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Damian Ossi,
DC Department of Energy & Environment
1200 1st Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

by mail and email: damian.ossi@dc.gov

Comments on revised Wildlife Action Plan

Dear Mr. Ossi:

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) commends the DC Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE) for its revision of the 2005 Wildlife Action Plan (WAP). The new revision builds on the 2005 plan, based on additional research, identifies additional species including invertebrates, adds to species in greatest conservation need, and suggests new initiatives. We offer the following comments, submitted by September 7, 2015.

Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for revision. We urge DOEE to advocate for including priorities to preserve habitats by restricting development in Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3, enhancing wildlife corridors (including separating wildlife from traffic), and increasing tree canopy to 40 percent.

Wildlife corridors. The plan correctly identifies the important goal of expanding wildlife corridors. A corollary goal is to preserve existing wildlife corridors intact. The RFK Stadium area includes a Tier 1 (the most significant) wildlife habitat and is recommended for wetlands restoration. Heritage Island and Kingman Island are

Conservation Opportunity Areas. The WAP also identifies roads as a potential threat to wildlife. WAP, pp. 77, 81-83, 87. Nevertheless, DC Department of Transportation has repeatedly proposed building a "park road" (a commuter road) along the Anacostia River from Benning Road to Barney Circle. This road would bifurcate the wildlife habitat along this section of the Anacostia River and harm wildlife. We urge that the WAP strongly and expressly recommend against new roads in wildlife corridors.

Coordination among DC government agencies to further WAP goals. Two important goals of the WAP are reaching 40 percent tree canopy and reduction in storm water run-off. At an ANC 6A meeting on August 18, 2015, Department of Recreation and Parks (DPR) announced a pilot project for a "zen garden" at the triangle park at 15th and North Carolina Avenue, NE. This park has multiple trees, paid for and watered by nearby neighbors. DPR's detailed plan calls for grade changes in the park, building earth mounds between trees, and adding paving where none exists now. DPR's plans appear to conflict with goals of the WAP. The DPR representative indicated that DOEE had not yet been consulted about the zen garden and that because the park was under DPR's jurisdiction, there was no need to consult with the DC Department of Transportation. We urge DOEE to encourage all DC government agencies to work together with DOEE to further the goals of the WAP.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

Sincerely,



Lisa Dale Jones
President

cc:

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