



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

April 2 , 2009

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Chairman Bulova and Board Members:

My name is Stella Koch. I am the Chair of the Environmental Quality Advisory Council and am testifying on the Council's behalf.

EQAC appreciates and accepts the significant budget trimming that has to occur this year to allow the county to achieve a balanced budget. However there are four proposed program reductions affecting the environmental that we would like to bring to your attention.

### AIR QUALITY

#### **On the proposed closing of the Fairfax County air quality monitoring program**

Fairfax County is part of Washington DC regional nonattainment area for both the 8-hour ozone standard and for particulate matter. One of the proposed budget cuts would eliminate the staff that services the four Fairfax County air quality monitors but not the monitors themselves. Because these four monitors have Health Department data that shows exceedances for ozone, Fairfax will not be in a position to close its four air quality monitors because that would place them in violation of relevant air quality regulations (CFR 40 Part 58, Subpart B §58.14). EQAC is somewhat at loss as to how the monitors will operate without appropriate staff and data collection.

We have these concerns:

- All the Fairfax monitors will show exceedances of the new federal ozone standard: the Mount Vernon monitor even exceeded the old ozone standard;
- Newer revised federal standards will be even harder to meet. We therefore believe staffing these four monitors is essential
- This information is critical for informing the residents of the Metropolitan Washington DC area, including Fairfax County, about the quality of the air that we breathe;
- The loss of this data would likely make it difficult to demonstrate attainment of the standard as ozone levels decrease.

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We urge you to fund the staff of air quality monitoring program.

**On the proposed elimination or reduction of service on certain bus routes**

Pages 74-75 of the Lines of Business Reduction Impact Statements show that over 1,000,000 bus trips would be eliminated by the proposed budget cuts. We have concerns that this may exacerbate the VOC and NOX pollution by creating more single occupancy vehicle traffic. EQAC notes the potential differences between air pollution from buses and the amount of air pollution if that same number of people were in single occupancy cars could be significant.

We also have concerns about the social impacts these reductions may have as they may disproportionately affect the at-risk populations who do not have access to personal transportation.

We urge the Board to be aware of both the air quality implications and social implications as they consider these budget cuts.

**Loss of the deer and geese management programs.**

Retention of the deer/geese management program is critical since even a one-year hiatus would cost the county much of the progress that has been made over the past decade. Since much of the deer management program has been conducted in our parks, there are now areas of regrowth in the understory vegetation, which is critical to the biodiversity of parkland vegetation and the sustainability of habitat for many smaller animal species.

Goose management has become ever more critical since increasing numbers of the geese in our area have become resident rather than migratory. Scientific studies have shown that fully one-third of the fecal coliform pollution of our lakes, ponds, and watercourses is due to the excrement of geese and ducks. Some of these lakes and watercourses are an irreplaceable part of our drinking water supply, and the shores of these waterbodies are made unusable for recreational purposes due to the fouling by goose excrement. Because there is a dearth of natural predators, the goose egg addling programs are crucial to keeping the goose population in check.

For both of these programs, any break in attempting to control these populations merely gives the deer and the geese an even more competitive advantage for population increases.

We urge the board to consider a way to continue these programs.

**Disproportionate Cuts to the Natural Resource Management Program in the Park Authority Budget**

While members of EQAC may understand why this happened, we have significant concerns that the over 40% cut in the Natural Resource Management Program represents a disproportionate cut on for one section of the Park management system. We ask that you seek some balance in these cuts.

We hope you will factor these concerns into your budget considerations. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

SMK

cc:

Environmental Quality Advisory Council  
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