

# Reston Completes Second Environmental Status Report

BY DOUG BRITT

According to the recently completed 2018 Reston Annual State of the Environment Report (RASER), Reston has many environmental attributes that contribute to the quality of life for its residents. Reston has received dozens of awards and commendations for its management of natural areas and for its many environmental education and outreach programs. But greater urbanization, redevelopment and invasive species (among other factors) represent ongoing threats to the community. Stormwater management continues to be a particularly problematic issue.

The RASER is a product of the RA Environmental Advisory Committee and was prepared by a nine-member Working Group composed of environmental professionals and volunteer citizen scientists. The 2018 RASER updates and expands upon the first RASER, completed in 2017. The current report evaluates the status of 19 separate environmental attributes, including three that were not covered in the 2017 report.



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Altogether, more than 325 data sources and scientific reports were reviewed and analyzed by the Working Group. Each attribute was then given a

qualitative status using a traffic light icon to distinguish among "good," "fair," "poor" and "undetermined"—the latter designation indicating that not enough data exist to make a reasonable assessment at this time. Only one attribute (Streams) evaluated in the 2017 RASER was deemed to have changed enough to warrant a different designation in 2018.

In addition, a new RASER chapter was added to cover Reston's acceptance into the prestigious international Biophilic Cities Network, which recognizes communities for the effective ways they connect residents with nature. Reston

is now partnered with such progressive cities as Singapore, Oslo, Wellington, Sydney, Birmingham, Edmonton, Austin, Phoenix, Portland, Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Washington, DC.

Another addition to the current RASER is a "Recommendations & Report Card" chapter. It describes 11 new recommendations for improving or protecting Reston's environmental quality and evaluates progress made toward implementing the 61 recommendations previously listed in the 2017 RASER.

The complete 2018 RASER (and its Executive Summary) can be viewed online at the NATURE OVERVIEW webpage on the RA website: <http://www.reston.org/Parks,RecreationEvents/NatureEnvironmentalResources/NatureOverview/tabid/959/Default.aspx>. The full report includes 135 graphs, tables, maps and photos, along with a complete list of references for readers interested in more detailed information.

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