



League of Women Voters[®] of Charlottesville and Albemarle County

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March 16, 2009

TO: The Honorable David Norris, Mayor
Charlottesville City Councilors

The Honorable David Slutsky, Chair
Albemarle County Supervisors

FROM: Charlottesville / Albemarle League of Women Voters

Subject: Approved Community Water Supply Plan

Dear Mayor Norris and Chairman Slutsky,

The League of Woman Voters of Charlottesville and Albemarle County have been advocates for watershed protection for more than twenty-five years and active participants in water supply planning throughout the design period. Based on our accumulated knowledge, we remain steadfast in our support of the implementation of the permitted, 50-year Water Supply Plan approved by the RWSA, the City, the County and the Albemarle County Service Authority.

After more than 10 years of reviewing over 32 alternatives and allowing extensive public participation, a water supply plan that meets community demand for water and our desire to protect our environment for generations to come has been developed.

This sustainable plan should improve the health of our watershed by protecting flows in two major rivers. The size of the new Ragged Mountain Reservoir is designed to meet estimated human demand in the year 2055 while meeting instream flow requirements of the South Fork Rivanna River below the South Fork Rivanna Dam. The plan also recognizes the inadequate water transfer capacity of the Moormans River water intake thereby requiring that the Sugar Hollow pipeline be decommissioned. A new pipeline from the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir to Ragged Mountain Reservoir will be built in its stead taking advantage of the abundant flow in the South Fork Rivanna. This important system design change will end the decade's long competition between the urban demand for water and the environmental needs of the Moormans River.

The financial burden placed on rate payers will be less than any other viable alternative presented in part because it incorporates replacement/rehabilitation of

antiquated infrastructure such as the dam at Ragged Mountain Reservoir, the O'Hill water treatment plant, century old raw water distribution pipes and, as mentioned previously, the decommissioning of the old and brittle Sugar Hollow pipeline.

The plan also leaves the community with stronger tree canopy and streams than we have today. Although it necessitates the removal of many acres of trees at Ragged Mountain Reservoir, the long range plan provides in compensation 200 acres of young native trees and miles of protected and rebuilt stream sides.

Another advantage is that the plan deals creatively with the sediment flowing into the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir. It facilitates the settling out of sediment before sending the clear water to Ragged Mountain Reservoir, a reservoir that is not subject to sediment accumulation because of its topography.

Finally, an important goal that emerged from the community during the long public planning process was to keep our public water source local. In keeping with this goal, the South Fork Rivanna River will continue to supply our community with its drinking water. Impressive public participation was instrumental in leading to this excellent outcome that the entire community can be proud to embrace.

Thank you.

Marguerite V. Cox

Marguerite V. Cox
President, League of Women Voters of Charlottesville and Albemarle County