



remnants of the **rich natural heritage rapidly disappearing from this urbanizing landscape**. Equally important, the parks provide opportunities for an ever increasing number of local, national, and international visitors to learn about the natural world, the threats posed by surrounding urbanization, and the strategies being used to manage these precarious landscapes.

As our understanding and appreciation of park resources increases so does our recognition of their vulnerability to the encroaching **stresses** of air and water **pollution**; land and stream **disturbance**; **invasive** exotic plants, animals, and pathogens; and overabundant populations of native species.

The Center for Urban Ecology (CUE) addresses these challenges through an interdisciplinary team that provides scientific guidance, technical assistance, and education to park resource managers. CUE has **considerable expertise and experience**, and we encourage and promote **collaboration** with federal, academic, and other professionals to provide **comprehensive support** to park managers. The Center works closely with park resource managers to help them better understand their unique and treasured resources and to discover creative and effective ways to sustain them in the face of urbanization.

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National Capital Region
Natural Resources and Science
Center for Urban Ecology

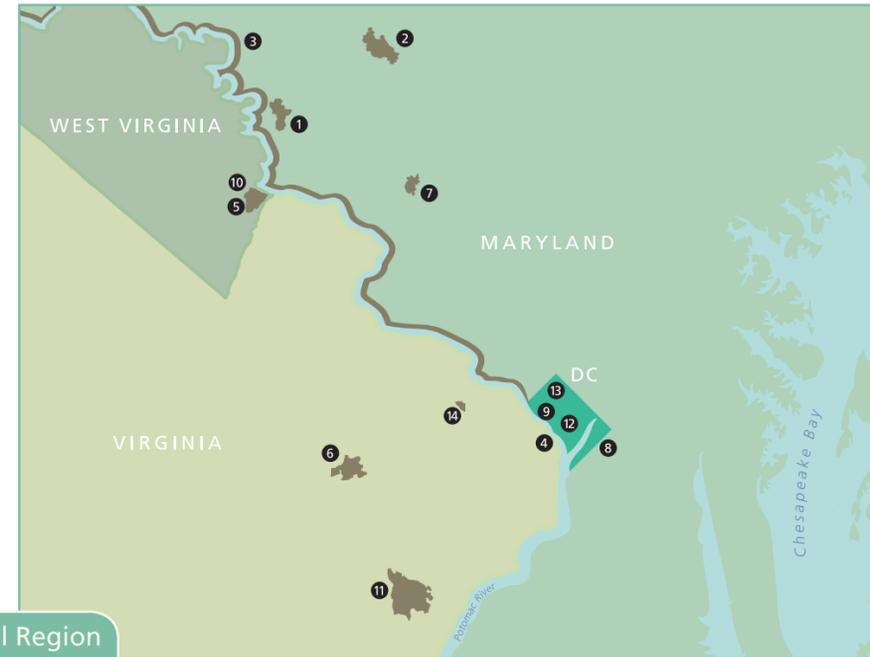
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior



Washington Monument, Washington DC
National Mall and Memorial Parks



Piscataway Park, MD
National Capital Parks - East



Parks in the National Capital Region
and their associated sites
protect significant resources



The Potomac Gorge, DC, MD, VA
C&O Canal National Historical Park and George Washington Memorial Parkway

1. Antietam National Battlefield, MD
www.nps.gov/anti
2. Catocin Mountain Park, MD
www.nps.gov/cato
3. C&O Canal National Historical Park, MD, DC
www.nps.gov/choh
4. George Washington Memorial Parkway, DC, VA
www.nps.gov/gwmp
5. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, WV, MD, VA
www.nps.gov/hafe
6. Manassas National Battlefield Park, VA
www.nps.gov/mana
7. Monocacy National Battlefield, MD
www.nps.gov/mono
8. National Capital Parks - East, DC, MD
www.nps.gov/nace
9. National Mall and Memorial Parks, DC
www.nps.gov/nama
10. Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
www.nps.gov/pohe
11. Prince William Forest Park, VA
www.nps.gov/prwi
12. President's Park, DC
www.nps.gov/whho
13. Rock Creek Park, DC
www.nps.gov/rocr
14. Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, VA
www.nps.gov/wotr





National Parks facing URBAN challenges

From left to right:

White-tailed deer overgrazing reduces the amount of seedlings, inhibiting natural forest succession.

Parks mitigate impacts of erosion caused by storm water runoff.

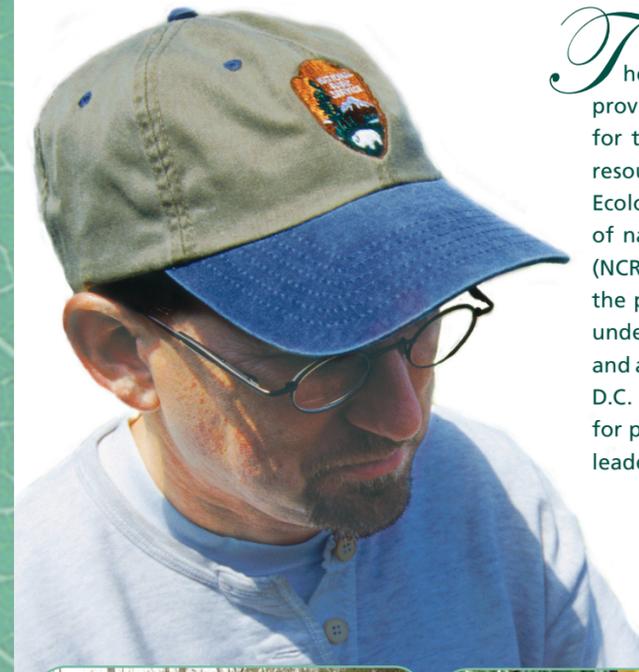
The spread of exotic invasive plants threatens native plants and animals.

Grassland restorations enhance wildlife habitat while preserving historical landscapes.

On the cover: Development is increasing adjacent to Prince William Forest Park, VA.

The National Park Service's National Capital Region **preserves, protects, and restores** significant and often unique natural resources within the National Parks of Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The Region's fourteen parks encompass numerous sites ranging in size from less than one to over six thousand hectares. These parks **provide a diversity of experiences and landscapes**, from the monuments and grounds of the National Mall to the waterfalls and cliffs of the Potomac River Gorge. The Region spans **four ecoregions** and encompasses approximately 130 plant communities preserving valuable but dwindling habitats and their animal and plant species, some of which are found only here. These diverse resources, whether they are protected in natural or historical parks, provide important refuges for conserving

Our Mission



The Center for Urban Ecology is an interdisciplinary team that provides scientific guidance, technical assistance and education for the preservation, conservation and enhancement of park resources within urbanizing landscapes. The Center for Urban Ecology is committed to improving and conserving the quality of natural resources throughout the National Capital Region (NCR). Working with resource managers, researchers, and the public, we strive to discover and incorporate new ways to understand, preserve, and enhance natural communities within and around the National Parks in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. By continuing to promote the best available science for park management decisions, we aspire to be recognized as leaders in the important field of urban ecosystem stewardship.

From left to right: Sampling for water quality analysis. Setting plots for long-term monitoring of forest condition. Controlling the spread of exotic plants in a native wetland.



Air
Monitors air quality to evaluate pollution impacts on park resources, human health, and scenic views.
202.342.1443 Ext 214



Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit
Develops partnerships with academic and other institutions to address resource issues.
301.698.7108



Ecology
Provides guidance to parks on ecosystem-based resource management.
202.342.1443 Ext 227



Exotic Plant Management
Surveys and implements treatments for invasive non-native populations.
202.342.1443 Ext 217



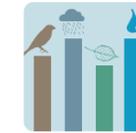
Geology and Soils
Identifies and describes significant geological and soil features for park and regional planning.
202.342.1443 Ext 212



Horticultural Landscapes
Provides guidance on the management of sustainable horticultural landscapes.
202.342.1443 Ext 208



Integrated Pest Management
Solves pest problems using effective low risk methods to protect visitors, resources, and the environment.
202.342.1443 Ext 218



Inventory & Monitoring
Documents species present in parks and conducts long-term monitoring for selected natural resource indicators' trends (vital signs).
202.342.1443 Ext 229



Threatened and Endangered Species
Assists and facilitates projects for federally endangered species research and recovery.
202.342.1443 Ext 209



Urban Ecology Research Learning Alliance
Facilitates scientific research and science education in the parks and communicates research findings.
202.342.1443 Ext 220



Vegetation
Provides technical support to parks for the identification and preservation of plant resources and coordinates vegetation mapping for the region.
202.342.1443 Ext. 209



Water
Provides technical assistance for management and protection of aquatic systems.
202.342.1443 Ext 228



Wildlife
Provides technical assistance for wildlife management.
202.342.1443 Ext 226

Our Programs