



April 1, 2022

Ann Wheeler, Chair
Prince William Board of County Supervisors
1 County Complex
Prince William VA 22102

Dear Chair Wheeler,

Fairfax Water recently wrote a compelling letter outlining the importance of Prince William County (PWC) in protecting the Occoquan Reservoir, the primary drinking water source for much of Eastern Prince William.

In its letter, Fairfax Water points out that PWC is the most populous jurisdiction in the Occoquan watershed as well as the one with the largest land area. Land use decisions within the Occoquan Reservoir watershed impact water quality, for better or worse.

The Planning Office has multiple efforts underway that could significantly change the character of the County and the sustainability of the Occoquan Reservoir. Together the PW Digital Gateway, Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District, and changes to the County's Long Range Land Use Map propose to replace more than 2,000 acres of Rural Crescent fields and forests with the impervious surfaces needed for data centers.

In addition, a proposed Agricultural and Forestal Designation would double densities in the Rural Crescent, with new "rural place types" in some areas that would add even more density. Another approximate $\pm 1,800$ acres of land in the Rural Crescent in Nokesville are proposed for Industrial Employment uses.

Given the magnitude of the proposed changes, Fairfax Water strongly recommends a Comprehensive Study, led by the Occoquan Basin Policy Board, to (1) assess the individual and cumulative impacts from the proposed development, and (2) identify opportunities to prevent water quality degradation in the Occoquan Reservoir.

Prince William Board of County Supervisors

Page 2

April 1, 2022

The model needed for the study is already developed, funded in part by PWC, and available to NVRC members, such as PW. The Occoquan Reservoir is already highly urbanized, which, as a water supply, is unique. It is critical to understand the potential short and long term impacts before making decisions.

We urge the BOCS to follow through with a study as well as extend an invitation to Fairfax Water to provide a presentation at an afternoon BOCS meeting to review the concerns raised in its letter and create an opportunity for discussion. Clean water is critical to the future of PWC.

Kim Hosen
Prince William Conservation Alliance
kim@pwconserve.org

Nancy Vehrs
Virginia Native Plant Society
nvehrs1@yahoo.com

Stewart Schwartz
Coalition for Smarter Growth
stewart@smartergrowth.net

Kyle Hart
National Parks Conservation Association
khart@ncpa.org

Ann Bennett
Sierra Club Great Falls Group.
ann.bennettrtw@gmail.com

Julie Bolthouse
Piedmont Environ. Council
jbolthouse@pecva.org

Joseph Eaves
Manassas Battlefield Trust
josepheaves@gmail.com

Max Hokit
American Battlefield Trust
mhokit@battlefields.org

cc: Prince William County Board of Supervisors