

COPY



THE FRIENDS OF DYKE MARSH

P.O. BOX 7183
Alexandria, VA 22307-0183

Please reply to -
7708 Tauxemont Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22308

May 8, 2008

The Honorable Gerry Connolly, Chairman
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
12000 Government Center Parkway
Suite 530
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-0079

Dear Chairman Connolly:

I write on behalf of the Friends of Dyke Marsh to share our concerns about the Final Flood Damage Reduction Analysis for the Belle Haven Watershed, prepared by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District. We very much appreciate Supervisor Hyland's and the county's outreach to the public.

We hope to work with officials and the community to find a solution to prevent future flooding of the Belle View area, a solution that is consistent with the preservation and restoration of Dyke Marsh.

Dyke Marsh, at 485 acres, is one of the last large freshwater tidal marshes along the Potomac River shoreline in the Washington, D.C., area, a shoreline once lined by a dynamic system of wetlands. It has existed at least for 5,000 to 7,000 years.

The U. S. Congress designated Dyke Marsh in 1959 as part of the National Park System "so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount." The marsh is unusual because it has survived in a large metropolitan, heavily developed area. It is one of the most significant temperate, climax, riverine, narrow-leaved, cattail marshes in the U. S. National Park System nationwide. Thus, it is an important local and national resource.

In this wetland, there are 300 known species of plants, 6,000 arthropods, 38 fish 16 reptiles, 14 amphibians and over 230 birds. Over the years, there has been a decline in many species and some are now extinct from Dyke Marsh.

We are pleased that the COE study recognizes the value of Dyke Marsh by stating, the "tidal wetlands known as Dyke Marsh, which is one of the last remaining natural wetland areas in Fairfax County. The wetlands are excellent habitat for wildlife and the area is widely used by tourists and local residents for recreational purposes (biking, hiking, etc. . .). Thus, this area is a *high priority for preservation by state and federal agencies. Any proposed development in these areas would undergo a rigorous review process by regulating agencies, and also, any proposed development would certainly have negative environmental and recreational effects.*" [emphasis mine]

We fully concur that flood control structures would have negative environmental impacts.

Wetlands Restoration Omitted

As I expressed at the public meeting, we are very disappointed that the Corps of Engineers' study proposes only structural solutions. We strongly urge that the county consider restoring wetlands in the area as part of the flooding solution.

The Dyke Marsh/Hunting Creek/Cameron Run ecosystem has lost much of its natural ability to absorb floodwaters.

- Dyke Marsh has been dredged and filled. Almost half of it has been destroyed.
- The Cameron Run/Hunting Creek area is highly degraded and severely altered by fill and sedimentation, including the Belle Haven Golf Course, Woodrow Wilson Bridge, I-95/495, Hunting Terrace Apartments, the George Washington Memorial Parkway and upstream development.

A March 1976 Virginia Institute for Marine Sciences tidal marsh inventory for the County, Alexandria and Arlington County observed, "The shoreline of this creek [Hunting Creek] has been extensively altered by filling and bulkheading, in fact, many buildings and roads now exist on what was once marsh or open water." It also states, "Hunting Creek has also been extensively altered. Buildings and roads now sit on former wetlands. . . ." Thus, Cameron Run and Hunting Creek have lost a chain of wetlands, forests, floodplains and ponds that once helped to control water and runoff.

The following is from an April 20, 1993 letter from the National Park Service: "Hunting Creek . . . was undoubtedly a dominant factor in the evolution of Dyke Marsh through its deposition of sediment and diversion of strong river

currents away from the marsh. The force of Hunting Creek has been muted lately as the confluence with the Potomac has been boxed in with the construction of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, the Capital Beltway (Route 495) and the Hunting Towers apartment complex. The result of the restriction of Hunting Creek has been the deposition of natural silts upstream in Hunting Creek, rather than in the marsh."

- Natural streams have been dammed, channelized and piped and natural stream buffers have been altered, destroyed and "hardened."

This area has lost its natural flood control capacity.

Shortcomings of the Study

The Corps' study overlooks several key points:

- Dyke Marsh, like all wetlands, plays an important role in flood control because wetlands act as "sponges" during flood events. A one-acre wetland can typically store about three-acre feet or one million gallons of water, according to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Dyke Marsh is excellent habitat for many biological and ecological purposes and resources (not just for wildlife).
- Dyke Marsh is also used for education and scientific study (not just for recreation). For example, Georgetown and George Mason University scientists conduct research there.
- Dyke Marsh is a high priority for the public and for local governments (not just for state and federal agencies).

Restore Wetlands

We strongly urge that you include the preservation and restoration of wetlands as part of the solution to flooding. "Wetland restoration and preservation is an important component of a comprehensive flood protection strategy," according to U. S. EPA in "Wetlands: Protecting Life and Property from Flooding."

We offer the following recommendations:

Evaluate the Hunting Creek embayment, Hunting Creek and Cameron Run for the potential of restoring forests, stream buffers, ponds and wetlands since they have lost much of their natural ability to absorb water.

Urge the Belle Haven Country Club and Golf Course to examine areas for wetland restoration, especially in light of the fill used to create the golf course. In 2002, the Fairfax County Wetlands Board gave the Club a permit to construct wetlands on the west side of the parkway.

Closely coordinate the flood control projects with the restoration of Dyke Marsh consistent with its preservation and restoration. The National Park Service is preparing an environmental impact statement to restore Dyke Marsh. Scientists and NPS officials have determined that restoration is feasible and desirable.

Evaluate areas west of Dyke Marsh for wetlands restoration or creation.

Factor into plans anticipated sea level rise. "The Potomac's level has risen about a foot in the past 100 years . . . And the river is now rising about an inch a decade, with greater increases possible as global warming intensifies," wrote Steve Olson, November 2007 *Washingtonian* magazine. See also Final Report, "Research Supporting Evaluation and Restoration of Dyke Marsh, by Katharina A. M. Engelhardt, Appalachian Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science.

In developing flood control plans, the county and the Corps should coordinate with --

- the National Park Service's plans to restore Dyke Marsh;
- the county's Cameron Run Watershed study;
- the county's Belle Haven Watershed Study;
- the Cameron Run Feasibility Study (Alexandria, Fairfax County, US COE)
- the city of Alexandria's development plans (e.g., Hunting Terrace condominiums, Hunting Towers, a new sewage plant on Hooff's Run)

Again, we urge you to include the restoration of wetlands in and around Dyke Marsh, on the western side of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and in the

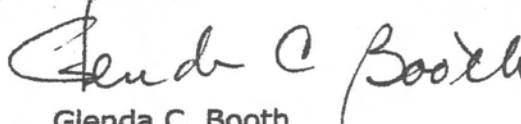
The Honorable Gerry Connolly

Page 5

Hunting Creek/Cameron Run waterway. We urge you to coordinate flood control projects closely with the U. S. National Park Service's plans to restore Dyke Marsh.

Again, we greatly appreciate your efforts and we look forward to working with you, the county, the Corps of Engineers and the Mount Vernon community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Glenda C. Booth".

Glenda C. Booth
President

cc: The Honorable Gerry Hyland, Supervisor, Mount Vernon District
The Honorable Jim Moran, U. S. House of Representatives
Colonel Peter Mueller, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
The Honorable Patsy Ticer, Virginia Senate
The Honorable David Englin, Virginia House of Delegates
Mr. David Vela, Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway
Ms. Katherine Ward, Co-Chair, Mount Vernon Council of Citizen Associations



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

L. Preston Bryant, Jr.
Secretary of Natural Resources

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Robert W. Duncan
Executive Director

May 22, 2008

Superintendent
George Washington Memorial Parkway
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
Park Headquarters, Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

RE: Dyke Marsh Preserve
Restoration & Long-Term
Mgt. Plan/ EIS scoping
ESSLog # 25162

Dear Superintendent:

We have reviewed the National Park Service's (NPS) letter notice of development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental and social impacts of the restoration and long-term management of Dyke Marsh Preserve (Preserve). Upon review of the relevant information and our attendance at the public scoping meeting held on April 22, 2008, we offer the following comments and recommendations. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), as the Commonwealth's wildlife and freshwater fish management agency, exercises full law enforcement and regulatory jurisdiction over those resources, inclusive of State or Federally *Endangered* or *Threatened* species, but excluding listed insects. We are a consulting agency under the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*), and we provide environmental analysis of projects or permit applications coordinated through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other state or federal agencies. Our role in these procedures is to determine likely impacts upon fish and wildlife resources and habitats, and to recommend appropriate measures to avoid, reduce, or compensate for those impacts.

Upon review of our data for the presence of listed wildlife resources, it has been determined that although no state Threatened bald eagle nesting locations are documented on or immediately adjacent to the Preserve, Dyke Marsh serves as an important foraging area for this species. We recommend that all restoration and management activities initiated on the Preserve are performed in a manner protective of this species and in enhancement of foraging habitat. We recommend

that the NPS coordinate closely with Jeff Cooper, VDGIF Region V Wildlife Diversity Biologist, at 540-899-4169 regarding the protection of bald eagles on this site.

In addition, the Potomac River has been designated a Confirmed Anadromous Fish Use Area. Anadromous fishes use the Potomac River in this area mainly as a migratory pathway during late winter into late spring for movement to spawning grounds. We recommend that all marsh and shoreline activities be performed in a manner protective of this resource. We support activities aimed at improving water quality, reducing sedimentation, and restoring spawning and nursery habitats for all aquatic species, including anadromous fishes. We recommend coordination with John Kauffman, VDGIF Region V Fisheries Manager, at 434-296-4731 regarding the protection and enhancement of these resources.

Although it is difficult for us to make specific comments about restoration and management activities at Dyke Marsh until specific projects are developed and proposed, we generally support the restoration of marsh and wetland habitats at this Preserve. We support the beneficial use of any clean dredge spoil from the area for use at this site. We are happy to assist the NPS in restoration and management efforts at Dyke Marsh and recommend continued coordination with our agency regarding future projects.

VDGIF supports the continuation of waterfowl hunting opportunities in and around the Preserve. The floating blind program that has been in operation in the public waters off of Dyke Marsh for over 15 years appears to be successful and has not resulted in any reported accidents or injuries to hunters or the public. We support the continuation of hunter access at the Marina. We believe it is very important that hunters be allowed the opportunity to carry cased shotguns from their cars to the marina area. We recommend consideration of expanding hunting opportunities and access on the Preserve and are willing to assist the NPS in these efforts.

Dyke Marsh Preserve is a very important wildlife viewing site. The Preserve features a well-developed wetland forest, expansive mudflats, and vistas of the Potomac River. Over 300 species of birds have been seen at this park. The Preserve's juxtaposition to the Potomac River and urban environments makes it an oasis for wildlife enthusiasts. Dyke Marsh Preserve is included in the VDGIF's Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail as site 2 on the Mason Neck Loop. The site includes a trail that runs through the forested wetlands and mudflats that provides visitors the opportunity to view eagles, foraging shorebirds, and waterfowl, as well as spring and fall migrant songbirds. We support maintenance of this site and the expansion of wildlife viewing opportunities within the Preserve. We would be happy to assist the NPS in identifying new opportunities for wildlife viewing at Dyke Marsh.

We recommend continued coordination with our agency regarding the management of wildlife on the Preserve, access to the Preserve for hunting and wildlife watching, and the avoidance and minimization of impacts upon wildlife and their habitats during specific restoration or management projects. As stated above, we are willing to assist the NPS in efforts to enhance wildlife habitats and manage wildlife resources under our jurisdiction. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Superintendent

05/22/2008

Page 3 of 3

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the development of the EIS. Please contact me or Amy Ewing 804-367-6913 if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Fernald", written in a cursive style.

Raymond T. Fernald, Manager
Nongame and Environmental Programs

Cc: Robert Duncan, VDGIF
David. Whitehurst, VDGIF
Gary Martel, VDGIF
Bob Ellis, VDGIF
Dee Watts, VDGIF



MOUNT VERNON GROUP

ALEXANDRIA, ARLINGTON COUNTY, FAIRFAX COUNTY, FALLS CHURCH, AND PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
VIRGINIA



May 19, 2008

Mr. David Vela, Superintendent
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Mr. Vela:

The Mount Vernon Group of the Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club supports the National Park Service's interest in the restoration of Dyke Marsh. I'm writing to you to encourage the NPS to move forward with the environmental impact statement process for this important initiative.

The Sierra Club is particularly interested in Dyke Marsh because it is the last major element of the extensive freshwater tidal marshes that used to exist along the Potomac River. Because so much of the nation's wetlands have been lost to development—and with more expected to diminish as sea levels rise with global warming—it's essential that we act as responsible stewards of the remaining freshwater wetlands.

Not only does Dyke Marsh play an important role in the ecological health of our area (and for the river, specifically), but it is a terrific site for environmental education. Each year thousands of people use the Mount Vernon Trail, which as you know runs through the Marsh, and learn about the freshwater wetland habitat through the signage and the scenery itself.

We hope that the Park Service will move forward expeditiously with the environmental impact statement process, and we look forward to working with you to restore this national treasure. Please let us know how we can help.

Sincerely,

Mary Kadera
Chair, Mount Vernon Group



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

22 May 2008

Mr. David Vela, Superintendent
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
National Park Service Headquarters
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Superintendent Vela:

Fairfax County has received the National Park Service's (NPS) Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Dyke Marsh Wetland and Restoration and Long-Term Management Plan. Our comments are based upon information presented by NPS staff at its April 22, 2008 public scoping meeting.

As you are aware, the 485-acre Dyke Marsh National Wildlife Preserve is the largest remaining freshwater tidal wetland in the Washington Metropolitan Area. Dyke Marsh provides numerous cultural and natural benefits. Fairfax County strongly supports the NPS's efforts to develop and implement a plan for the restoration and long term management of this tidal freshwater marsh and other associated wetland habitats lost or impacted in Dyke Marsh Preserve on the Potomac River. As approximately 270 acres of marshland were dredged for sand and gravel from 1940-1972, we request that the EIS include detailed information on constituent material to be used to re-establish the marsh. If the use of dredge spoil is being considered, it should be demonstrated through testing that such material is safe and uncontaminated, and closely matches the texture and composition of the land, which comprises the existing marsh. We further recommend that NPS confer with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science regarding the design of the restoration and use of materials for the restoration.

Please be advised that disturbance in the inter-tidal area may be subject to review and approval by the Fairfax County Wetlands Board. The Wetlands Board review process would include a public hearing and would be separate from the EIS review process.

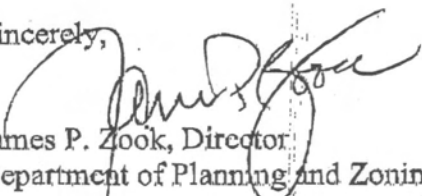
Again, we commend NPS in its efforts to restore and protect Dyke Marsh. We appreciate the opportunity to comment during this public scoping period. If you have any questions about our comments, feel free to contact Mary Ann Welton at 703-324-1380.

Department of Planning and Zoning
Planning Division
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 730
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5509
Phone 703-324-1380
Fax 703-324-3056
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/



National Park Service
May 22, 2008
Page 2

Sincerely,



James P. Zook, Director
Department of Planning and Zoning

cc: Board of Supervisors
Fairfax County Wetlands Board
Anthony H. Griffin, County Executive
Robert A. Stalzer, Deputy County Executive
Pamela G. Nee, Chief, Environment and Development Review Branch, DPZ
Mary Ann Welton, Environmental Planner, DPZ
Julie Bradshaw, Senior Marine Scientist, Virginia Institute of Marine Science



William D. Euille
Mayor

City of Alexandria, Virginia

301 King Street, Suite 2300

Alexandria, Virginia 22314



City Hall (703) 838-4500

Home (703) 836-2680

Fax (703) 838-6433

alexvamayor@aol.com

May 21, 2008

Superintendent
National Park Service, Park Headquarters
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Superintendent:

On behalf of the City of Alexandria, I want to express the City's support for the restoration of Dyke Marsh. Restoring one of the last remaining tidal marshes along the Potomac River in the Washington D.C. area will enhance the recreational and educational opportunities available for local residents and visitors alike. This restoration will help reestablish historic tidal flows and provide an improved ecosystem that will benefit the overall Potomac Watershed and aide in meeting the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Act.

If restoration efforts include bringing off site material in to replace some of the approximately 270 acres of marshlands that were lost due to dredging between 1940 and 1972, the City would be willing to explore the possibility of providing material from maintenance activities along Cameron Run and Holmes Run should that opportunity arise. Please contact William Skrabak, Director, Office of Environmental Quality at (703) 519-3400 Ext. 163 with any questions.

Sincerely,

William D. Euille
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Members of City Council
James K. Hartmann, City Manager

"Home Town of George Washington and Robert E. Lee"



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

22 May 2008

Mr. David Vela, Superintendent
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
National Park Service Headquarters
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Superintendent Vela:

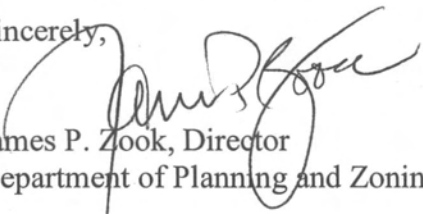
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Again, we commend NPS in its efforts to restore and protect Dyke Marsh. We appreciate the opportunity to comment during this public scoping period. If you have any questions about our comments, feel free to contact Mary Ann Welton at 703-324-1380.

Sincerely,



James P. Zook, Director
Department of Planning and Zoning

cc: Board of Supervisors
Fairfax County Wetlands Board
Anthony H. Griffin, County Executive
Robert A. Stalzer, Deputy County Executive
Pamela G. Nee, Chief, Environment and Development Review Branch, DPZ
Mary Ann Welton, Environmental Planner, DPZ
Julie Bradshaw, Senior Marine Scientist, Virginia Institute of Marine Science



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

May 22, 2008

Mr. David Vela, Superintendent
George Washington Memorial Parkway
U. S. National Park Service
Turkey Run Park
McLean, Virginia 22101

Dear Mr. Vela:

On behalf of the members of the Fairfax County Wetlands Board, I write to support your efforts to restore Dyke Marsh and to prepare a management plan. We offer these comments as part of your environmental impact statement process.

Dyke Marsh is one of the last large freshwater tidal marshes along the Potomac River shoreline in the Washington, D.C., area, a shoreline once lined by a dynamic system of wetlands. Wetlands are among most productive ecosystems in the world with an immense variety of species. Virginia Institute of Marine Science biologist, Kirk Havens, has said, "In an area roughly the size of an average desk top, there can be as many as 8,300 animals."

Wetlands provide ecological services such as water quality enhancement, resident and migratory wildlife habitat, spawning and nursery grounds, attenuation of tidal energy, shoreline stabilization, protection against erosion from waves and currents and control of flooding. A restored Dyke Marsh can enhance these ecological services.

Virginia has lost 42 percent of its wetlands. In addition, submerged aquatic vegetation in the Chesapeake Bay watershed has dropped from 200,000 acres to 38,000 or less, according to the Chesapeake Bay Program. Most of the wetlands that once lined the

Wetlands Board
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 730
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5509
Phone 703 324-1380
FAX 703 324-3056

Potomac River have been destroyed. In Fairfax County, wetlands are less than one percent of the land area. A restored Dyke Marsh could help reverse some of our wetland losses and help fulfill the Commonwealth's commitment to restore the state's wetlands.

We suggest that the restoration and management plans also focus on the following:

- Establishing hydrology, tidal flows and water levels that maximize the marsh's acreage and ecological services to the degree practicable;

- Encouraging the preservation and return of native vegetation and animals;

- Controlling and discouraging non-native plants and animals;

- Addressing all zones of Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve;

- Evaluating stresses on the "western" marsh, on the west side of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and take necessary actions to preserve and restore the marsh;

- Restoring areas excavated and their ecological functions, including areas at the south end of the marsh, to their pre-dredged condition and using appropriate fill;

- Removing construction and other debris dumped in the marsh, as long as removal does not have an adverse impact on the marsh;

- Addressing erosion and preventing future erosion, including "living shorelines" where appropriate; and

- Continue educational, interpretative and research programs to enhance public appreciation of wetlands.

We urge you to consider the guidelines of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and to consult with the wetlands scientists of the Virginia Institute for Marine Science as you go forward.

Mr. David Vela

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We appreciate the National Park Service's initiation of this process and look forward to supporting the restoration of Dyke Marsh.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenda C. Booth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Glenda" being more prominent than the last name "Booth".

Glenda C. Booth

Chair

Fairfax County Wetlands Board

7708 Tauxemont Road

Alexandria, VA 22308



COPY

THE FRIENDS OF DYKE MARSH

P.O. BOX 7183
Alexandria, VA 22307-0183

May 21, 2008

The Honorable Penelope A. Gross, Chair
Environment Committee
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
6507 Columbia Pike
Annandale, Virginia 22003-2029

Dear Supervisor Gross,

I am writing to share the concerns of the Friends of Dyke Marsh about the Final Flood Damage Reduction Analysis for the Belle Haven Watershed, prepared by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District.

We understand that the Board's Environment Committee will consider a workplan at your June 9 meeting which will include proceeding with a feasibility study for the Belle Haven floodwall and levee. We hope you can provide copies of this letter to other members of the committee and that the committee will give our concerns full consideration .

In addition, we strongly urge that the National Park Service be included in all studies and design planning since many of these structures would be on NPS land and they could adversely affect their property.

Unfortunately, I will unavoidably be out of town on June 9 and cannot attend the meeting.

I hope you will be in touch if I can be of any help.

Sincerely,

Glenda C. Booth
President
703-765-5233

cc: The Honorable Gerry Hyland

✓ Mr. Jon James, Acting Superintendent, George Washington Memorial
Parkway



FedEnvironmentChr200
7@fairfsxfederation.org
05/23/2008 08:16 PM
AST

To: gwmp_superintendent@nps.gov
CC:
Subject: From NPS.gov: Dyke Marsh Park Restoration and Management Plan

Email submitted from: /gwmp/contacts.htm

Mailing Address

Address Line 1: Federation Environmental Chair

Address Line 2: 4022 Hummer Road

City: Annandale

State / Province/Region: VA

Zip / Postal Code: 22003

Country: USA

At the Board meeting for the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association (Fairfax Federation) last night (May 22nd), the Board voted to support the National Park Service's efforts to prepare restoration and management plans for Dyke Marsh through the environmental impact statement process.

I apologise for the lateness of our comments, but the Board only meets once a month and it so happens that the May meeting was scheduled some time ago.

The Fairfax Federation only takes positions on issues that are of county-wide interest. Please keep me informed on the development of your restoration and management planning efforts.

Flint Webb, P.E.

Environmental Chair

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations



MID-ATLANTIC FIELD OFFICE
34 Defense Street, Suite 200
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-3103
410.224.6620 Fax 410.224.2077
www.ducks.org

May 15, 2008

Superintendent David Vela
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Park Headquarters Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Mr. Vela:

I am writing on behalf of Ducks Unlimited (DU) to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Dyke Marsh Wetland Restoration and Long Term Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. DU supports the National Park Service's (NPS) plan to restore Dyke Marsh. This project will provide much needed wetland habitat that will benefit several species of waterfowl in addition to many other wildlife species.

DU has more than 13,000 members in 55 chapters throughout the state, in addition to nearly 1-million supporters nationwide. DU has protected and restored over 37,600 acres of wetlands and associated uplands in Virginia. DU and its members have taken an active interest in the restoration of Dyke Marsh and we look forward to seeing this project progress.

Specifically, we are interested in contributing directly to the restoration of Dyke Marsh in partnership with the NPS and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. By partnering on this project we can help determine the most effective approach to maximize the benefits of the marsh not only for wildlife diversity, but for recreation as well.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the restoration of Dyke Marsh and we look forward to working with the NPS to successfully restore this unique and important area. Please feel free to contact me to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Kurt Dyroff
Manager of Conservation Programs



The Audubon Society of Northern Virginia

4022 Hummer Road

Annandale, VA 22003

Phone: 703-256-6895 Fax: 703-256-2060

E-mail: fas@fairfaxaudubon.org

Website: <http://www.fairfaxaudubon.org>

Celebrating a quarter century protecting birds, other wildlife & their habitats throughout Northern Virginia.

May 2, 2008

Mr. David Vela, Superintendent
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, Virginia 22101

Dear Mr. Vela:

On behalf of the over 4,000 members of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, I write in support of the National Park Service's environmental impact statement plans to restore Dyke Marsh and develop a management plan and to provide comments.

In light of the loss of wetlands in the nation and the rapidly diminishing undeveloped land in Northern Virginia, the restoration of Dyke Marsh can play an important role in enhancing and creating habitat for many plants and animals.

Wetlands are among most productive ecosystems in the world, with an immense variety of species, including microbes, plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish and mammals.

Congress designated Dyke Marsh in 1959 as part of the National Park System "so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount." We believe that the restoration and management of the marsh should be consistent with that goal.

Dyke Marsh has existed at least for 5,000 to 7,000 years and is unusual because it has survived in a large metropolitan, heavily developed area. It is a national resource because it is one of the most significant temperate, climax, riverine, narrow-leaved, cattail marshes in the U. S. National Park system. Therefore, it is a national resource.

The marsh is home to 300 known species of plants, 6,000 arthropods, 38 fish, 16 reptiles, 14 amphibians, and over 270 species of birds. It is a prime habitat for wading birds, waterfowl and many species of migrating birds.

The marsh is very fragile. We understand that there has been a decline in some bird species, including the Marsh Wren, the Least Bittern, King Rail and Virginia Rail. There is at least one plant on the federal endangered and threatened species candidate list and one plant is extinct in Dyke Marsh (*Plantago cordata*). At least one fish, the Short-nosed sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) is on the federal endangered list.

We especially want to highlight the state of the Marsh wren as we understand it. Dyke Marsh supports the only known nesting population of Marsh wrens (*Cistothorus palustris*) in the upper Potomac tidal zone, a species once found all along the marshes of the Potomac River. Surveys suggest that there may have been a serious decline in Marsh wrens and Least bitterns in Dyke Marsh.

In terms of the Marsh wren, we are aware of these statistics:

1883 - "Hundreds of the large globular nests, affixed to the swaying reeds, used to be found in the bit of marsh bordering the Lee estate, and thence toward the Virginia end of Long Bridge [along the Potomac River] [Dr. David Johnston]

1950 - 87 singing males counted [Dr. David Johnston]

1998 - 2000 31 male territories and 7 breeding territories, thus 38 wrens [Sandra Spencer]

2007 - 6 established territories [Larry Cartwright]

We fully concur with the comments submitted by Sandra Spencer in which she recommended steps to restore and enhance the Marsh wren's habitat. Restoring and enhancing this habitat will benefit other species as well.

We believe that the restoration and management plan should focus on preserving and restoring native habitat and controlling non-native species. We also recommend that the plans focus on restoring wetlands lost to excavation, removing construction debris, restoring tidal flows and addressing erosion and sediment supplies, sea level

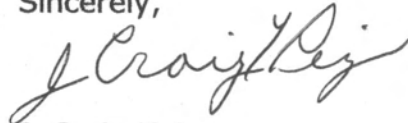
Mr. David Vela

Page 3

rise, impacts of river and marsh traffic, poaching, hunting, fishing, pollution, runoff, noise and trash.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our views and suggestions and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. Craig Heizer".

J. Craig Heizer
President



THE FRIENDS OF DYKE MARSH

P.O. BOX 7183
Alexandria, VA 22307-0183

May 21, 2008

Mr. Jon James
Acting Superintendent
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, Virginia 22101

Dear Mr. James:

On behalf of the Friends of Dyke Marsh, I am submitting several items making recommendations to the National Park Service on the restoration and management of Dyke Marsh.

- Comments of the Friends of Dyke Marsh
- A letter with 71 signers, including local elected and former officials
- A petition with 119 signers

These are submitted in response to your request for public comment on the NPS's preparation of a Wetland Restoration and Long-Term Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.

We appreciate this opportunity and look forward to working with you to restore and sustain Dyke Marsh.

Sincerely,

Glenda C. Booth
President
703-765-5233

**Comments of the Friends of Dyke Marsh
on the U. S. National Park Service
Environmental Impact Statement**

**Friends of Dyke Marsh
P. O. Box 7183, Alexandria, VA**

Glenda C. Booth, President (703) 770-8000

Glenda C. Booth

7708 Tauxemont Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22308

Note: Glenda Booth's
letter should be on
PERC This copy
is attached to the petition.
Robert O.

May 21, 2008

Overall Goal

The Friends of Dyke Marsh applaud and fully support the National Park Service's purpose and objectives of the environmental impact statement (EIS) as presented at the public scoping open house on April 22, 2008 and NPS's goals as stated in the "Need for Action" section of the document prepared for the public scoping meeting.

Dyke Marsh is a valuable and irreplaceable natural habitat located near our nation's capital. The habitat it provides for biodiversity and for the education and appreciation of the public has been seriously threatened.

The Friends of Dyke Marsh strongly support the scientifically-based and broadest possible restoration of the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.

We urge NPS to prepare a restoration plan and a long-term sustainable management plan that protects, restores and enhances the natural ecosystems in the total Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve and their ecological functions, emphasizing restoration of degraded areas, maintenance of the biodiversity of native species and allowing low-impact activities and access to the marsh for the purposes of passive recreation, education and scientific research. The end goal should be a stable and sustainable marsh with an area, ecology and species distribution approximating the historic marsh.

The EIS, management plan and preferred alternative should emphasize Congress's clear intent that Dyke Marsh is a wildlife preserve and should be restored and managed so that "so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount." (P. L. 86-41)

Congress Supports Restoration

The U. S. Congress has supported restoration of Dyke Marsh at least four times:

- The U. S. Senate Committee on Public Works report that accompanied the authorizing legislation that transferred this property to the National Park Service system, indicates that "future reclamation" was expected. (Report number 280, 86th Congress, May 11, 1959).
- In 1959, Congressman John Dingell, lead author of the Dyke Marsh legislation, stated during debate on the bill, "We expect that the Secretary will provide for the deposition of silt and waste from the dredging operations in such a way as to encourage the restoration of the marsh at the earliest possible moment."
- In 1974, in P. L. 93-251, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Army to assist NPS "to plan for, design and implement restoration of the historical and ecological values of Dyke Marsh."
- In 2007, Congress approved and the President signed a provision in the water projects bill, H. R. 1495, now P. L. 110-114, authorizing the Corps of Engineers to accept funds from NPS for the restoration of Dyke Marsh.

Listed below are issues that we believe the National Park Service should consider in preparing and evaluating alternatives for this project and for the management plan.

Restoration Recommendations

We recommend that the Dyke Marsh EIS and restoration plan address the following:

Ecology: The EIS should incorporate the overall ecology of the marsh as the central driving consideration. Consideration of specific species, such as the Marsh Wren, Least Bittern, declining species and endangered plants, for example, should be given attention, in the context of the overall ecology of the wetland.

Total Marsh: The EIS should focus on restoration of the entire marsh, all zones of the marsh and the upland areas of the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, to support the maximum natural, self-sustaining wetland possible.

"Western Marsh": The EIS should evaluate the impact of development, urbanization and human activities on the part of the marsh west of the parkway and the impact of the canals, "hardening" and channelization of streams in the Belle View and River Towers areas on the marsh and evaluate opportunities for better protecting and enhancing this part of the marsh.

Hydrology and Sedimentation: A full understanding of sedimentation, erosion and hydrology affecting Dyke Marsh is critical to the successful restoration and self-sustaining maintenance of Dyke Marsh. The EIS should analyze the river dynamics (e.g., scour, flooding, storm surges), tidal flows and erosion (wind, water, wakes) and give specific attention to how this affects deposition of sediments into Dyke Marsh. The preferred alternative should assure adequate sediment deposition to maintain a self-sustaining, healthy marsh. Another factor to be considered in ensuring adequate sedimentation and addressing erosion is the effect of continued sea level rise.

Hunting Creek and Dyke Marsh Tributaries: Directly related to hydrology and sedimentation are significant changes that have occurred to Hunting Creek and Cameron Run, their tributaries and to tributaries directly entering the marsh. The mouth of Hunting Creek has been significantly restricted by the construction of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and other fill. Cameron Run and Hunting Creek have been severely altered by I-95/495, its interchanges, the Belle Haven Golf Course, Hunting Towers, the Belle Haven Picnic Area and other modifications). Much of this is the result of the steady urbanization of the watershed of Dyke Marsh is a part. These developments have had significant impacts on downstream sedimentation and pollution, affecting Dyke Marsh and restoration efforts.

The EIS should assess changes in the role of Hunting Creek in supplying sediment to Dyke Marsh and how that influences restoration and sustainability of the marsh. The EIS should, in consultation with local jurisdictions, evaluate the health and role of streams flowing into the marsh.

Excavated Areas: The EIS should include and the preferred alternative should include restoration of all excavated areas, including excavated areas on the southern end of the marsh. These areas should be filled with appropriate, clean fill to their pre-dredged condition. Fill should be appropriately stabilized until the wetland is established. Restoration work should avoid sensitive seasons such as nesting and breeding seasons.

Dumped and Other Debris: Dumped and other debris and foreign materials should be evaluated as to whether they should be removed in a way that would not harm the marsh, to restore areas to their pre-disturbed condition. For example, restoration of the outer island and the area of the present observation decks toward the end of the boardwalk should include removal of old construction debris, such as concrete blocks and rebar, as long as the removal does not have adverse impacts.

Biological Resources: The EIS should include current inventories of the most significant biological resources of Dyke Marsh to establish a baseline.

Native and Non-Native Plants: The preferred alternative should provide for (1) planting native plants, encouraging colonization of native plants and re-introducing more native species in the entire marsh; (2) a monitoring plan (at a minimum for 10 years) for success and replanting if necessary to achieve appropriate cover; and (3) methods to discourage geese and other predators that might unduly and adversely impact vegetative cover. The preferred alternative should propose specific methods to control non-native species long term.

Traffic and Activities: The EIS should analyze the impacts of river and marsh traffic (human and marine), poaching, hunting and fishing on the wetland's natural resources. The EIS should provide data on river traffic trends in recent years.

Public Use: Analysis of options for some walkways, boardwalks, trails and interpretive signage to enhance visitor appreciation of the marsh and upland and to support passive recreation, with minimal impact on the natural resources of the marsh.

Evaluation of the impact of activities in the marsh, including the marina and marina-associated activities; fishing; poaching; hunting; pets; walking and hiking; nature study; photography; other recreational activities; research; surveys; and installation and management of nest boxes and other non-natural structures.

Management Plan Recommendations

The Friends of Dyke Marsh urge the National Park Service to propose a long-term sustainable management plan for the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve that protects and enhances the natural ecosystems within the marsh and its upland areas within the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, emphasizing restoration of degraded areas, maintenance of the biodiversity of native species and allowing low-impact activities and access to the marsh for the purposes of passive recreation, education and scientific research.

We recommend that the Dyke Marsh management plan address the following:

Native, Non-Native Species: Control of non-native species and encouragement of native species.

Protective Zones: Creation of a buffer zone and no-wake zone on the eastern, river boundary of the marsh to discourage motorized traffic, poaching and hunting.

Activities Enforcement: Enforcement of current rules prohibiting certain activities in the marsh, including jet skis, water skis, motor boats, possessing or carrying firearms, hunting and bicycling.

Pets: Placement of clear, appropriately placed signs requiring leashes on pets and cleanup of pet excrement.

Enforcement of current rules addressing pets, including requiring leashes on pets and cleanup of pet excrement, and prohibiting pets from entering the Potomac River.

Managing, Monitoring: Managing restoration; monitoring restoration and reporting regularly to the public on the success of restoration.

Boundaries: Marking of all boundaries, especially the eastern boundaries in the Potomac River that are not marked when the EIS is published.

Seasonal Restrictions: Clearly designating with signs and enforcing restricted areas during nesting and breeding season, other sensitive times and areas in which species are in decline.

Surveys: Conducting periodic surveys of natural resources and visitor use and conducting ongoing updates of existing surveys.

Traffic: Management polices to minimize impacts of river traffic on the marsh, to minimize boat traffic in the marsh and prohibit motorized boats in the marsh, including jet skis and water skis.

Pollution: Identification of sources and causes of pollution, runoff, noise and trash and methods to reduce them and minimize impacts on the marsh.

Public Use: Allowing low-impact, passive recreation only, interpretive and educational programs and scientific research.

Other potential projects that might affect or be affected by this project

We urge the National Park Service to consider the following projects and studies because of their relationship to Dyke Marsh:

Fairfax County and U. S. Corps of Engineers' February 2008 Final Flood Damage Reduction Analysis for Belle Haven Watershed, prepared by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District.

Fairfax County's Stream Protection Strategy Baseline Study, February 2001

Fairfax County's Cameron Run Watershed Plan

Fairfax County's Belle Haven Watershed Plan (not yet completed)

Fairfax County and U. S. Corps of Engineers' Huntington/Cameron Run Flood Damage Reduction Project

Fairfax County's Environmental Strategy and Cool Counties initiative

Fairfax County's Tree Action Plan and tree conservation ordinance

Fairfax County Park Authority Great Parks, Great Communities Plans

City of Alexandria's Environmental Action Plan

City of Alexandria's Waterfront Strategy

City of Alexandria's plans to build a new sewage treatment plant on Hooff's Run

High-rise Construction at Hunting Terrace Apartments and Hunting Towers

Woodrow Wilson Bridge expansion and mitigation projects

Interstate 95/495 widening

National Harbor, Prince Georges County, Maryland

Potomac River dredging

Virginia's Tributaries Strategy

Virginia's Wildlife Action Plan, especially imperiled species

Virginia's Natural Heritage Program, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage

Federal and State-listed endangered and threatened species and candidate lists

National Audubon Society's State of the Birds Watchlist, Bird Life International's Red List

Name:	Gerald Connolly
Organization:	County of Fairfax
Address:	12000 Government Center Parkway Fairfax, VA 22035 USA
E-mail:	chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov

Correspondence Text

Dyke Marsh is an exceptional natural resource in Fairfax County. In addition to providing critical estuarine habitat in an area where most of the shoreline has been developed, Dyke Marsh is a recreational and educational resource for the many County residents who enjoy nature study, canoeing and kayaking. It is also a site for biology research by several area colleges and universities.

I appreciate the National Park Service's initiation of strategies to restore Dyke Marsh, and encourage you to take aggressive action to restore and protect this irreplaceable resource. Restoration should prioritize habitat and biodiversity protection while still permitting non-motorized recreational use.

Fairfax County and the US Army Corps of Engineers are in the process of examining flood protection alternatives for the Belle View/New Alexandria and Huntington neighborhoods. Based on a five percent design study, a combination of a levee and floodwall surrounding the entire Belle View/New Alexandria neighborhood (including River Towers) would have the highest Benefit to Cost Ratio. If the County and the federal government are able to partner to construct this sort of levee and floodwall, I would want to be sure that it would not further degrade Dyke Marsh. For the benefit of the public, elected officials and County staff, it would be helpful if your restoration plan addressed the impact of possible construction of a floodwall and levee, as outlined in the Corps of Engineers' report, on the viability of Dyke Marsh as it currently exists and its restoration.

I also urge you to move quickly to mark the eastern boundaries of Dyke Marsh and take steps to create a protected area or buffer zone (e.g. lower speed limits, no wakes) on the eastern boundary.

Thank you again for undertaking this study, and please do not hesitate to contact me if the County can be of assistance in any way.

Name: Kristal McKelvey
Organization: Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Natural Heritage
Address: 217 governor Street
Richmond, VA 23219-2010
USA

Correspondence Text

Dear Mr. Steury:

the Department of Conservation and tcreation's Division of natural Heritage (DCR) has searched its Biotics Data System for occurrences of natural heritage resources from the area outlined on the submitted map. Natural heritage resources are defined as the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, unique or exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic formations.

Biotics documents the presence of natural heritage resources in the project vicinity. However, due to the scope of the activity and the distance to the resources, we do not anticipate that this project will adversely impact these natural heritage resourcess. In addition, DCR supports the efforts proposed to restore and implement a long term mangement plant for the Dyke Marsh Wetland.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement established between the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the Viginia Department of Conservatoin and Recreation (DCR), DCR represents VDACS in comments regarding potential impacts on state-listed threatened and endangered plant and insect species. The current activity will not affect any documented state-listed plants or insects.

In addition, our files do not indicate the presence of any Stat Natural Area Preserves under DCR's jurisdiction in the project vicinity.

New and updated information is continually added to Biotics. Please contact DCR for an update on this natural heritage information if a significant amount of time passes before it is utilized.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries maintains a database of wildlife locations, including threatened and endangered species, trout streams, and anadromous fish waters, which may contain information not documented in this letter. Their database may be accessed from http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/info_map/index.html , or contact Shirl Dressler at (804) 367-6913.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at (804) 692-0984. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

Kristal McKelvey
Coastal Zone Locality Liaison

Name: Amy Ewing
Address: 4010 West Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230
USA
E-mail: amy.ewing@dgif.virginia.gov

Correspondence Text

We have reviewed the National Park Service's (NPS) letter notice of development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental and social impacts of the restoration and long-term management of Dyke Marsh Preserve (Preserve). Upon review of the relevant information and our attendance at the public scoping meeting held on April 22, 2008, we offer the following comments and recommendations.

Upon review of our data for the presence of listed wildlife resources, it has been determined that although no state Threatened bald eagle nesting locations are documented on or immediately adjacent to the Preserve, Dyke Marsh serves as an important foraging area for this species. We recommend that all restoration and management activities initiated on the Preserve are performed in a manner protective of this species and in enhancement of foraging habitat. We recommend that the NPS coordinate closely with our agency regarding the protection of bald eagles on this site.

In addition, the Potomac River has been designated a Confirmed Anadromous Fish Use Area. Anadromous fishes use the Potomac River in this area mainly as a migratory pathway during late winter into late spring for movement to spawning grounds. We recommend that all marsh and shoreline activities be performed in a manner protective of this resource. We support activities aimed at improving water quality, reducing sedimentation, and restoring spawning and nursery habitats for all aquatic species, including anadromous fishes. We recommend coordination with our agency regarding the protection and enhancement of these resources.

Although it is difficult for us to make specific comments about restoration and management activities at Dyke Marsh until specific projects are developed and proposed, we generally support the restoration of marsh and wetland habitats at this Preserve. We support the beneficial use of any clean dredge spoil from the area for use at this site. We are happy to assist the NPS in restoration and management efforts at Dyke Marsh and recommend continued coordination with our agency regarding future projects.

VDGIF supports the continuation of waterfowl hunting opportunities in and around the Preserve. The floating blind program that has been in operation in the public waters off of Dyke Marsh for over 15 years appears to be successful and has not resulted in any reported accidents or injuries to hunters or the public. We support the continuation of hunter access at the Marina. We believe it is very important that hunters be allowed the opportunity to carry cased shotguns from their cars to the marina area. We recommend consideration of expanding hunting opportunities and access on the Preserve and are willing to assist the NPS in these efforts.

Dyke Marsh Preserve is a very important wildlife viewing site. The Preserve features a well-developed wetland forest, expansive mudflats, and vistas of the Potomac River. Over 300 species of birds have been seen at this park. The Preserve's juxtaposition to the Potomac River and urban environments makes it an oasis for wildlife enthusiasts. Dyke Marsh Preserve is included in the VDGIF's Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail as site 2 on the Mason Neck Loop. The site includes a trail that runs through the forested wetlands and mudflats that provides visitors the opportunity to view eagles, foraging shorebirds, and waterfowl, as well as spring and fall migrant songbirds. We support maintenance of this site and the expansion of wildlife viewing opportunities within the Preserve. We would be happy to assist the NPS in identifying new opportunities for wildlife viewing at Dyke Marsh.

We recommend continued coordination with our agency regarding the management of wildlife on the Preserve, access to the Preserve for hunting and wildlife watching, and the avoidance and minimization of impacts upon wildlife and their habitats during specific restoration or management projects. As stated above, we are willing to assist the NPS in efforts to enhance wildlife habitats and manage wildlife

resources under our jurisdiction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input during the development of the EIS. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Name: Joseph Hoffman
Organization: Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
Address: 51 Monroe St
Suite PE 08
Rockville, MD 20850
USA
E-mail: jhoffman@icprb.org

Correspondence Text

Thank you for the Superintendent's letter dated April 10, 2008 notifying us of the preparation of the EIS for the Dyke Marsh Preserve and the initiation of the scoping process.

We do not have comments at this time on the notice of intent. We wish to remain on your public notification and information distribution list(s).

The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin is a state-federal compact commission with a mission to enhance, protect, and conserve the water and associated land resources of the Potomac River basin and its tributaries through regional and interstate cooperation. If we can be of assistance please advise us. Thank you

Joseph K. Hoffman
Executive Director
Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin

April 30, 2008

Name: William D. Euille
Organization: City of Alexandria
Address: 301 King Street, Suite 2300
Alexandria, VA 22314
Alexandria, VA 22314
USA

Correspondence Text

May 21, 2008

Superintendent
National Park Service, Park Headquarters
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Superintendent,

On behalf of The City of Alexandria, I want to express the City's support for the restoration of Dyke Marsh. Restoring one of the last remaining tidal marshes along the Potomac River in the Washington D.C. area will enhance the recreational and educational opportunities available for local residents and visitors alike. This restoration will help reestablish historic tidal flows and provide an improved ecosystem that will benefit the overall Potomac Watershed and aide in meeting the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Act.

If restoration efforts include bringing off site material in to replace some of the approximately 270 acres of marshlands that were lost due to dredging between 1940 and 1972, the City would be willing to explore the possibility of providing material from maintenance activities along Cameron Run and Holmes Run should that opportunity arise. Please contact William Skrabak, Director, Office of Environmental Quality at (703) 519-3400 Ext. 163 with any questions.

Sincerely,

William D. Euille
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Members of City Council
James K. Hartmann, City Manager
National Park Service, Park Headquarters (Hard Copy)

Author Information

Name:	Eleanor F. Krause
Organization:	Wellington Civic Association
Address:	8210 Fort Hunt Road Alexandria, VA 22308 USA
E-mail:	elenk@cox.net

Correspondence Text

As the President of the Wellington Civic Association (WCA), I am making comment on behalf of our community, as directed by the membership at a public meeting of our association. The Wellington community sits along the Potomac River directly south of Dyke Marsh, and consists of just fewer than 500 households.

As neighbors of the Marsh, WCA members are directly impacted by the state of the health of the Marsh. Many WCA neighbors walk, kayak and bird-watch in the Marsh, and are actively involved in protection of the Marsh through the Friends of Dyke Marsh (www.fodm.org).

A restored Dyke Marsh Wetland can aide in the control of storm water surges that negatively impact personal property along the river within our community.

The WCA fully supports the development of a plan for the restoration and long-term management of the entire 485 acres of Dyke Marsh.

In addition to our support for the Marsh restoration and management plan, as a community, we strongly urge that Boundary Markers be immediately installed to delineate the Marsh's area. This action should not wait for the completion of the EIS process and full funding of the restoration project to take place. We encourage the NPS to work with the Corps of Engineers and the Coast Guard to have these markers put in place right away. The Markers are essential to stop damaging incursions into the Marsh by watercraft operated by combustion engines and by licensed hunters who are not authorized to hunt inside the Marsh's boundaries.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,
Eleanor F. Krause
President, Wellington Civic Association

Author Information

Name:	Katherine Ward
Organization:	Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations
Address:	Alexandria, VA 22308 USA
E-mail:	kjwmvcca@yahoo.com

Correspondence Text

The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCC) is a non-profit membership organization representing the citizen associations of the Mount Vernon Magisterial District, Fairfax County, Virginia.

The Board of Directors (BOS) of the MVCCA has accepted the recommendations of the Environmental and Recreation Committee regarding the plan to restore Dyke Marsh.

The BOS has accepted the complete restoration of the Dyke Marsh using scientific methods to determine the scope of the effective restoration of this historic marsh. It furthermore, accepted the importance of immediately installing boundary markers to delineate the Marsh property.

A full MVCCA General Membership Council resolution will be provided after our general meeting May 28, 2008.

K. Ward
Co-Chair
MVCCA

Author Information

Name: Flint Webb
Organization: Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Address: Federation Environmental Chair
4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003
USA

Correspondence Text

Mailing Address
Address Line 1: Federation Environmental Chair
Address Line 2: 4022 Hummer Road
City: Annandale
State / Province/Region: VA
Zip / Postal Code: 22003
Country: USA

At the Board meeting for the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association (Fairfax Federation) last night (May 22nd), the Board voted to support the National Park Service's efforts to prepare restoration and management plans for Dyke Marsh through the environmental impact statement process.

I apologize for the lateness of our comments, but the Board only meets once a month and it so happens that the May meeting was scheduled some time ago.

The Fairfax Federation only takes positions on issues that are of county-wide interest. Please keep me informed on the development of your restoration and management planning efforts.

Flint Webb, P.E.
Environmental Chair
Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

Name: T Whit Field
Organization: The Northern Virginia Conservation
Address: 4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003
USA
E-mail: wfield@nvct.org

Correspondence Text

By email per Notice
Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
National Park Service
McLean, Virginia 22101
Attn: Brent Steury

Re: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Dyke Marsh Wetland Restoration and Long-Term Management Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Land Trust who's primary mission is to preserve open space by acquiring land and conservation easements, providing stewardship of protected lands, and building public support for conservation. Part of this effort is accomplished through public education programs. NVCT has created a "floating classrooms," naturalist-led kayak program in local waters providing conservation and environmental education through recreation. Such trips have historically included tours around Dyke Marsh.

NVCT wishes to support the Park Service's efforts to restore, protect and enhance the fantastic resources of Dyke Marsh ("Marsh"). At the Park Service's request, NVCT supplies the following observations to help in the scoping effort for the proposed Environmental Impact Statement beyond the very general parameters provided in the Notice.

The Park Service needs to carefully balance protection of the Marsh with the public's right to navigate the waters around it. Heretofore, the Service has only attempted to regulate small-group kayak and canoe tours. NVCT respectfully notes that such uses have minimal if any impacts on the Marsh or its native inhabitants. To the contrary, motorized watercraft usage, both from Park Service lands and by water access, has significantly more potential impact, yet is not regulated at all.

The Park Service needs to scope out and address the rights of the public to use the navigable waters around Dyke Marsh -- for recreation and enjoyment of this natural resource -- with actual impacts to the Marsh, carefully balancing protection of the Marsh with those rights. The Park Service needs to evaluate its authority to regulate such usage (i.e., restrict use of the navigable waters of the United States), its enforcement resources, and other considerations and develop a proposal that carefully balances any proposal to curtail the public's right of water travel with demonstrated benefits to the Marsh. That balancing needs to array all the impacts to the Marsh, from natural and man-made activities, and not infringe on the public's use unless such regulation is effective and enforceable.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and look forward to working with the Park Service to enhance protection and restoration of the Marsh. We thank you for your strong preservation efforts.

Sincerely yours,
T. Whit Field
Vice President and General Counsel

Name: Paul M. Siegel
Organization: Friends of Little Hunting Creek
Address: 8707 Stockton Pkwy
Alexandria VA 2308
Alexandria, VA 22308
USA
E-mail: lhwc@zzapp.org

Correspondence Text

Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway
U.S. National Park Service
By email through PEPC Website – <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/gwmp>

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the development of a plan for the restoration of the Dyke Marsh Wetland and for its Long-Term Management.

The Friends of Little Hunting Creek is a group of private citizens dedicated to preserving and protecting Little Hunting Creek and its watershed in Fairfax County. Several of our members served on the Little Hunting Creek Steering Committee that advised Fairfax County on the development of its stormwater management plan for the watershed and continue their involvement as an ad hoc Watershed Committee to facilitate and monitor implementation of the plan.

We strongly support the restoration of Dyke Marsh. Dyke Marsh is an ancient and beautiful freshwater tidal marsh that is unique in the Washington area and that is a delight to visit, on foot or by kayak. It offers important habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities for humans. Restoring the wetland would improve the quality of the Potomac and the Chesapeake Bay, by increasing the amount of sediment and pollutants removed from its waters.

We believe that any management plan (or restoration) must include removal of the invasive species that overrun parts of Dyke Marsh, and we support the suggestion to restore tidal flows west of the haul road. Some restoration is needed just to mitigate the effect of years of neglect of this site. Consideration should be given to restoring flows from Great Hunting Creek, if possible, to provide a process by which the marsh soils are continually replenished without massive intervention.

The Dyke Marsh restoration should consider the Belle Haven Marina as an integral part of the Preserve, emphasizing and increasing its provision of the least intrusive means of access to the marsh for recreation and nature study – boating by canoe and kayak. The plan should also recognize that the marina currently offers the only public boating access to the Potomac between Alexandria and Mt Vernon on the Virginia shore. Marsh restoration must balance the need to preserve and defend the marsh from the impact of motorized craft against the public benefit derived from boating access to the Potomac.

The restoration plan should be brought to bear on the Corps of Engineers study of the feasibility of installing a floodwall north and west of Dyke Marsh that is intended to protect inland areas from flooding. Could the Dyke Marsh restoration contribute to a reduced risk of flooding? Could it replace a floodwall? Will a floodwall further degrade the current marsh, and any areas that might be restored? These questions need to be considered, and the NPS should take a more active part in defending the ecological and cultural values of the Dyke Marsh Preserve from the impacts of this and other Federal, State, and local projects in the area. In particular, modification of the flow of Great Hunting Creek in the name of flood control should be done in a way that will benefit and not harm the marsh. The NPS should consider the mitigation of exceptional tidal flooding in Belle View as one of the benefits of the marsh restoration, and argue this utility forcibly to the agencies considering crude seawalls as the only defense. (Katrina showed the vulnerability of seawalls.) Experience in other restoration projects (e.g., Hatches Harbor, Cape Cod National Seashore) has demonstrated the benefit of constructing a complete hydrological model of the marsh and Great Hunting Creek in making such arguments to the public and

other stakeholders.

The plan should distinguish between filling the holes left from the gravel dredging operations of 1950's through 1970's -- directed at stabilizing the present marsh -- and activities which might increase the area of emergent wetlands and marsh. Merely stabilizing the current marsh would go beyond current levels of preservation effort by the NPS. Increasing the area of emergent wetlands could be thought of as restoration, though it might bear little relation to the marsh in the 18th Century. The elevations of soils deposited to create emergent marsh should be determined gradually and adaptively, learning in the process how to create sustainable plant communities and control undesirable species and herbivory.

We hope these comments are useful in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Dyke Marsh Wetland Restoration and Management Plan. We look forward to the public presentation of the Plan itself.

Sincerely;
Paul M Siegel and Elizabeth A Martin
Friends of Little Hunting Creek

Name: Stephen D. Eccles
Organization: Virginia Society of Ornithology
Address: 8904 Narem Place
Annandale, VA 22003
USA
E-mail: stephendeccles@aol.com

Correspondence Text

I send these comments as the Chair of the Conservation Committee of the 800-member Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO). As such, I will restrict myself to matters of bird conservation. But I would mention that VSO members are bird-watchers, and therefore have an interest in ensuring that Dyke Marsh is retained and improved from that perspective also. Most also have an interest in restoring Dyke Marsh for other life forms as well as birds.

To back up this declared interest in the restoration of Dyke Marsh for bird conservation purposes, the VSO Conservation Committee has recently decided that it will support these efforts with a grant of \$1,000 (the maximum permissible) from its Small Grants Conservation Fund, to be released to (or through) the Friends of Dyke Marsh at the appropriate time.

The species of principal concern to bird conservation at Dyke Marsh are Marsh Wren, Least Bittern and Virginia Rail. Our main comments therefore are that the restoration and management plan - and preceding research and environment impact assessments - explicitly take the conservation of these species fully into account; and that, should there be any conflicting objectives, the conservation of these species should take precedence.

On substance, we have little to add to the excellent presentation made to the NPS by Sandy C. Spencer: Restoration of Dyke Marsh for the Marsh Wrens - An Opinion for the November 4, 2004 Workshop (updated April, 2008).

We also support the May 2 letter to Mr David Vela submitted by J. Craig Heizer, President of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, so I will not repeat its content here.

I would just add one comment concerning duck hunting. While I am aware that duck hunting is not allowed at Dyke Marsh national park, it is permitted (with appropriate license) right up to the Dyke Marsh boundary. However, that boundary has been undefined and unmarked, making it possible for duck hunters to enter Dyke Marsh with little fear of being cited. Any management plan for Dyke Marsh must include a provision requiring clearly defined and well marked boundaries.

Thank you.

Author Information

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Correspondence Text

The Friends of Dyke Marsh will submit more comprehensive written comments.

The U.S. Congress Supports Restoration

The Friends of Dyke Marsh (FODM) applaud the National Park Service for initiating this process. FODM strongly supports the scientifically-guided restoration of this important wetland. Congress has supported restoration at least three times:

1. The U. S. Congress designated Dyke Marsh in 1959 as part of the National Park System "so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount."

The U. S. Senate Committee on Public Works report that accompanied the authorizing legislation that transferred this property to NPS, indicates that "future reclamation" was expected. (Report number 280, 86th Congress, May 11, 1959).

In 1959, Congressman John Dingell, lead author of the Dyke Marsh legislation, stated during debate on the bill, "We expect that the Secretary will provide for the deposition of silt and waste from the dredging operations in such a way as to encourage the restoration of the marsh at the earliest possible moment."

2. In 1974, in P. L. 93-251, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Army to assist NPS "to plan for, design and implement restoration of the historical and ecological values of Dyke Marsh."

3. In 2007, Congress approved and the President signed language in the water projects bill, H. R. 1495, authorizing the Corps of Engineers to accept funds from NPS for the restoration of Dyke Marsh.

We believe that the EIS and the management plan should fully reflect Congress's intent, clearly expressed as early as 1959.

Issues that a Restoration and Management Plan Should Address

Among other areas, we list some of the issues that we believe the restoration of Dyke Marsh and management plan should address. We urge NPS to --

Restore areas excavated and ecological function, including areas at the south end of the marsh.

Remove construction and other debris dumped in the marsh.

Address shoreline erosion and steps to prevent future erosion, as discussed on page 59 and 60 by Katia Engelhardt in Should We Restore Dyke Marsh?, November 4, 2004.

Improve ecosystem services and native habitat for fish, wildlife and other biota.

Take steps and adopt a management plan to enhance and manage native plants and animals and

biodiversity and minimize non-natives.
Identify and control non-native, invasive plants and animals.

Emphasize the restoration and management of the marsh's biodiversity.

Preserve and restore marsh as a nursery for fish and other animals.

Preserve and restore habitat for migratory birds.

Analyze the adequacy of openings under the parkway to allow tidal flow.

Restore wetlands on the west side of the Parkway, north of Belle Haven Road and south of Hunting Creek.

Create habitat for the short-nosed sturgeon (See Katia Engelhardt in Should We Restore Dyke Marsh?, November 4, 2004, page 71)

Analyze the alterations made in Hunting Creek and their impact on Dyke Marsh. Take steps to address adverse impacts.

Analyze the impact of the canals and "hardening" and channelization of streams in the Belle View area on the marsh.

Evaluate the impact of activities on the marsh, including river traffic, current and predicted; fishing, poaching and hunting; pets; walking and hiking; nature study; photography; other recreational activities; research; surveys; installation of nest boxes; stormwater runoff; increase in impervious surfaces in the watershed; pollution; trash; debris; sedimentation; noise; air pollution; water pollution; use of herbicides and pesticides.

Evaluate the "urbanization effects" outlined by Katia Engelhardt in Should We Restore Dyke Marsh?, November 4, 2004.

Restore and expand habitat for the Marsh Wren, King Rail, Virginia Rail, and Least Bittern, as well as other birds and animals, especially those which have declining populations (See page 68, Should We Restore Dyke Marsh?, November 4, 2004)

Preserve and restore habitat to expand native wetlands vegetation.

Other potential projects that might affect or be affected by this project

Fairfax County and U. S. Corps of Engineers' February 2008 Final Flood Damage Reduction Analysis for Belle Haven Watershed, prepared by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District.

Fairfax County's Cameron Run Watershed Plan

Fairfax County's Belle Haven Watershed Plan (not yet completed)

Fairfax County and U.S. Corps of Engineers' Huntington/Cameron Run Flood Damage Reduction Project

Fairfax County's Environmental Strategy and Cool Counties Initiative

Fairfax County's Tree Action Plan and tree conservation ordinance

Fairfax County Park Authority Great Parks, Great Communities Plans

City of Alexandria's Environmental Action Plan

City of Alexandria's Waterfront Strategy

City of Alexandria's plans to build a new sewage treatment plant on Hooff's Run

High-rise Construction at Hunting Terrance Apartments and Hunting Towers

Woodrow Wilson Bridge expansion and mitigation projects

Interstate 94/495 widening

Potomac River dredging

Virginia's Tributaries Strategy for the Potomac River

Virginia's Wildlife Action Plan

Virginia's Natural Heritage Program, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage

Other Information that Needs to be Considered

The Dyke Marsh Preserve Ecosystem, compilation of studies and reports addressing Dyke Marsh, by Dr. David W. Johnston

Studies conducted by Dr. Edd Barrows, Georgetown University, Laboratory of Entomology and Biodiversity; Biodiversity Database of the Washington, D. C. Area; www.biodiversity.georgetown.edu

Research of D. Katia Engelhardt, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Appalachian Laboratory, Should We Restore Dyke Marsh?, November 4, 2004

Population Abundance and Habitat Requirements of the Marsh Wren, (*Cistothorus palustris*) at Dyke Marsh National Wildlife Preserve. By Sandra C. Spencer, 2000, George Mason University, Fairfax Virginia

Final Report on Inventories of Plant Species and Communities in Dyke Marsh, Alexandria, Virginia. By Z. Xu, George Mason University, 1991.

A Natural Heritage Resources Inventory of Hunting Bay-Dyke Marsh, Natural Heritage Technical Report #92-4, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage (Van Alstine, N. E., K. A. Buhlmann, and A. Belden, 1992)

The impact of global warming and sea level rise on Dyke Marsh

The impact of National Harbor and its activities, such as the Seadog's wakes, jet skis, other boating activity, nighttime light shows and fireworks

National Audubon Society, International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources' (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, American Bird Conservancy, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state of Virginia and other lists of threatened and endangered birds, plants and animals

Chesapeake Bay Interstate Agreement and other Bay agreements

Information on how you use the park and how a project might affect that use

In general, the Friends of Dyke Marsh encourage NPS's restoration and management plans to provide for these activities: passive recreation, nature study, scientific research, nature walks, education and

interpretation programs.

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USA
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Correspondence Text

May 12, 2008

Dear National Park Service Staff,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. Delta Waterfowl is an international organization, dedicated to waterfowl conservation and research and the preservation of our waterfowl hunting traditions.

It has come to our attention that there is some discussion of ceasing waterfowl hunting opportunities from the eight(8) floating blind sites surrounding Dyke Marsh in Northern Virginia. As a waterfowl conservation group with members and constituents affected by any decision made by the NPS, we wish to provide our perspective on the matter.

We recognize the fact that there are residential areas along Dyke Marsh; however it is our understanding that the eight(8) floating blind sites in question are each located at least one thousand, five hundred feet from the shore line and hunting from these locations pose no threat to homeowners along Dyke Marsh. Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries have set strict regulations that govern waterfowl hunting along this stretch of the Potomac River. These regulations allow for waterfowl hunting from the eight(8) floating blind sites only and are restricted to allow hunting on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only.

Hunters and waterfowl hunters in particular, have an exceptionally well established track record of accomplishments when it comes to conservation of wildlife and their habitat. The long legacy of conservation victories across the United States and within the state of Virginia are largely because of the leadership, dedication and financial support of hunter and anglers.

We strongly support the continued waterfowl hunting from the floating blind sites along Dyke Marsh. We urge the National Park Service to recognize the constituents of sportsmen and women within the state of Virginia and their desires to maintain the waterfowl hunting traditions along Dyke Marsh and afford them a consultation role in the decision making process. We thank you for taking our perspective into consideration as you move forward with the Dyke Marsh restoration project.

Sincerely,
Jason T. Wallace
SE Regional Director
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
(843)-229-4344
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Correspondence Text

The L.O.C.S Chapter of Waterfowl USA is willing to work in a partnership program with NPS to rehabilitate the Dyke Marsh area. Currently we are willing to supply 2000 lbs. of seed (corn, millet, sorghum) for use as food plots, nesting areas, cover for both game and non game speices. Additionally I would suggest that you work in partnership with Ducks Unlimited, VA Waterfowlers Assoc, Delta Waterfowl, and Waterfowl USA. We have a combined 100+ years experience reclaiming and rehabing wetlands. See attached magazine. I would also suggest that you utilize the VDGIF biologists as they are some of the most knowledgeable in this type work. You are missing the boat if you do not utilize their knowledge and expertise.

Finally, I and the members of Waterfowl USA support the hunting of waterfowl, USA along the Potomac River including the Dyek Marsh area as provided in the 1988 agreement.

Name: William Braddock
Organization: DIA Road and Gun Club
Address: 11004 Burywood Lane
Reston, VA 20194
USA

Correspondence Text

I am writing to you today representing the 117 members of the DIA Rod and Gun Club, a private organization legally chartered in the State of Virginia with no official connection to any federal intelligence agency. As our name implies, we are an organization of like-minded sportsmen who have joined together for fellowship and common pursuit of ethical and legal hunting and fishing recreational opportunities. Our members come from all walks of life and reside inter alia in northern Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Our Club supports conservation and community service events, including VDGIF events, such as the youth, women, and novice hunts at Occoquan Bay NWR and USF&WS deer management and youth fishing activities and several other volunteer programs at both Mason Neck and Occoquan Bay NWRs. Individually; most of our members are members of one or more national conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, Quail Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Waterfowl USA, Delta Waterfowl, The Izaak Walton League and Ducks Unlimited. These organizations pump millions of dollars as well as priceless hours of volunteer support into wildlife management programs nationwide to preserve national and state wildlife agencies. Hundreds of game and non-game species as well as those people who enjoy hunting and simply observing them are the direct beneficiaries of these efforts.

Today I am writing specifically to put our united support behind the current VDGIF regulations governing the conduct of waterfowl hunting in the Great Hunting Creek and Dyke Marsh areas. The current regulations, adopted and in force since 1990, represent an equitable compromise hammered out at the time by local landowners, conservationists, The National Park Service, VDGIF, and hunting enthusiasts (some within our membership rolls) that have withstood the test of time. The conditions that existed at that time have not fundamentally changed since. There is simply no credible evidence to suggest that the limited waterfowl hunting legally and ethically conducted in that area has been detrimental to the broader use and enjoyment of that area by waterfowl or other non-game species. Now a local but very small minority using specious arguments like those espoused by Ms Glenda Booth and Linda Brown (Mount Vernon Gazette, 27 Mar 08) are causing the Department to expend precious resources answering and processing out of cycle complaints. The Department has a well advertized, disciplined, and timely process for suggesting changes to its published regulations that gives all citizens and interest groups access to the rule making process. Instead anti-hunting groups, thinly veiled as concerned conservationists, are attempting to circumvent the established process and have chosen to take their "case" to the public press and political arenas.

We understand that as a public sector entity you may be obligated to conduct special public hearings to address this matter. We only ask that you be even-handed in your sampling of public opinion and include representation from the hunting public as well who support your current regulations and rule making process and give so generously of their time and resources to the larger conservation efforts. We are prepared to send a representative to any such public or even closed door meeting and would ask that you notify us with sufficient lead time to respond appropriately. Our designated point of contact is Bob Chapin, (571) 217- 1700, CHAPIN780@aol.com.

Name:	David Wilson
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Correspondence Text

These comments are indicative of an advocacy by a significant number of people that are or were involved in the sport of rowing with West Potomac High School and potentially other local high schools, as related to the proposed restoration and future use of the Potomac River in and around the are of Dyke Marsh.

1. West Potomac High School is located less than a mile from Dyke Marsh, but has no connection with this important wetland.
2. West Potomac High School has a long history of engaging young people in outdoor activities on the Potomac River through its rowing program.
3. It makes sense to connect the local high school with Dyke Marsh by allowing rowing activities to be based on the fast land adjacent to the marsh.
4. Rowing is highly compatible with protecting and enhancing the ecological values delivered by Dyke Marsh and will create an opportunity to expose a key audience (young people) to this important wetland while protecting it.

The sport of rowing is compatible with the goals of the Dyke Marsh Wetland Restoration and Long Term Management Plan. More specifically:

- * Rowing will not have any negative impact on the marsh or surrounding waters.
- * Rowing will not have any negative impact on the wildlife of the Dyke Marsh.
- * Rowing will not penetrate the marsh.
- * Rowing shells do not create a wake.
- * The small john boats used to support the rowing shells (coaches boats) create minimal wake and if absolutely necessary wakeless boats can be used.
- * Rowing creates significantly less impact than results from normal traffic along the Potomac River, construction at adjacent sites and normal water traffic in the area.

Rowing Will Expose Young People to Wetlands

Rowing will create opportunities to expose additional young people to the value of this wetland. Despite the proximity of the school, virtually no students visit or use Dyke Marsh. By having a regular activity occurring next to the marsh over time hundreds of young people will be exposed to the marsh and have an opportunity to learn about it, about the value of wetlands, and connect with this site specifically. This is an essential teaching moment that is being lost today by not facilitating rowing adjacent to Dyke Marsh.

Building a New Constituency for Dyke Marsh

Significantly, this will also create a link between the local high school and this wetland. It will create an opportunity, not only to expose people to this site, but to educate high school students about the ecological functions performed by the site. It will create a bond of place between the most significant educational and ecological sites in the immediate area. Failure to create this connection will miss the opportunity to expose hundreds of young people to the site, create an awareness of the ecological functions and proponents for Dyke Marsh. This will bring an important new age cohort into the understanding of, and becoming proponents for, wetlands and for Dyke Marsh. Failure to make this connection perpetuates the separation of the general public and young people in particular for the

importance of wetlands and Dyke Marsh specifically.

Name:	Karen Norris
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Address:	1250 S Washington St #107 Alexandria, VA 22314 USA
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Correspondence Text

We have observed changes in our environment. We are located at the confluence of Hunting Creek- just north, and adjacent to, the boundary of Dyke Marsh and your study.

Two thoughts:

- 1.) We have contact Katia Engelhart's colleague, Dr. Cindy Palinkas, of the Eastern Shore Center (UMD-CES). Cindy has a specialty in sedimentation and will send a summer intern student in June to take samplings of our core and study the sediment. You may be interested in this report.
- 2.) We understand from your presentation tonight that the Army Corps of Engineers will seek out appropriate dredged material for the restoration of the marsh. Please help yourself to as much material is as practical from our cove. We would like our unusual sediment build-up dredged out- if at all possible, and it would help your restoration efforts.

Thank you for this wonderful presentation and opportunity to chat with staff.
In appreciation, Karen Morris.

Author Information

Organization: Porto Vecchio Condominium
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Alexandria, VA 22314
USA
E-mail:

Correspondence Text

Superintendent
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
Park Headquarters
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Sir:

The residents of Porto Vecchio Condominium join the Friends of Dyke Marsh to support the scientifically-guided restoration of this important wetland. More than 30 residents are members of the Friends of Dyke Marsh.

The restoration of Dyke Marsh can improve the ecological services provided by the wetland, enhance the historic landscape intended by Congress for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, promote scientific research and educational programs, and offer the public more opportunities for recreation and nature study. The anticipated improvements will help fulfill Virginia's commitment to restore lost and degraded wetlands under the Chesapeake Bay Agreement.

Please consider these important topics to include in the study:

1. Restore wetlands lost to excavation (filling in the areas once dredged)
2. Use appropriate fill
3. Consider the sediment at the confluence of Hunting Creek/Porto Vecchio for fill
4. Use the study by Dr. Palinkas to assess suitability of Porto Vecchio sediment for fill
5. Prevent erosion, including wave and wake action
6. Study sediment deposition, including predictions for natural sustainability
7. Study hydrologic processes
8. Consider public access, walkways, foot trails, and kayak water trail

Thank you for your review and consideration.