

Forest Patches in Wards 7 & 8

Towards Environmental Equity

Citizens Forest Health Working Group

May 9 2024

ANACOSTIA PARKS &
COMMUNITY
COLLABORATIVE



Goals & Expectations

- To seek out other forest patches around the District and tell their stories so they can be cared for by local communities and supported by the city.
- This isn't easy! Many issues need addressing to save forest patches. Ownership and maintenance are complex when patches cross property lines.

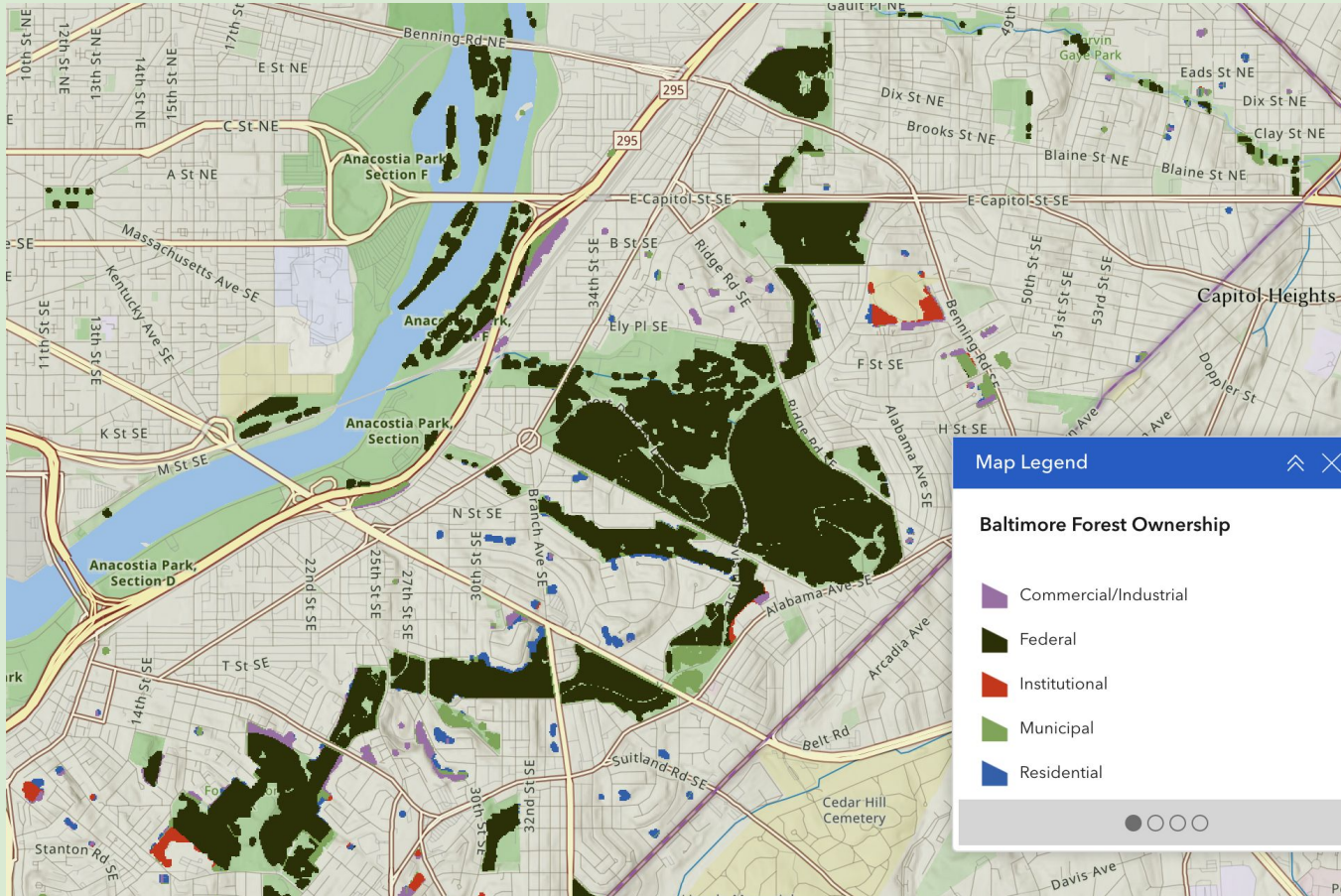
What do we want to know?

- Ownership of parcel(s)
- Current condition. Is someone caring for it now?
- Relationship to wildlife corridors and other natural areas
- Relationship to people and places – location within the community

Tools

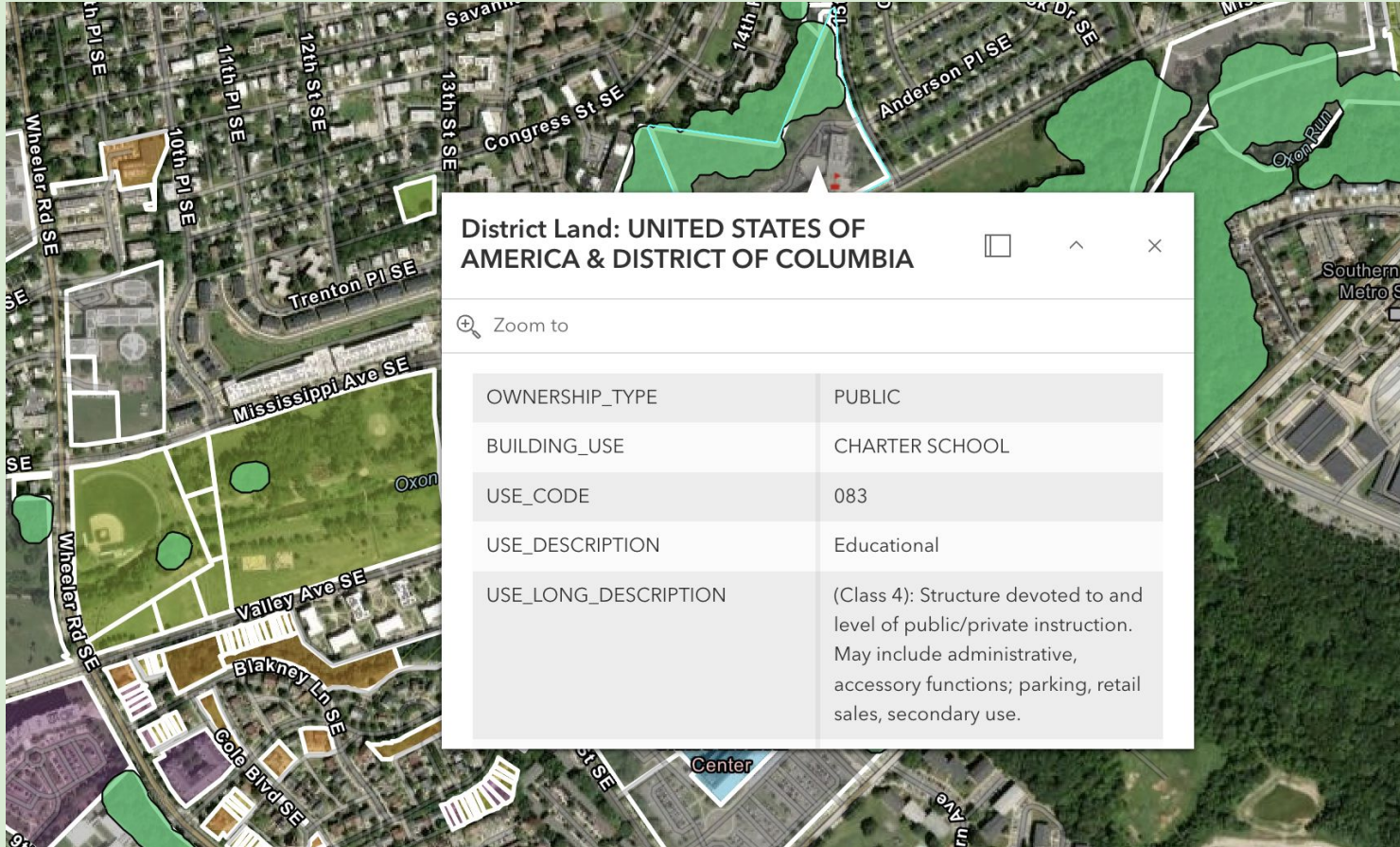
- USFS Forest Patch Mapping Tool,
https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/e9801ba79ba0487c8a027390da49fbea/page/Washington%2C-D_C_/ (Nancy Sonti)
- Forest Patches and District Lands Map,
<https://harvard-cga.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=0a4abb0e075544449fc4a8f55ff5675d> (Allison Clausen)

Urban Forest Patch Viewer



USFS, Nancy Sonti

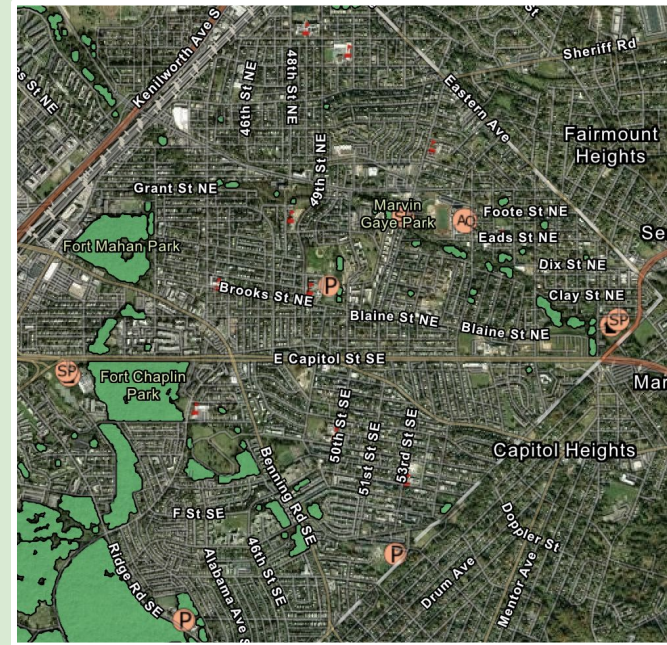
District Lands Overlay - Allison Clausen



Wards 3 & 4 Rock Creek Park

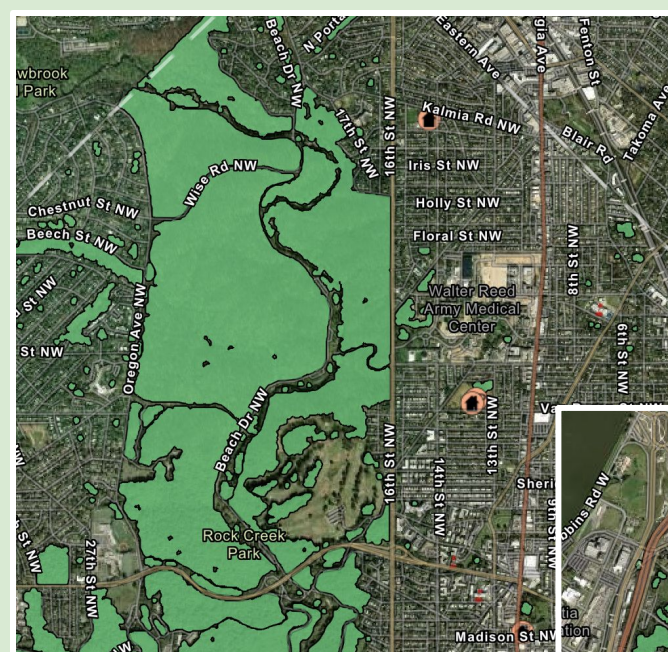
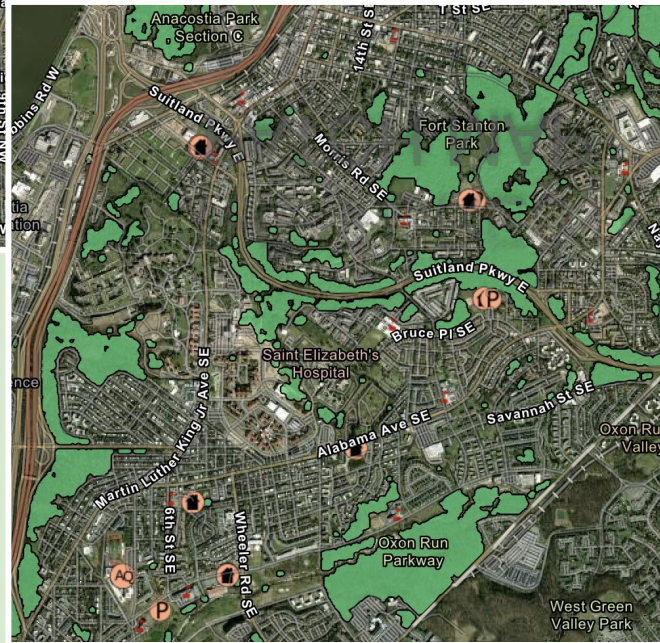
THE FOREST PATCH MAP

Ward 7



Urban Forest Patches overlain on
satellite imagery, Allison Clausen

Ward 8



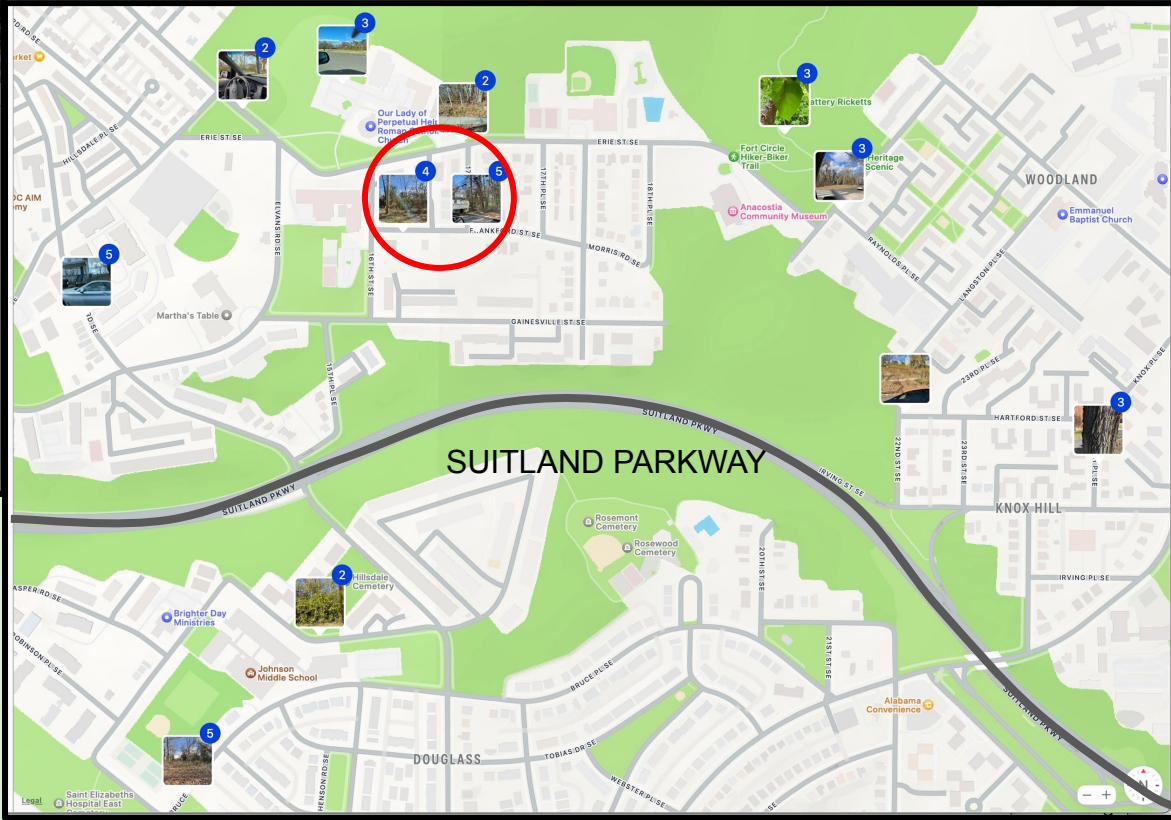
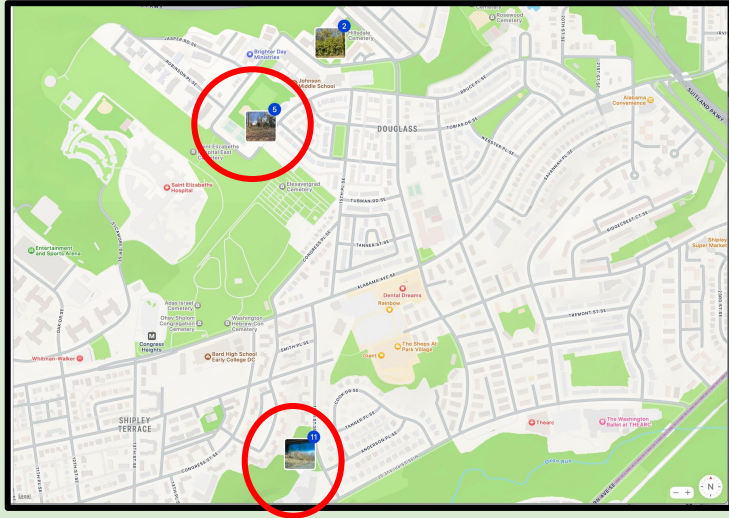
Ward 8 Tour

Brenda Richardson (Tour Leader)
Allison, Delores, Liz & Catherine

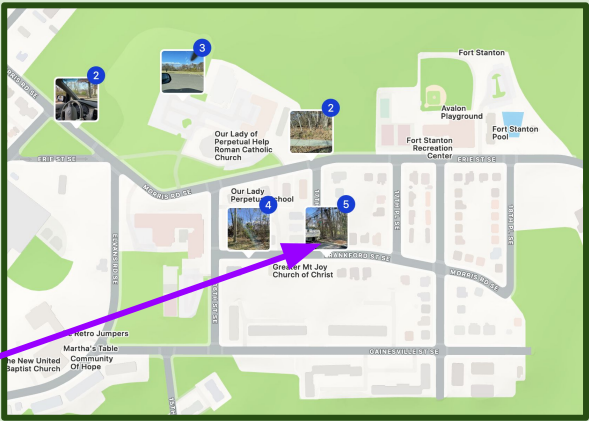
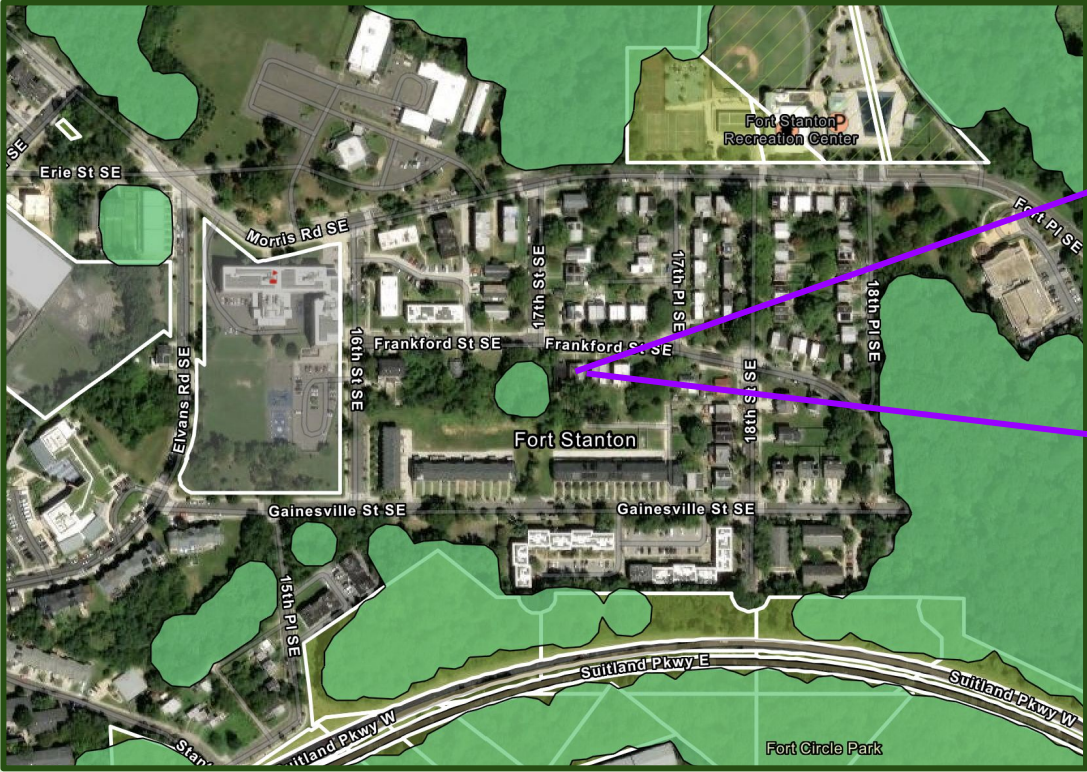


Nov 28 2023

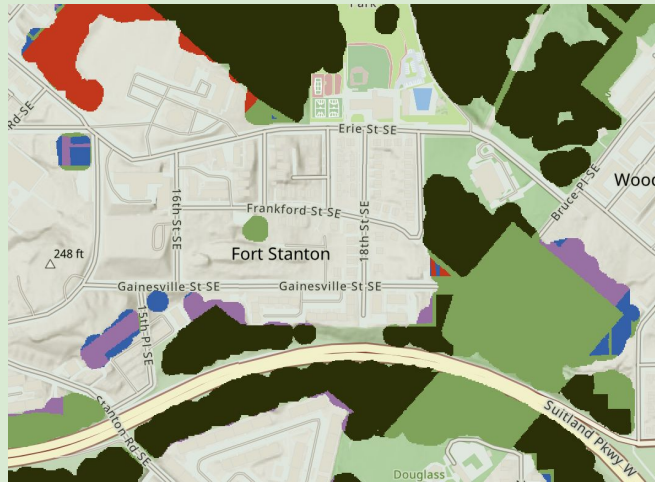
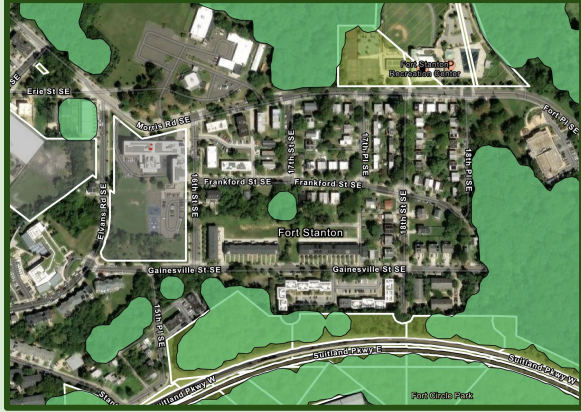
Ward 8 Forest Patches



Frankford and 17th

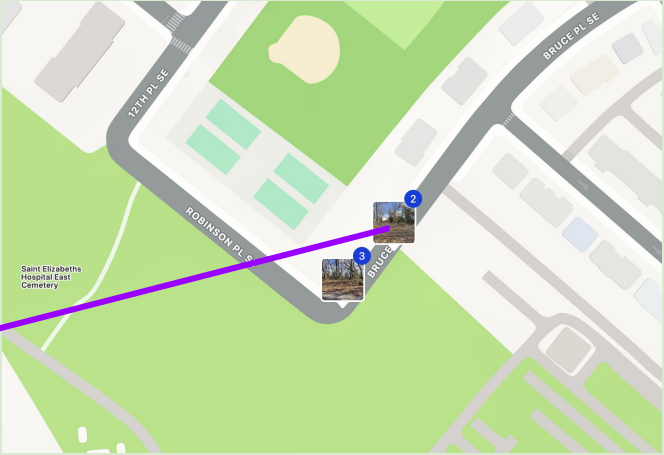


Frankford and 17th

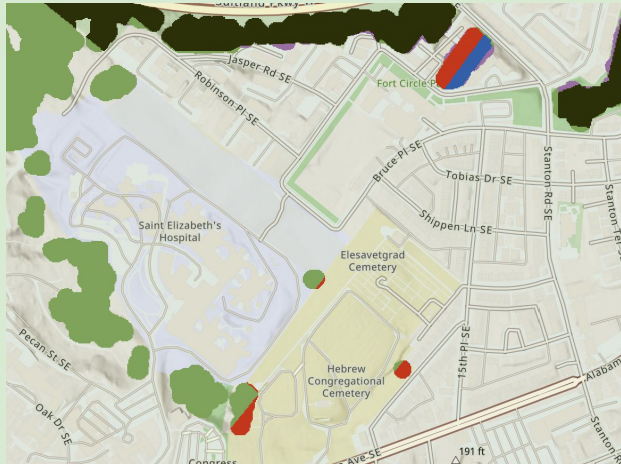


- **OWNERSHIP:** Private lots, some vacant and encompassing rear yards of houses. Could be a paper street.
- **CONDITION:** Unmaintained. Invasives vines on trees.
- **WILDLIFE:** Very close to Ft. Circle Park and wildlife corridor which follows Suitland Pkwy
- **PEOPLE:** Moten Elementary School, DC Infrastructure Academy (Charter), Ft. Stanton Park, Woodland Public Housing

Bruce Pl SE (St. Elizabeth's)

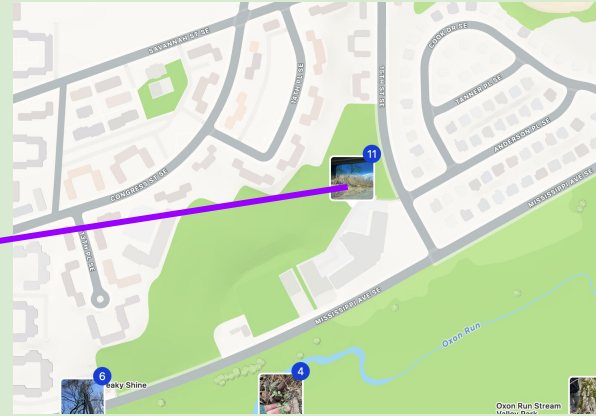


Bruce Pl SE (St. Elizabeth's)



- **OWNERSHIP:** Line of vacant platted lots.
- **CONDITION:** Unmaintained
- **WILDLIFE:** Could connect with St. Elizabeth's and Ft. Circle Parks. Cemetery likely has some wildlife benefit.
- **PEOPLE:** Next to St. Elizabeth's Campus & Elesavetgrad Cemetery, Johnson Middle School, Hayden-Johnson Recreation Center, Public Housing

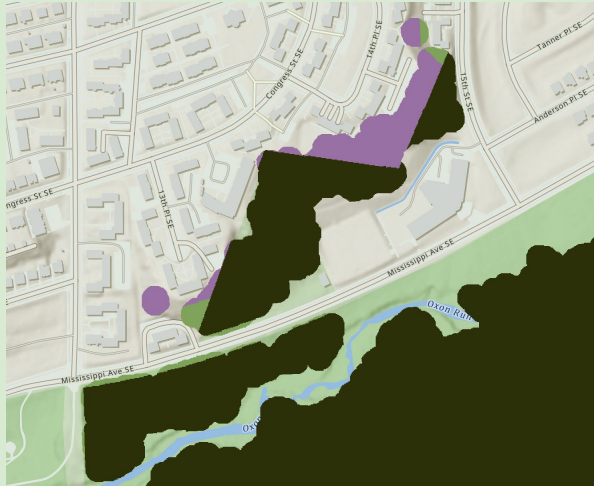
Malcolm X Public Charter School



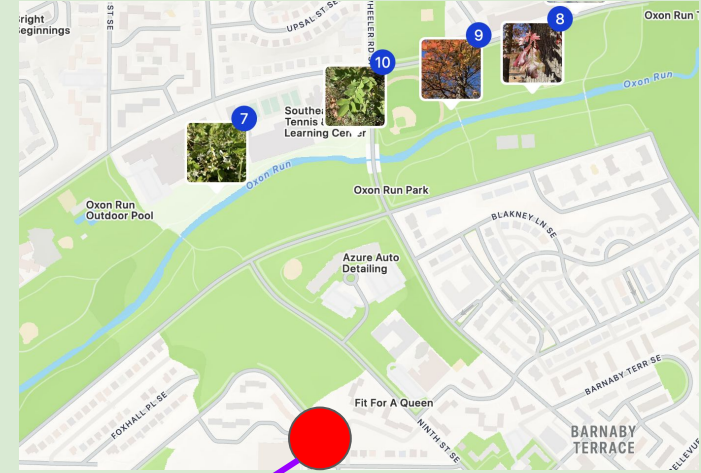
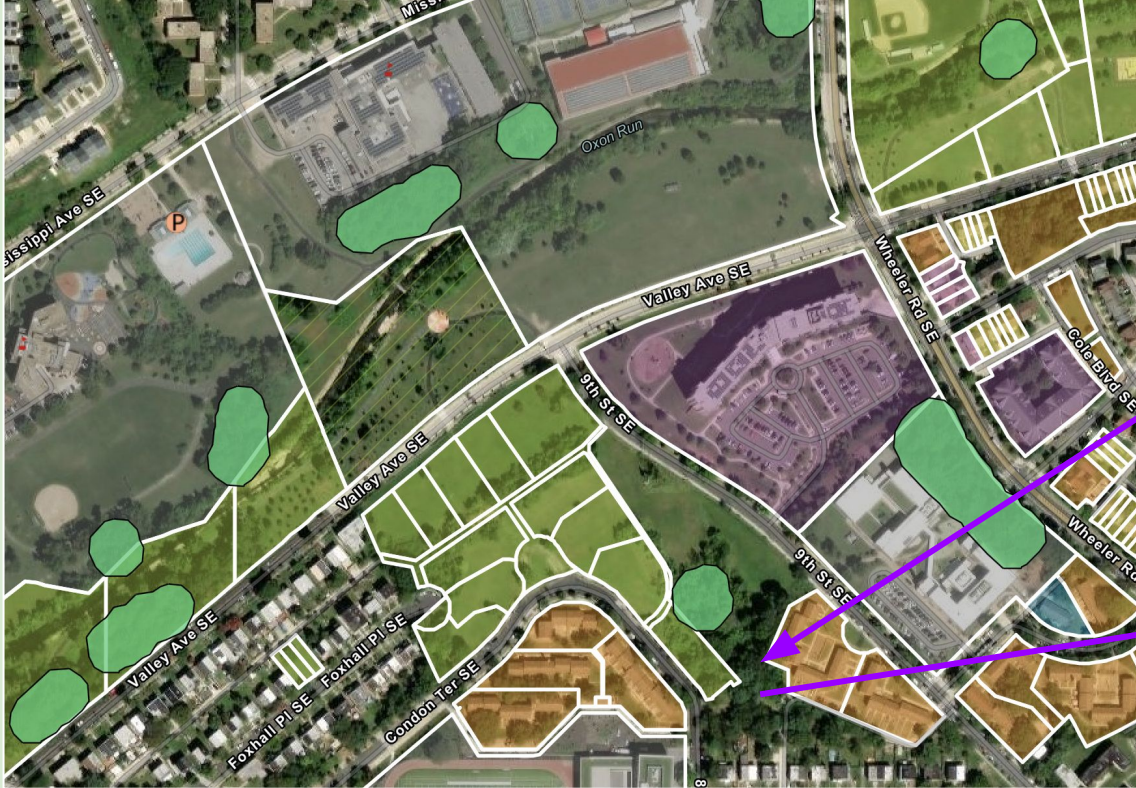
Malcolm X Public Charter School



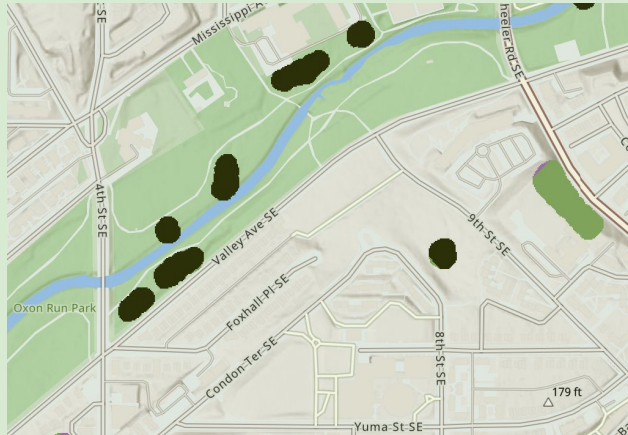
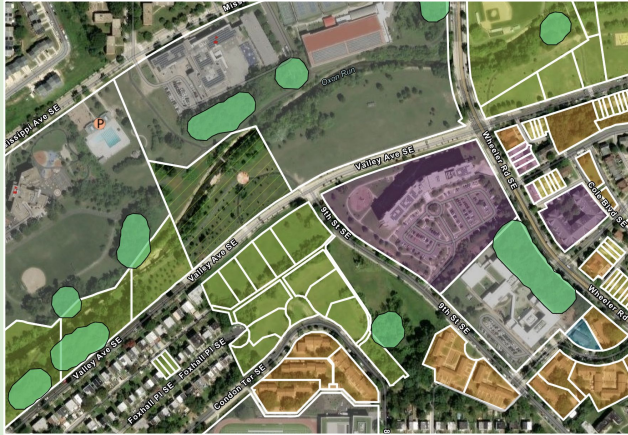
- **OWNERSHIP:** Public Charter School & Grounds, DHS & Private
- **CONDITION:** Fenced behind school. New trees have been planted here. Overall condition unknown.
- **WILDLIFE:** Significant patch across Mississippi Ave from Oxon Run
- **PEOPLE:** Amazing opportunity to connect with students, living classroom.



Condon Terrace & 8th St SE

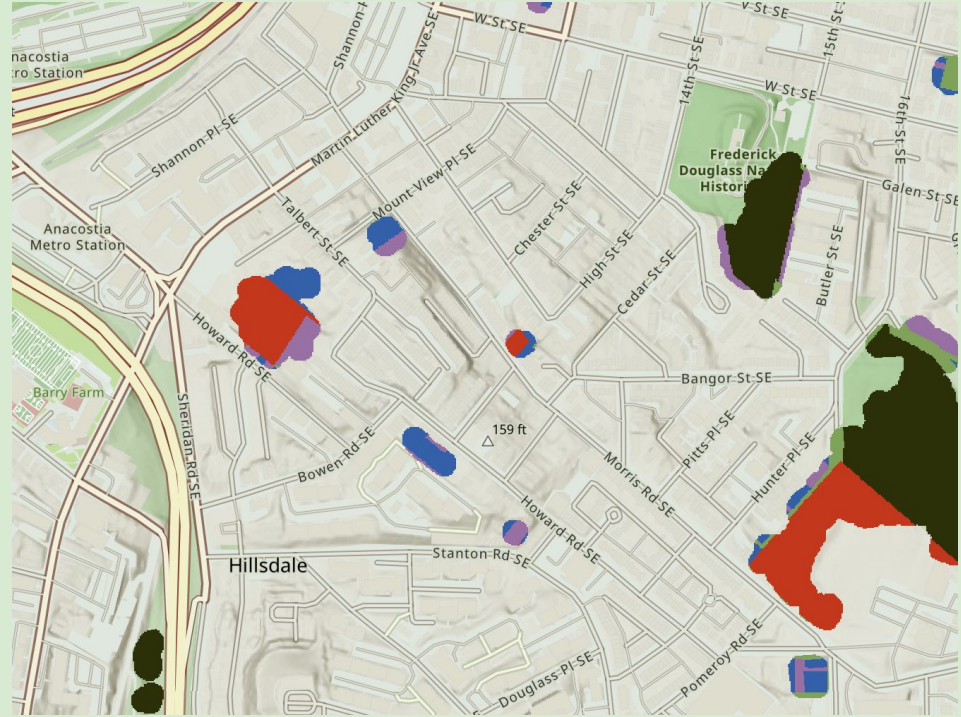


Condon Terrace & 8th St SE



- OWNERSHIP: DCHA Public Housing
- CONDITION: Invasives, trash. New growth since previous housing units were torn down.
- WILDLIFE: Connection to vacant lots which connect across Valley Ave to unforested area of Oxon Run Park
- PEOPLE: Parkside Terrace Development, SE Tennis & Learning Center

Bethlehem Baptist Church, MLK Jr Ave SE



Ward 8: What did we learn?

- The ward does have large forested areas, the largest of which are controlled by NPS
- Connection to Oxon Run
- Suitland Parkway is a wildlife barrier as well as a wildlife corridor. Would a wildlife underpass be useful?
- Brenda, please share your thoughts!

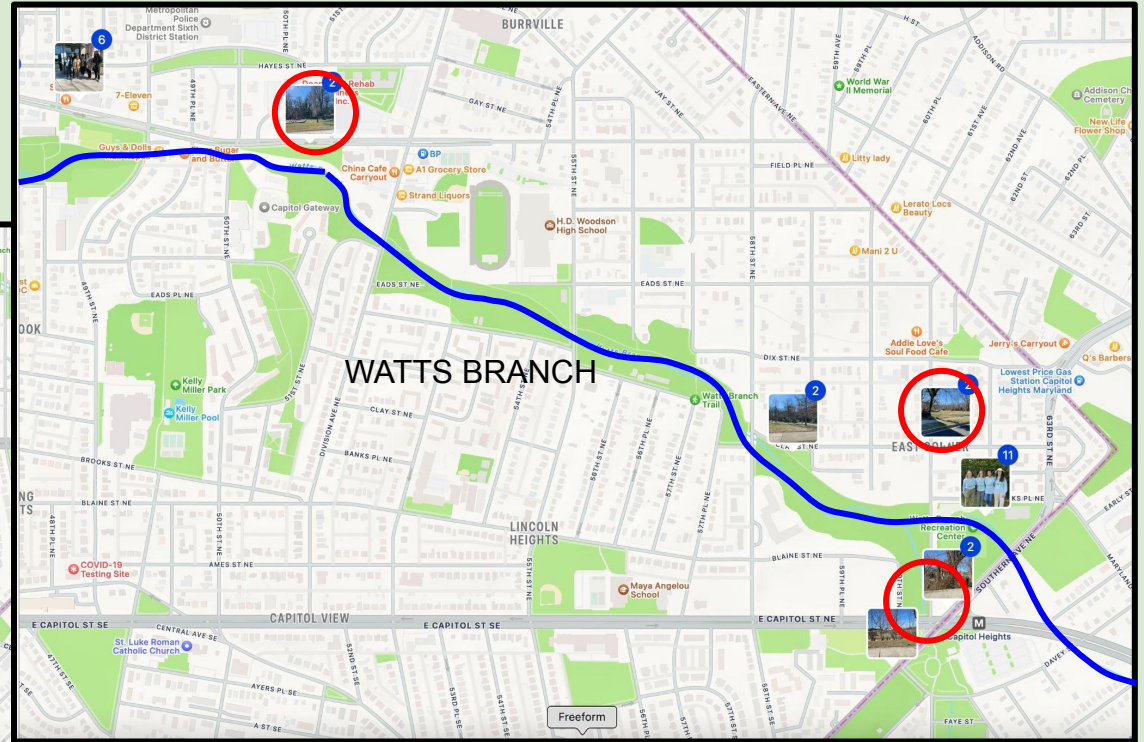
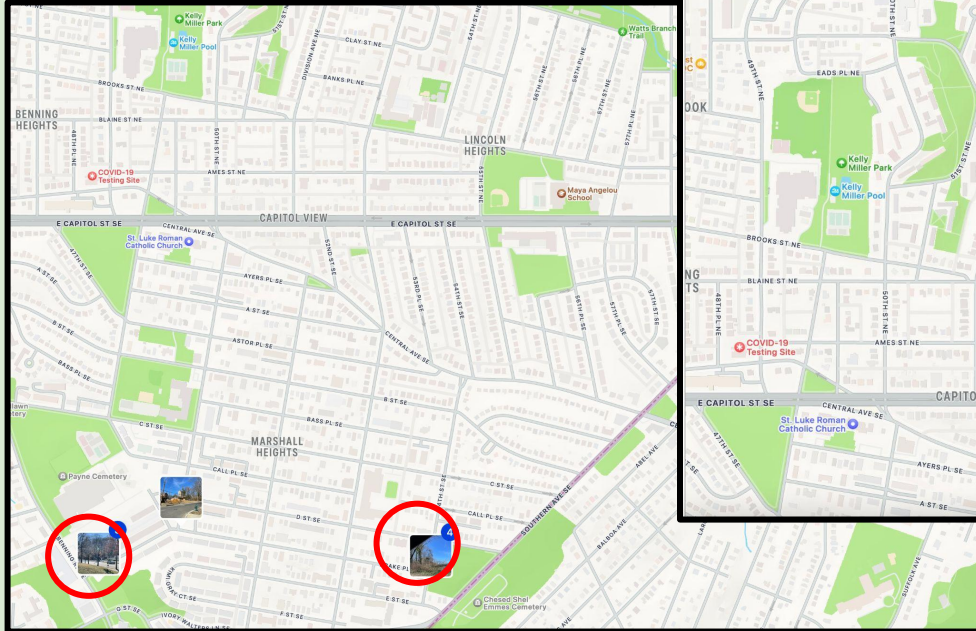
Ward 7 Tour

Dennis Chestnut (Tour Leader)
Marly, Kyra, Takia, Glen, Liz & Catherine

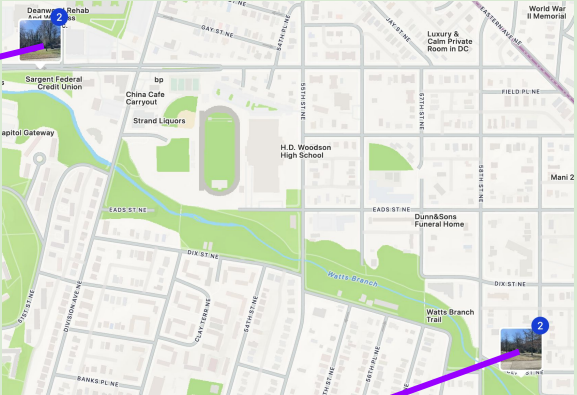
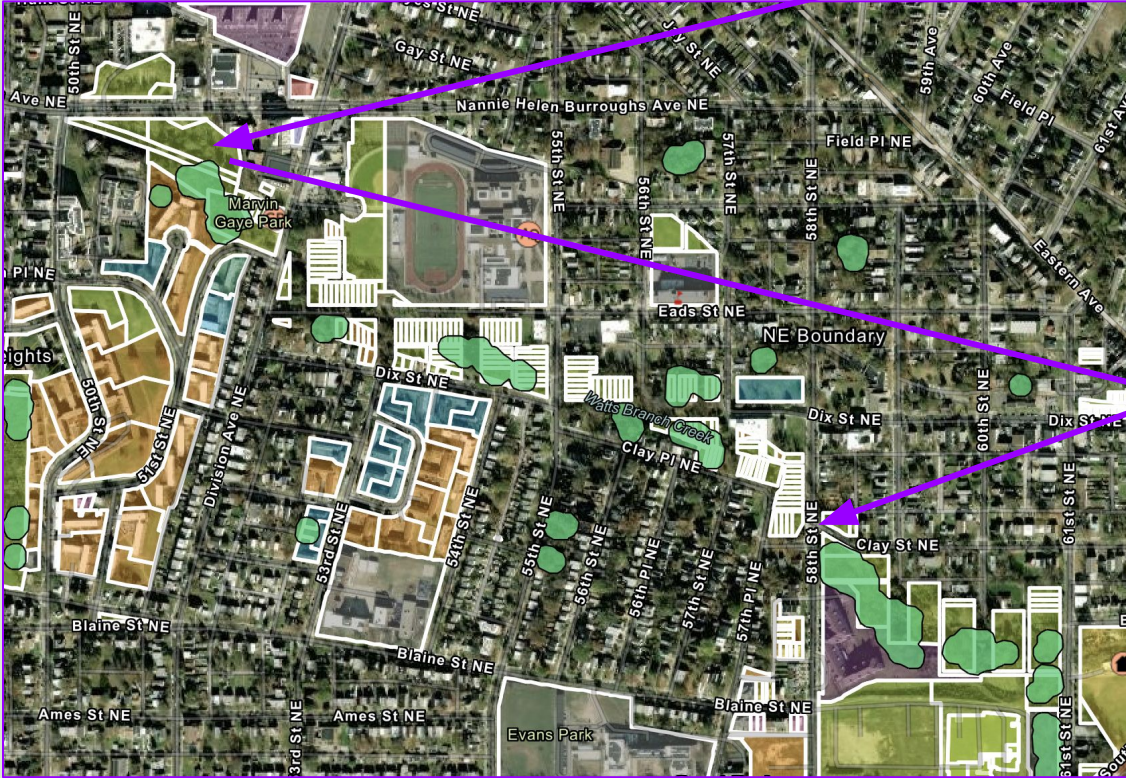


Feb 7 2024

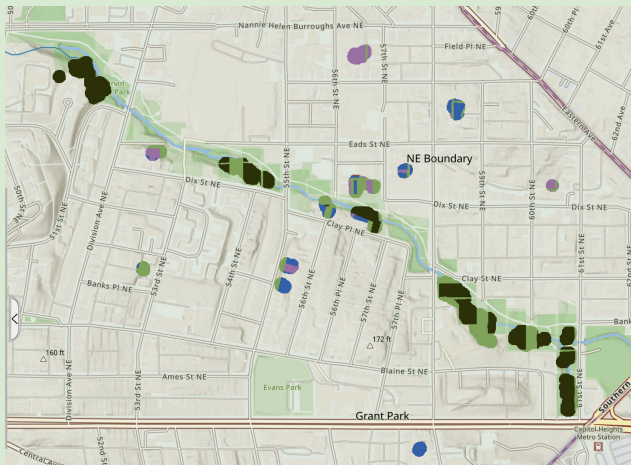
Ward 7 Forest Patches



Watts Branch/Marvin Gaye Park

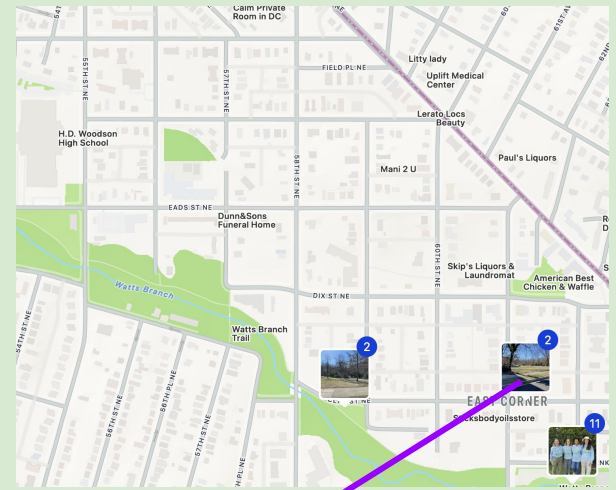
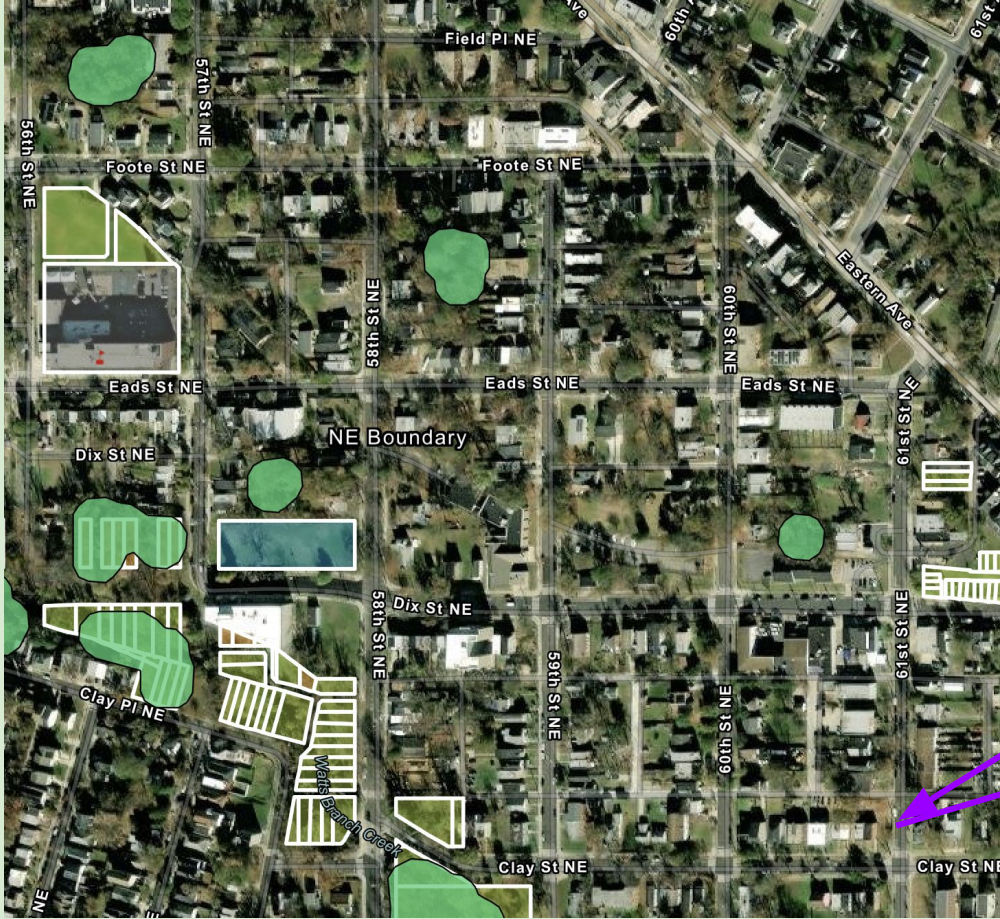


Watts Branch/Marvin Gaye Park

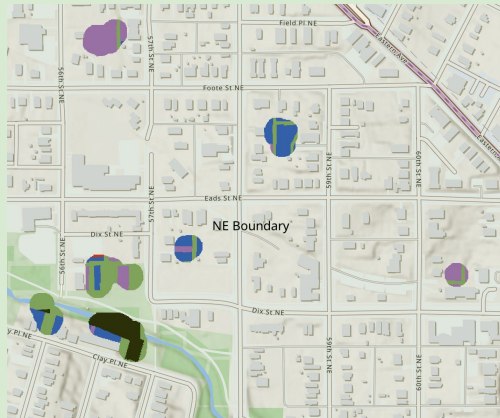


- **OWNERSHIP:** Mostly DPR Parcels (Green) and private, a few DCHA Public Housing (Orange or Purple)
- **CONDITION:** Poor, small forest patches with invasives, bare open patches
- **WILDLIFE:** Discontinuous patches do not connect for wildlife
- **PEOPLE:** Essentially no dedicated natural areas for recreation, except Lederer Gardens. Paved trail is important transportation route.

Vacant Lots, Clay & 61st and others

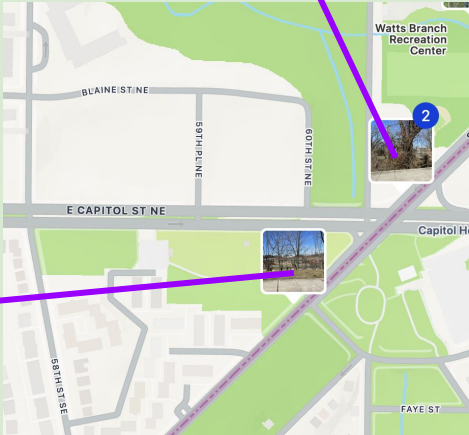


Vacant Lots, Clay & 61st and others



- **OWNERSHIP:** Commercial, Residential and Municipal (paper streets/alleys)
- **CONDITION:** Scattered, isolated small forest patches or bare/mowed ground
- **WILDLIFE:** No connections to larger forest patches
- **PEOPLE:** Vacant DHCD site near small forest patches; nearby elementary school has no trees on its grounds

Watts Branch Rec & East Capitol Food Hub

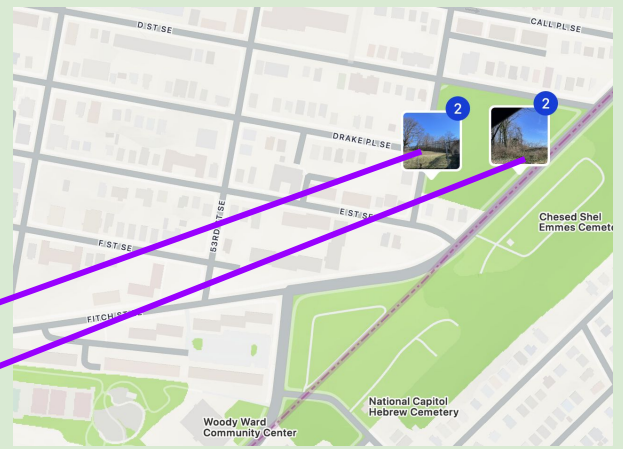


Watts Branch Rec & East Capitol Food Hub

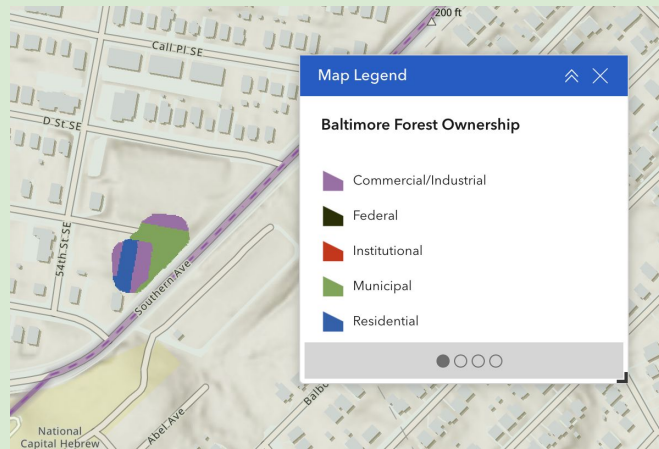


- **OWNERSHIP:** DPR, DCHA- note isolated fragment of DPR land
- **CONDITION:** Poor, invasive filled DPR sites; wide open DCHA food hub site and undeveloped sites
- **WILDLIFE:** Forest patches could be connected along Watts Branch to greatly improve wildlife habitat
- **PEOPLE:** Forest patches are surrounded by public housing or undeveloped city land. Food Hub is a terrific site for urban farming.

54th St. SE and Southern Ave

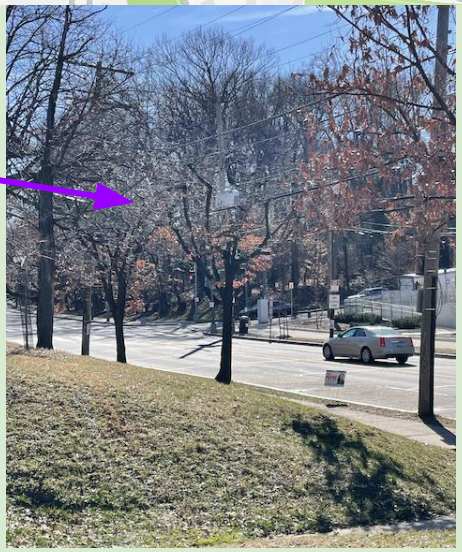
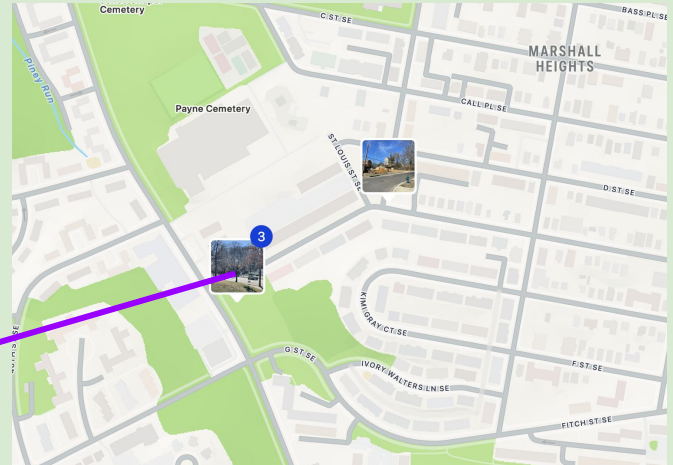


54th St. SE and Southern Ave



- OWNERSHIP: DDOT fragments surrounded by private land
- CONDITION: A few large trees in poor condition from invasives; partly open ground
- WILDLIFE: Isolated patch supports limited wildlife
- PEOPLE: It is the **ONLY** forest patch between E Capitol and Benning Rd! Nearby elementary school has no nature access.

Benning Rd SE and G St. SE



Benning Rd SE and G St. SE



- OWNERSHIP: DCHA (E), DGS (S,W), Commercial (N)
- CONDITION: Unknown, not maintained
- WILDLIFE: Connecting these patches to Ft. Dupont would be a huge benefit to wildlife
- PEOPLE: Adjacent to substantial public housing. DGS lands are likely very high risk of redevelopment

Ward 7: What did we learn?

- The Eastern corner of the District has very few forest patches
- They are small, in poor condition, and widely separated thus not serving wildlife or people well
- There is great opportunity at the Southern Ave end of Watts Branch to improve the forested areas and create new healthy natural areas
- The District owns multiple forest patches not protected by DPR in Ward 7

What did we learn?

- Wards 7 and 8 have different issues with respect to forest patches and natural areas
- Preserving Circle Forts also preserves green space.
- Ownership of the patches can be very complex
- Local citizens and agencies must together prioritize what areas to protect both people and wildlife

Next Steps?

- Are these the right patches?
- Wildlife and species surveys
- Work with communities to prioritize patches that support communities and wildlife corridors
- Refine presentation to share with policy makers, agency staff, community groups.

