BEDFORD AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

A Northern Westchester & Eastern Putnam County, New York chapter of the National Audubon Society
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COMMENTS TO NEW YORK CITY DEP ON SITING OF A FILTRATION PLANT FOR THE CROTON WATERSHED
Wednesday, March 13, 2002

1) Bedford Audubon Society is an 800 member chapter of National Audubon Society in Northern Westchester and Eastern Putnam County. Most of our members reside in the Croton Watershed. If they could be here tonight, they'd be speaking to you and urging you protect our remaining watershed buffer lands, wetlands and wild open spaces to protect New York City's drinking water..
2) They would tell you that to protect valuable, disappearing habitat for threatened species and species of special concern in Westchester such as Red Shouldered Hawks and Wood Thrush that require large territories and forested areas to breed and survive within the watershed, we must protect the diminishing wild open spaces that are causing increasing contact between people and wildlife. The same holds true for many other more common species that are part of the intricate web of life that keeps our watershed ecosystem healthy and naturally protective of the precious water we all drink.
3) Development pressures would undoubtedly cause an endless vicious cycle of more and larger filtration plants. We have seen first hand in our participation in the regulatory process how real estate developers are taking advantage of the meager protection we afford the watershed, and leverage it to their advantage at the local level, for, as you are well aware, we have no effective regional planning within the watershed.
4) Most importantly, the quality of Croton Watershed drinking water now meets or exceeds federal Surface Water Treatment Rule standards, so no need exists for this expensive and potentially harmful chemical filtration plant.

5) We urge you to instead follow the less expensive route and fight for increased protection of watershed buffer lands and increased enforcement of watershed rules and regulations. Any child can tell you that preventing pollution from occurring is a far better course of action than allowing pollution and trying to clean pollution up after the fact. That is in fact what a filtration plant would accomplish: ever increasing pollution and ever more expensive chemical filtration plants.
6) I'd like to remind you of the words of the great biologist and writer Rachel Carson who told journalists that "Mankind has gone very far into an artificial world of his own creation. He has sought to insulate himself in his cities of steel and concrete, from the realities of earth and water and the growing seed. Intoxicated with a sense of his own power, he seems to be going farther and farther into more experiments for the destruction of himself and his world. Let's not allow this to happen in a healthy Croton Watershed.

Respectfully Submitted

Donald C. Pachner chair
Conservation Committee
Member of the Board of Directors,