

Speaking Testimonies Handed in from June 19th Public Meeting

WSSC Watershed Testimony
Dr. Denis Webb
June 19, 2012

EA ENGINEERING
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

JUN 19 2012

My name is Denis Webb and my wife Barbara and I own a small private horse farm which abuts the buffer zone surrounding the Rocky Gorge Reservoir. Last night at the hearing in Laurel on the topic of watershed usage, there was considerable discussion of the rationale (or lack thereof) for moving the "interior" equestrian trail to the access road and reducing the period when the WSSC recreational facilities are open to all users, boaters, fisherman as well as the equestrians. Another change implemented in the recent WSSC watershed access regulations did not receive adequate attention last night, in my opinion, namely, the closure of all private entrances to the horse trails and limiting access only to official WSSC entrances. I would like to briefly discuss that now.

When we moved into our farm about 20 years ago we approached the WSSC watershed patrol and asked for their help and blessing for laying out an access route from our farm to the equestrian trails. WSSC happily agreed to this request and this enabled us to basically ride out the back gate of our property and immediately be on the beautiful WSSC trails. They subsequently sent us a document stating that we officially had this access route. We still have this document in our files and I have included a copy attached to this testimony. Under the new rules we cannot use this trail access but must trailer our horses to one of eight official WSSC entrances. Even this is misleading as most official entrances do not have suitable parking for horse trailers. Two entrances require parking on private property, one requires parking along a dangerous road and one no parking. There is only one suitable parking lot east of Route 29 (Supplee Lane) and three marginally suitable parking lot west of Route 29 (Ednor , Batson and Brogden) The latter three have limited space, 2-4 trailers, and also serve as school bus turn-arounds.

In practice no trail rider would buy a property or board their horse at a facility abutting the buffer zone and then trailer to an "official" entrance. Much of the attraction of these properties is being able to quickly and easily hop on your horse after a tough day at work, in that bit of spare time you have or just on a sudden desire to commune with nature on a beautiful day. None of this would be possible if you had to first trailer somewhere. Even more insidious is the effect this rule has upon commercial boarding facilities. Many boarders do not have trailers due to the expense and effort of purchasing and maintaining one, and those individuals would seek barns which have ready access to trails. Even those with trailers are boarding at these facilities because of ready access to the trails and would look elsewhere if this rule is enforced. Implementation of this regulation requiring using only the official WSSC entrances would thus inflict a severe financial penalty on the commercial barns and would likely jeopardize their very existence.

This regulation makes absolutely no sense to me and I have yet to hear a reasonable justification for its existence. I would ask E A Engineering to consider the environmental aspects of this regulation, if any, and unless a cogent explanation for its existence is forthcoming I urge WSSC to rescind it.

JUN 19 2012

Subject: An alarm bell was rung and the people came.

Last Nights June 18, 2012 Public meeting regarding: The T. Howard Duckett and Triadelphia Reservoirs changes.

with the "EA" Engineering, Science & Technology group and Stakeholders was very well attended with around 90 people of a wide range of demographics. It was well attended by WSSC employee's, community advocates, EA, and at least one supporting politician who graciously gave her time Councilwoman Mary Lehman District 1.

(NEXT MEETING TONIGHT - at the Izaak Walton League Wildlife Achievement Chapter (26430 Mullinex Mill Road, Mt. Airy, MD 21771. If you plan to speak for EA records it is a good idea to submit your comments in print to them.

Also I would love a copy from anyone who has comments or letters. I think we need to be sure to keep our own records too. You can send them to me: Debby.Poole@Juno.com)

We heard about Good things:

GRANTS - The Maryland Department of Transportation offers grants up to forty thousand dollars per project each year to build and improve trails in Maryland. The WSSC equestrian trail is most likely eligible for these funds.

TRAINED MOUNTED RESCUE AND PATROL TEAMS -Times are changing. Regularly throughout the US riders are asked to volunteer to be trained for rescue and patrol. It's not unusual to see on the news Riders looking for a lost child or adult. Last year Howard Co. Police Dept. Volunteer Mounted Police Unit advertised Seeking Experienced Riders to train to patrol their parks. Not to confront but to observe and report a problem or help in a rescue. Several of our riders are trained for this and offer their help on the Watershed.

OLIVA PASS - In 1983 Pat Oliva and Terry Ledley succeeded in getting an underpass built along the river under Rt. 29 to connect the two trail sections.

TERRY LEDLEY TRAIL - one of the most beautiful trails named after Terry Ledley who for 35+ years has maintained trails often at her own financial expense.

COMPANIES CAN AMEND RULINGS - it's never to late, WSSC can make changes to address these issues. Look at the Bank of America I think they just reversed a decision about charging extra on checking because of one lady protesting. http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-500202_162-20128896/the-woman-behind-the-bank-of-america-fee-protest/

MARYLAND HORSE 2010 CENSUS STATISTICS -amazing statistics go to www.mda.state.md.us/horseboard and then click on Equine Census it will take you to this information.

WE HAD PEOPLE FROM WIDE DEMOGRAPHIC WHO SPOKE SUCH AS; teachers, nurses, lawyers, private land owners, business owners, boating, fishing, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, clubs, civic associations, Maryland National Park and Planning...

WE HAD PEOPLE THAT CAME FROM BALTIMORE, VIRGINIA, DC AND OTHER OUTREACHING AREAS WHO CARE ABOUT THIS BEAUTIFUL RESOURCE.

WE HEARD PEOPLE TELL HOW THEY MOVED INTO THE BURTONSVILLE, LAUREL AREA BECAUSE OF THE WATERSHED.

DEER POPULATIONS ARE BEING ADDRESSED BY WSSC AND THE DR. - no one in the room had a problem with the deer being controlled. In fact the equestrians agree there is a great need.

VANDALISM - Is mostly a non issue - most that spoke of Vandalism attributed it to lack of patrols, but also when the horseback riders (the eye's and ears) where pulled off the trails last year.

VOLUNTEERS - are abundant, an amazing amount of people spoke of areas they care for, and have cared for sometimes decades. Many were willing to sign up and help.

GENERATIONS - many spoke of sometimes as many as 5th generations that have cared for, loved, and stayed in this area just because of the watershed.

You could feel the Heat of Frustration Rolling off some when we learned of:

NO OFFICIAL WSSC OFFICERS PATROLLING THE AREA - not one for over a decade since the watershed patrols funding was changed. Before that change Patrol Officers Butch Abbott, Tony Frye, Ray Hohl, Bart Pitt and Terry Perrell on boats, horseback and jeeps made notes of problem areas especially on the firebreak, shoreline, and often went with WSSC maintenance crews as well as volunteers. No one does this now, and no one knows intimately as they did the pro's and con's of the watershed. They also went to farms and encouraged riders to purchase permits, and reached out to personally understand the needs of those who use the watershed.

FINANCIALLY -Where did this important funding go. If not for officers and maintenance where??

VIRTUALLY NO MAINTENANCE IN THE LAST DECADE ESPECIALLY ON THE IMPORTANT FIREBREAKS (now referred by WSSC as the access or buffer road)

THE STONEWALLING OF MPIO REPORTS AND OUTRAGEOUS BILLS CHARGED - one of our speakers relayed in part this "I am frustrated that I am unable to participate in these meetings the way that I would like to because of the lack of information on this study. I made a very limited request for documents specifically related to the study through a Maryland Public Information Act request. WSSC responded that this was such a huge request that they needed an additional 30 days to work on it. When the WSSC wrote to say that they had completed their document review, they indicated that they were charging me for 6.5 hours of time, including other expenses related to their search, for a grand total of \$400 plus, which did not include copying fees. Because this is a great deal of money and I planned to use the documents to share with my fellow equestrians, I requested a waiver of the fee based on the fact that having these documents is necessary to be an informed stakeholder and, therefore, in the public interest." This issue is ongoing. I understand several others have met with similar MPIO request problems.

FINANCIALLY - I understand the cost of the EA study is \$225K to survey 5000 acres of land for erosion sources

FINANCIALLY - business' are really taking a hit when the trails were closed, people moved their horses out of this area. Thus they are not here buying gas, food,....

TURF FERTILIZING IS ONE OF THE WORST THINGS FOR THE WATER. - we all need to be aware of how fertilizer runs off lawns into the streams.

THE TRIBUTARIES - just in a short stretch between rt 29 and 650 there are probably 8 streams that carry water directly into the river.

IF THE TRAILS CLOSE DOWN AND ALL THE FARMS THAT BORDER THE WATERSHED ARE GONE, WHAT WILL PROTECT THE AREA FROM BUILDING - at the end of almost every road off 198 there are farms that protect the watershed. If the farms go under because of lack of revenue what will replace them? Guess.

MANY CONCERNS ABOUT LACK OF DATA/OR ERRONEOUS DATA, AND LACK OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH. we have not seen data to support these changes.

MISS THE YEARS OF PAST COOPERATIVE RELATIONS SHIPS BETWEEN WSSC AND TRAIL RIDERS OF TODAY (over 600 members).

LOSING MORE GREEN WAYS - at this time existing trails especially connecting ones like the watershed are being protected, remain open, and saved for future generations.

Other subjects that still need to be addressed:

JUN 19 2012

June 19, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the owner and operator of Greystone Farm in Brookeville Maryland. I have been in the horse riding stables business for over 40 years in Montgomery County.

I have been a long standing part of the horse community and have watched and been personally impacted by development in our area.

I have a long history with helping to keep trail access open for riders working with Naomi Manders in the 1990's to realize her goal of having equestrian trails linking together throughout the County.

The horse community is a vital part of our society here, in Maryland, and without areas to exercise our horses we will not be able to continue. Horses help people in many ways both physically and therapeutically as proven by the many programs available to the public, so this would indeed be a great loss.

Please be aware of this important move to keep all trails open year round to riders who are generally very good stewards of the land that they are permitted to ride on.

Also it is a well-known fact to most equestrians that ATV and other motorized vehicles are the major source of erosion problems NOT HORSES.

Horses have been use for centuries for logging and farming in sensitive areas because they did not cause soil problems or pollution.

Sincerely,

E. Anne Cowles

JUN 19 2012

Testimony of Maria Schwartz at Stakeholders' Meeting held in Mt. Airy, Md on June 19, 2012.

My name is Maria Schwartz. I am a member of Trail Riders of Today (TROT), an organization of approximately 700 plus members. I am a horse owner and a trail rider. I keep my horses at a farm that abuts the 5,500 acres of the WSSC land that is the subject of EA's study. I also live right off of the watershed but I don't have enough land to support 2 horses. However, for several years, I kept my single horse in my backyard. I moved to my home in 1986 specifically because I could ride from my home to the trails without having to rely on a trailer which I did not have for many years. I moved my horses to their current location for the same reason. I support the concerns my fellow stakeholders have raised at this meeting and at last night's meeting in Laurel.

The first concern I would like to raise is that by virtue of the WSSC's current regulations, anyone without a trailer that is not next to a designated access point, is not able to ride on the watershed. Additionally, I don't understand how the WSSC can institute a regulation that has such a negative impact on our environment generally since this regulation requires a trail rider to get into a large car or truck and use gas that adds nasty things to our air quality in order to pull a trailer to an access point rather than, as was previously the case, allowing trail riders to access the watershed trails by horseback.

The second concern I have focuses on the lack of information that I have had access to in order to prepare for these meetings. Let me give you some detail. After the announcement that EA would be conducting a study and was looking for stakeholders, I called EA to let them know I would like to participate as a stakeholder. The person that took my call did not know about the study and did not even where to direct my call in the organization. But I was told that someone would call me back. No one did. Two weeks later, I called a second time and spoke with a gentleman. He told me that he couldn't give me any information about the study and suggested that if I wanted any information, I would have to get it from the WSSC. To accomplish that, I made a very limited request for documents specifically related to the EA study through the Maryland Public Information Act. WSSC responded that this was such a huge request that they needed an additional 30 days to work on it. When the WSSC wrote to say that they had completed their document review, they indicated that they were charging me for 6.5 hours of time, including other expenses related to their search, for a grand total of \$491.69, which does not include copying fees. Because this is a great deal of money for me to pay, and I planned to use the documents to share with my fellow equestrians, I requested a waiver of the fee based on the fact that the only way I could get this information was through an MPA request and that having these documents is necessary to be an informed stakeholder and, therefore, in the public interest. WSSC emailed a response that they were sending my request to their General Manager for review and consideration. Rather than next receiving an answer to my request for a waiver, I received a second bill for the WSSC's search time. I thought this was just an error and the WSSC had sent this bill out not realizing that I was requesting a waiver. However, the next time I heard from the WSSC, it was to again request payment for their search and inform me that if I didn't pay the fee, they would turn my bill over to their legal department. I am still waiting for a response to my request for a waiver.

What the WSSC's actions in this situation indicate to me is that the WSSC does not want educated stakeholders. They want to keep us in the dark. And this behavior leads me to ask "Why?" and, in response to that question, to conclude that the WSSC has a hidden agenda. And it appears that their hidden agenda not only includes equestrians (whose horses are supposedly fouling our drinking water) but also boaters, fishermen, picnickers, and all the folks who treasure and gently use watershed resources. While it's not pleasant but understandable when an ex-spouse has a hidden agenda, or the person trying to sell you something for more than it's worth has a hidden agenda, it is NOT ok for county, state or federal representatives to have hidden agendas. In fact, it is contrary to good government. The communication of information is critically important in a healthy democracy. This means that our representatives must be as transparent as possible in their interactions with the public. My real fear and the reason I am here today to speak to this assembly is that I believe "something is rotten in Denmark." While we are laying off teachers and curtailing other services in Maryland, we (and as ratepayers I do mean WE) are apparently paying EA \$225,000 to scope out a study that no one outside of the WSSC can see a basis for. And neither EA nor WSSC is forthcoming in helping us to understand the issues at hand. Instead, the WSSC is publishing wild statements in papers such as the Washington Post which people not familiar with the watershed read and respond to with "Oh my goodness, horses are pooping in our drinking water."

The groundless impression that the WSSC is creating is SO wrong on so many levels, one might find it hard to figure out where to start. I am honestly not sure the results of any study the WSSC initiates on this issue will not be skewed to serve the WSSC's own hidden agenda.

This gets to my third concern. If EA is only looking at 5,500 areas that buffer the water directly, what about runoff from storm drains, from areas where individuals have dumped trash, from fertilized lawns, from road construction that abuts WSSC land outside of the 5,500 acres? EA's study is ALREADY skewed. And on a less than minor note, as EA does its study of the horse trails, they should not identify the firebreak as the horse trail. The firebreak and its horrible erosion, is completely of the WSSC's own making and has nothing to do with equestrian use which began for the first time, in March of this year when trail riders were forced to use it per revised WSSC regulations. The so-called interior trails which show no signs of erosion and runoff should be labeled as the horse trails, not as the "interior trails" as has been described here tonight by EA.

Finally, when this is all said and done, especially if Phase 1 of EA's study provides information that indicates that there is no basis to proceed to Phase 2 of the study, the Office of Legislative Audits should take a serious look at the waste and abuse the WSSC has engaged in over the last year and a half.

JUN 19 2012

June 19, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

My Name is Ainslee Sadler and I live in Burtonsville, Maryland. I have lived in close proximity to the Rocky Gorge Reservoir for a number of years. Over the years my family have both used the riding trails and assisted with maintaining those trails. Approximately 10 years ago I began to see a decrease in patrols and/or maintenance of the entire watershed to include recreation areas, horse trails, and fishing areas. I have discovered many cross drainage culverts which are washed out and impassable due to lack of maintaining. These culverts are located throughout the Watershed and allow streams to move from one side of the firebreak to the other without crossing the surface. For many years these culverts were being properly maintained and allowed watershed operations to continue and no erosion was taking place. However, once maintenance of these culverts stopped, erosion took place and debris built up causing collapse of the firebreak roadway. For reasons unknown, the WSSC then moved the horseback riding from the well established and maintained horse trails to these dangerously eroded and washed out firebreaks.

To date I have not seen any documented evidence of damage to the watershed, water quality, or habitat, caused by horses who trail ride alone the original designated bridle trail. In closing, we need to make every effort to control erosion to our watershed, but moving the horse trails to an area already in desperate need of repair was not the solution. I am asking for the trails to be re-opened and corrective action to be taken to update the watershed regulations.

Thank You,
Mrs. Ainslee Sadler and family.

Horse Manure on Trails—Myths and Mysteries

By Merle Richmond, BS, Biology, Eastern Michigan University & M.A., Vertebrate Zoology, UCLA

When equestrians share trails with other users, the first word out of the non-equestrian's mouth when asked about equestrians on the trail is "YUCK". The big pile of brown "yuck" is large, smelly and therefore, it must be bad in every aspect. It must carry germs first of all that will make us sick. And if they are environmentally involved, it must spread the dreaded exotic, invasive plants they hear about.

Contrary to the belief of many, healthy horses do not carry statistically significant numbers of indicator organisms or pathogenic organisms. *E. coli* which is an indicator species for human pathogenic bacteria is almost nonexistent in normal horse manure. A study "An Analysis of Human Pathogens found in Horse/Mule manure along the John Muir Trail in King's Canyon, Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks," was completed by Robert Wayne Derlet, M.D. and James Reynolds Carlson, PhD, both of UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento, California. The purpose of this study was to determine

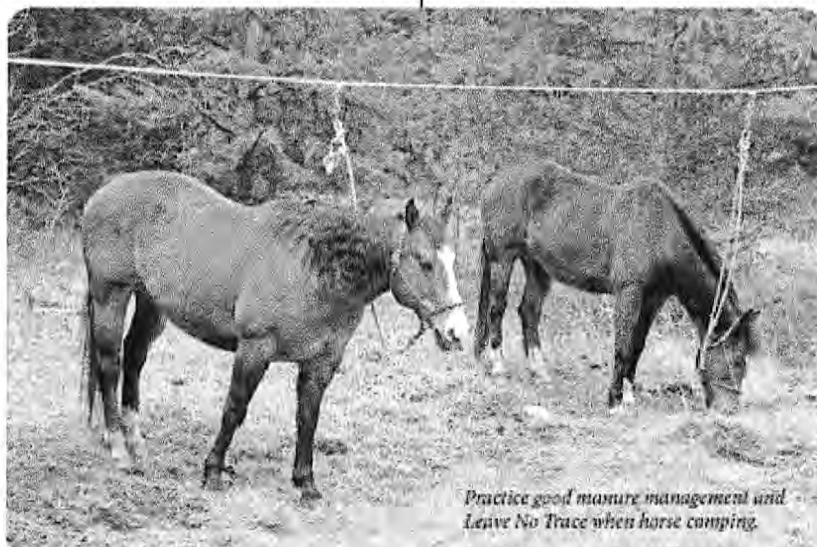
whether specific pathogenic organisms including *E. coli*, *Salmonella* and/or *Giardia* could be found in quantities that could contaminate water sources for backpackers along popular sections of the John Muir Trail. In this study, the chief aim was to identify *E. coli* and *Salmonella*. It was found that horses and pack animals generally have a low likelihood of importing *E. coli* and *Salmonella* into wilderness areas. Other studies indicate that if a horse or pack animal is not healthy, there is a greater risk of finding pathogenic organisms. It has also been noted the "if" horse manure contained significant pathogens horse owners and especially veterinarians would show increased incidence of these diseases—which is not so.

Environmentally conscious individuals will also point out that horse manure obviously contains seeds from the grass



and hay they eat, and therefore, must be a significant factor in the spread of exotic weed seeds. Paranoia here has led to rule regarding weed free hay being required on some federal lands in the west. A research study ordered by the American Endurance Rides Conference, conducted by Dr. Stith T. Gower, Department of Forest Ecology and Management at the University of Wisconsin and published December 28, 2006 finds

Contrary to the belief of many, healthy horses do not carry statistically significant numbers of indicator organisms or pathogenic organisms.



to the contrary. Using sites in North Carolina, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, non-native plant species composition and percent of total plant species did not differ between horse and hiker trails. He states "The results of this study and others demonstrate that horse hay and manure contains seeds of non-native plant species, but native and non-native plant species rarely become established on horse trails because of the harsh environmental conditions." Hay is composed of sun loving plants that do not grow in forests. They may sprout and become small plants, but never grow into seed producing plants. Other factors like wind, water

(Continued on next page)

(Horse Manure, continued)

and wildlife play more important roles in this dispersal. The requirement for "weed free" hay places a heavy, chemical burden on the land in order to produce it. Locally grown hay would provide the same benefit since the weeds in locally grown hay would only contain those weed already in that geographic area.

So, it gets back to the "YUCK" factor. As equestrians using the trails and parking areas, always be sure to totally clean up parking areas. Work on training your horse to step off the trail to relieve its self. It is not reasonable to require riders to dismount and kick it off the

trail, as many are older and some are handicapped. Horse back riding is a sport that these people can participate in to enjoy long hours in the wilderness. At stream crossing, water your horse and then move away from the stream.

...always be sure to totally clean up parking areas.

The occasional horse that would drop its manure in a stream is insignificant as the fast moving water disperses it quickly and natural bacteria will break it down quickly. Nutrient enrichment is only significant if there is a camp where large numbers of horses would be present is

next to a lake or stream. Manure in this case should be placed in bunkers for regular collection.

Try to educate land managers that horse back riding is a low impact sport, enjoyed by the very young to the very

old, including many that are handicapped or have special needs. Maybe we should be more concerned about the treatment that our own human sewage from our homes get. Look up primary, secondary and tertiary sewage treatment. What type does your town, city, village have?

JUN 19 2012

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

It seems to me that there have been an adequate number of detailed responses addressing the interest and use of the WSSC properties by various recreational groups. I myself am an avid kayaker and hiker but after listening and researching, I am not sure that the issue at hand is really the impact of recreational users upon the WSSC properties.

I am afraid that the WSSC has a specific agenda that includes precluding and/or limiting recreational use of the properties not because they are causing damage but rather because they are a convenient excuse or scapegoat to forward their plans.

I say this for two reasons. First, the study that is being done regarding silt accumulation and damaging run off impact to the areas, is not inclusive of all reasonable and probable causes. It appears to be solely focused on the recreational activities that in fact are the most minimal cause of such ecological damage.

In my opinion this will result in a skewed and incomplete survey. The survey will not answer the question of environmental protection at all.

Secondly, the WSSC has not tried to work with the recreational users in a constructive way. In fact, these recreational users, are a tremendous asset to WSSC in that they embody a large group of ecologically minded people who have been and would continue to be, advocates for preservation of the WSSC properties.

They are many hands to make light work. What a waste to disregard such a dedicated populous who would undoubtedly donate many hours of uncompensated time in the effort to preserve the WSSC grounds were they treated as partners rather than the enemy. It seems only logical to me that if you were really trying to solve a problem, you would tap into such an obvious resource – not ignore it.

The second point that I would like to make is that by fragmenting us- the recreational users into our specific interest groups – boaters, fishermen, equestrians, hikers etc. we are weakening our voice.

We need to unite and attempt to discover what the real agenda is here so that we can make an impact together.

All of us have an enormous stake in this and I would hate to see our energy spent defending the minimal impact of our recreational use if the powers to be are not really interested in the recreational impact beyond having an excuse to further their agenda.

Thank you

Lynda Mischler

8

Re: Comments made to EA on June 19, 2012 at Izaak Walton League Wildlife Achievement Chapter, 26430 Mullinex Mill Road, Mt. Airy, MD 21771

Thank you for offering me this opportunity to present my statement.

My name is John Love and I am a resident of Montgomery County. I frequently use Triadelphia and Rocky Gorge reservoirs for rowing, kayaking, and canoeing. Last year, I used the reservoirs well over 100 times. Just today, I rowed on Triadelphia in the morning. My boat is long and skinny and produces no wake. I park in designated areas, and I launch from the designated ramps. In my estimation, I produced no erosion from the buffer areas surrounding the reservoirs, and I caused no other pollution. So, why am I here, giving a statement at this watershed study meeting?

I believe the following: (1) The results of this study could be used to further limit access to the two reservoirs. Already, access has been limited in 2012 by a whopping 20 percent or more, due to the later opening and earlier closing dates imposed upon us this year. There was even talk last year that the "staff" at WSSC is considering closing the reservoirs entirely to boaters like me. (2) I believe WSSC handled the whole horseback issue poorly and that has drawn rowers, kayakers, and canoeists into the argument as to how to limit buffer zone erosion. This is a ridiculous position to be in, because (3) this study likely will find that rowers, kayakers, and canoeists are not contributing significantly to erosion of buffer areas.

I hope for the following: (1) The results of this study can be used to justify returning to a longer season for boaters like me. If other activities on the buffer areas need to be restricted to prevent erosion in late-winter and late-fall, boating could still be allowed. I would refer the study team to opening/closing dates for similar reservoirs in the area: for example, Seneca Lake at Black Hill Regional Park and Liberty/Prettyboy reservoirs near Baltimore. They all open on/around March 1. (2) I hope WSSC will see from this process that consulting with the user-community on decisions about reservoir access and activities is helpful outreach. Users like me felt shut out of previous decisions. We users could be so much more helpful to WSSC if we had a good relationship. (3) Finally, I hope WSSC will continue to allow boaters access to these beautiful reservoirs to the maximum extent possible, finding that all of us are good stewards of the lakes and careful not to denigrate the natural surroundings.

Thank you.

Subject:

Re: request to speak @ wssc/ea meeting 6/19/12

As a stake-holder and customer of WSSC I welcome efforts to guarantee the safety and purity of our drinking water, including a scientific study of possible causes of pollution and sedimentation. After all, because of mismanagement and skewed priorities, more than a billion people in the world currently lack access to decent water supply, and twice as many lack access to proper sanitation. Four billion people will live under conditions of severe water stress by 2025. We count ourselves lucky to live in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and wish to cooperate fully in guaranteeing both safety and supply for our urban area.

The problems which can affect reservoirs are many, varied and complex and relate to the length of time water is retained behind a dam (the longer the retention, the more lethal the problems), the water temperature, levels of dissolved oxygen, the amount of exposure to ultraviolet radiation, and a host of other factors. Inflowing rivers transport material such as nutrients, sediments and other contaminants, which may then be affected by in-lake processes such as settling of suspended particles, biochemical action and thermal stratification, that is, temperature variations which can cause water to "stratify," exhibiting different properties and processes in different layers. As an example, some metals, such as iron and manganese, are soluble in water under anaerobic (low oxygen) conditions, but will precipitate in aerobic environments. Dams themselves are not "clean" sources of electricity because of their serious social and environmental impacts. Studies reveal that dam reservoirs are often significant sources of greenhouse gases, especially in the tropics, where reservoirs can produce more greenhouse gases than even the dirtiest fossil fuel power plants.

In short, myriad and multiple factors contribute to reservoir water quality and any good scientific study will attempt to include as many variables as possible. It is important, therefore, that this proposed study be fact-based and attempt to give as complete a picture as possible.

Therefore, to determine the amount of sedimentation taking place in our reservoirs and evaluate what is contributing to sedimentation we need to know all the possible sources, the quality of the sediment entering, the relative quantities of sediment washing into the reservoir, as well as the yearly sedimentation rate, including seasonal variances. Channels entering the reservoir must be evaluated by standards of erosion resistance and capacity. These are just a few variables and human and animal sources of erosion are part of the picture; however, they are only part of it.

In order to study the bacterial contamination in the water we need comparison studies of river water above and below the dam, as well as in the reservoir.

I am here tonight to make a plea to WSSC and EA to conduct a study which is both ethical and scientific. The study - as presented to us last night in Laurel - seems to be neither ethical nor scientific. To EA I would say, protect the reputation of your company by counseling WSSC to include all the possible variables in as complete a way as possible. To WSSC I would say, resist the temptation to justify possible cuts in staff for patrolling the watershed area around the reservoirs by reducing this study to the most minor variable, recreational useage.

If the real reason for the study is to justify cutting staff patrolling the border areas, I would say that people patrol this area and restricting useage will limit public policing and open the way for illegal dumping and illegal useage on a much larger scale.

My personal plea is for WSSC to work together with your greatest supporters, we environmentally-friendly groups currently using the reservoir for kayaking, horseback riding and family picnics. Employ us as your eyes and ears, connect with us as your scouts so that we can report regularly to you on environmental problems and disturbances. You will find in us a loyal, dedicated and responsible group of supporters who wish nothing more than to protect our water supply for generations to come.

Thank you for listening.

Jane von Maltzahn

Subject: Rocky gorge meeting

Hi – I'm Peter Schumacher of Laurel, Maryland. I appreciate AE Engineering giving watershed stakeholders a chance to voice their concerns about ever increasing WSSC reservoir access restrictions, unlike WSSC management.

I'm a heavy WSSC watershed user and own a home bordering Rocky Gorge Reservoir. I had six boats in my garage until recently, now I'm down to five. WSSC reservoirs are my sole source of exercise, stress relief, and adventure. I don't go to gym, jog, play team sports, etc. I go paddling. Yesterday, Father's Day, we had three generations of Schumacher's on Rocky Gorge – me, my son, and my Dad. By the way, Dad caught his personal best Largemouth Bass, 22" long... but the spot is a secret.

I'm gravely concerned with the increasing access restrictions WSSC has placed on the people to their water. For the record, in 2002 when I moved in adjacent to the watershed, the hours of access were:

- Sunrise to 1 hour after sunset (2002 to approximately 2009)

The reservoir was open for recreation

- March 1 – December 15 (2002 to 2010)

Since then WSSC has arbitrarily and without stakeholder input, reduced the calendar year access period by 2 months, eliminating citizen access during the entire month of March and from November 15 – December 15. Thus the current calendar access period is:

- April 1 – November 15 (2011, 2012)

They also reduced the daily time from:

- Sunrise to sunset

We understand reasonable restrictions and can live with the Sunrise to sunset rule for public safety. However, the loss of March and November 15 – December 15 has no scientific basis and hurts the citizens.

As an example of reasonable reservoir access rules, look to the Baltimore reservoirs such as Liberty reservoir which serve the same purpose as WSSC reservoirs (drinking water).

I'm reading from a document pulled off the BaltimoreCity.gov website today:

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=QS51O1TgDxY%3d&tabid=2242&mid=4303>

“V. Permitted Activities

The following recreational activities, *which have minimal impact on the natural environment*, are permitted with some restrictions described hereinafter within areas of the Water Quality Management Areas open to the public: biking in approved areas, fishing from watercraft, bank fishing, use of watercraft, picnicking (no fires), hiking, horseback riding, bow and arrow hunting at Liberty, Prettyboy, and Loch Raven, bird watching, skeet shooting (only at Loch Raven Skeet and Trap center call ...) and golf (only at Pine Ridge Golf Course at Loch Raven – call ...)

Also “7. The watercraft season extends from **March 1st through December 31st**, weather permitting.”

Thus, Baltimore allows citizens to access the reservoirs 2.5 months more per year than WSSC under WSSC’s new access restrictions. WSSC’s new restrictions are unacceptable.

In summary, in the heavily industrialized Rt. 1 corridor, the citizens need access to wild spaces like WSSC reservoirs for exercise, stress relief, family gatherings and nature enjoyment. I’m gravely concerned that WSSC is headed in the wrong direction.

Attempts to further restrict access, and failure to roll back the newly implemented access restrictions (no March access, no November 15-December 15 access) will meet with vigorous political opposition.

Thank you.

Peter Schumacher, Laurel, MD

West Laurel Civic Association
P.O. Box 387
Laurel, MD 20725
18 June 2012

**WLCA
2011-2012
Board of
Directors**

Melissa Daston
President

Cassandra
Hostetler
1st Vice President

Barbara Sollner-
Webb
2nd Vice President

Susan Railey
Treasurer

Tom Dernoga
Recording
Secretary

Beth Evans
Public Affairs
Officer & Area V
Rep

EA Engineering, Science and Technology, Inc
ATTN: Ms. Tracy Eberhard,
15 Loveton Circle
Sparks, MD 21152

My name is Melissa Daston and I am the President of the West Laurel Civic Association which represents 1,700 homes in both Prince George's and Montgomery counties. Our community abuts the Rocky Gorge watershed and reservoir. The sudden decision of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) to curtail access to horseback trails last year came without warning, was based on no scientific evidence, and has had unintended consequences for both West Laurel residents and WSSC. The current consideration to further limit access to the watershed prior to collection and analysis of scientific data is premature and directly impacts West Laurel.

When the West Laurel Civic Association Executive Board met with senior members of WSSC earlier this month, the manager of one of the commercial stables located in West Laurel noted that after years of having a waiting list at his establishment, he now has a 35% vacancy rate primarily due to the actions of WSSC to close the horseback riding trails. This same pattern of lost business has occurred in each of the commercial stables. At the same time since ending trail riding, residents have reported an increase of illegal motorbike usage along the watershed, campfires, hikers with unleashed dogs, and swimmers in the reservoir. When these "new" and illegal users are asked why they are in the area, they have uniformly professed that they thought the ban on horseback riding meant that they now had free access to these trails. The simple act of closing riding trails has had an unintended consequence.

The small WSSC police force has long used the horseback riders as their eyes and ears; at the same time, the WSSC environmental offices has also counted on these loyal stewards to monitor activity, maintain the trails, and report issues. In short, this group of users who are now precluded from using the watershed can no longer serve as environmental stewards nor are they able to assist WSSC in deterring users who have a deleterious impact.

Closing access to just one type of usage of the watershed, has also impacted every homeowner in West Laurel. Conversations with multiple realtors have underscored that the WSSC decision has contributed to the devaluation of homes. As WSSC considers further restrictions and access to the watershed to boaters, anglers, the iron-man competition, and WSSC fall deer hunt, there is significant concern on further impacts to West

West Laurel Civic Association
www.wlcaweb.org

Laurel residents.

The West Laurel Civic Association requests that the pre-existing access be reinstated during the period of the environmental study allowing EA Engineering, Science and Technology and the Prince George's County Soil Conservationist to assess the actual impact of current usage. We believe that this is a sound scientific approach.

Should the environmental study find that usage of the Rocky Gorge watershed, be it boating, angling, horseback riding, or other WSSC approved activities, are in any way degrading the water quality or harming the environment the West Laurel Civic Association will support WSSC in their remediation actions. However, should the findings show that the current limited use is not having a negative impact, I strongly urge WSSC to reconsider and reinstate the privileges that have been rescinded and not add additional restrictions.

Melissa G. Daston
President
West Laurel Civic Association

cc: Mr. James Neustadt
Delegate Pena-Melnyk
Councilwoman Mary Lehman