

# CONNECTION

## Bridging Gap From Reston to Lake Fairfax

**Public private partnership yields pedestrian bridge, restored streams and trails at Lake Fairfax.**

**By Alex McVeigh**

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Members of the Fairfax County Park Authority and the Reston Association celebrated a successful public-private partnership along with cycling enthusiasts at Lake Fairfax June 4. Their cooperation over the past year resulted in restoration of 232 feet of stream banks and the addition of a pedestrian bridge connecting Reston trails to trails in Lake Fairfax Park.

"One of the key themes of this project was connectivity, and this little project here is a prime example of how that works," said Kirk Holley, manager of special projects for the Fairfax County Park Authority. "Forty feet of bridge and maybe 100 feet of gravel trail not only provides the loop around the entire lake, but it also goes back into the extensive trail network the Reston Association has."

Before the bridge was constructed, Colvin Run separated the two properties, meaning one would have to get wet to cross. Larry Butler, director of Parks and Recreation for the Reston Association, said the project will greatly benefit Reston residents.

"This bridge provides access for Reston residents to get to the park and circumnavigate the lake," Butler said. "Now Reston residents can come over here and take advantage of the park without having to wade or put waders on and folks from the parks to have other routes to take."

Bill Bouie, chairman of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board called the project the latest in a series of projects designed to improve Lake Fairfax.

"This is a prime example of public-private partnership," said Bill Bouie, chairman of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board. "It's been a dramatic transformation over the last few years of Lake Fairfax. It is one of the most beautiful parks in the system."

The 40 by six-foot bridge was constructed by Northern Virginia Stream Restoration as part of their restoration of Colvin Run. The \$350,000 project was completed at no cost to the taxpayers, since NVSR agreed to cover the cost of the in exchange for the right to sell mitigation credits. The credits can be purchased by other developers to mitigate the effects of construction, ensuring there is no net loss of natural space.

"Just about anyway you look at it, it's a great deal," Bouie said.

Frank Raiti, the Virginia advocacy representative for the Mid-Atlantic Road Enthusiasts, a cycling organization, said the project was greatly beneficial for bikers in the area.

"The opportunity to have this bridge dropped in place for us has really opened up the world for us and it's a wonderful thing," he said.

The 232 feet of stream restoration is aimed to help stem the tide of sediment flowing into Lake Fairfax, as well as keep the streams overflowing and carving out deep banks.

Another phase of the project included using volunteer labor to improve sections of degraded trails.

"The objective was to make these trails sustainable, to make them sustain the amount of traffic and use from Reston," Raiti said. "It's a very active, very healthy community and you could sit here today and watch the people go by as evidence of that."





*Photo by Alex McVeigh/The Connection*

**Members of the Fairfax County Park Authority and the Reston Association join with biking enthusiasts June 4 at Lake Fairfax to cut the ribbon on a new pedestrian bridge.**



*Photo by Alex McVeigh/The Connection*

**Reston Association Board Director Ken Kneeven (Lake Anne/Tall Oaks) walks down a section of restored trail along Colvin Run near Lake Fairfax Saturday morning.**