



The Need for Parkland in Northern Virginia And the Role of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority in Conserving Public Open Space

Presented By:
William Dickinson
NVRPA Chairman

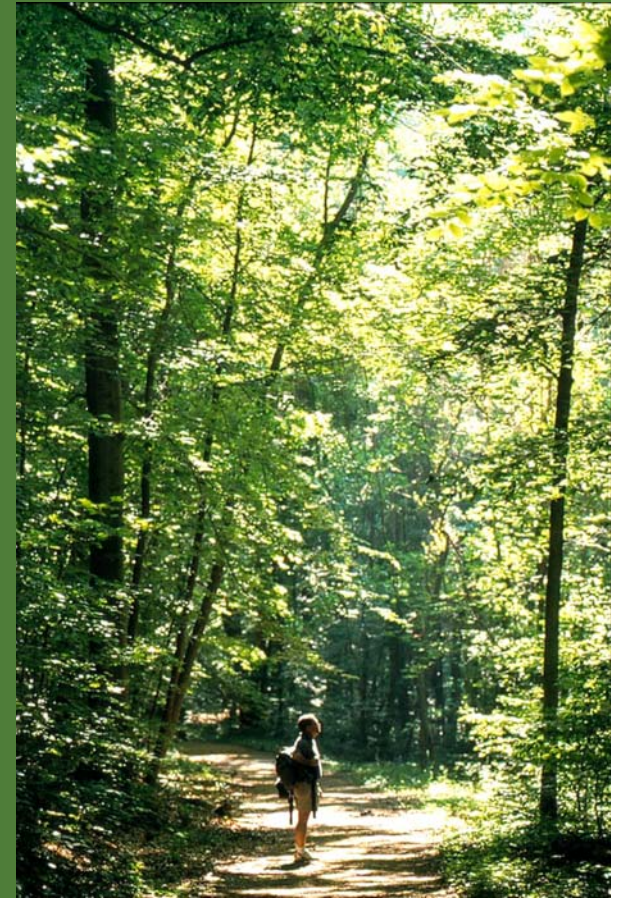


Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

Founded in 1959, NVRPA was set up pursuant to the Virginia Park Authorities Act that allows one or more local governments to create a park authority.

Today, NVRPA is the largest regional authority of its kind in Virginia.

- Six member jurisdictions: Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun counties and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church and Fairfax.
- A population of 1.6 million and an area of 956 square miles.





Reasons Why a Regional Park Authority was Established



6/19/2007

- Recognition that open space and natural areas were critical to quality of life.
- An understanding that Northern Virginia was growing fast, and natural areas needed to be acquired before they were lost to development.
- A recognition by the smaller jurisdictions that they did not have the land base to provide all the natural and recreational opportunities their citizens needed access to.
- A need to protect the drinking water supplies of the region.
- An appreciation that a regional authority would have better economies of scale to protect natural resources and provide unique recreational opportunities that ³ would complement local recreational offerings.



Founding NVRPA Chairman Ira Gabrielson



Ira M. Gabrielson

First Director of the Fish and
Wildlife Service, Vice Chair of
Virginia Outdoor Study
Commission (1966) and
renowned ornithologist

“With the tremendous growth in population that has been apparent, especially in the coastal and Piedmont regions of this state in the past two decades, the time has come when we must plan for space if we are going to have something more than standing room only in the near and immediate future...Those natural areas that are preserved today will draw future interest in the well-being of the citizens of Virginia.”

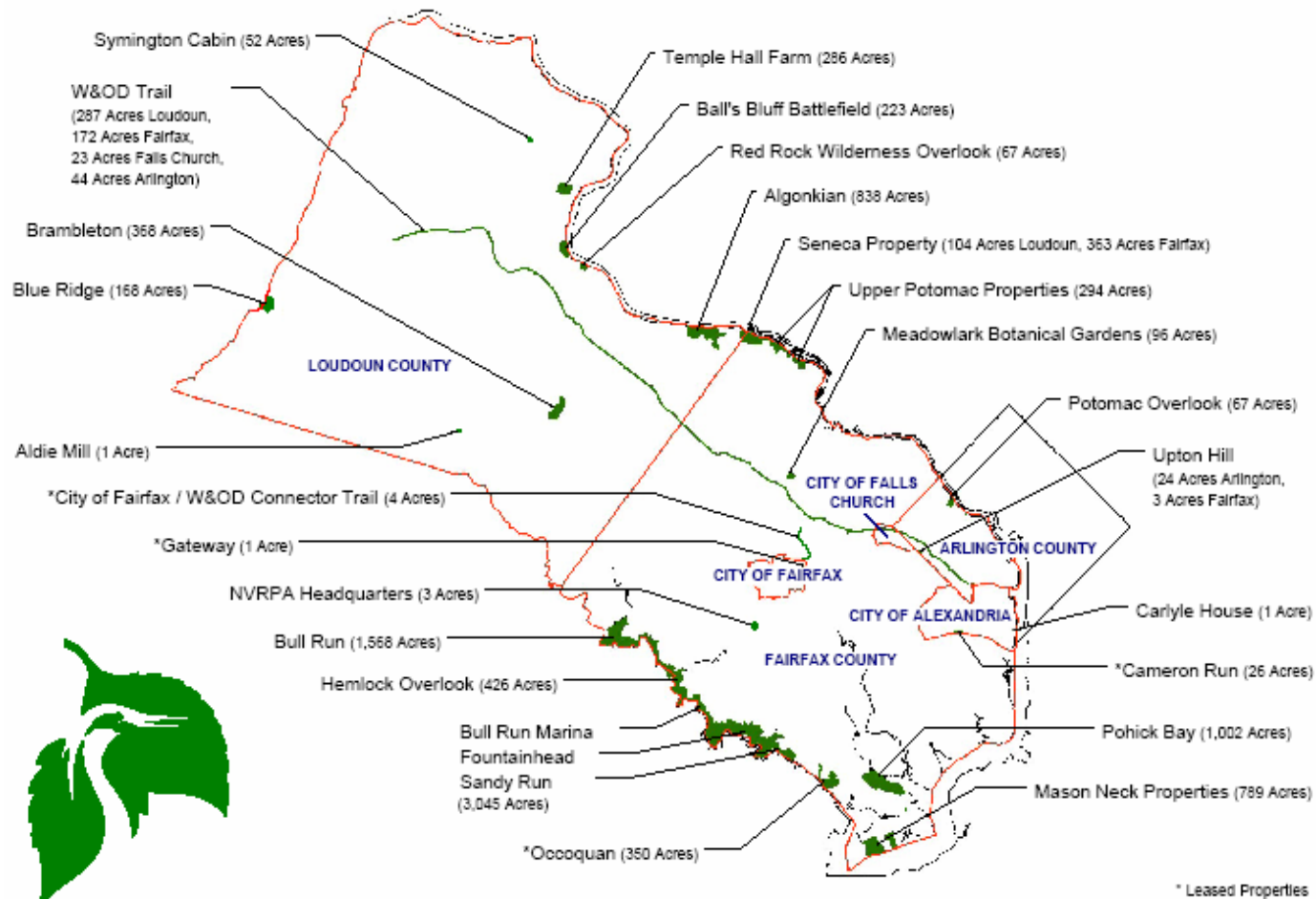
**Address to the Virginia Citizens Planning Association,
Richmond, Virginia, May 9, 1960**



Mission Statement

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority enhances the communities of Northern Virginia and enriches the lives of their citizens through the conservation of regional natural and cultural resources. It provides diverse regional recreational and educational opportunities, and fosters an understanding of the relationships between people and their environment.

Parkland of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority



Current NVRPA Parks

- 21 Parks

- 10,000 Acres

- 100 miles of Trails
- 3 campgrounds
- 3 Golf Courses
- 5 Aquatic Facilities
- 5 Marinas
- A Botanical Garden
- An Outdoor Learning Center
- A Nature Center



Voters Value Natural Areas

- *96% of voters believe that Virginians owe it to future generations "to protect the land, water and wildlife for their use and enjoyment."*¹
- 71% of Virginians favor purchase of land to be managed as natural areas or parks for public use.²

6/19/2007





Recommendation from the Draft Virginia Outdoor Plan

Specific needs identified in the Northern Virginia region are:

- Water access for fishing, swimming and boating.
- Trails for fitness, bicycling, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding and off-road motorcycling.
- Multipurpose fields for soccer, football and other field sports.
- Natural areas for nature studies.
- Parks with camping and picnicking.
- Additional basketball, tennis and volleyball courts.



Trails = #1 Recreational Activity

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey

W&OD Trail stretches 45 miles and has over 2 million users per year.



The Bull Run/Occoquan Trail is 18 miles of beauty and nature. ⁹



Historic Sites= #2 Recreational Activity

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey

NVRPA Historic Sites:

- Carlyle House (circa 1752)
- Aldie Mill (circa 1809)
- Temple Hall Farm (circa 1810)
- Ball's Bluff Battlefield (circa 1861)





Historical Interpretive Programs Are finding New Markets:

84% Increase in School Tours of Carlyle House over the last year.

800 fourth graders recently visited Temple Hall Farm to learn about farming history.

Expanded interpretive efforts at Ball's Bluff Battlefield Park are attracting more visitors than ever before.



Aquatics= #4 Recreational Activity

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey

NVRPA operates 5 pools/waterparks





Natural Areas = #5 Gardens = # 12

Recreational Activity

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey
**NVRPA operates one botanical garden & nearly
10,000 acres of natural area**





Fishing= #7 Boating = #10 Recreational Activity

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey

NVRPA operates 5 marinas





Picnicking= #8

Recreational Activity

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey

NVRPA operates 30 picnic pavilions

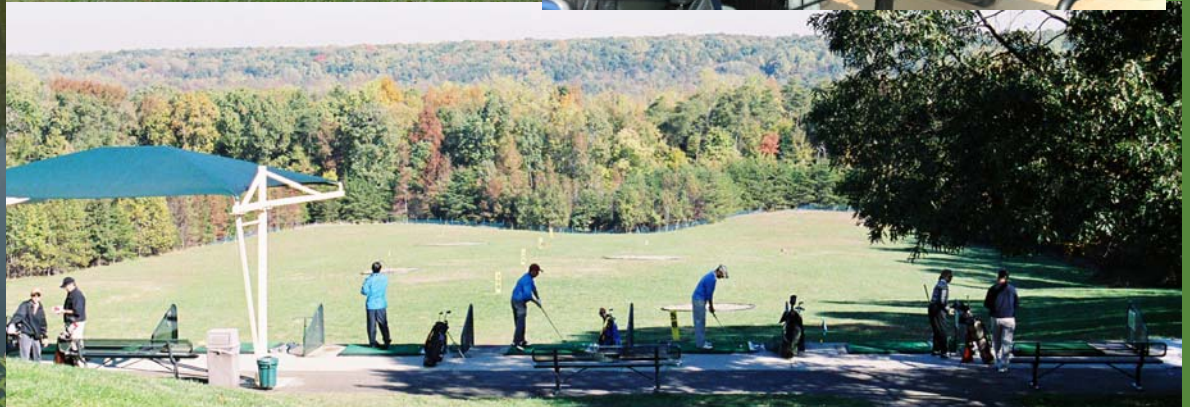




Golf = #1 Outdoor Sport

According to the 2006 Virginia Outdoor Survey

NVRPA operates 3 golf courses

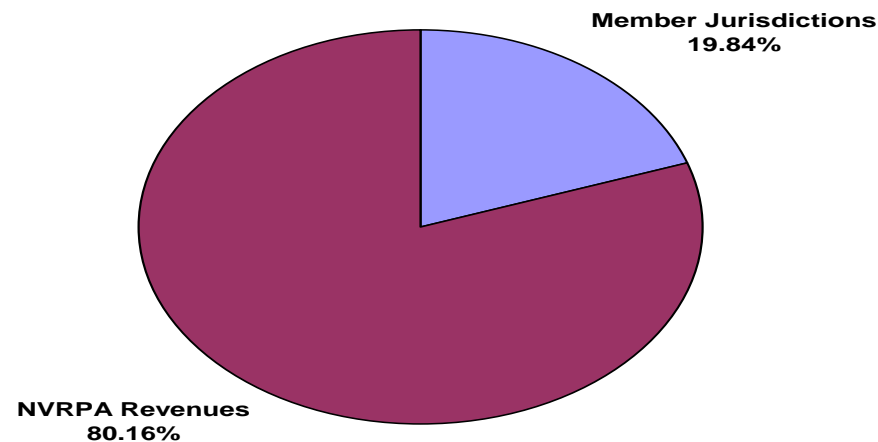




One of the most Self Sufficient Park Agencies in the Nation

Enterprise operations account for over
80% of our operating revenue.

**Revenue Sources
FY 2006 Actual**





NVRPA Land Acquisition History



- Five of our 21 parks were donated to the Authority.
- Most of the 10,000 acres of parkland were acquired in the 1960s and 1970s.
- By the 1980s, over 95% of our current land holdings had been purchased.
- Lack of federal and state financial support and increased real estate values essentially stopped our purchases of significant new parkland.



Challenges & Opportunities For Parkland Funding

Challenges

- Federal Land & Water Conservation funds are at a historic low.
- Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) is underfunded.
- Local government funding is challenged by declining real estate market.

6/19/2007

Opportunities

- Create a new funding source that ties funds for riparian parkland to water related utilities.
- Seek other non-traditional funding streams to support parkland expansion.
- Consider population density in VLCF funding¹⁸.



NVRPA Board



6/19/2007

City of Falls Church

Barry D. Buschow

Jeff Tarbert

City of Alexandria

William C. Dickinson, Chairman

David M. Pritzker

City of Fairfax

Brian D. Knapp

Arthur F. Little

Fairfax County

Jean R. Packard

Judy Braus

Arlington County

John G. Milliken

James I. Mayer, Vice Chair

Loudoun County

Su Webb

20

Joan G. Rokus, Treasurer