# Town Council
# Regular Meeting
# Agenda Item 7.a.

**Agenda Item:** **Resolution 25-G-23 in support of protecting the natural environment along the W&OD Trail**

**Meeting Date:** April 8, 2025

**Category:** Consent

**Prepared by:** Christopher E. Martino, Interim Town Manager

**Description:**
The Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail is a vital recreational and environmental asset, spanning Northern Virginia and serving as a focal point for the Town of Herndon. Recently, Dominion Energy cleared nearly all trees along a four-mile section of the trail in the Vienna and Dunn Loring area as part of its vegetation management under power transmission lines. The Town of Vienna's Town Council approved a resolution, similar to what is proposed, requesting Dominion Energy to end further large-scale tree removal along the trail.

**Background:**
Following the tree trimming near the Town of Vienna, Dominion expressed their intent to apply this same practice - to extend this practice along 33 miles of the W&OD Trail corridor, from Shirlington to west of Leesburg - including the section passing through the Town of Herndon. Under this approach, Dominion intends to remove all vegetation taller than 10 feet and prohibit any future growth of trees or plants with the potential to exceed this height.

In response, the proposed resolution asks Dominion Energy to:

1. Halt large-scale tree removal along the W&OD Trail.

2. Adopt a formal policy on vegetation management that balances infrastructure reliability with environmental preservation.

3. Replant cleared areas where tree removal is necessary with a mix of native species that support pollinators and wildlife.

4. Actively manage invasive species in areas where replanting occurs until newly planted vegetation and habitat are fully established.

While Dominion Energy has temporarily paused its work on the remaining 29 miles of the W&OD Trail, it is imperative that steps are taken to address this type of work that may be occurring in the future.

**Strategic Focus Area:**



Environmental and Economic Sustainability

**Fiscal Impact:**
N/A

**Legal Impact:**
N/A

**Staff Recommendation/Next Steps:**
Recommend approval as presented.

**Attachments:**
1. Resolution (Proposed)