

# Fairfax County Park Authority

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LOB #332:

## **FORESTRY**

### **Purpose**

The purpose this LOB is to protect and preserve Fairfax County's tree canopy located on 23,346 acres of Park Authority property.

### **Description**

The Park Authority staff and contractors provide tree maintenance work within the 23,346 acres of parkland, of which 70 percent is in a natural state, and are on call 24/7. This LOB has been in place for over 35 years. Forestry work consists of general tree maintenance and includes pruning, removals, and inspections for tree health within the parks as well as responding to requests from residents and park staff for the inspection and removal of hazardous or fallen trees within the parks and those that may pose a threat to private properties. Certified Arborists monitor the ongoing health and removal of trees on Park Property, schedule work accordingly and provide a monthly tree report showing a count of removals and pruning as suggested by the Tree Commission. This LOB monitors tree canopy health annually.

### **Benefits**

This LOB provides monitoring and maintenance for the health of the Park Authority's green infrastructure that contributes to a natural habitat for wildlife, natural stormwater management controls, reduction in air and water pollution, increases economic value to adjoining property and provides a calming presence for park users. Providing a healthy green infrastructure through quality maintenance practices is beneficial to the climate as well as the overall wellness for park patrons. Routine inspections and maintenance of trees performed by certified arborists provides a safe environment from dead/dying, diseased, and potentially hazardous trees from falling onto park facilities, roadways/trails, neighboring private properties, and people. The County Vision Elements that are related to Forestry are: Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities, Building Livable Spaces, Practicing Environmental Stewardship and Exercising Corporate Stewardship.

### **Mandates**

This LOB is responsible for working with and following the guidance of the International Society of Arboriculture Standards. Park Authority Forestry works in concert with Fairfax County Public Works and Environmental Services Urban Forestry Division and the Tree Commission.

**International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)** - Park Authority arborists are ISA Certified.

ISA Certified Arborist® Code of Ethics

<http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/codeOfEthics/index.aspx>

[http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert\\_Ethics\\_CACodeofEthics.pdf](http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert_Ethics_CACodeofEthics.pdf)

[http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert\\_Ethics\\_CACaseProcedures.pdf](http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert_Ethics_CACaseProcedures.pdf)

[http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert\\_ethics\\_TrademarkPolicy0016.pdf](http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert_ethics_TrademarkPolicy0016.pdf)

**Fairfax County Urban Forest Management**

<http://www.fairfaxCounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/ufmdmain.htm>

**Fairfax County Tree Commission**

<http://www.fairfaxCounty.gov/dpwes/trees/treecommission/>

# Fairfax County Park Authority

## Fairfax County Tree Commission – Tree Action Plan

<http://www.fairfaxCounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/treeactionplan.pdf>

### Trends and Challenges

The Park Authority has seen an increase in urbanization of the County; citizen complaints; park acreage; development of parkland; limited staff and resources, along with increased contracted costs to remove dying/dead trees, diseased trees, and trees leaning over property lines. These all contribute to the daily challenge in responding to citizen requests and park needs. On average, the Park Authority responds to 789 tree-related requests per fiscal year. Over the last five fiscal years, responses to citizen tree-related issues have averaged 466 or 59 percent of all tree requests per fiscal year. Due to the limited staff and resources, and challenges recruiting and retaining staff, more tree work is being contracted causing delays in responses to citizen requests and safety concerns as well as increases in contracted costs.

The majority of Park Authority land is comprised of a canopy that is 80 to 100 years old. As the Park Authority acquires more undeveloped land, develops that land, and as the green infrastructure ages, the Forestry Division is seeing an increase in fallen trees, dead trees, and leaning trees. Forestry costs have risen from an annual budget of \$63,500 to an average of \$200,000 per year on contracted work. It no longer has staff to support in-house tree climbing work or pro-active tree inspections. All Forestry work is now reactive work. The industry standard response time for a Priority 1 situation, (*Any Tree Dead or Alive, which has defects that will cause imminent danger to life, Park infrastructure or private property; Inspections of Trees & Limbs that may fall; Dead texture of wood soft, rotted, uprooting, storm damage, hanging limbs, cracks, lightning strikes, cavity's, deadwood*), is 20 business days. The Forestry LOB is currently resolving Priority 1 situations in 40 days. This LOB is funded by both General Fund and General Construction and Contributions Fund. The contracted tree work is budgeted in the General Construction and Contributions Fund. The Forestry LOB and the Park and Trail Maintenance LOB share the same funding source, therefore, as the Forestry LOB consumes a greater proportion, the Park and Trail Maintenance LOB is adversely impacted.

### Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #332: Forestry</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$435,972	\$422,766	\$520,372
Operating Expenses	142,046	159,912	132,717
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$578,018</b>	<b>\$582,678</b>	<b>\$653,089</b>
General Fund Expenditures	\$578,018	\$582,678	\$653,089
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>10 / 10</b>	<b>10 / 10</b>	<b>10 / 10</b>

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## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Days necessary for residents/staff work requests to be inspected from time of notification	20 Business Days	15 Business Days	13 Business Days	13 Business Days 40	13 Business Days 35
Priority 1 tree remediation work resolved within 10 business days	No data available	No data available	No data available	Business Days 40	Business Days 35
Priority 2 tree remediation work resolved within 20 business days	No data available	No data available	No data available	Business Days 60	Business Days 50
Priority 3 remediation work resolved within 40 business days	No data available	No data available	No data available	Business Days	Business Days

Two Park Authority arborists oversee more than 23,346 acres of park land much of which border residential properties. Currently staff assesses reported issues regarding dead trees, falling trees, or trees that have already fallen. On average over the last five years, 59 percent of tree work is related to public inquiries, and 41 percent of Forestry's staff time is addressing tree work on Park facilities. Over the last three years, Forestry has removed 2,136 trees.

Proactive tree work has not been performed in recent years due to limited resources. There are approximately 5,361 acres of developed park land. To implement a preventative tree maintenance program, additional resources would be required.