



## INOVA Public Hearing Testimony

### Merrifield Suburban Center Study Task Force – December 11, 2018

My name is Kris Unger, with the Friends of Accotink Creek, a local environmental non-profit dedicated to protecting, promoting, and restoring the Accotink Creek watershed.

I'm here today to voice my concerns about watershed impacts from the recent construction on the Inova property. This fall we observed and documented what I consider to be severe neglect of the sediment control measures put in place to protect the watershed from sediment pollution. Basically if you cut down all the trees and bulldoze an area, when it rains a lot of dirt will get washed downhill and downstream. Water full of sediment is like air full of smoke - it's hard to live in. We want to keep sediment out of streams in order to protect the insects and animals that live in the stream, and those that depend on them.

I've been working with Fairfax County to address this issue, and I've been told that things are much better now. I certainly hope they are.

One of my concerns is what this says about Inova as a responsible steward of this property, and as a member of this community. So far the only communication that I have received from Inova is "No trespassing" signs put up around the problem area. It's pretty easy for a large entity like Inova to ignore or blow off a community group like the Friends of Accotink Creek. We're a small group, and we do this as volunteers, because we care deeply about protecting nature and restoring the environment.

I'm disappointed by what I've seen so far from Inova, in terms of taking responsibility for this pollution issue. I believe that there are excellent opportunities for Inova to be a responsible steward of this property, the remaining nature, and the watersheds. That would involve

- Reducing stormwater runoff and pollution from impervious surfaces.
- Committing to only using native plants for landscaping.
- Responsible management of natural areas to reduce invasives and erosion.

As a starting point, I request an onsite meeting at the Inova property to review the status of the construction site with the relevant County departments like SDID, DPWES, as well as NVSWCD. I'm not in a position to make this happen. I'm asking for your support in arranging an onsite meeting, and starting the conversation with Inova about how we can work together to protect nature and the watershed.

Thanks for your time,  
Kris Unger, Primary Conservator, Friends of Accotink Creek

## Friends of Accotink Creek

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