls, Great Egrets, Greater Yellowlegs, Lincoln's, Swamp and Field Sparrows, Great Crested Flycatchers, and Indigo Buntings. This also a good place to look for King Rails and American Bitterns. Depending on the state of the trails, ticks could be a problem as are mosquitoes and other biting insects in late spring and summer. Please check the Fairfax Audubon Society (FAS) Web site (www.fairfaxaudubon.org) or contact the FAS office (703) 256-6895 (office hours are 8-4 M-F) for information about FAS sponsored walks that might be scheduled for this site.

CONSERVATION CHALLENGES: Rain, snowmelt, and groundwater feed the wetlands bank. Land "upstream" from the bank will be developed with houses. This

might affect Neabsco Creek that borders the wetlands bank on the east. The wetlands bank is protected by a “recorded conservation easement”.

CONSERVATION WORK AT THE SITE: The developer of the Julie J. Metz Wetlands Bank has turned the property over to Prince William County, which is responsible for maintaining it. Periodically, the developer does site monitoring and trail maintenance work as well. Fairfax Audubon Society isn’t involved in any conservation work at this site.

CONTACT INFORMATION: None

FEES AND HOURS OF OPERATION: There are no fees for this site and no formal hours of operation.

FACILITIES: There is a small parking lot and no restrooms. Food, drinks, and restrooms are available about a mile away at a commercial facility at the intersection of Rte. 1 and Neabsco Road. Also, there are various facilities at Leesylvania State Park.