



JOSEPH S. PAXTON
County Administrator



ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

September 16, 2010

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Election District No. 5

Maureen Hyzer
Forest Supervisor
United States National Forest Service
5162 Valleypointe Parkway
Roanoke, VA 24019-3050

Dear Ms. Hyzer:

The U.S. Forest Service is in the process of revising the George Washington National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, commonly referred to as the Forest Management Plan; the Board of Supervisors previously reiterated its opposition regarding designating additional wilderness areas within Rockingham County.

The County is also aware of the potential for commercialization and development of energy sources on federal land. This appears to be in contradiction to the Board's support for use of the land for recreational purposes. The County is currently evaluating two matters related to energy development on private land in the County. The first is to provide a procedure for the construction of wind farms in the County. An ordinance to create this procedure was recently recommended by the Planning Commission to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration. The other matter is a request for a special use permit for the construction of a well to test for natural gas. This matter has been tabled while the board and staff evaluate additional information. Both of these items are related to development on private property. The Board supports the right for land owners to request a specific use for their property. It is then evaluated in a public process that provides appropriate due process for the applicant and those that may have concerns or oppose the proposed use.

Rockingham County is supportive of the development of alternative energy resources located at a site that is appropriate for its use, with appropriate levels of regulation and oversight, and on private lands. The Board does not support the commercialization of the natural resources in the National Forest or National Park lands, other than the limited timber sales program, through mining, extraction and other industrial means.

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Thank you for your time and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Joseph S. Paxton

JSP/tsg

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