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**Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
Ridgewater Park Comprehensive Plan Amendment
Public Input Session, February 15, 2007**

My name is Nicole Hamilton and I am President of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. I represent our membership which is made up of hundreds of citizens from across Loudoun County that care about and are concerned for the natural environment of our county.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy requests that you deny the Ridgewater Park Comprehensive Plan Amendment. As stated in the county's own staff reports, this area is an "extremely critical and environmentally sensitive area" and the development use and density proposed through this CPAM is inappropriate for this location. This land needs to be preserved as a Transition Area as originally intended. Our opposition to this CPAM is three-fold:

- 1) Environmentally Sensitive Area: The area in question contains a variety of forest habitats, riparian buffers, wetlands, small streams, isolated ponds and rare plant species. These are incredibly productive habitats for wildlife that also play a key role in filtering our water supply and our air.
- 2) Potential Harm to Water Supply: By changing this to a Suburban Planning area, you will eliminate a key protection for the drinking water supply intake & reservoir—which sits next to the proposed area. Sediment & toxic runoff will jeopardize the water quality and put the drinking water supply at higher vulnerability to pollution, increase the need for dredging and increase costs.
- 3) Removal of that much forest and destroying that much open space will further contribute to our air pollution problems and global warming. This is a huge area of undeveloped habitat, rich in forest cover. The removal of forests and fields and their replacement with pavement and rooftops will result in the "heat-island" effect where heat is trapped by blacktop and radiated out and further air pollution due to the increased traffic.

The existing Comprehensive Plan established safeguards for our environment and the Transition Area was one of these. While we would like to see the safeguards go even further, we request that you at least do not erode what little protections we have. We ask that you oppose the Ridgewater Park CPAM.

Darrell Schwalm, speaking on behalf of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy tonight, will provide further details regarding our concern for the environment in this critical habitat area.

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