

**New Millennium Occoquan Watershed Task Force
Report Recommendations
Agency Response Assignments
3/13/03**

Reservoir Recommendations	
1.	<p>The Task Force strongly endorses existing programs and policies aimed at maintaining acceptable levels of water quality in the Reservoir. The County should oppose any effort to weaken regional policies, particularly the State's Occoquan Policy governing wastewater treatment.</p> <p>LEAD: FCWA COORDINATION: DPWES; NVRC; OWML; UOSA</p>
2.	<p>The County should strive to reduce nutrient and sediment contributions to the Reservoir above and beyond those being achieved through existing policies and ordinances.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: FCWA; UOSA; OWML</p>
3.	<p>The County should continue to be an active participant in State and federal regulatory and/or policy initiatives that might result in requirements for additional nutrient and sediment reductions in order to ensure that reduction strategies are based on sound policy and science.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: FCWA; UOSA; OWML</p>
4.	<p>The Task Force strongly endorses efforts such as the Global Strategy Initiative to predict and mitigate new pollutants of concern.</p> <p>LEAD: FCWA COORDINATION: OWML; DPWES; UOSA</p>
5.	<p>The Task Force encourages the continued sharing and coordination of information among UOSA, OWML, and FCWA and County staff to ensure that Reservoir water quality concerns are appropriately addressed.</p> <p>LEAD: FCWA COORDINATION: DPWES; NVRC; OWML; UOSA</p>
Streams and Ecosystems Recommendations	
1.	<p>Rigorously maintain the integrity of the Occoquan downzoning. As demonstrated by the County's 2001 <i>Stream Protection Strategy Baseline Study</i>, the downzoning has been an effective measure for the protection of stream ecosystems. LEAD: DPZ COORDINATION: DPWES; FCPA</p>
2.	<p>Continue regular long-term stream assessments by the Stream Protection Strategy staff. Such assessments are critical to measuring the County's progress in protecting and restoring stream ecosystems. These assessments should include continued partnership with volunteer stream monitoring efforts. The County should ensure that the Stream Protection Strategy staff is adequately funded and staffed to handle its growing responsibilities.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>

3.	<p>Fully develop and implement the Stormwater Planning Division’s watershed management planning process in the Occoquan Watershed, as well as all other County watersheds. This process represents the County’s most focused and comprehensive approach to protecting and restoring stream ecosystems.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
4.	<p>Study and adopt new stormwater management designs that have been demonstrated to protect or improve the health of stream ecosystems.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: FCPA</p>
5.	<p>Encourage the use of those LID techniques that have been proven effective under local conditions, both where new development is planned and, to the extent feasible, for retrofitting of existing development. The County should further investigate the effectiveness and applicability of LID techniques.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
<p>Land Use and Open Space Recommendations</p>	
1.	<p>At a minimum, continue the County’s commitment to the successful strategy for water quality protection of the Occoquan Reservoir that was established through the comprehensive zoning actions that were taken in 1982.</p> <p>LEAD: DPZ COORDINATION: NONE</p>
2.	<p>Establish a broad-based advisory committee, to include stakeholders, County staff, and one or more members of the County’s Planning Commission, to review standards and guidelines associated with Special Permit, Special Exception, and public uses that may be approved in the R-C District in the Occoquan Watershed and to report its findings and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The advisory committee should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the maximum allowable floor area ratios currently allowed in the R-C District in light of overall impervious surface implications, public use/facility needs, institutional use needs, recreational needs, and the purpose and intent of the 1982 downzoning action. • Recommend zoning standards, performance standards, and/or Comprehensive Plan guidelines for total impervious cover and/or undisturbed open space. • Review the combined impact of the facility footprint and total impervious surface cover, including parking. • Determine if it would be appropriate to establish clearer guidance in the Comprehensive Plan regarding the circumstances under which Special Exception and Special Permit uses (as well as public uses reviewed during the 2232 process) can be considered to be “designed to mitigate impacts on the water quality of the Occoquan Reservoir.” <p>LEAD: DPZ COORDINATION: DPWES; PLANNING COMMISSION; FCPA</p>

3.	<p>Establish a more proactive easements program that provides for outreach efforts to owners of land in the Occoquan Watershed that contains environmentally sensitive resources, particularly where these resources would not otherwise be protected by regulation.</p> <p>LEAD: DPZ COORDINATION: FCPA; NVCT</p>
4.	<p>Fully fund watershed management planning efforts as well as the implementation of adopted plan measures. As part of the planning process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the effectiveness of existing stream valley protection mechanisms. Identify additional regulatory and/or non-regulatory measures, if any, that may be needed in order to ensure that stream valleys will be protected adequately. • Identify additional performance requirements that may be appropriate to ensure that by-right development in the R-C District will not adversely affect stream quality. <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: DPZ; FCPA</p>
5.	<p>Complete the ongoing review of impediments to the application of low impact site design techniques and identify disincentives and policy/regulatory conflicts associated with the implementation of these techniques. Determine if and how these disincentives, impediments, and conflicts can be overcome so as to increase the application of such techniques in the Occoquan Watershed. Investigate incentives and requirements that could be pursued to increase the application of these practices.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
Tree Preservation Recommendations	
1.	<p>Continue to press for tree conservation and preservation enabling legislation.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
2.	<p>Establish tree canopy goals for the Occoquan Watershed and determine appropriate implementation measures for attaining those goals. Tree preservation, not removal and replacement, should be the primary means of achieving the goal.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
3.	<p>Encourage the revegetation of lost riparian stream buffers with native woody vegetation by identifying potential reforestation areas, providing citizen education, and encouraging citizen reforestation efforts.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>

Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management Recommendations	
1.	<p>The Task Force supports the stormwater management findings of the Infill and Residential Study and urges implementation of its recommendations.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
2.	<p>Ensure that frequency of County inspections is sufficient to enforce the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NONE</p>
Onsite Sewage Disposal Recommendations	
1.	<p>Establish a Commission to investigate necessary legislation and ordinances to establish a self-supporting "Onsite Sewage Disposal System Management Authority" to move Fairfax County and potentially the region into the EPA Model Program Level 4. Invite participation by appropriate representatives from other Watershed jurisdictions. The Commission should be sensitive to the existing private septic haulers and should include them as an integral part of a management program.</p> <p>The "Authority" is envisioned to be structured similar to a utility that may be public, private or a public-private partnership. The "Authority" would perform routine maintenance and provide regular monitoring of all onsite systems. The system owners would pay a recurring fee to the "Authority" for routine maintenance and regular monitoring of the onsite sewage disposal systems by qualified professionals.</p> <p>The existence of an "Authority" would guarantee continuing preventative maintenance and would encourage the increased use of technologically advanced systems on lots and parcels with marginal to poor soil conditions. This would also allow those properties to be developed without creating future liabilities to the County due to failed onsite sewage disposal systems.</p> <p>Creation of an "Authority" would require the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and benchmark "Management Authorities" that may already be in place in other areas; • Research how "Management Authorities" are funded; • Research the need for legislation and/or local ordinances and prepare necessary legislation or ordinances; • Determine steps necessary to create and implement the "Management Authority; and, • Determine service levels necessary for different types of systems. <p>LEAD: HEALTH COORDINATION: FCWA</p>

Citizen Involvement Recommendations	
1.	<p>The County should strengthen partnerships with appropriate public and citizen organizations to broaden participation in education and stewardship activities aimed at changing attitudes and behaviors. The mass media may be helpful in this effort.</p> <p>LEAD: NVSWCD COORDINATION: DPWES; OPA</p>
2.	<p>The County should encourage growth of the network of organizations and citizen groups concerned with and/or actively involved in watershed and water quality issues, and seek assistance on methods of reaching more citizens to seek participation in stewardship activities.</p> <p>LEAD: NVSWCD COORDINATION: DPWES; OPA</p>
3.	<p>The County should sponsor or become partners to sponsor more programs, meetings, seminars and festivals on water quality and natural resource protection that attract people who may become active volunteers in existing or new programs and help to educate others on the value of good stewardship.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: NVSWCD; OPA</p>
4.	<p>The County should support in any way possible the expansion of existing outreach and education programs, such as those sponsored by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, the Audubon Naturalist Society, and the Fairfax County Park Authority.</p> <p>LEAD: NVSWCD COORDINATION: DPWES; FCPA; OPA</p>
5.	<p>The County should investigate proactive outreach to property owners who have property in or abutting Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) and/or other stream valley areas. The County may use its GIS to identify these parcels and to deliver stream-specific information RPA responsibilities, stewardship, and easement opportunities.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: DPZ; NVCT</p>
6.	<p>The County should develop a strategy for strengthening the role of citizens in code and ordinance enforcement. This task should be assigned to County agencies responsible for environmental code enforcement with input from environmental and community watershed stakeholder groups.</p> <p>LEAD: DPWES COORDINATION: DPZ, NVSWCD</p>
Regional Coordination Recommendations	
1.	<p>The Task Force strongly endorses continued support of regional approaches to Occoquan Watershed protection. The Task Force recommends that the County request the Northern Virginia Regional Commission to develop a plan to address identified issues of greater than Fairfax County concern. One approach could be to incorporate recommendations and findings into NVRC's multi-year effort to develop a regional watershed management plan for the Occoquan.</p> <p>LEAD: NVRC COORDINATION: DPWES; FCWA; OWML; UOSA</p>

Implementation and Reporting	
1.	<p>To ensure follow-through, the Task Force requests that the Board of Supervisors ask the County Executive to track and report to them on the implementation of Task Force recommendations at least annually.</p> <p>LEAD: ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR</p>

Agency abbreviations:

- DPWES: Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- DPZ: Department of Planning and Zoning
- FCPA: Fairfax County Park Authority
- FCWA: Fairfax County Water Authority
- HEALTH: Department of Health
- NVCT: Northern Virginia Conservation Trust
- NVRC: Northern Virginia Regional Commission
- NVSWCD: Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District
- OPA: Office of Public Affairs
- OWML: Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory
- UOSA: Upper Occoquan Sewage Authority