



County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee

FROM: Gabriel Zakkak, Director, Department of Code Compliance (DCC)
Jai Cole, Executive Director, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA)
Jose Comayagua, Director, Facilities Management Department (FMD)
Sara Silverman, Assistant County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney (OCA)

DATE: February 28, 2023

SUBJECT: County Response to the Bamboo Ordinance on Public Land

The Fairfax County Running Bamboo Ordinance took effect on January 1, 2023, prohibiting landowners in Fairfax County from allowing running bamboo to spread from their property to any public right-of-way or adjoining property that they do not own. County public land managers within FMD and FCPA have responded by developing planning and management strategies to comply with the ordinance and meet the requests of the public. They are working together to share information, methodologies, and management strategies; to coordinate outreach providing information to the public; and to support the ordinance.

DCC, the agency responsible for enforcing the ordinance, has focused on establishing a dialogue with landowners to educate them about the ordinance and explain how to comply with it. For properties identified as violating the ordinance, DCC seeks progress toward compliance within a reasonable timeframe and will conduct site visits and investigations to assess the progress and effectiveness of bamboo management strategies. DCC believes that it has sufficient staff to enforce the ordinance at this time, given the current volume of complaints.

DCC has engaged with FCPS and they are actively inspecting and taking appropriate action to suppress the spreading of bamboo. FCPS grounds management crews will work with neighboring property owners to maintain compliance with the bamboo ordinance.

FMD is successfully managing known bamboo occurrences on County-owned land. It has identified, removed, and begun treating approximately one-and-a-half acres of bamboo on eight properties. FMD does not anticipate a need for additional funding to manage bamboo on Board-owned property.

FCPA is tracking and mapping bamboo complaints and occurrences of bamboo on FCPA property. Currently, FCPA has identified more than 185 bamboo patches (250 acres). In response, FCPA developed its bamboo project prioritization protocol, which prioritizes bamboo removal efforts based on site conditions, cooperation from neighboring landowners, the Fairfax County Vulnerability Index, and other factors. FCPA continues to support and

contribute to outreach efforts for the new ordinance by serving as bamboo subject matter experts, speaking with the public, and distributing running bamboo educational materials. FCPA is committed to bamboo management on parkland in the long term. Given the magnitude of FCPA's bamboo management program, FCPA requested \$500,000 for FY24 to fund contracted bamboo removal projects on FCPA property and one full-time Ecologist position to manage project prioritization and respond to citizen inquiries. This funding was not included in the County Executive's advertised budget on February 21, 2023; however, FCPA is working with DMB to request funding in third quarter.

Cc: Aimee Vosper, Deputy Director, FCPA
Laura Seidler, Deputy Director, FMD
Laura Grape, Resource Management Division Director, FCPA
Justin Moss, Director Facilities Management, FCPS
John Burke, Natural Resources Branch Manager, FCPA
Shane Flannigan, Management Analyst, FMD
Matthew Mertz, Code Specialist, DCC