



Testimony before
Environmental Quality Advisory Committee

January 12, 2022

For over 30 years, the Chesapeake Bay states have made promises to restore the Bay's health, but enacted halfway measures while missing deadline after deadline. For much of the same time the world has similarly dithered on climate change. This stuff is real. It does not care about our expectations or inconveniences.

The [Annual Report](#) correctly states “The most pressing environmental priority ... is global climate change.” (p. 2)

In support of this priority, the Annual Report goes on to recommend “processes and incentives that increase tree and forest cover” (p. xi)

The Annual Report also highlights how “Preservation and expansion of our natural stream buffers will ... contribute to our climate resiliency” and cautions against “trading ecological resources for increases in impervious surfaces” (p. 58)

There are too many forces of deforestation, private and public, that Fairfax County alone cannot contain. Therefore it is our obligation whenever it is in our power, to adopt a course of prevention of deforestation large and small.

The Friends of Accotink Creek thank EQAC for specifically mentioning one such case where resisting deforestation is entirely within the power of Fairfax County, namely the [Cinder Bed Road Bikeway](#). This Bikeway would be a lovely but redundant paved trail through a beleaguered forest fragment, made worse by proposed lighting and its route through especially sensitive wetlands. Bicycle-friendly and pedestrian-friendly “Complete Streets” as envisioned by [ActiveFairfax](#) provide the alternative to the path of deforestation in this case and all cases of temptation to trade forests for pavement.

Stream health, forest health, carbon sequestration, and climate resiliency are essential elements of a holistic approach to ensuring the environmental wellbeing of Fairfax County. Let’s achieve the goals of the [Tree Action Plan](#) by putting forest preservation at the core of all County plans and practices.

Friends of Accotink Creek

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