



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON AQUEDUCT
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, BALTIMORE DISTRICT
5900 MACARTHUR BOULEVARD, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016-2514**

October 17, 2011

Office of the General Manager

Mr. Kenneth Landgraf
Acting Forest Supervisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
George Washington & Jefferson National Forests
5162 Valleypointe Parkway
Roanoke, VA 24019

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the George Washington National Forest

Dear Mr. Landgraf,

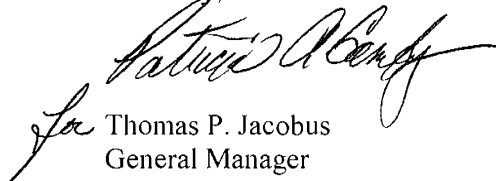
The Washington Aqueduct (WA) owns and operates two water treatment plants in the District of Columbia from which three wholesale customers – DC Water, Arlington County, VA and the City of Falls Church, VA – are provided with high-quality water. These three wholesale customers in turn distribute water to approximately one million people living in, working in and visiting the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia.

The Potomac River is the sole raw water source for water treated by Washington Aqueduct. Promoting and engaging in watershed protection efforts is as important to Washington Aqueduct as is selecting the best treatment technologies. Our needs for a safe, reliable water supply involve both issues of water quantity and quality. Long-standing interstate agreements for the Potomac River Watershed, to which we have been a signatory, have addressed water quantity and quality protection as essential to properly managing this key natural resource. As a result, any action that could vitiate the effects of these agreements would be unwelcome. Safe water supply is essential to life; the needs of the water treatment and supply utilities that rely on the Potomac River for source water must be given primary consideration.

Washington Aqueduct strongly supports the selection of an Alternative that prohibits the use of horizontal fracturing (hydrofracking) for natural gas development within the Forest. Although studies on the technique are still needed in order to fully understand the potential impacts on drinking water, enough study on the technique has been done and information has been published to give us great cause for concern about the potential for degradation of the quality of our raw water supply as well as impact to the quantity of the supply.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment to the Draft EIS. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact Ms. Patty Gamby by phone at 202-764-2639 or by email at patricia.a.gamby@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,


Thomas P. Jacobus
General Manager

cc. Joe Hoffinan, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
Stuart Freudberg, Metropolitan Washington Council of Government

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