

Collection
M 032
OM 007

LOUDOUN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS PROJECT

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Thomas Balch Library
208 W. Market Street
Leesburg, VA 20176

USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: .33 cu ft, 12 oversized items

COLLECTION DATES: 1998-2003

PROVENANCE: Dorn C. McGrath, Jr., George Washington University; Joan Rokus, Leesburg, VA

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: Collection open for research.

USE RESTRICTIONS: No physical characteristics affect use of this material.

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from Thomas Balch Library.

CITE AS: Loudoun County Environmental Indicators Project (M 032), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

ALTERNATE FORMATS: Copies of the newsletters are available online at the Loudoun County Environmental Indicators Project website
<http://www.gwu.edu/~leip/>

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 2006.0159; 2007.0093

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Loudoun County Environmental Indicators Project (LEIP) was initiated 1 Oct 1998. Conducted by George Washington University, the five year project was intended to make scientific analysis available to Loudoun County's elected officials and residents to help in making decisions about public policy relating to land use. It later expanded to provide environmental information to the general public.

The project received an initial grant from the Virginia Environmental Endowment, with additional funding from individuals, foundations, corporations and institutions. The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors also provided substantial financial support, and the project utilized the county's Geographic Information System (GIS). The project was directed by George Washington University, with Dorn C. McGrath, Jr. as principal investigator. A steering committee consisting of local citizens, local government representatives including Eleanor Towe of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors and B. J. Webb, Mayor of the Town of Leesburg provided additional oversight. Business people, representatives of foundations and institutions, and developers were also represented on the committee.

During the first year of the project, efforts focused on selecting sites to monitor, with 17 locations finally chosen. Drought conditions and rapid growth spurred interest in determining the effects of development on the environment. Among concerns were air and water quality, deforestation, and the potential for urban heat island effect from the increase in paved surfaces. Presentations and meetings were held to validate the decisions, and a newsletter and website were created to present information to the public.

In the 2000 annual report, LEIP identified a number of environmental changes: loss of forest, decline of agriculture, loss of wetlands and riparian land, and an increase in urban heat island effect. Air quality also showed an increase in pollution. The project also identified an environmental success story, an artificial wetlands created near Dulles Greenway to replace an existing one displaced by construction. Indicators showed that the wetlands helped reduce the amount of pollution in water collected there.

By 2001 LEIP had experienced a change in direction, as members were asked by the community for guidance about dealing with the county's rapid development. The forums changed to include displays and use a charette process to involve the public in discussions. At the conclusion of the project, it was hoped that LEIP's activities could be used as a model by other communities interested in assessing environmental changes.

Sources:

Loudoun County Environmental Indicators Project (M 032), Thomas Balch
Library, Leesburg, VA.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of annual reports, newsletters, and public presentation materials. Annual reports include text and maps demonstrating the baseline and analytical work done during the report's year. Presentations were originally mounted on foam core board; they have been removed and placed in file folders, with oversized items rolled for storage.

Three large framed photographs are hung in the lower level hallway of the library: Dulles Town Center, 23 Oct 2000; Dulles Town Center, Southern Exposure, 23 Oct 2002; and Potomac Crossing Subdivision, 23 Oct 2000.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1:

- Folder 1 Annual Report, 1999
- Folder 2 Annual Report 2000
- Folder 3 Annual Report 2001
- Folder 4 Annual Report 2002
- Folder 5 Greater Washington Immigrant Population 1990-1998
- Folder 6 Western Bypass, 1998
- Folder 7 "Indicators of Change," 1999
- Folder 8 "What is Geography," 2001
- Folder 9 "Loudoun County, Virginia Indicators of Change," 1998-2003

OM 007:

- Folder 1 "Citizen's Guide to Water Conservation & Lawncare," Spring 2002
Immigration map, 1990-1998

Rolled Storage:

USGS map (combination of parts of Seneca and Sterling quads, 1994)

USGS map (combination of parts of Arcola, 1981; Sterling, Leesburg, and Seneca quads, 1994)

Map of proposed Western Bypass Corridor Study dated March 1997

1967 Loudoun County Highway Map

Remote Sensing of the Urban Heat Island Effect – generalized poster

Poster of "Urban Heat Island" showing current (1999) research by NASA and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

Introductory poster "Welcome to Changing Development Standards Practices in Loudoun County and the United States"