

Abandoned and Improperly Parked Rental Scooters on the Mount Vernon Trail Corridor

49 rental scooters and e-bikes left obstructing a National Park Service trail, its sidewalk approaches, and the 14th Street Bridge crossing — recorded across 14 bicycle commute passes between 2026-08-03 and 2026-08-13. Devices arrive at a steady rate but are not being collected, and the number standing in the corridor grew 70% in nine days.

Corridor Mount Vernon Trail, Arlington & Alexandria, VA **Observation period** 2026-08-03 – 2026-08-13 (8 riding days)
Data source BumpyRide, GPS-tagged rider reports

1 Summary

49 distinct devices left obstructing the corridor	17 stayed put for more than a day	10 days longest single obstruction	+70% growth in devices standing in the corridor	3.6 new devices per pass — essentially unchanged
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Over 8 riding days, a bicycle commuter riding this corridor twice daily logged 144 GPS-tagged sightings of rental scooters and e-bikes parked where they should not be: across the Mount Vernon Trail tread, on sidewalk approaches, in the George Washington Memorial Parkway margin, and on the 14th Street Bridge span itself. Because a device still in place was re-recorded on each pass, those sightings resolve to **49 distinct devices** (§2).

The reconstruction produces one finding that matters more than the rest:

THE CORRIDOR IS NOT BEING DUMPED ON — IT IS NOT BEING CLEARED

New devices appeared at a near-constant rate throughout: 3.4 per pass in the first week, 3.6 in the second. Over the same period the number of devices *standing* in the corridor rose from 8.3 to 14.1 per pass, up 70%.

Arrivals flat, population climbing: devices are accumulating because they are not being removed. This is a collection failure, not a surge in bad parking.

- **Devices sit for days, not minutes.** 17 of the 49 devices remained in place across more than one day, 11 for three days or more, and 6 for a week or more. The longest sat for 10 days — the entire observation period. Together they account for 73 device-days of obstruction.
- **Within a single day, nothing moves.** On 31 occasions a device was recorded on the morning pass and again on the evening pass, still in place up to 7.6 hours later.
- **The problem is concentrated and mappable.** 17 specific locations held a device for more than one day; they are listed with coordinates in §6.

The report asks the operator to clear those locations and fix the monitoring that let a device sit for 10 days, and asks the licensing authorities for this corridor to make corridor geofencing and a documented removal standard conditions of the operating permit. Specific requests are in §8.

2 How the data was collected

The observer is a daily bicycle commuter who rides this corridor twice on most weekdays — northbound in the morning and southbound in the evening. Sightings were logged with BumpyRide, an iOS cycling app that records a timestamped GPS coordinate the moment the rider taps a labelled event button. Nothing was entered after the fact or from memory; each sighting marks a device the rider physically rode past.

A device was logged when it was parked in a way that obstructed or intruded on the trail tread, a sidewalk, a bridge deck, or a park area — not merely because it was present in the corridor. Devices parked upright and clear of the path were not logged.

FROM 144 SIGHTINGS TO 49 DEVICES

The rider deliberately re-recorded a device on every pass for as long as it stayed put, so the 144 raw sightings are not 144 devices. Reconstructing the actual count uses a property of a commute: the route is fixed, so *every pass is an observation of every location*. A pass that records nothing at a location is evidence the device was gone.

Sightings were grouped into locations within 40 m of one another, and each location's history was laid out across the 14 passes in order. An unbroken run of passes with a sighting is one device sitting there — an *occupancy episode*. Passes are counted in sequence rather than by calendar date, so the days without a ride (5, 8 and 9 August) bridge an episode instead of splitting it.

A single missed sighting inside an otherwise unbroken run is treated as the rider not logging it rather than the device vanishing and an identical one landing in the same spot before the next pass. The data supports that: internal gaps of exactly one pass outnumber gaps of two or more by 21 to 10, which is the signature of intermittent observation, not device turnover. Splitting on *every* gap instead yields 70 devices; that is the strict upper bound, and it does not change any conclusion in this report.

WHAT THE COUNTS DO AND DO NOT REPRESENT

49 is a floor, not a total. A sighting generally corresponds to one device, but roughly five sightings per pass covered a group of two or more at a single spot, and devices that arrived and left between passes never appear at all. The true number is higher.

Dwell times are minimums. A device recorded over 10 days was present for *at least* that long; it may have arrived before the first sighting and stayed after the last.

Operator identification is the rider's visual observation. The rider reports that with very few exceptions the devices were Lime-branded. Brand was not recorded in the data itself, so the per-location tables in this report make no operator claim. Any operator can verify or refute the attribution against its own trip and parking records for these coordinates and timestamps.

3 Arrivals versus accumulation

Splitting the devices present on each pass into those that arrived since the previous pass and those already there separates two very different problems — more devices being parked badly, or the same devices never being collected. The corridor has the second.

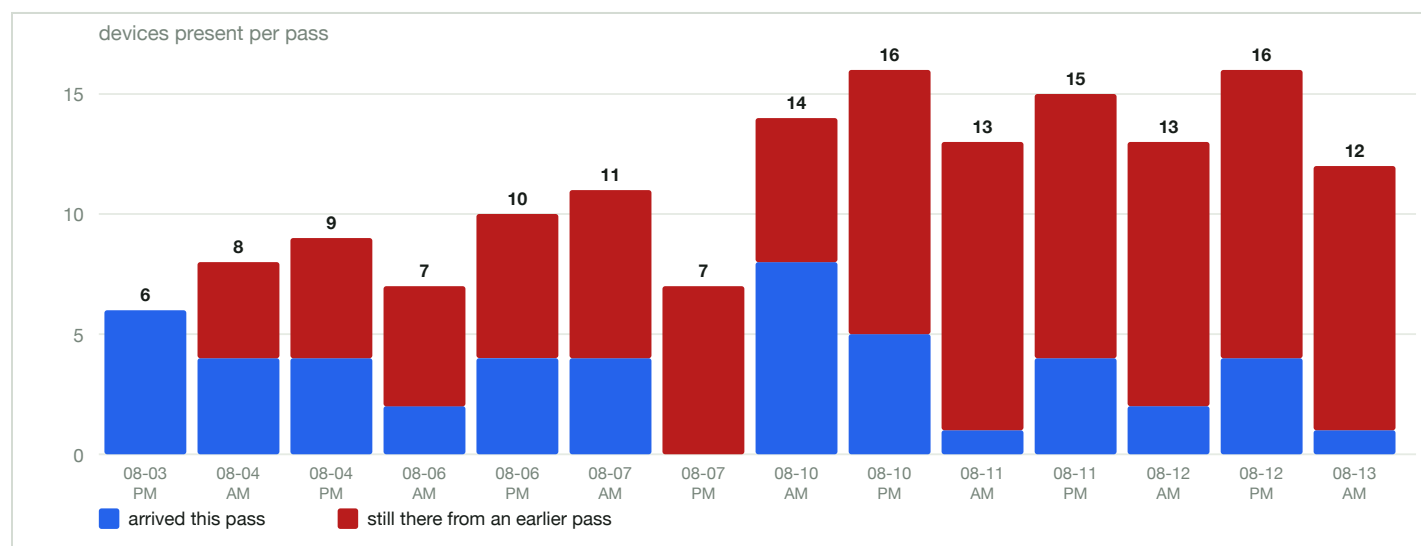


Figure 1. Devices present on each pass. The blue band is devices seen for the first time; the red band is devices already recorded on an earlier pass and still in place. No rides were made on 5, 8 or 9 August. The blue band is flat while the red band grows.

New arrivals held steady at 3.4 per pass in the first week and 3.6 in the second — no meaningful change. Devices standing in the corridor rose from 8.3 to 14.1 per pass, an increase of 70%. The entire growth is carried by devices that were already there.

A second check points the same way. Morning and evening sightings are exactly equal over the period (72 each). Were devices being ridden away and re-parked through the day, the two directions would diverge; they do not, which is what a largely static population looks like.

4 How long devices stay

Of the 49 devices, 32 were seen once and gone by the next pass. Those are unremarkable — a device parked badly and collected or ridden away within hours. The remaining 17 are the problem: each stayed in place across more than one day, and every one of them is plotted below.

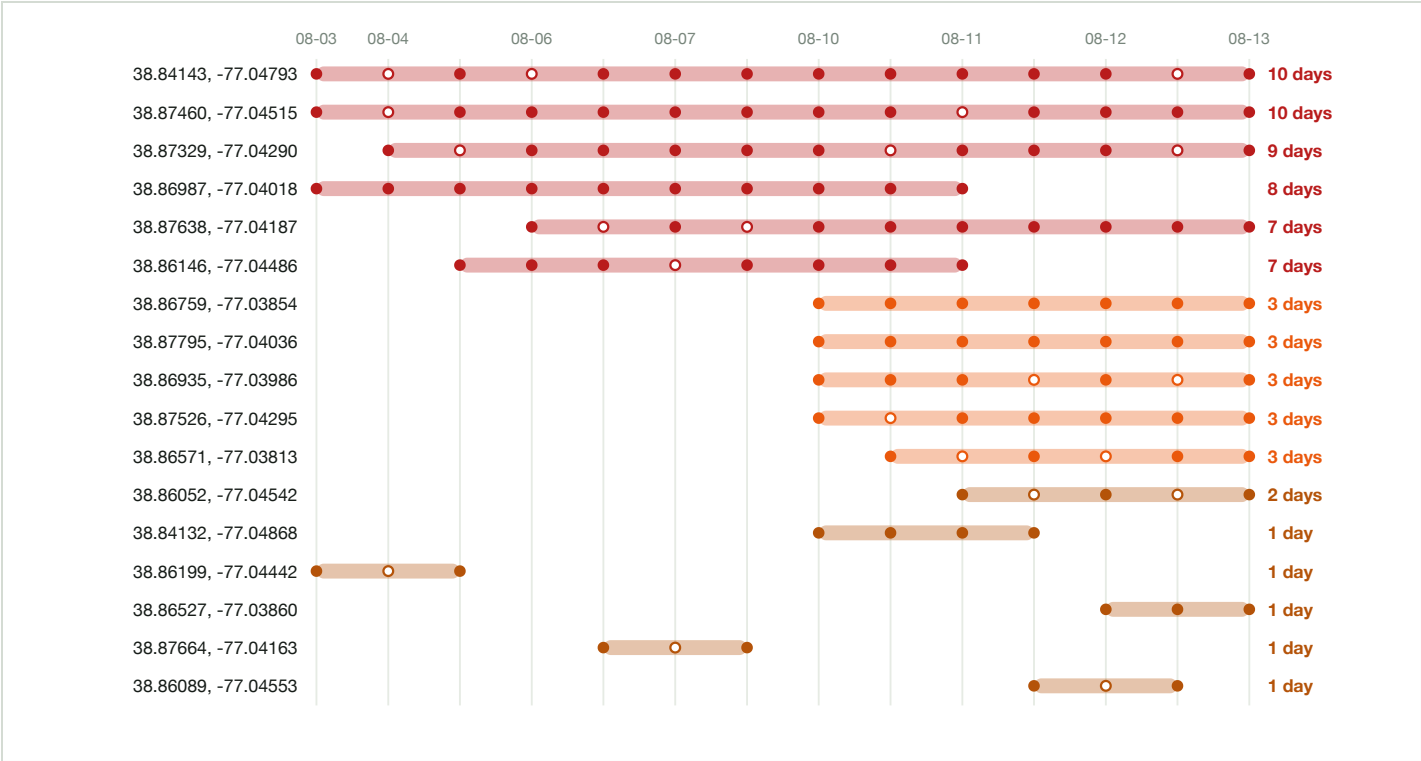


Figure 2. Every device that remained in place across more than one day, drawn against the 14 passes. Filled dots are sightings; hollow dots mark a pass where the device was not logged but was recorded on both sides of it. Bar colour follows the severity scale used throughout this report.

11 devices held their spot for three days or more and 6 for a week or more. The two longest — at 38.84143, -77.04793 and 38.87460, -77.04515 — were both present on the first pass of the study and still there on the last, 10 days later. Across all episodes the corridor absorbed 73 device-days of obstruction.

WITHIN A SINGLE DAY

On **31 occasions** a device was recorded at the same location on the morning pass and again on the evening pass of the same day, with the two sightings 7.6 hours apart at the widest. A device that has not moved across an entire working day is not in service; it is obstructing the trail.

IF THE RECONSTRUCTION IS WRONG, THE PROBLEM IS LARGER

Grouping sightings into episodes assumes that an unbroken run at one spot is a single device rather than a succession of different ones. That assumption cannot be tested from outside — only the operator's fleet telemetry can settle it — but the conclusion does not depend on it.

If the runs are single devices, then units sat untouched for up to 10 days and the operator's monitoring failed to flag them: a **collection and monitoring** failure.

If instead different devices cycled through the same spots, then arrivals are far higher than the 3.6 per pass measured here, and a handful of coordinates are absorbing a continuous stream of badly parked units: a **geofencing and end-of-ride** failure on a larger scale than this report claims.

Both readings require the same first step, and the operator can distinguish them immediately from its own records. This report asks for that determination to be made and shared.

DATE	LOCATION	STILL PRESENT AFTER
2026-08-04	38.86987, -77.04018	7.6 h
2026-08-06	38.86146, -77.04486	6.6 h
2026-08-06	38.86987, -77.04018	6.5 h
2026-08-06	38.87329, -77.04290	6.5 h
2026-08-06	38.87460, -77.04515	6.4 h
2026-08-07	38.84143, -77.04793	6.9 h
2026-08-07	38.87460, -77.04515	6.6 h
2026-08-07	38.86987, -77.04018	6.6 h
2026-08-07	38.87329, -77.04290	6.6 h
2026-08-10	38.84143, -77.04793	7.4 h
2026-08-10	38.84132, -77.04868	7.4 h
2026-08-10	38.86146, -77.04486	7.2 h
2026-08-10	38.86759, -77.03854	7.2 h
2026-08-10	38.86935, -77.03986	7.2 h
2026-08-10	38.87460, -77.04515	7.1 h
2026-08-10	38.86987, -77.04018	7.1 h
2026-08-10	38.87638, -77.04187	7.1 h
2026-08-10	38.87795, -77.04036	7.0 h
2026-08-11	38.84143, -77.04793	7.6 h

DATE	LOCATION	STILL PRESENT AFTER
2026-08-11	38.84132, -77.04868	7.6 h
2026-08-11	38.87329, -77.04290	7.4 h
2026-08-11	38.86759, -77.03854	7.4 h
2026-08-11	38.87638, -77.04187	7.3 h
2026-08-11	38.87795, -77.04036	7.3 h
2026-08-11	38.87526, -77.04295	7.3 h
2026-08-12	38.86759, -77.03854	7.0 h
2026-08-12	38.86527, -77.03860	7.0 h
2026-08-12	38.87460, -77.04515	6.9 h
2026-08-12	38.87638, -77.04187	6.9 h
2026-08-12	38.87795, -77.04036	6.9 h
2026-08-12	38.87526, -77.04295	6.9 h

All 31 same-day morning-to-evening observations.

5 Where the devices are

Sightings are not spread evenly along the corridor. 82% fall in the northern half — the 14th Street Bridge approach and the Gravelly Point / Roaches Run stretch. The bridge segment alone accounts for 62 sightings (43%), including devices left on the bridge deck itself, where the shared-use path is at its narrowest and there is no room to pass an obstruction safely.

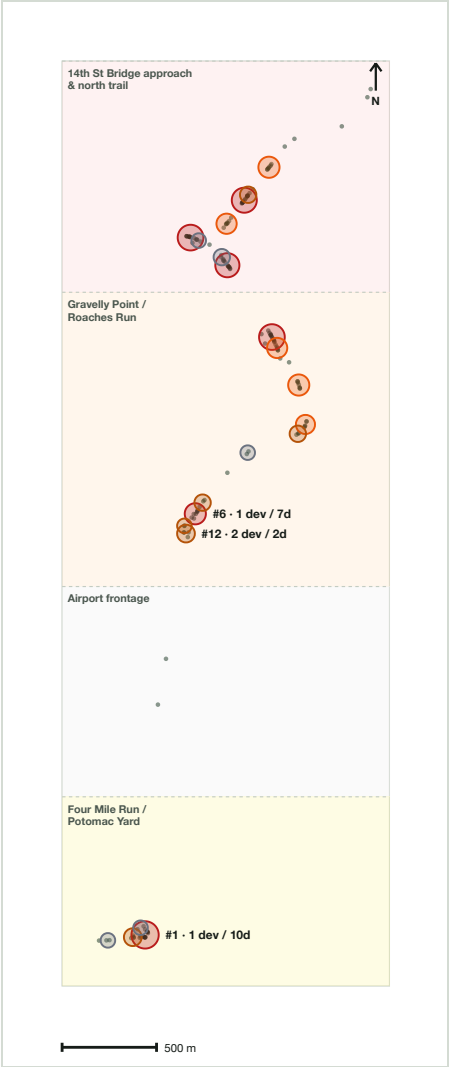


Figure 3. Corridor overview. One further sighting, 2.8 km south near Potomac Yard, falls outside the frame.



Figure 4. Northern hotspot at larger scale — the bridge approach and Gravelly Point, containing 96 of 144 sightings.

● longest stay 6+ days ● 3–5 days ● 1–2 days ● under a day circle area ∝ sightings
small dots = individual sightings

Both maps are drawn to equal horizontal and vertical ground scale in WGS 84; numbered labels correspond to the location ranks in §6, labelled with the number of devices and the longest stay recorded there. Segment names are descriptive; the coordinates are authoritative.

Broken out by segment, the distribution is:

CORRIDOR SEGMENT	SIGHTINGS	SHARE
14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	62	43%
Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	56	39%
Airport frontage	2	1%
Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	24	17%

The airport frontage is the control case. It carries the same trail, the same commuters, and the same hours, but only 2 sightings — because it has no adjacent destinations where a rider would end a trip. The problem tracks where trips end, not where the trail runs.

6 Recurring locations requiring action

The 17 locations below each held a device for more than a single pass. Coordinates are the mean position of the sightings assigned to each location; sightings within 40 m were treated as the same location, which is roughly the accuracy envelope of a phone GPS fix taken from a moving bicycle. “Longest stay” is the greatest number of days a single device remained there.

#	COORDINATES (WGS 84)	SEGMENT	DEVICES	SIGHTINGS	LONGEST STAY	FIRST – LAST SEEN
1	38.84143, -77.04793	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	1	14	10d	08-03 – 08-13
2	38.87460, -77.04515	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	12	10d	08-03 – 08-13
3	38.86987, -77.04018	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	12	8d	08-03 – 08-12
4	38.87638, -77.04187	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	11	7d	08-06 – 08-13
5	38.87329, -77.04290	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	10	9d	08-04 – 08-13

#	COORDINATES (WGS 84)	SEGMENT	DEVICES	SIGHTINGS	LONGEST STAY	FIRST – LAST SEEN
6	38.86146, -77.04486	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	7	7d	08-04 – 08-11
7	38.86759, -77.03854	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	7	3d	08-10 – 08-13
8	38.87795, -77.04036	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	7	3d	08-10 – 08-13
9	38.86935, -77.03986	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	6	3d	08-10 – 08-13
10	38.87526, -77.04295	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	6	3d	08-10 – 08-13
11	38.86571, -77.03813	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	5	3d	08-04 – 08-13
12	38.86052, -77.04543	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	4	2d	08-04 – 08-13
13	38.84132, -77.04868	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	1	4	1d	08-10 – 08-11
14	38.86199, -77.04442	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	3	1d	08-03 – 08-04
16	38.87664, -77.04163	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	2	3	1d	08-06 – 08-12
17	38.86527, -77.03860	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	3	1d	08-12 – 08-13
22	38.86089, -77.04553	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	2	1d	08-11 – 08-12

The remaining 22 locations saw only devices that were gone by the next pass; they are listed in the appendix for completeness. The 17 above are where intervention would have the most effect.

7 Why this matters

The Mount Vernon Trail is a National Park Service facility within the George Washington Memorial Parkway. It is a shared-use path carrying commuting cyclists, runners, and pedestrians, and along much of the affected stretch it is roughly ten feet wide with soft or dropped shoulders. A scooter lying across it removes most of the usable width.

- **Collision and fall risk.** A dark-coloured device lying on the tread is difficult to see at dawn and dusk — precisely the hours of the observed commute traffic. Avoiding one forces a swerve into oncoming path users or off the edge of the pavement.
- **The bridge is the worst case.** 62 sightings fall in the 14th Street Bridge approach and crossing, where the path is confined between a railing and a traffic barrier. There is no shoulder to move into and no way to turn around. A device left on the span forces users into a single-file squeeze past it, above an active roadway and the river.
- **Accessibility.** An obstruction that a fit cyclist can squeeze past is a hard stop for a wheelchair user, a handcycle, or someone with a stroller or a guide dog. Blocked sidewalk approaches raise obligations distinct from trail etiquette.
- **Park land.** These are not city sidewalks where a leaning scooter is an ordinary nuisance. Devices are being left in a national park unit, in the parkway margin, and in the Roaches Run and Gravelly Point areas.
- **It is trending the wrong way.** The standing population grew 70% in nine days without any rise in new arrivals, which indicates the corridor is not on any effective collection route.

8 Requested actions

TO THE OPERATOR

- ① **Clear the 17 locations in §6 now.** Each is given to five decimal places. They are a work order, not a complaint.
- ② **Explain how a device sat for 10 days without being flagged.** Idle-time monitoring should have caught every one of the 6 devices that stayed a week or more. Confirm from your telemetry whether these were single stranded units or repeat drop points, and share which — the remedy differs (\$4).
- ③ **Geofence the Mount Vernon Trail corridor and the 14th Street Bridge crossing as a no-parking zone,** so a trip cannot be ended there. The bridge deck should additionally be a no-ride zone. The bounding corridor extent given in §9 defines the affected area.
- ④ **Require end-of-ride parking verification inside the corridor** — a location check and a parking photo before a trip can close — and reject closures on the trail tread.
- ⑤ **Publish a removal service level for park and trail land** and report performance against it. A device reported on a national park trail should be collected in hours, not days.
- ⑥ **Add this corridor to a daily sweep route.** Devices standing for a week, and 31 instances of one sitting from morning to evening, indicate no one is currently looking.

TO THE LICENSING AND PERMITTING AUTHORITIES FOR THIS CORRIDOR

- ① **Make corridor geofencing a permit condition** for every operator licensed to deploy here, rather than a voluntary measure.
- ② **Require a documented removal standard** for devices on trail, park, and bridge land, with monthly reporting of reports received, response times, and devices collected.
- ③ **Request each operator's own parking and idle-device records for these coordinates covering 2026-08-03 to 2026-08-13** and compare them against this dataset. The comparison will show directly whether operator monitoring is detecting what a passing cyclist detects twice a day.
- ④ **Measure dwell time, not complaint volume.** A single device obstructing a national park trail for 10 days is a systems failure; counted as complaints it looks like a handful of minor reports. Dwell time is the metric that distinguishes them.
- ⑤ **Coordinate across jurisdictions.** The affected corridor crosses National Park Service land as well as Arlington County and City of Alexandria territory. A device left at the bridge is outside any single local permit regime, which is part of why the problem persists there.

OFFER

The complete underlying dataset — every report with its coordinate and timestamp — is available on request in CSV form to any operator or agency that wants to verify these findings or match them against internal records. Observation is continuing, and this analysis can be re-run to measure whether an intervention worked.

9 Data notes and limitations

- **Sampling.** Two passes per riding day on a fixed route. Reports reflect what was visible from the trail at those moments. Devices outside the rider's line of sight, or placed and removed between passes, are absent. This biases every count downward.
- **Device count.** 49 devices is a reconstruction from 144 sightings, not a direct count (§2). Splitting on every observation gap instead gives 70. Both understate the true figure, because roughly five sightings per pass covered clusters of two or more devices and anything that arrived and left between passes is invisible.
- **Positional accuracy.** Coordinates come from a phone GPS fix taken while moving, with typical accuracy of a few metres and larger error near the bridge structure. The 40 m clustering radius accommodates this; it may merge two genuinely distinct parking spots that sit close together.
- **Episode identity.** As set out in §4, sightings at one coordinate cannot distinguish a single stationary device from successive devices left in the same place. Both readings support intervention; only the operator's telemetry can settle which applies.
- **Dwell times are lower bounds.** An episode is measured from first to last sighting, so a device may have arrived earlier and stayed later than recorded.
- **Operator attribution.** Brand is the rider's contemporaneous visual observation and is not encoded in the data. No per-location table in this report attributes a device to an operator.
- **Period.** 2026-08-03 to 2026-08-13 — 11 calendar days, 8 of them with rides. Five of the 14 trips fell on days with only one leg recorded.
- **Extent.** Reports span 38.81543° to 38.88167° N and 77.03415° to 77.06244° W. Three fall outside the corridor's core: one roughly 2.8 km to the south near Potomac Yard, and two just beyond the northern end of the bridge crossing. All three are retained in every total in this report.

A Appendix — all recorded locations

All 39 locations, ranked by report count.

#	COORDINATES (WGS 84)	SEGMENT	DEVICES	SIGHTINGS	LONGEST STAY	FIRST – LAST SEEN
1	38.84143, -77.04793	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	1	14	10d	08-03 – 08-13
2	38.87460, -77.04515	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	12	10d	08-03 – 08-13
3	38.86987, -77.04018	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	12	8d	08-03 – 08-12
4	38.87638, -77.04187	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	11	7d	08-06 – 08-13
5	38.87329, -77.04290	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	10	9d	08-04 – 08-13
6	38.86146, -77.04486	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	7	7d	08-04 – 08-11
7	38.86759, -77.03854	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	7	3d	08-10 – 08-13
8	38.87795, -77.04036	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	7	3d	08-10 – 08-13
9	38.86935, -77.03986	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	6	3d	08-10 – 08-13
10	38.87526, -77.04295	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	6	3d	08-10 – 08-13
11	38.86571, -77.03813	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	5	3d	08-04 – 08-13
12	38.86052, -77.04543	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	4	2d	08-04 – 08-13
13	38.84132, -77.04868	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	1	4	1d	08-10 – 08-11

#	COORDINATES (WGS 84)	SEGMENT	DEVICES	SIGHTINGS	LONGEST STAY	FIRST – LAST SEEN
14	38.86199, -77.04442	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	3	1d	08-03 – 08-04
15	38.87367, -77.04324	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	3	3	0d	08-04 – 08-12
16	38.87664, -77.04163	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	2	3	1d	08-06 – 08-12
17	38.86527, -77.03860	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	3	1d	08-12 – 08-13
18	38.87446, -77.04465	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	2	2	0d	08-04 – 08-12
19	38.84117, -77.05020	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	2	2	0d	08-04 – 08-07
20	38.86437, -77.04166	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	2	2	0d	08-10 – 08-13
21	38.84177, -77.04821	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	2	2	0d	08-10 – 08-12
22	38.86089, -77.04553	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	2	1d	08-11 – 08-12
23	38.86341, -77.04290	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	1	0d	08-03 – 08-03
24	38.81543, -77.06244	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	1	1	0d	08-03 – 08-03
25	38.87427, -77.04399	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-04 – 08-04
26	38.88128, -77.03435	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-06 – 08-06

#	COORDINATES (WGS 84)	SEGMENT	DEVICES	SIGHTINGS	LONGEST STAY	FIRST – LAST SEEN
27	38.88167, -77.03415	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-06 – 08-06
28	38.87893, -77.03940	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-06 – 08-06
29	38.84116, -77.05074	Four Mile Run / Potomac Yard	1	1	0d	08-06 – 08-06
30	38.85238, -77.04714	Airport frontage	1	1	0d	08-07 – 08-07
31	38.87930, -77.03880	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-07 – 08-07
32	38.87990, -77.03591	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-07 – 08-07
33	38.86867, -77.03913	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	1	0d	08-10 – 08-10
34	38.86885, -77.03967	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	1	0d	08-10 – 08-10
35	38.87556, -77.04267	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-10 – 08-10
36	38.85456, -77.04665	Airport frontage	1	1	0d	08-10 – 08-10
37	38.87690, -77.04134	14th Street Bridge approach & north trail	1	1	0d	08-11 – 08-11
38	38.87001, -77.04082	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	1	0d	08-11 – 08-11
39	38.86956, -77.04060	Gravelly Point / Roaches Run	1	1	0d	08-11 – 08-11

Prepared from 144 GPS-tagged rider reports collected 2026-08-03 to 2026-08-13 using BumpyRide for iOS. Coordinates are WGS 84 decimal degrees. Times are local (UTC-4). Locations were grouped with a 40 m greedy spatial clustering pass; all other figures are direct counts from the source records. Underlying data available on request.