

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

People and Wildlife Living in Harmony

Letter to the Editor

March 2005

Dear Editor:

I am writing as the president of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, along with hundreds of county citizens, businesses and other organizations, participated in the extensive, multi-year process that resulted in the adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan and the Revised Zoning Ordinance. Throughout the process, all sides argued their case before the county on numerous public occasions. While we were pleased when language was included in the Comprehensive Plan that protected Loudoun County's Green Infrastructure, we were deeply disappointed when much of that language was removed in attempt after attempt to compromise with those in opposition to the new Comprehensive Plan. What is really sad is that now all of those compromises were for naught as the opposition clearly was not interested in finding a middle ground that would balance their desire to develop this county with the needs of the greater good that includes preserving open space and the special character of Loudoun. Indeed, they wanted only one thing — the ability to build houses from Fairfax County to the Blue Ridge Mountains. And now, with the immense financial resources to pay for what they wanted, it appears that they have succeeded in obtaining their goal.

If the AR1 and AR2 zoning is not re-instated, if the CPAM amendments are approved, Loudoun County's natural environment will suffer permanent damage. Diversity will be lost. Thousands of acres of natural, healthy habitat will be lost. Our remaining forests will be bulldozed under, our streams will run brown with sediment, our fields and meadows will sprout nothing but houses, and the natural world that remains in this county will suffer enormously. The plants and animals that require open space to exist will disappear from our county. And, there will be a clamor to remove those that remain as pests because they will intrude on residential space. The decline of this natural world will be all of our loss and it is a loss that will be felt by all generations that follow us.

While everyone knows that development on this scale costs millions of dollars because of extensive infrastructure requirements, it will also cost us millions more because the quality of the water we drink and the quality of the air we breathe will suffer. And we, the citizens of the county, will also have to pay for that.

This letter was also sent to the Board of Supervisors. We ask the Board of Supervisors to re-advertise and re-enact the AR-1 and AR-2 zoning which was adopted by the last Board. We ask the Board to turn down those CPAM amendments their own Planning Department said had no merit. If the Board of Supervisors does not take these actions, all of us, including the natural world, will lose this beautiful place forever.

Sincerely,
Nicole D. Hamilton, President
Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy