

Donaldson Run Civic Association

February 22, 2022

Jane Rudolph, Director
Department of Parks & Recreation
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Rudolph,

On behalf of the Donaldson Run Civic Association (DRCA), we are writing with regard to the Department's consideration of a deer management program.

A recent *Sun Gazette* article quoted certain staff as “get[ting] very few” concerns about the deer population documented by a May 2021 County-funded drone study, and suggesting that despite this study the deer overpopulation problem has not been “statistically proven.” This is not what we hear from our members, whether or not they have voiced their concerns to the County or to the Animal Welfare League. During the past year, DRCA has been closely monitoring this problem, which continues to cause great damage to our parks and the ecosystems that sustain them – and to the adjacent trees, shrubs, flowers, and gardens tended by our members. Many years ago, the manager of Potomac Overlook Regional Park also advised that the deer were doing severe damage to saplings in that park. We devoted a full DRCA meeting last year to hearing from our residents about these concerns, and from an Arlington Regional Master Naturalist about what might be done about them. The problem is particularly acute in our neighborhood, which falls within one of the four geographic areas in the County found by last year's study to have a higher deer population than is considered healthy by experts.

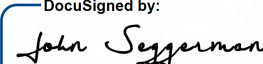
Last September, we wrote to the County Board Chair urging that the County craft a sound implementation plan to address deer overpopulation. We understand that the Department has still not taken the first step of publishing a request for proposals (RFP) to hire a consultant to initiate this process. We are disappointed about what appears to be a delay in taking needed action, and based on our experience have no reason to doubt the accuracy of last year's drone survey. We urge you to review this matter with a view towards developing a management program with the deliberation and the speed that it deserves.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. We look forward to your response.



Bill Richardson
President

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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John Seggerman
First Vice President
NC Representative.