

## **Proposed Resolution to *Stop the Destruction of 66 Trees & Halt Expansion of Unnecessary Parking* at Upton Hill Regional Park**

**Whereas**, trees purify our air by filtering pollutants and producing oxygen;

**Whereas**, asthma rates among Arlington County children have risen 44% in the last 5 years, fueled in part by massive loss of trees (the equivalent footprint of the Pentagon every few years<sup>1</sup>), increased asphalt and concrete with relentless new construction (which excrete toxins), and rising pollution from idling trucks and increased vehicles on our roads<sup>2</sup>;

**Whereas**, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's plan to remove 66 mature trees<sup>3</sup> is inconsistent with federal and state laws protecting the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and Arlington's own 2007 Nature Resource Management recommendations<sup>4</sup>, which documented through field observations that large trees at Upton Hill should be protected from future park development or redevelopment, including the construction of facilities and trails;

**Whereas**, the expansion of the upper parking is unwarranted and unnecessary, and no justification has been offered by the Park Authority for why more parking is needed, with its attendant erosion and pollution;

**Whereas**, the parking lot expansion is a waste of Arlington County funds to NOVA Parks because Upton Hill swimming pool is only open three months a year, and for the remaining nine months parking is plentiful for the mini golf and batting cages;

**Whereas**, 45% of Arlington County is already covered with impervious surfaces, increasing pavement on parkland, contradicts Arlington County's own policies of trying to minimize or eliminate surface parking;

**Whereas**, Upton Hill provides the last remaining forest between Bluemont and the extensively paved area known as Seven Corners, and U.S. metropolitan areas lose 36 million trees annually;

**Whereas**, the beautiful forest at Upton Hill is frequented by families, hikers, bikers, bird watchers and wild life,

---

<sup>1</sup> Quote from John Vidstadt, Arlington County Board meeting, July 2018

<sup>2</sup> Arlington County Department of Public Health community hearing, May 31, 2018

<sup>3</sup> Tree numbers derived from NOVA Parks Land Disturbing Activity application (LDA 18129) submitted May 15, 2018, to Arlington County for work at Upton Hill, Sheets 37-39, "Tree Preservation Plan and Details" reviewed in person and received under the Virginia FOIA by Friends of Upton Hill. Available at: <https://sites.google.com/view/friends-of-upton-hill/dead-trees-walking>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://sites.google.com/view/friends-of-upton-hill/home/spoiling-natural-resources>

**Therefore**, be it resolved that Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's plans be halted until they are revised to prevent the removal of high-value trees and expansion of the parking lot; that permits issued ensure the preservation of these mature trees; and there be sufficient supervision and oversight to ensure that the construction at Upton Hill preserves these mature trees.

- Passed unanimously on October 24, 2018, with one abstention

\*\*\*\*\*

For further documentation and substantiation on the loss of almost 900 trees in Arlington since 2014, see the following page with BCA member Suzanne Sundburg’s research.

Public Project/Site	# of Trees Removed/To Be Removed	Source/Documentation
Upton Hill Regional Park Project 2018	66 trees to be removed, including high-value, large native trees; RPA on site	<a href="https://sites.google.com/view/friends-of-upton-hill/dead-trees-walking">https://sites.google.com/view/friends-of-upton-hill/dead-trees-walking</a> (see list of trees to be removed from the permit application’s tree removal plan at bottom of page)
Lubber Run Community Center/Park Site 2018	111 trees to be removed, including high-value, large native trees; RPA on site	<a href="https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/05/LRCC_PFC2_-_Presentation_2017-0531.pdf">https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/05/LRCC_PFC2_-_Presentation_2017-0531.pdf</a> See slide/p. 50 — note that subsequent discussions reduced the number to 108
Reed School Addition 2018	+/-34 trees to be removed	No number is provided. Schematic shows trees to be removed. See slide/p. 35 of the BLPC presentation at <a href="https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/180515-REED-PFRC-BLPC-presentation.pdf">https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/180515-REED-PFRC-BLPC-presentation.pdf</a> Note: in 2008/2008, many trees were removed during construction of the joint Westover Library/Reed School complex
Salt Dome Site (Old Dominion Dr. & 26 <sup>th</sup> Street N.) 2018	Total number not provided in public documents for this project; RPA near site?	<a href="https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/08/SaltDome_Overlay_Aug_final.pdf">https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/08/SaltDome_Overlay_Aug_final.pdf</a> This map shows some of the peripheral trees that will be cut down but doesn’t provide a total number of trees that will be cut.
TJ Middle School Site/Alice West Fleet Elementary School (new school) 2017	157 trees removed; part of site was public parkland	See slide/p. 4 at <a href="http://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/032417-Urban-Forestry-full-presentation-opt.pdf">http://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/032417-Urban-Forestry-full-presentation-opt.pdf</a>
Stratford Middle School Addition/Drop-	157 trees to be removed	See p. 2 at <a href="https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/09/Stratford_EnvironmentalAssessment_Part1.pdf">https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/09/Stratford_EnvironmentalAssessment_Part1.pdf</a>

off Lane/Driveway		
Abingdon Elementary School Addition 2015/2016	152 trees removed; another 6 to be “transplanted”	See p. 3 at <a href="https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/12/FINAL-E2C2-Abingdon-letter.pdf">https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/12/FINAL-E2C2-Abingdon-letter.pdf</a>
Ashlawn Elementary School Addition 2014	94 trees removed, including 7 in the RPA	See p. 6 at <a href="https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/DC-Ashlawn-Elementary-ESA-checklist-1-27-14.pdf">https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/DC-Ashlawn-Elementary-ESA-checklist-1-27-14.pdf</a> Note: Several mature trees on this site have died since construction was completed. Additional trees to be removed in the RPA in conjunction with the “Montague St. entrance.”
McKinley Elementary School Addition 2014	78 trees, including mature trees	<a href="https://www.arlnow.com/2014/09/22/mckinley-elementary-expansion-gets-county-board-approval/">https://www.arlnow.com/2014/09/22/mckinley-elementary-expansion-gets-county-board-approval/</a>
Over 60 Public Park Projects	Number of trees to be removed not disclosed.	<a href="https://projects.arlingtonva.us/types/parks/">https://projects.arlingtonva.us/types/parks/</a> Note: Nearly all major park projects include the removal of mature trees. However, because “maintenance capital” funds are used for these “maintenance” projects, no environmental analysis is required, according to staff. And the number of trees to be removed is not included in the materials that are made publicly available.