

**NOVA Parks Board Meeting Agenda**  
**Thursday January 15, 2026**  
NOVA Parks HQ  
5400 Ox Road  
Fairfax Station, VA 22039



6:45 PM: Dinner

7:00 PM: Closed Session to discuss real estate acquisition, legal and personnel matters

7:30 PM: Board Meeting

*Board Lead: Kumar*

- Call to Order
- Introductions
- Amendments to the Agenda
- Approve November 20, 2025 Minutes

7:35 PM: Treasurer's Report/Status of Funds

*Board Lead: Bonfils*

7:40 PM: Auditor's Report

*Staff Lead: Weaver*

7:55 PM: Board Elections

*Board Lead: Ferguson*

8:05 PM: Admin Items

*Staff Lead: Russian/Nolan*

- *Light Show Update*
- *Metroduct Payment Transfer*

8:10 PM: Presentation: Roving Naturalist

*Staff Lead: Russian*

Adjourn

**City of Alexandria**

Sean Kumar  
Scott Price

**Arlington County**

Paul Ferguson  
Michael A. Nardolilli

**Fairfax County**

Patricia Harrison  
Stella Koch

**City of Fairfax**

Mark Chandler  
Douglas Stewart

**City of Falls Church**

Paul Baldino  
David Gustafson

**Loudoun County**

James Bonfils  
Cate Magennis Wyatt



## **NOVA PARKS**

Board Meeting, November 20, 2025

7:30 p.m.

Meadowlark Botanical Gardens – The Atrium

9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court

Vienna, VA 22182

**DRAFT**

### **ATTENDANCE:**

#### **Board Members:**

##### **In Attendance:**

Sean Kumar, Chairman

Paul Baldino, Vice Chairman

James Bonfils

Mark Chandler

Paul Ferguson

Dave Gustafson

Patricia Harrison

Stella Koch

Michael Nardolilli

Douglas Stewart

##### **Absent:**

Scott Price

Cate Magennis

Wyatt

#### **Staff:**

Justin Wilson, Executive Director

Blythe Russian, Director of Operations

Brian Nolan, Director of Planning and Development

Lauren Weaver, Director of Finance

Kelly Gilfillen, Director of Marketing and Communications

Kevin Casalenuovo, Park Operations Superintendent

Dustin Betthausen, Park Operations Superintendent

Danielle Endler, HR Administrator

Mike DePue, Planning Administrator

John Bell, Senior Planner

Patrick Wells, Budget Administrator

Anh Phan, Community Engagement Manager

Leslie Preble, Planning and Development Administrative Assistant

#### **Guest**

Renee Yancy, The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia (CFNOVA)

### **OPEN SESSION**

#### **City of Alexandria**

Sean Kumar

Scott Price

#### **Arlington County**

Paul Ferguson

Michael A. Nardolilli

#### **Fairfax County**

Patricia Harrison

Stella Koch

#### **City of Fairfax**

Mark Chandler

Douglas Stewart

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Paul Baldino

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#### **Loudoun County**

James Bonfils

Cate Magennis Wyatt

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

## **Amendments to the Agenda**

No amendments to the agenda

## **Introductions:**

The Chairman welcomed Justin Wilson as the new Executive Director.

Mr. Wilson expressed his appreciation to the Board of Directors and all the park employees for the welcome.

Ms. Russian introduced Dustin Betthausen the new Park Operations Superintendent

## **Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Bonfils made a motion to approve the September 18, 2025 meeting minutes, Mr. Nardolilli seconded the motion.

**Unanimously approved**

## **Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Bonfils reviewed the Status of Funds and said that all was in order.

Mr. Gustafson asked if we have deposit insurance for the checking accounts. Ms. Weaver said that the accounts are FDIC insured but also thinks we are covered as a government entity. She will check and confirm.

Mr. Bonfils also said that the report from the Audit was clean and that the final report will be out in December.

He expressed his appreciation to the Board members who attended audit committee meeting

Mr. Bonfils also announced that Reservoir Park at Beaverdam recently received two awards:  
*2025 American Institute of Architects Northern VA Award of Excellence in Civic/Cultural Architecture*

and

*Merit Award from the Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects*

Mr. Chandler suggested a way to display those awards to the public. A QR code was suggested

## **Admin Items:**

Bull Run Watermain Extension

Upton Hill Ocean Dunes Locker Renovations

W&OD Broad Run Bridge Decking Improvements

Reservoir Park Budget Revision

Mr. Stewart asked about Anglers winning so many bids. Mr. Nolan explained that we work with them a lot and yes, they are often the low bidder. Mr. Nolan said that it has been determined that Anglers can accommodate the workload over the various projects.

Mr. Nardolilli made a motion to approve all admin items; Mr. Bonfils seconded the motion.

**Unanimously approved**

### **Report on Funds with The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia (CFNOVA)**

**Lauren Weaver**

Ms. Weaver reviewed the funds held with CFNOVA.

She also briefly introduced Renee Yancy from CFNOVA. She explained that our partnership with CFNOVA enables investment in equities that earn more money than they would elsewhere. There is a total of six funds, three large endowments and three smaller pooled funds. She reviewed the return on investment for the various funds.

Ms. Weaver also touched on the grants that are awarded as part of our partnership with CFNOVA.

Ms. Harrison asked for more information on the grants and how many children benefit.

Mr. Wilson explained that more information would be included in the upcoming presentation by Ms. Russian.

### **Title 1 Report**

**Blythe Russian**

Ms. Russian discussed the grants that are awarded as a part of our relationship with CFNOVA. CFNOVA handles the administration for these grants. In-jurisdiction schools can apply. Grants cover transportation for field trips. The original goal was 2 grants per cycle (Spring and Fall) and in Spring 2025 there were 12 field trips scheduled with approximately 560 students served. Fall 2025 there were 3 field trips scheduled

Ms. Russian explained that they are working with CFNOVA to solicit more applications so that more children can benefit. She also mentioned that with one year of experience and many photos of the field trips, we will be able to generate more interest and more donations.

### **Renee Yancy, CFNOVA**

Ms. Yancy spoke about the CFNOVA side of the partnership – helping NOVA Parks achieve goals. She said they manage over 250 types of funds and are data driven. She distributed some handouts to the Board for their interest and expressed her appreciation for the ongoing partnership with NOVA Parks.

Ms. Yancy left at 8:15



## **10 Year Financial Forecast**

**Patrick Wells**

Mr. Wells reminded the Board that he gave a similar report last November and this year he would highlight what has changed since last year. He used a variety of graphs to demonstrate different possible outcomes based on certain assumptions. Specifically, he demonstrated how different scenarios such as severe weather impacts and changes in appropriations levels from jurisdictions can affect projections. Revenue was down in FY25 and Mr. Wells discussed how that shrinks the 3- and 5-year averages. He also looked at historical trends and how that can impact the 10-year forecast.

## **Fees and Charges**

**Blythe Russian**

Ms. Russian presented the 2026/2027 Fees and Charges. She reviewed the process and criteria for change. They consider current and future trends in the market, private and public competition, and projected changes in operating expenses such as labor, supplies, and maintenance costs that may impact net revenue.

Mr. Nardolilli made a motion to approve the proposed 2026/2027 Fees and Charges; Mr. Gustafson seconded.

**Unanimously approved**

Mr. Bonfils made a motion to enter closed session; Mr. Nardolilli seconded

**Unanimously approved**

Enter closed session at 8:51

## **CLOSED SESSION (as allowed by § 2.2-3711)**

Legal matters, in accordance with Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711-(A)(7)

Legal matters were discussed. No action was taken.

Real estate matter, in accordance with Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711-(A)(3)

Real estate matters were discussed. No action was taken.

Ms. Koch made a motion to enter open session, Mr. Nardolilli seconded

The Chairman read the following certification:

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements prescribed by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such matters identified in the motion to convene closed session were heard, discussed or considered by this Board during closed session.

The certification was **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED** by roll call vote.

**OPEN SESSION**

Re-entered open session at 9:50

**ACTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION:**

Mr. Bonfils made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute the Memoranda of Understanding on behalf of NOVA Parks as determined by the Board during closed session. Ms. Koch seconded the motion.

**Unanimously approved**

Mr. Bonfils made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Koch seconded the motion.

**Unanimously approved**

**ADJOURNMENT**

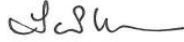
Meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

**NOVA Parks**  
**5400 Ox Road**  
**Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039**

January 7, 2026

To: James Bonfils , Treasurer

From: Lauren Weaver, Director of Finance



Subject: Status of Funds

Note: Fund balances as of 12/31/25

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

NVRPA Checking (Truist Bank)	3,665,353.92
Credit Card Receivable Account (Truist Bank)	2,372,381.74
Carlyle House Garden Guild Savings (Burke and Herbert)	1,811.13
Carlyle House Docents Savings (Burke & Herbert)	673.30
FSA - SunTrust - Flexible Spending Account (Truist Bank)	15,510.39
Imprest Fund - Special Event Center at Bull Run (Truist Bank)	18,794.98
Imprest Fund - Meadowlark Light Show (Truist Bank)	2,169.82
Local Government Investment Pool - NVRPA - Capital Fund	26,007,779.86
Charles Schwab- Capital Fund	2,465,555.02
Local Government Investment Pool - Deirdre J. Turnage Endowment Fund	138,723.87
Local Government Investment Pool - Daman Account	240,492.32
Local Government Investment Pool - Designated Set Aside - General Fund	562,301.32
Local Government Investment Pool - Designated Set Aside & Strategic Opportunity - Enterprise Fund	<u>7,772,141.63</u>
Designated Set Aside Sub-Total ( <b>RESERVES</b> )	8,334,442.95
LGIP Month of December Effective Yield 3.982%	
<b>TOTAL NVRPA CASH</b>	<u><u>43,263,689.30</u></u>

**LOAN PROCEEDS**

VRA Resources from Construction Loan for Upton Hill -Par	-
VRA Resources from Construction Loan for Upton Hill -Net Premium	263,548.79
VRA Resources from Construction Loan for Occoquan -Par	-
VRA Resources from Construction Loan for Occoquan -Net Premium	<u>821,348.65</u>
	<u><u>1,084,897.44</u></u>

**RESERVE**

Local Government Investment Pool - Stribling Debt Service Reserve Fund	149,732.25
	<u><u>149,732.25</u></u>

**RESTRICTED LICENSE FUND**

Local Government Investment Pool - Restricted License Account	153,975.75
Charles Schwab- Restricted License Fund	2,031,515.55
(W&OD Friends portion of this balance = \$70,698.20)	
(Wetlands Mitigation Fund portion of this balance = \$75,651.31)	
<b>TOTAL RESTRICTED FUND CASH</b>	<u><u>2,185,491.30</u></u>

**CARLYLE HOUSE FRIENDS**

Local Government Investment Pool - Carlyle House Friends	412,115.38
<b>TOTAL CARLYLE FRIENDS CASH</b>	<u><u>412,115.38</u></u>

Since the last Status of Funds report submitted to you on November 12, 2025 the following major deposits were collected:

<b>Checks</b>			
11/24/25	City of Fairfax	Appropriation	129,437.50
12/15/25	City of Falls Church	Appropriation	85,428.75
12/15/25	Commonwealth of VA	Unclaimed Property	6,006.51
12/16/25	United States Treasury	EV Grant	7,500.00
12/16/25	Fiber Network Services	Construction Deposit	5,000.00

<b>ACH's Received</b>			
11/17/25-1/2/26	Vivenu	Online Ticket Sales	2,594,751.04
12/1/25	Nodal Exchange	Catering	12,468.00
12/19/25	MetroDuct	License payment	7,557,420.00
12/31/25	City of Alexandria	Qtrly Appropriation	216,080.23

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 10,614,092.03</b>
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# MEMO



**To:** NOVA Parks Board of Directors  
**Through:** Justin M. Wilson, Executive Director  
**From:** Blythe Russian, Director of Park Operations  
**Date:** January 7, 2026  
**Re:** 2025 Holiday Light Show Report

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**Recommendation:** That the Board accept the update on the 2025 Holiday Light Shows.

**Strategic Plan Alignment:** Objective 5.1.1 – Enhance the performance of NOVA Parks’ light shows with a goal of increasing revenue by 3% annually from 2023 to 2027.

**Financial Impact:** \$4,489,000 budgeted gross revenue/\$4,654,286 gross revenue to date (with payments still pending and daytime ice skating continuing)

**Discussion:** NOVA Parks hosted a trio of annual holiday light shows in 2025: Bull Run Festival of Lights, Meadowlark’s Winter Walk of Lights and Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run.

2025 presented new opportunities and new challenges. The first challenge was implementing a new online ticketing system. After working with Eventbrite for the past 13 years, a new online vendor was selected to provide a customer-friendly online ticketing experience. After evaluating over 10 proposals, we chose *vivenu* to support our online ticket sales. Overall, the customer experience with *vivenu* has greatly improved, with simple transfer procedures and customer support. The new system reduced customer service issues and increased speed of entry at all three shows. Staff continue to work closely with *vivenu* on clear and transparent reporting and look forward to next year when we can fine tune the ticketing process based on the lessons we learned this year.

An important part of the success of the light shows is the planning and implementation of the annual Holiday Light Show Marketing & Communication Plan. The plan includes social media, collaborations with partners and influencers, media relations, email marketing to previous customers and print, radio, and podcasting advertising.

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New elements of the Marketing & Communication Plan that were implemented this year include:

- **Use of customer data tool to target customers:** Promotions were placed at Tyson's Corner and Meadowlark's Halloween Scavenger Hunt based on new information about customer behavior.
- **Implementation of SMS/MMS messaging:** Light show customers who opted in to receive text messages received a concession coupon after their ticket was scanned and cross-promotion for other light shows the next day. The campaign yielded 18,541 link clicks to purchase tickets for other light shows and 65,113 active SMS subscribers for future light show communications.
- **Promotion of Ice & Lights with a Ribbon Cutting Event with Alexandria's Mayor:** The event was pitched to the media and received coverage by Northern Virginia Magazine, ALXNow, Alexandria Gazette Packet, Alexandria Times, and NBC4. By partnering with stakeholders, Ice & Lights and the ribbon cutting event were promoted as social media collaborations with Visit Alexandria, the City of Alexandria, and Alexandria's Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities Department.
- **Implementation of social media contesting to reach new audiences:** After coordinating with iHeart to donate tickets to the sold-out iHeart Jingle Ball, social contests were held for the donated concert tickets, a donated gift box with tickets to all 3 light shows, and a drawing for a donated snack pack and car pass to Festival of Lights. Contest posts reached 20,000 accounts and engaged 200 participants each. Each participant tagged 1 to 3 friends to reach new customers.
- **Partnership with iHeart:** The WASH-FM street team was on-site at Ice & Lights and Winter Walk of Lights to add value to the customer's experience and promote the light shows on their social accounts before and during their visits.



## Photo of the Week



PHOTO/NOVA PARKS

**From left to right:** NOVA Parks Executive Director and former Alexandria mayor Justin Wilson, current Mayor Alyia Gaskins, City Councilor R. Kirk McPike and NOVA Parks Board Member Scott Price commemorated the 55-year partnership between NOVA Parks and Alexandria with an ice skating event on Dec. 4.

This year, light show sales started in early October and seemed to take off quickly. Once the shows opened, we were concerned with a significant drop in at-the-door sales at Bull Run. Staff attributed the drop in sales to a shift in customer base and constraints of the new ticketing system. The ticketing system constraints were quickly addressed. Staff and Marketing were responsive to the drop in sales and implemented new and targeted strategies to reach new customers to increase sales.



### **Bull Run Festival of Lights 2025 Snapshot**

- 60,526 vehicles (third highest car attendance on record, second only to COVID-era years)
- 73% online sales
- Admissions Revenue: \$2,040,455\* (payouts pending)
- Retail Revenue: \$98,207\*
- Vendor Revenue (Carnival & Petting Zoo): \$171,123\*
- Gross Revenue: \$2,309,786\*

**Attendance & Ticketing Trends:** This season, drive-up (day-of) visitation at the gate declined by nearly 5,000 vehicles, while advance online sales increased by approximately 1,600 vehicles. This shift presents an opportunity to further leverage dynamic pricing to better capture revenue during peak, high-demand periods while encouraging attendance during lower-demand times. Spreading visitation more evenly will improve traffic flow, reduce wait times, and enhance the overall guest experience.

**Operations & Cost Efficiencies:** Staff eliminated the need to hire an outside electrical contractor during setup. This resulted in meaningful cost savings and allowed the team to wrap additional trees, further enhancing the visual quality of the show.

**New Features & Display Enhancements:** Installation of a new 100-foot RGB illuminated tunnel quickly became a guest favorite. Addition of a new star arch at the Holiday Village entrance was brighter, easier to install, and created a popular photo opportunity. Over 40 trees were professionally wrapped with new lighting bringing the forest to life with vibrant color.

**Retail, Flow, & Guest Experience Improvements:** Palm Pals were a strong retail success, generating nearly \$5,000 in additional revenue in the Holiday Village shop. Introduction of a 4-pack of Holiday Specs sold online resulted in the sale of more than 1,500 additional units compared to previous years.







### Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights 2025 Snapshot

- 88,599 visitors (fourth highest visitation to date)
- 98% online sales
- Admissions Revenue: \$1,742,631\* (payouts pending)
- Retail Revenue: \$62,808\*
- Food, Beverage & Alcohol Revenue: \$254,812\*
- Gross Revenue: \$2,161,091\*

**Attendance & Ticketing Trends:** A variety of promotions and themed nights, including buy 1 get 1 free nights, dog nights, and community appreciation nights supported traditionally slower visitation nights and strengthened community engagement. Peak and off-peak pricing strategies continue to be implemented based on demand.

**Operations & Cost Efficiencies:** Operations benefited from a highly experienced seasonal workforce, with a significant portion of staff returning from previous seasons. Staff bulk ordered retail items for all shows in order to capitalize on price breaks and increase retail sales.

**New Features & Display Enhancements:** New features include large botanical flowers, a re-envisioned koi pond, and a great photo-op sleigh.

**Food, Beverage & Alcohol Sales:** Winter Walk expanded alcohol sales to a new location at the Food Truck and offered a signature drink, the Amaretto Snow Globe (with glow in the dark straw!) Overall food, beverage and alcohol sales topped \$250,000 for the first time!







### Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run 2025 Snapshot

- 14,265 visitors
- 88% online sales
- Admissions Revenue: \$139,708\* (payouts pending & daytime ice skating open through 2/28)
- Retail Revenue: \$7,366\*
- Food & Beverage Revenue: \$36,736\*
- Gross Revenue: \$183,409\*

**Attendance & Ticketing Trends:** Attendance at this annual event has been on the decline. The operating schedule has been adjusted to focus on peak days of operation but this did not increase sales. Additional daytime ice skating sessions have been added, but overall attendance is down with little to no sellout nights. While group sales have increased, notable attention will need to be paid to the operating schedule, promotions, group and party sales.

**Operations Highlights:** Ice & Lights saw an improvement in retail merchandise offerings and presentation. The park also hosted Timber Lane Elementary School Choir to encourage community engagement. Daytime ice skating is available on weekends and holidays through February 2026.

**New Features & Display Enhancements:** New features include a ski gondola, lighted flamingos, penguins, and sharks, and a jet skiing Santa display.



Looking ahead, it is critical that we continue to invest in the light shows. Holiday lighting displays represent a significant capital investment; however, ongoing investment is necessary to keep the experience fresh, visually engaging, and competitive. Guests expect to see new elements and enhancements each year, and continued upgrades are essential to drive repeat visitation, maintain strong attendance, and support long-term revenue growth. Strategic reinvestment will ensure that the light shows remain premier seasonal attractions for years to come. Both Winter Walk and Festival of Lights have exceeded the Strategic Plan Objective of increasing revenue by 3% annually, based on admission fees, not an increase in visitation. The continued investment in these products will help solidify this \$4 million product for the future.

# MEMO



**To:** NOVA Parks Board of Directors

**Through:** Justin M. Wilson, Executive Director

**From:** Brian Nolan, Director of Planning and Development

**Date:** January 7, 2026

**Re:** Transfer of non-recurring license payment to the Capital Endowment (Community Foundation for Northern Virginia)

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**Recommendation:** Authorize the transfer of \$5,500,000 of the final \$7,557,420 payment from the non-recurring license fee for Metro Duct Systems Underground Utility License to the Capital Endowment with the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia.

Request that staff return to the Board at or before the July Board meeting with a recommendation for a Board policy for transfers, withdrawals and funding level of the Capital Endowment.

**Strategic Plan Alignment:** Objective 4.3.5: Fund endowment for Capital with non-recurring revenue sources starting in 2023.

Objective 5.3.3: Fund an endowment to support capital projects from non-recurring revenues like telecom and natural resource banking starting in 2023

**Financial Impact:** \$5,500,000

The current Capital Endowment is at \$16,472,630 as of 1/6/2026. With the addition of the proposed \$5,500,000, the Capital Endowment will now be \$21,972,630.

## Discussion:

At the March 17, 2022, Board meeting, the Board unanimously approved the creation and funding of a Capital Endowment with the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. The goal of staff's recommendation was to both create an endowment and identify capital revenues that would fund the endowment, as contemplated in our Strategic Plan.

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The motion approved by the Board stated:

*“We move to create a NOVA Parks Capital Endowment with the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia, to dedicate non-recurring payments from Natural Resource Banking, and non-recurring licensing fees to this Endowment. Further, other non-recurring payments will be brought to the Board for the decision whether to invest them in the Endowment or not.”*

The three main sources of revenue include:

- Non-recurring license fees for underground utilities and other impacts to the W&OD Trail and other park facilities
- Revenues from Natural Resource Banking
- License fees for telecom and other sources that would generate significant capital revenues

As a result of the Board’s vote, these Capital revenues are received and transferred to the Capital Endowment to create a perpetual legacy of funding for Capital projects. The long-term vision is that withdrawals from the endowment will be limited to ensure the body of the endowment remains intact in perpetuity. When the Capital Endowment was created in 2022, the vision was to assemble an endowment of \$25 million to allow for 4% annual withdrawals, \$1M annually.

In January of 2024, NOVA Parks entered into a long-term license agreement with Metroduct Systems LLC to provide for the installation of telecommunications equipment along the W&OD Trail. This agreement called for payments to NOVA Parks in installments during the installation of the equipment.

At the January 18, 2024 Board meeting, the Board approved transfer of the initial payment from the license agreement to the Capital Endowment. Last month’s payment represents the final installment payment under the agreement.

Given that there are several potential land acquisition initiatives under consideration that may require significant capital funding, staff has proposed transferring \$5,500,000 of the final payment to the Capital Endowment at this time.

At or before the July Board meeting, staff will return to the Board with:

- A recommendation for disposition of the remaining \$2,057,420 of the license fee
- A Board policy recommendation for transfers, withdrawals and appropriate funding level of the Capital Endowment.

# MEMO



**To:** NOVA Parks Board of Directors  
**Through:** Justin M. Wilson, Executive Director  
**From:** Blythe Russian, Director of Parks Operation  
**Date:** January 7, 2026  
**Re:** Roving Park Naturalist Program

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**Recommendation:** That the Board accept the update on the Roving Park Naturalist Program

**Strategic Plan Alignment:** Goal 1.8 Provide outreach and educational opportunities related to natural resource conservation.

Goal 2.4 Enhance quality of life through beneficial and successful programs, partnerships, and events to meet the needs of our diverse community.

**Financial Impact:** \$105,000 is included in the Enterprise Administration budget to cover the two existing positions.

+/- \$5,000 of revenue from paid Roving Park Naturalist programs is assigned to the parks where the program is hosted.

## Discussion:

NOVA Parks is proud to have two Roving Park Naturalists that have offered over 100 programs in at least 13 Regional Parks during the current fiscal year, affirming our commitment to educate our park visitors on the natural resources that exist throughout our system. These programs have served over 5,000 visitors during the current fiscal year through summer camps, paddle tours, field trips, hikes, scout badge programs, specialty programs, and more!

Matt Felperin has been a full-time employee with NOVA Parks since 2019 and is based out of Potomac Overlook Regional Park. Whitney Gilliland joined NOVA Parks as a part-time employee in 2023 and now works year-round on a part-time schedule and is based out of Winkler Botanical Preserve. Matt Felperin will make a presentation at the January Board Meeting about the Roving Park Naturalist Program.

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Roving Park Naturalist programming is broken down into a few categories:

**Public:** Programs that the public can register for (free or fee-based), park public programs and “Critter Corner,” an interaction with guests at waterparks, non-traditional interpretation parks, light shows and campgrounds.

**Scout:** Programming for Scouts of America and Girl Scouts that satisfy a variety of badge requirements. These are fee-based programs.

**Summer Camps:** Programs offered exclusively at Meadowlark, Potomac Overlook and Winkler for NOVA Parks Day Camps.

**Field Trips:** Programs for NOVA Parks Outdoor Kids Title 1 Grant recipient field trips and scheduled field trips by our 6 jurisdictions, primarily at Meadowlark, Potomac Overlook, and Winkler.

**Private:** Programs provided on request by groups that are facilitated within our parks.

Programs may include animal encounters, kayak tours, hikes, astronomy, and Standards of Learning based programming and field trips. Nearly all of our naturalist programs are offered at NOVA Parks facilities.

With the two naturalists we have currently funded in our Budget, we are able to divide responsibility to serve more visitors:

<b><i>Full Time: Matt</i></b>	<b><i>Part Time: Whitney</i></b>
Public and Private nature program themes: Photography, Kayaking, Birding, Seasonal Events	Public family programs at Winkler and Potomac Overlook
Private programs for park friends groups (W&OD, FOBB), and other community organizations such as ARMN, Northern Virginia Bird Alliance and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Arlington and Alexandria	Customized Girl Scout badge programs to take place at parks outside of Potomac Overlook and Winkler Botanical Preserve: possible topics- Animal Observer, EcoLearner, Math in Nature, Bugs, Eco Friend, Hiker, Animal Habitat, Flowers, Gardener
Camp Grow’s animal talks	Camp Winkler once a week animal talks Camp Overlook animal talks (as needed)
Critter Corner Table at light shows, waterparks, campgrounds, and Holiday Scavenger Hunts (Easter, Halloween, Christmas)	
Christmas Bird Counts	Temple Hall Fall Fest Critter Corner
Special requests for informational tours for the board, ribbon cuttings, or interpretive sign information	Winkler Botanical Preserve school field trips
School Field Trips	

One of the most meaningful outcomes of the Roving Naturalist program is the opportunity to provide encounters with animals and nature to guests that may not otherwise have exposure. Critter Corner tables at waterparks, campgrounds, and light shows provide a unique experience to a wide number of visitors. Our public and private programming provides a more in-depth and specialized experience to interact with nature within our Regional Parks.

NOVA Parks has continued to grow the Roving Park Naturalist Program from one full-time employee to its current status of one full-time and one year-round part-time Naturalist. As the opportunity and demand continue to grow, NOVA Parks hopes to expand the program to include additional seasonal staff that can assist with established programs and consider new programs and audiences with the goal of expanding interpretation in all NOVA Parks. This can be accomplished through a combination of existing part-time park staff, intern opportunities, and training full-time staff to expand their skillset.





**Great Employees Delivering  
Memorable Experiences!**

Monthly Report | January 2026





## ABOUT NOVA PARKS

In the late 1950's, the Northern Virginia Planning District Commission and a group of residents from several local jurisdictions came together to protect Northern Virginia's rich heritage of woods, meadows, lakes and streams from the threat of suburban sprawl. These residents, working with their local governments—Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church—organized under the Virginia Park Authorities Act in 1959 as the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA). They came together to plan, acquire develop and operate a system of regional parks for all Northern Virginians to enjoy.

Today, NOVA Parks (as the organization came to be known in 2014) represents three counties and three cities—Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, the City of Alexandria, the City of Falls Church and the City of Fairfax. NOVA Parks staff, volunteer board members appointed from each jurisdiction and many friends of the regional parks working together have preserved over 12,500 acres of rolling and wooded Virginia countryside for you and created a priceless legacy for future generations.

### **NOVA Parks' 2023-2027 Strategic Plan**

provides goals and objectives that direct the work of the NOVA Parks team. The 5-year plan is organized into 5 Strategic Pillars. Each update in this report now includes the strategic pillar the staff work supports:

**(E) Strategic Pillar 1: Environment**

**(B) Strategic Pillar 2: Belonging**

**(T) Strategic Pillar 3: Our Team**

**(F) Strategic Pillar 4: Building the Future**

**(R) Strategic Pillar 5: Revenue & Efficiency**

# MONTHLY UPDATES FROM:

Justin Wilson, Executive Director  
Kelly Gilfillen, Marketing and Communications Director  
Blythe Russian, Operations Director  
Dustin Betthausen, Park Operations Superintendent  
Kevin Casalenuovo, Park Operations Superintendent  
Dennis Charlton, Food and Beverage Manager

<b>Aldie Mill, Mt. Zion, and Gilbert's Corner</b>	Corwyn Garman, Site Manager
<b>Algonkian</b>	Reid Nebergall, Park Manager
<b>Ball's Bluff</b>	Ben Bilko, Park Manager
<b>Blue Ridge</b>	Ryan Corder, Park Manager
<b>Brambleton</b>	Matthew Murphy, Park Manager
<b>Bull Run</b>	Eric Ferguson, Park Manager
<b>Bull Run Marina</b>	Kate Irwin, Park Manager
<b>Bull Run Shooting Center</b>	Laurelyn Rawson, Park Manager
<b>Cameron Run</b>	Howie Abasto, Park Manager
<b>Carlyle House</b>	Rebecca Super, Historic Site Manager
<b>Cattail Property</b>	Ben Bilko, Park Manager
<b>Fountainhead</b>	Kate Irwin, Park Manager
<b>Meadowlark Botanical Gardens</b>	Jeff Hill, Botanical Gardens Manager
<b>The Atrium at Meadowlark</b>	Wayne Hager, Atrium Facilities Manager
<b>Occoquan</b>	Matthew Taylor, Park Manager
<b>The River View at Occoquan</b>	Hannah Fry, Hospitality & Event Sales Manager
<b>Piscataway</b>	Ben Bilko, Park Manager
<b>Pohick Bay Park</b>	Brad Jackson, Park Manager
<b>Potomac Overlook</b>	Rachel Doody, Park Manager
<b>Red Rock</b>	Ben Bilko, Park Manager
<b>Reservoir Park</b>	Matthew Murphy, Park Manager
<b>Rust Manor</b>	Alexandra Gordon, Facility and Event Sales Manager
<b>Sandy Run</b>	Kate Irwin, Park Manager
<b>Temple Hall</b>	Ben Bilko, Park Manager
<b>Upton Hill</b>	Evan McGurrin, Park Manager
<b>Winkler Botanical Preserve</b>	Rachel Doody, Park Manager
<b>W&amp;OD Trail</b>	Ryan Corder, Park Manager





## An Update from the Executive Director

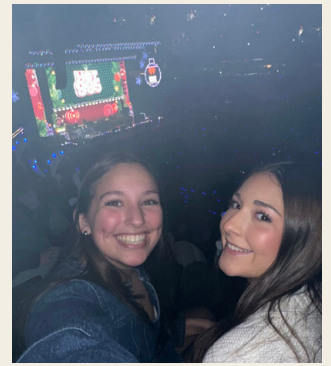
### Justin Wilson, Executive Director

- The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors voted to allocate \$750,000 to support design and engineering of a rehabilitation of the historic Goose Creek Bridge. (F)
- We have now achieved a tentative agreement with Dominion on a new Memorandum of Understanding governing vegetation management along the W&OD Trail. We have briefed elected officials and stakeholders on this new agreement, and we are working to coordinate final signature and public roll-out with Dominion. (F, E)
- We have forged a new partnership with Howard University to support our efforts to document the history at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens of the 1944 challenge to Jim Crow-era segregation policies on interstate transportation. (B)
- New legislation has now been filed for consideration during the 2026 General Assembly session to enable funding from the Commonwealth in support of African-American burial sites on NOVA Parks property. (B)
- I have continued meetings throughout our member jurisdictions with elected/appointed officials and our partner organizations. (B)
- We have held meetings and reviews to conduct diligence on a few potential land acquisition possibilities. (E)



**Kelly Gilfillen,  
Marketing & Communications Director**

- Developed and provided talking points for Mayor Gaskins' remarks at the Dec. 4 Ice & Lights Ribbon Cutting to highlight NOVA Parks' 55-year partnership with Alexandria and highlight NOVA Parks as Alexandria's largest youth employer (F, R)
- Provided transcript of remarks and photos of Ice & Lights Winter Skating Party & Ribbon Cutting to media representatives not in attendance, and received coverage by Alexandria Times (bottom right), ALXNow, and Alexandria Living. (R)
- Coordinated with iHeart Media to donate tickets to their sold-out iHeart Jingle Ball. (R)
- Implemented social media contests for donated concert tickets, a donated gift box with tickets to all 3 light shows, and a drawing for a donated snack pack and car pass to Festival of Lights. Contest posts reached 20,000 accounts and engaged 200 participants each. Each participant tagged 1 to 3 friends to reach new customers. (R, F)
- Light Show SMS/MMS messaging campaign yielded 18,541 link clicks to purchase tickets for other light shows and 65,113 active SMS subscribers for future light show communications. (R, F)
- Attended coordination meeting in Vienna about the proposed Vegetative Management MOU with Dominion and to begin discussing the joint announcement of the MOU to the public. (E, F)
- Coordinated the development of a performance metric scorecard with the Budget and Operations teams. (R, F)
- Attended the NOVA Parks Holiday Party at The River View at Occoquan. (T)
- Provided a Marketing Tools overview training and an administrator-level training for the Operations Leadership Team. (T)
- Met with the Operations Leadership Team to begin planning for 2025 Summer Camps marketing and communications. (R)



**Photo of the Week**



PHOTO/NOVA PARKS

**From left to right:** NOVA Parks Executive Director and former Alexandria mayor Justin Wilson, current Mayor Alyia Gaskins, City Councilor R. Kirk McPike and NOVA Parks Board Member Scott Price commemorated the 55-year partnership between NOVA Parks and Alexandria with an ice skating event on Dec. 4.





## Blythe Russian, Operations Director

- Purchased and received a new EV Chevy Equinox bringing our EV fleet to three. (E)
- Continue to work with contractors to bring four additional EV charging stations online. Once connected, the new stations at Algonkian and Meadowlark will be available for public use. (E)
- Conducted interviews for Assistant Park Manager and Point of Sale Systems Specialist. (T)
- Worked with Paul McCray to implement new interpretive displays throughout NOVA Parks. (E)
- Implemented increased rates for Attendant positions to stay \$1.00 ahead of minimum wage changes that went into effect January 1. (T)
- Worked with park staff to implement Fairfax County meal tax effective January 1. (R)



## Dustin Betthausen, Park Operations Superintendent

- Met with managers at Upton Hill Regional Park to review progress on invasive plant species removal efforts and discuss the plan moving forward. (E)
- Participated in the setup and execution of the Ice & Lights ribbon cutting, which brought together the Mayor of the City of Alexandria, City Council Members, community leaders, and youth participants from Alexandria Out of School Time. (B)
- Met with a representative from the City of Alexandria's Summer Youth Employment Program to confirm Cameron Run Regional Park's participation in 2026, providing work and training opportunities for program participants. (F)
- Received administrator-level training from the Marketing team on the print and design portals, including roles, responsibilities, submission approval, and workflow processes. (T)
- Conducted interviews for the Park Manager position serving Brambleton Golf Course and Reservoir Park. (T)
- Met with rowing operations managers to review team MOUs and align operational and management practices to ensure consistency across all three facilities. (F)
- Met with managers at Winkler Botanical Preserve to develop a plan to extend operating hours on select days to accommodate evening visitation, including permitted golden-hour photography. (F)
- Met with management and Great Blue Heron Catering to discuss opportunities for social and corporate events and related catering services. (F)
- Met with managers from Pohick Bay Golf Course and Brickmakers Café to coordinate implementation of the new Fairfax County Meal Tax, effective January 1. (R)
- Worked closely with the Camps and Programs Committee and Marketing to develop the 2026 Summer Camp Communication Plan. (R)

## Kevin Casalenuovo, Park Operations Superintendent

- Met with Dominion Energy regarding planting locations, a proposed Memorandum of Understanding, and a new transmission tower along the W&OD Trail near Pacific Boulevard in Sterling. (E, F)
- Met with the Food and Beverage team to review operational performance and identify opportunities for service and efficiency improvements. (R)
- Participated in the interview and selection process for Bull Run Regional Park's Crew Leader position. (T)
- Supported the implementation of the meals tax across multiple park locations to ensure compliance and consistency. (R)
- Finalized the contract with Troon Golf, the agency's external golf marketing partner, to strengthen marketing efforts and revenue generation. (R)
- Participated in the selection of the new Park Manager for Reservoir Park. (T)
- Participated in planning discussions for a new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system at Mount Zion Church to support the long-term preservation of the facility. (F)
- Attended a recruitment event for seasonal waterpark staff held in conjunction with the Festival of Lights carnival, supporting early engagement and hiring efforts. (B, T)

## Dennis Charlton, Food and Beverage Manager

- Delivered catering services for 19 private events. (R)
- Featured Nodal Exchange holiday party with customized small plate stations showcasing 10 globally inspired dishes. (B, R)
- Hosted NOVA Parks holiday party at The River View. (T)
- Developing 2026 wedding catering menus to increase average spend per event. (R)
- Collaborated with event site chefs on plate presentation and garnishes for the 2026 wedding menu to elevate perceived value. (R)
- Expanding allergen and dietary restriction menu offerings to improve client satisfaction. (B)

## Aldie Mill, Mt. Zion and Gilbert's Corner – Corwyn Garman, Site Manager

- Staff continue drafting text and sourcing images for new interpretive signage on the grounds and inside the mill. (B)
- Aldie Mill and Mt. Zion hosted tours with local historian Rich Gilesie on December 9 for 6 middle school students from the Loudoun School for Advanced Studies. (B)
- Attended a meeting with Loring Engineers on December 12 regarding new HVAC system for the church at Mt. Zion Historic Park. (F)
- Aldie Mill hosted students, teachers, and parents for the annual Village Caroling program on December 19 with 120 visitors in attendance. (B)



## Algonkian – Reid Nebergall, Park Manager

- The golf team assembled to recover golf balls from the fringe of the driving range, recovering more than 1,000 balls to put back into use. (R)
- Repairs to the damaged green on Hole #6 are underway. This will remain on a temporary green through the winter to promote healthy growth. (F)
- Staff met with a representative from Spark Golf to explore implementation of additional league opportunities (B)
- The Woodlands staff signed six new event contracts in December. (R)
- A variety of updates to The Woodlands are underway including new fencing, new patio hardscaping, patio lighting, custom window treatments, and more. (F)
- Fall crew team programs wrapped up for the season, with over 60 high school participants. (B)

## Ball's Bluff – Ben Bilko, Park Manager

- A workday has been held by the Friends of Ball's Bluff to work on trails and roadway maintenance. (B)
- A new front porch project has been completed on the Jackson House. (F)

**Interesting interpretive site**

[Google Review](#) ★★★★★

December 2025 by F.Bradbury V

## Blue Ridge – Ryan Corder, Park Manager

- Staff completed end-of-season maintenance on the trails and grounds. (F)

## Brambleton – Matthew Murphy, Park Manager

- We began scheduling our Golf Leagues for the 2026 season. We had 10 Leagues playing weekly in 2025. (R)
- Met with various industry vendors to plan our merchandise offering for 2026. (R)
- Met with our Capital team and contractors to prepare for upcoming renovations at Brambleton. (F)
- Larry Messner continues to dedicate his time at Brambleton Golf Course. He is targeting invasive species, improving habitats, and restoring areas with native plantings. (E)



**Great course  
for winter golf**

[Google Review](#)

★★★★★

January 2026  
by R. Cruz



## Bull Run – Eric Ferguson, Park Manager

- Atlantis Waterpark baby pool will be resurfaced this winter. (T)
- Waterpark staff received a Silver Award for their three summer audits. (T)
- Camp Store staff put together over 4,000 s'mores kits for Festival of Lights. (R)
- James Haskell joined the maintenance team as the new Crew Leader. (T)
- Hosted the waterpark holiday party and recruitment event at Festival of Lights. Seasonal summer staff and their friends attended the Village for games and food and a thank you for a fantastic summer. Over 150 staff and their referrals attended. (T)
- Increased online ticketing in order to maximize visitation at Festival of Lights. This year, over 44,000 cars and 18,000 marshmallows were consumed in December! (R)



## Bull Run Marina – Kate Irwin, Park Manager

- Staff conducted a facility audit to identify maintenance priorities. (F)
- Park Manager met with South Lakes Crew Boosters in preparation for their first season using the facility. (R)

## Bull Run Shooting Center – Laurelyn Rawson, Park Manager

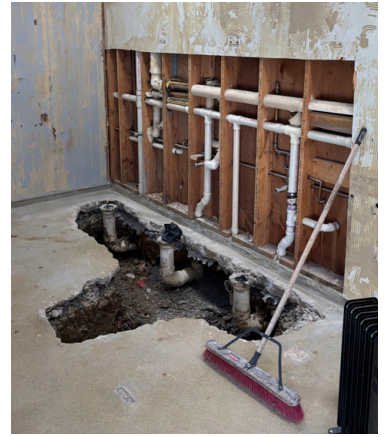
- Park Manager worked with our Capital team in getting the archery building roof replaced. (F)
- Finalized the 2026 tournament schedule with the state National Sporting Clays Association board. (R)
- Site Supervisor, Katelyn Law, focused on improving the park's Google rating by seeking more reviews. The overall review rating increased to 4.5 with some great feedback on Learn to Shoot instructors. (B)
- Archery Concessionaire hosted the annual Frostbite JOAD Tournament (Junior Olympic Archery Development) in December. Several club JOAD records were broken! (B)
- Spring 2026 bookings for our Corporate Group Events are going strong. (R)





## Cameron Run – Howie Abasto, Park Manager

- Park Manager and Aquatics Manager met with their mentors who provide guidance and support. (T)
- Riptide restroom renovations have begun at the waterpark. (F)
- Met with Light Show vendor to explore future displays. (R)
- Park hosted the last night of the Village on December 30th and look forward to continuing daytime ice skating on weekends and holidays through February. (F)
- Hosted Alexandria City Mayor, Parks and Recreation Department, and local after school programs at Ice & Lights. (F)
- Hosted the Roving Park Naturalist and animals, adding value for light show visitors. (E)
- Worked with local Elementary School and its music and arts program to host a choir event for light show visitors. (F)



## Carlyle House – Rebecca Super, Park Manager

- We had lovely weather for the annual Scottish Walk Open House on December 6th. There were 731 people on the grounds and 363 toured the first floor of the house. (B)
- The first concert in the Bank of Alexandria Building Lobby was a sold-out affair with 40 visitors. Everyone enjoyed an afternoon of 18th century music and sipped on spiced apple shrub. (B)
- A group tour from the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers was led by a former Navy docent. (B)
- We have three new docents in the final stages of their volunteer training. We hope to see them on the schedule in the new year. (T)
- Staff completed the easement inspection of the architectural elements of the Bank of Alexandria Building. (F)



## Cattail Property – Ben Bilko, Park Manager

- Staff continues to monitor house temps to avoid freeze damage, bait stations have been refreshed, and leaves and sticks removed weekly. (F)
- Staff removed the leaves and debris from around Symington cabin and locked everything up for the winter. (F)

## Fountainhead – Kate Irwin, Park Manager

- Hosted the EX2 Backyard Burn trail race with 359 runners. (R)
- Management held a meeting with senior ranger staff to gather feedback from the past season and generate suggestions for the upcoming season. (T)

## Meadowlark Botanical Gardens – Jeff Hill, Botanical Gardens Manager

- Winter Walk of Lights attendance is slightly higher than past years. Guests enjoy the expanded food and beverage options. (R)
- Promotional nights continue to be in high demand. There have been noticeable increases in guest attendance on traditionally slower nights because of offerings such as Kids Buy One Get One Free, and Pup Nights during the light show. (B)
- New wayfinding signage has been installed in the gardens. (F)
- Horticulture staff completed their season and are finalizing designs and orders for next seasons plantings in the gardens. (E)
- Garden Attendance remains steady for the winter. Pup days in the gardens and Just a Walk Programming are seeing good attendance. (B)

### Best winter lights I've ever seen

Really magical experience. Year to year the Meadowlark team adds more amazing lights covering so much ground on an easy paved walking trail, and vertical lighting up into the trees....This year it was extra special to visit Meadowlark's winter lights with my dog who is getting old, and might not be alive for future Christmases. Thank you to the park staff and whoever else spent weeks installing the lights, you gave us a wonderful gift. <3

[Google Review](#) ★★★★★  
December 2025 by E. Gloeckner



## Meadowlark Atrium – Wayne Hager, Atrium Facilities Manager

- In the month of December, The Atrium hosted 13 private events. We had 8 Corporate Holiday Parties, 4 Wedding / Wedding Receptions and 1 Corporate Retirement Reception. (R)
- About half of the holiday parties we hosted purchased Winter Walk of Lights tickets taking advantage of group ticket sales. (R)



## Occoquan – Matthew Taylor, Park Manager

- A solar panel technician performed an inspection of the solar panel system at the Jean R. Packard Center with the goal of diagnosing the current functionality of the system and identifying procedures to ensure the system operates properly. (E)
- To help target invasive species in high-impact areas, we began working with park managers from Upton Hill and Potomac Overlook to develop a partnership with a newly formed volunteer group in Fairfax County called Plant NOVA Natives. Their mission is to conduct invasive plant removal at local parks and assist them with educating the public about the harmful effects of invasive plant species. (E)
- Park maintenance staff continue to remove various invasive plant species throughout park, specifically in bioretention areas. (E)
- In preparation for the FY27 budget development, managers are analyzing profit/loss statements and budget and expense reports to find areas to reduce expenses while identifying unique and creative ways to increase revenue. (R)
- We hosted an end of the year team meeting with Occoquan and River View full-time staff. In this meeting, we enjoyed a look back at the team's successes in 2025, reviewed various policies, and looked ahead to exciting projects coming in 2026. (T)



## The River View at Occoquan – Hannah Fry, Hospitality & Event Sales Manager

- The River View had the honor of hosting the NOVA Parks Annual Holiday Party this December. (T)
- In addition to the holiday party, The River View hosted 3 weddings and an external holiday party this December. (R)
- To encourage more foot traffic, The River View has continued hosting Open Tour days. (R)
- Management is planning for the upcoming Greater Virginia Bridal Expo in February in collaboration with the Events Committee. (R)

### I hope to be back in the future!

My team & I had the pleasure of hosting a corporate event in the River View space and had a wonderful experience. The team's communication, flexibility, service, and attention to detail are outstanding. They prioritize excellence & went above and beyond to ensure all of our needs were met. The venue and surrounding area is absolutely beautiful and I hope to be back in the future!

[Google Review](#) ★★★★★ Nov. 2025 by Reece

## Piscataway – Ben Bilko, Park Manager

- Staff and ROTC volunteers have been working on removing trash from the riverfront now that the undergrowth and poison ivy has died and you can easily see and pick up the trash. (E, B)

## Pohick Bay Golf Course – Jon Mendez, Assistant Park Manager

- Grounds Crew focus has shifted to winter month projects by maintaining natural landscape by cutting down brush and maintaining naturalized areas. (E)
- Grounds Crew has started winterizing the irrigation system. This will help protect the system from any freezing damage during the winter season. (R)
- Pohick Management Team hosted part time staff and volunteer holiday party. (T)



## Pohick Bay Park – Brad Jackson, Park Manager

- Staff have been making enhancements to the camping experience, including the addition of 2 large retaining walls at underutilized campsites. (R)
- Deluxe cabins have seen a number of improvements including furniture upgrades and replacements, exterior patio lighting and contract maintenance work that involved cleaning and re-staining both front and rear decks. (B)
- Campground Committee has been working from the Communications Plan with Aspira on monthly eblasts to past campers with targeted promotions on low usage cabin and campground times. (R)
- Recently completed new concrete work around our Camp store to expand the patio for community space and camper Wi-Fi usage. (F)
- The new walk-in cooler for Pirate's Cove was delivered and installed expanding food storage space as we move forward supporting the growing demand at our pool. (R)
- Participated in Mentor Meeting #2 supporting the program and providing feedback to the Mentee. (T)
- NOVA Disc Golf conducted their Monthly event at the park with over 75 participants. (B)
- Attended meetings with two vendors on future opportunities to consider bringing Wi-Fi into the campgrounds for all campers. (F)
- Met with contractors for upcoming work to renovate and restore Shelters 1 & 2. (R)
- All full-time and approximately 25 part-time staff members attended the annual Aquatics party at the Festival of Lights Carnival. (T)

## Potomac Overlook – Rachel Doody, Park Manager

- The annual Search for Santa's Critters event kicked off at the beginning of December with extra dates added over past years to allow for more participants. Other public programs offered in December included Art in the Park: Holiday Ornaments and Learn to Letterbox: Holiday Edition. The last two Girls Scout programs and school field trips for the year were hosted this month. (B)
- Weekends continue to be popular for Nature Center Birthday Parties and Park Steward led invasive plant removal events. (E)
- During December, the Roving Naturalists hosted Critter Corners table programs at Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights, Cameron Run's Ice and Lights, and Potomac Overlook's Search for Santa's Critters event. (E)
- Other public programs offered by the Roving Naturalists in November included Meteor Shower watch party at Gilbert's Corner and the annual Christmas Bird Count at Algonkian, Potomac Overlook, and Winkler Botanical Preserve. (E)





## Red Rock – Ben Bilko, Park Manager

- Park has been very busy with hikers. (F)

## Reservoir Park – Matthew Murphy, Park Manager

- Completed rowing storage allocation review, re-issued permits for the first half of 2026, and began collecting payments for first quarter billing. (B)
- Introduced Portrait Photography permitting process similar to other parks. (R)
- Gathered and created materials to finalize a Volunteer Program, which will kick-off in April. Park staff worked to review inquiries, organize applicants, and follow up with program details. (B)
- Conducted meeting with Marina Committee to establish roles and timelines for a consistent approach to Group Rentals, spring Annual Boat Launch Pass promotions, and new seasonal campaigns for 2026. (R)
- Park Specialist and Site Supervisor supported Light Show management operations at Bull Run. (R)



**Well maintained.** Beautiful trails around the lake.

[Google Review](#) ★★★★★

December 2025 by H. Bellomy

## Rust Manor – Alexandra Gordon, Facility and Event Sales Manager

- Continue to work on the first-floor renovations. The new ADA bathrooms substantially improve ADA accessibility. (B)
- Facility and Event Sales Manager, Alexandra, participated in the mentor program with her mentee from The River View, Elizabeth. Their first meeting was at a coffee shop to discuss our 5-year plans with the company! (T)
- The Rust Team will conduct Event Temple training at The River View later this month to ensure that all 4 venue sites are running smoothly and implanting our Banquet Event Order for all future events. (R)

## Sandy Run – Kate Irwin, Park Manager

- During the off-season, staff worked on coordinating with clubs, schools, and individual renters to remove boats from the boathouses in preparation for rack replacement. (F)

## Temple Hall – Ben Bilko, Park Manager

- One calf was born. It is our first calf born to a belted Galloway bull and black angus cow. Picture attached. (B)
- Staff is working on rental house maintenance tasks in several houses. (F)
- Contractor has begun restoring the front porch roof and replacing the roof on the smoke house. (F)
- Park Specialist worked at Light Show in December. (T)



## Upton Hill – Evan McGurrin, Park Manager

- Trail improvement work continued throughout December, including removal of approximately 60 cubic yards of debris over a two-week period and maintenance improvements along the Yellow Trail and the Trailhead to Orange Connector Trail at the North Livingston border. (E)
- Engaged in coordination and discussion of new strategies with other Park Managers regarding the FY27 approach to invasive plant management. (E)
- A deer management site walk was conducted on December 4 with representatives from Arlington County, including Police, the deer sharpshooting contractor, and Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation staff. (E)
- Bathhouse renovations progressed with coordination between IT, Planning, and Telelink to confirm power and data requirements are met for the new Ocean Dunes lobby desk while minimizing additional construction work. (F)



## Winkler Botanical Preserve – Rachel Doody, Park Manager

- Staff met to begin plans for the direction of the park for FY27 and beyond including changes to park hours, lodge rentals, and staffing. (F)
- Public and private programs offered in December included Scouting America Genealogy Merit Badge, Songbirds and Sewing, free book hike to “What Cheer, What Cheer” a kid’s birding book, and the annual Christmas Bird Count. (B)
- Volunteer projects included Eagle Project of constructing a new Team Building activity to be used for future Mentor program meetings and summer camp activities. (T)

## W&OD Trail – Ryan Corder, Park Manager

- Met with NOVA Parks leadership and Dominion Energy to discuss replanting plan for Vienna corridor. (E)
- Met with town of Purcellville leadership to discuss potential portable restroom partnership at the end of the W&OD Trail. (B)
- Worked with Dominion Energy to target invasive species removal in the Vienna area. (E)
- Continue working with The Friends of the W&OD to plan upcoming Trail Patrol banquet. (B)
- Attended meeting with Big T properties to listen to a proposal to build an amenity adjacent to the trail in Leesburg. (F)



