



WATER QUALITY ADVISORY GROUP

January 29, 2007

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Executive:

The Water Quality Advisory Group (WQAG) hereby submits its eleventh Annual Report, as outlined under Article 4, Chapter 19 of the Montgomery County Water Quality Discharge Law. The WQAG consists of 15 voting members representing farmers, businesses, environmental organizations, public-at-large and scientific/academic organizations from around the county as well as representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. The current members of the WQAG are listed at the end of this letter. Our mission is to recommend to you and the County Council policies, programs, and priorities to protect, maintain, and restore the biological, chemical, and physical integrity of the County's streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater.

The County has an impressive program that is nationally recognized to protect, maintain and restore water quality in the County, but the task is daunting due to the rapid development that has occurred and is occurring in the County. The County has about 1,500 miles of streams and the water quality in about 600 miles of streams is classified as "poor" or "fair," and anecdotal evidence from citizens we have spoken with is that quality in many stream segments is decreasing.

The past year was a year of high visibility for water-quality issues within the county and the region. Particularly noteworthy events were the following:

- The Stormwater Partners Coalition was formed to advocate changes in the County's NPDES Stormwater Permit for more quantifiable restoration goals, increased accountability, and more rapid project implementation rate;
- The Clean Water Task Force was established to evaluate existing interagency coordination for stormwater management and water resources protection and to formulate recommendations to improve coordination and water quality;
- The County Council approved \$1.25 million in new clean water initiatives to promote Low Impact Development (LID) projects and enhance the County's current aggressive stormwater management activities; and

- The Healthy Lawns and Clean Water Initiative approved by major fertilizer companies and the governors in the Chesapeake Bay watershed calls for a fifty percent reduction in phosphate in lawn fertilizers, which has been a long-term goal of the WQAG.

During the past year, the WQAG made recommendations to you on the following topics:

- We recommended in a letter to you dated December 5, 2006 that budget priorities for the Department of Environmental Protection should be: 1) increased support of community watershed groups; 2) more active support of low-impact and green development; 3) enhanced communications among all County agencies and departments that impact water quality, and 4) design of new and renovated roads that maximize infiltration and minimize runoff; and
- We recommended in a letter to you dated December 5, 2006 that legislation related to water resource issues be put on hold until such time as recommendations from the Clean Water Task Force are prepared and a comprehensive analysis has been completed.

The WQAG met monthly during the past year with no meeting held in December. The major topics discussed at our meetings included:

- Feasibility of controlling stormwater runoff using LID retrofits in dense urban areas, presentation by Chris Behr, Landscape Architect;
- Lessons learned from the MS4 permit, presentation by WQAG member Meo Curtis of DEP;
- GIS Hydro – A tool that automates hydrologic analyses, presentation by WQAG member Glenn Moglen, professor of environmental engineering at University of Maryland;
- Erosion in the Anacostia Watershed, presentation by Masaya Maeda, environmental scientist with the Anacostia Watershed Society;
- Green Energy Program in the County, presentation by Eric Coffman of DEP;
- Green Building Design in MCPS system, presentation by Anja Caldwell of MCPS;
- Stormwater Partners Coalition recommendations, presentation by Diane Cameron;
- Green Urbanization and potential application in the Twinbrook Redevelopment, presentation by Marion Clark of MNCPPC;
- Canoeing and kayaking in County's streams, presentation by WQAG member Kay Fulcomer,
- Water monitoring systems and data availability in the County;
- County's Clean Energy Reward Program, presentation by Susan Kirby of DEP.

In August we met with the former director of the DEP, James Caldwell, and discussed with him the WQAG's recommendations for budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Our budget priorities are described in our December 5th letter to you.

We would like to acknowledge that the WQAG benefits greatly from presentations and background provided by the public agency representatives. We continue to benefit from their participation and knowledge, and are impressed with the dedication and professionalism of these public agency representatives.

The WQAG added a new member this year, Mike Smith who represents the environmental community and is actively involved in stream monitoring with the Friends of Sligo Creek. The WQAG lost two long-term members who contributed much to the WQAG this year due to term limits, Doug Holy who represented the environmental community and Shobhana Sharma who represented the business

The Honorable Isiah Leggett

January 8, 2007

Page 3

community, and in addition Helene Smith who represented the environmental community and Christopher Choppin who represented the business community resigned. We have experienced some difficulty in recruiting new members and are currently advertising to fill three vacant positions.

We applaud your long-term commitment to environmental quality in Montgomery County and look forward to working with you and your staff to achieve the goals of maintaining and restoring the biological, chemical, and physical integrity of the County's streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater. We look forward to providing you input on water resources priorities and welcome you and your staff to attend our monthly meetings which are held on the 2nd Monday of each month. Contact me at 301.718.8900 or candrews@sspa.com with any questions or comments you may have.

Sincerely,



Charles B. Andrews
Chair, Water Quality Advisory Group
Box 558
Garrett Park, MD 20896

cc: Marilyn Praisner, Council President
WQAG Members

Current Members of the Water Quality Advisory Group

Charles Andrews, Garrett Park, scientific/academic
Jill Coutts, Brookeville, scientific/academic
Meo Curtis, DEP
Kathleen Fulcomer, Laytonsville, public-at-large
Todd Greenstone, Brookeville, agriculture
Scott Kauff, Rockville, public-at-large
Lonnie Luther, Damascus, agriculture
Glenn Moglen, Silver Spring, scientific/academic
Frederick Phillips, Kensington, public-at-large
David Plummer, Montgomery County Soil Conservation District
Douglas Redmond, MNCPPC
Dustin Rood, Gaithersburg, business
Larry Silverman, Silver Spring, environmental
Mike Smith, Silver Spring, environmental
Terrance Valentine, WSSC