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National Park Service News Release

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Public Comment Invited on Restoring Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary after Oil Spill

Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan available for review

ARLINGTON, Va. — The National Park Service (NPS) is inviting public comment on four alternatives to restore affected areas of Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary, along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and to compensate for damages after a mineral oil spill.

The Natural Resource Trustees— Department of the Interior acting through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NPS, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Virginia—selected a preferred alternative that would enhance wetland habitat in the Sanctuary. The restoration would include planting native plants, which benefit wildlife and improve the water quality of the Potomac River, and adding educational signs to teach visitors about the habitat and species of birds that use Roaches Run Wildlife Sanctuary.

To comment:

1. Review the documents, including the settlement agreement and submit comments electronically at the National Park Service's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=75342>
2. Mail or hand deliver comments to: Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters, Attn: Dominion DARP, [700 George Washington Memorial Parkway, McLean, VA 22101](https://www.nps.gov/700GeorgeWashingtonMemorialParkwayMcLeanVA22101).
3. Deadline is **March 9, 2018**.

A copy of the proposed Settlement Agreement is available by mail from: Assistant Solicitor, Environmental Restoration Branch, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, D.C., 20240.

Background

On January 24, 2016, a transformer ruptured at the Dominion Energy Virginia Crystal City Substation and discharged approximately 13,500 gallons of mineral oil dielectric fluid. Although approximately 11,120 gallons of oil were recovered from spill containment facilities, which prevented the oil from leaving the Crystal City Substation property, and approximately 2,000 more gallons were recovered during response to the spill, an undetermined quantity of oil was observed in Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary, and an oil sheen was observed in or along the Potomac River. Birds of different species, including great blue heron, lesser scaup, Canada goose and mallard were oiled, some of which were cleaned and released. In addition, Gravelly Point Parking Area along George Washington Memorial Parkway was partially closed for response operations for a 16-day period, preventing visitors from accessing portions of the parking area and nearby recreational opportunities.

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