

CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION TRUST

Saving America's Civil War Battlefields

John L. Nau, III
Chairman

James Lighthizer
President

Laura Durham
Recreation and Parks
1108 Jefferson St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Ms. Durham,

I am writing on behalf of the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), a 55,000-member national nonprofit battlefield preservation organization. Our mission is to protect our nation's endangered Civil War sites and promote appreciation of these hallowed grounds through education and heritage tourism. Please accept this as our comments on the Fort Ward Ad Hoc Draft Report.

As a preservation organization, CWPT is heartened to see that the plan includes provisions for dealing with the threats to the land and earthworks of Fort Ward and the African American cemetery, specifically: storm water run-off; proper maintenance of vegetation; and proper mowing and turf management. We also encourage the completion of the archaeological investigation to further identify grave sites so that they may be properly marked and cared for.

In addition, we strongly agree with the report's recommendations on recreational use, particularly strengthening the regulations on picnic procedures to include a ban on alcoholic beverages and amplified music. We also encourage the removal of the dog park.

CWPT is also in favor of increased interpretation of the site, including additional signage highlighting the African American experience at Fort Ward. We also agree that the formation of an educational outreach committee to offer Fort Ward as an instructional tool is important, especially with the upcoming Civil War Sesquicentennial.

In conclusion, CWPT gives our overall support to the recommendations in the Fort Ward Ad Hoc Draft Report, in the hopes that this important historical site will be properly preserved and maintained, while providing educational opportunities for the community.

Sincerely,



O. James Lighthizer,
President