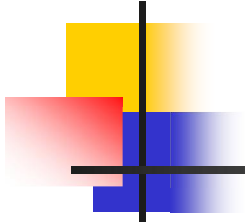


Helicopter Users Forum



Metropolitan Washington Council of
Governments

George L. Nichols
Principal Environmental Planner
Department of Environmental Programs

March 13, 2007

Past COG History on Helicopter Issues

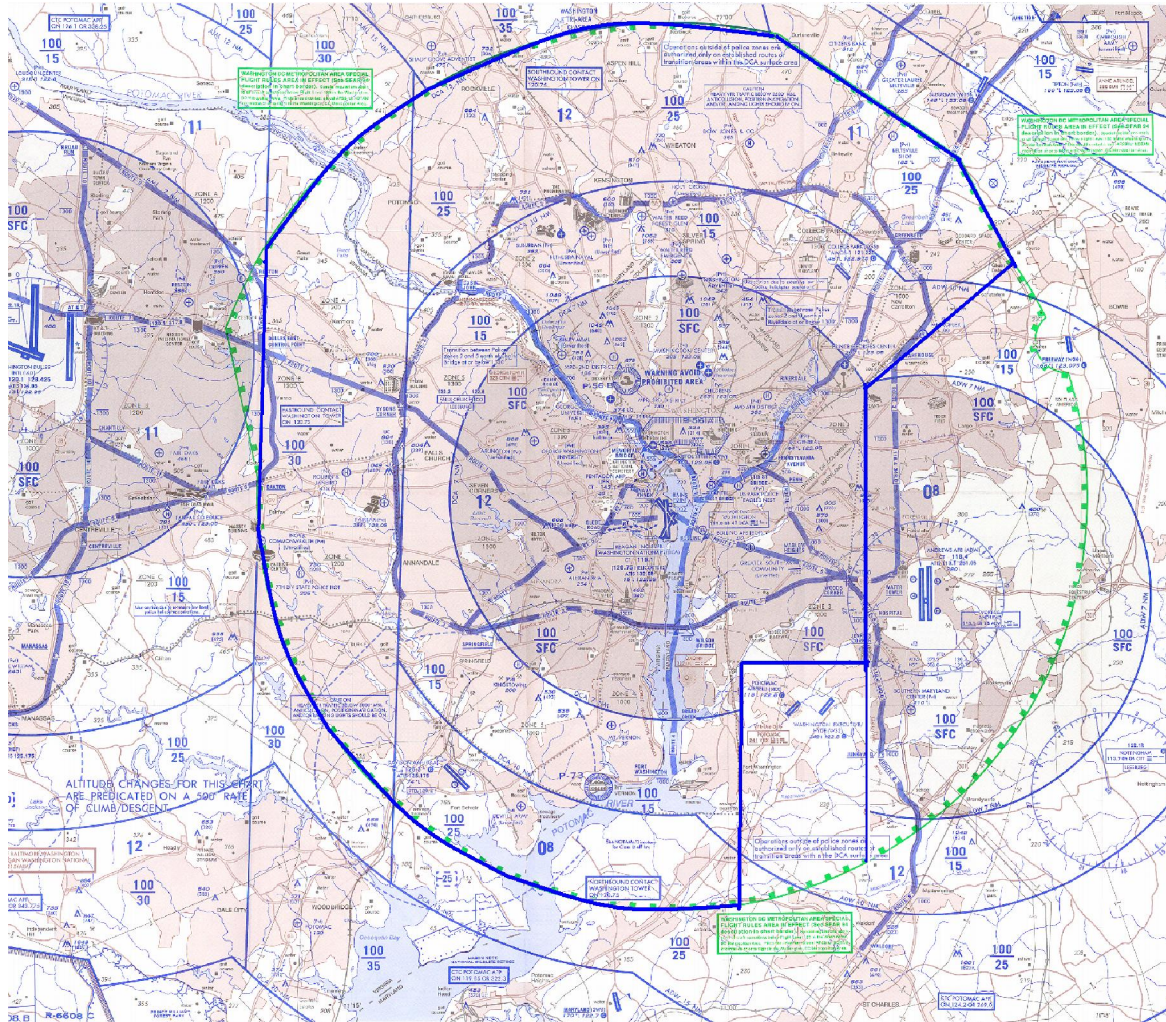
- n Assessment of the Use of Helicopters for Emergency Medical Transport in Metropolitan Washington Region, 1979 and 1985
- n Helicopter System Inventory and Vertiport Feasibility Study for Metro Washington, 1992
- n Regional Helicopter System Plan, 2005

Regional Helicopter System Plan, 2005

n Goals

- n Ensure that the current helicopter system meets the region's transportation and public services needs
- n Manage the system better to help reduce community noise impacts
- n Establish land use and permitting guidelines for helistops/heliports
- n Document relationship between transportation and public service benefits of helicopter operations and economic well being of region

Existing Route Structure



Who Uses Helicopters?

- n Variety of public and private agencies
- n Police and fire
- n Hospital and emergency medical community
- n Federal law enforcement
- n US Military
 - n Army
 - n Navy
 - n Air Force
 - n Marine

Where Do These Helicopters Operate?

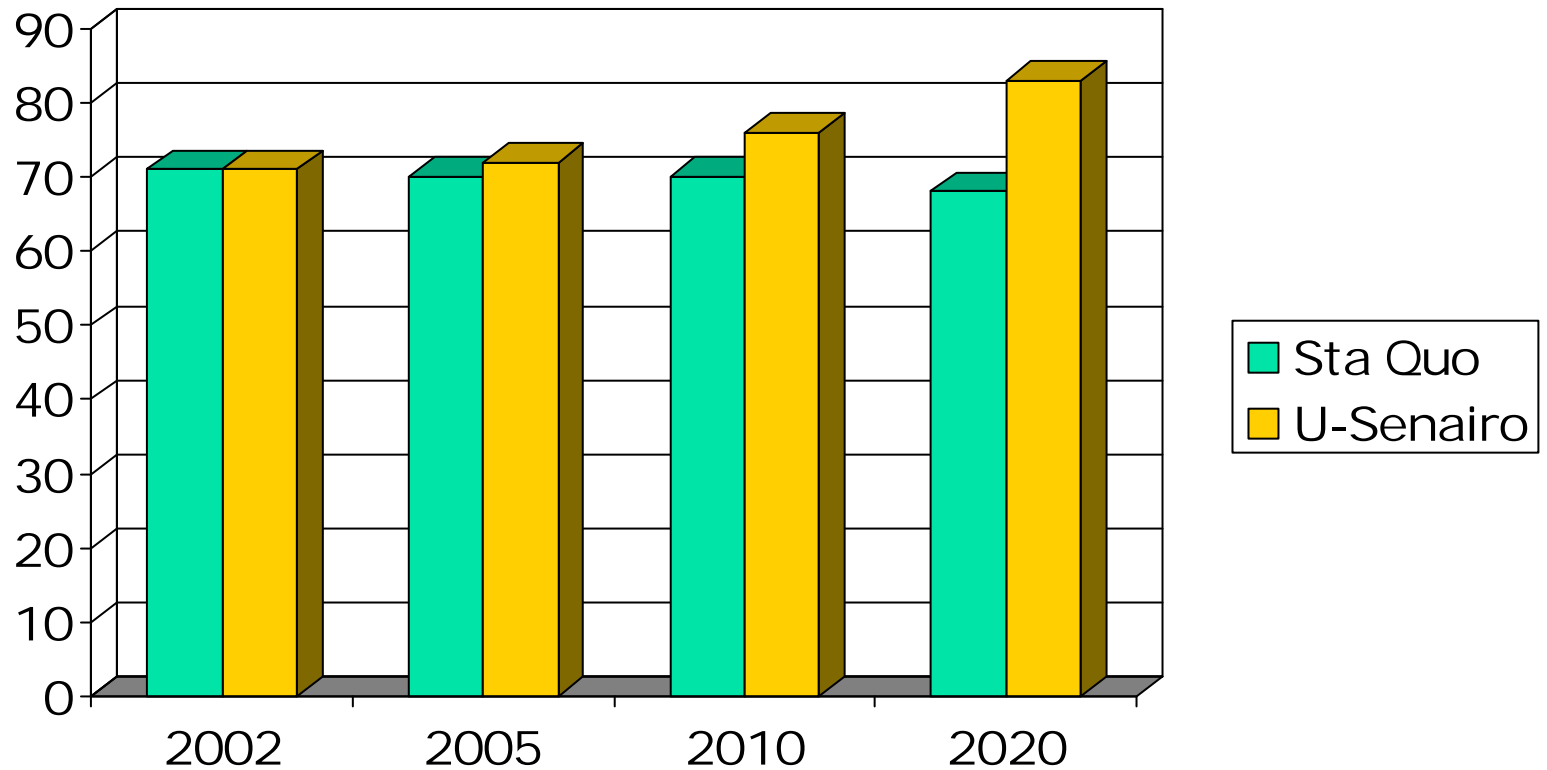
- n In 2002 – 48 active heliports in region
 - n Private/Corp -- 12
 - n Government -- 10
 - n Military -- 3
 - n Medical -- 22
 - n Public-Use -- 1



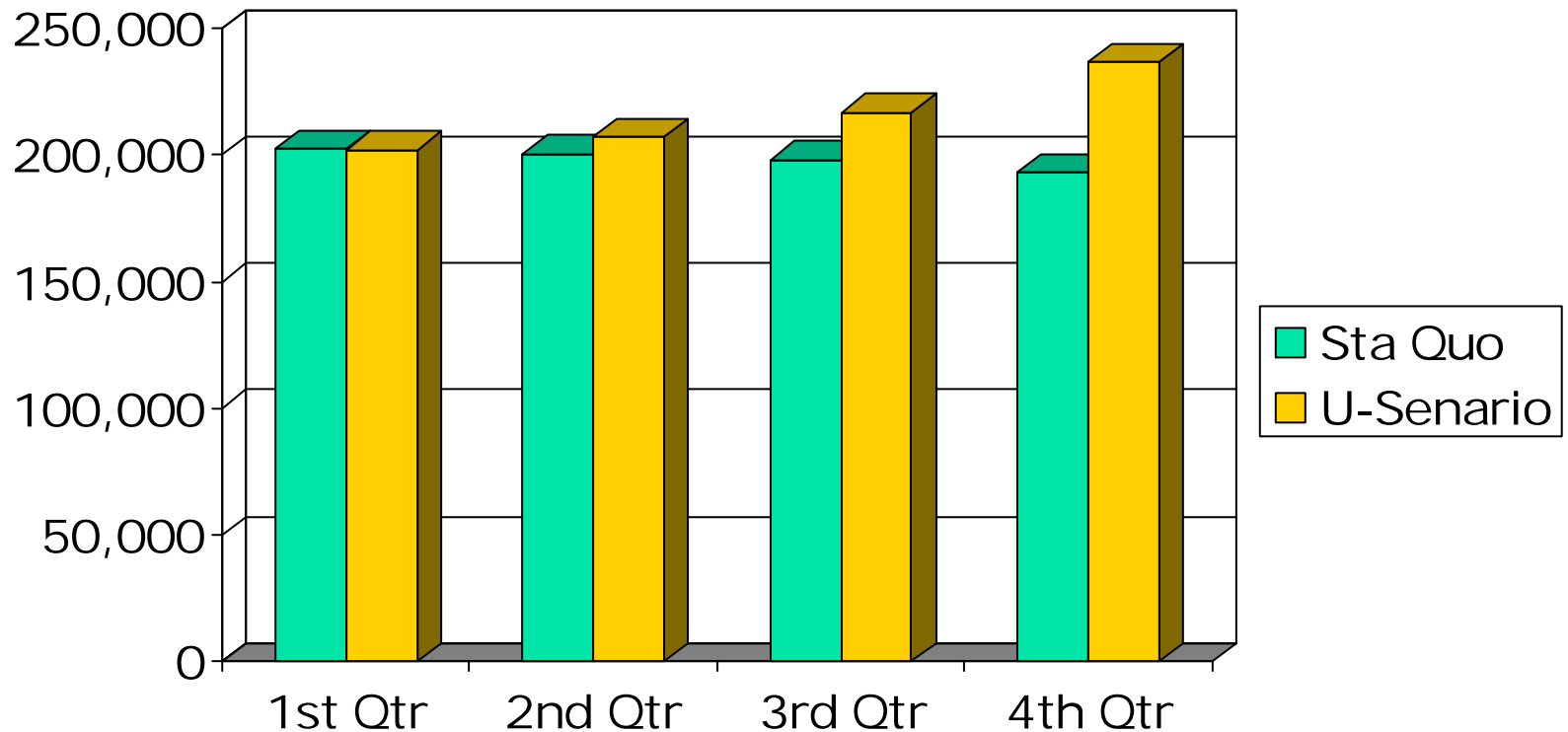
Forecast of Future Activity

- n Increased demand for airborne law enforcement
- n Increased need for security of high level government officials
- n Continued development of new technologies used by a number of operators
- n Increased traffic congestion
- n Rotocraft manufactures and new models

Forecasts of Total Based Helicopters in Metropolitan Washington



Forecast of Total Helicopter Operations in Metropolitan Washington



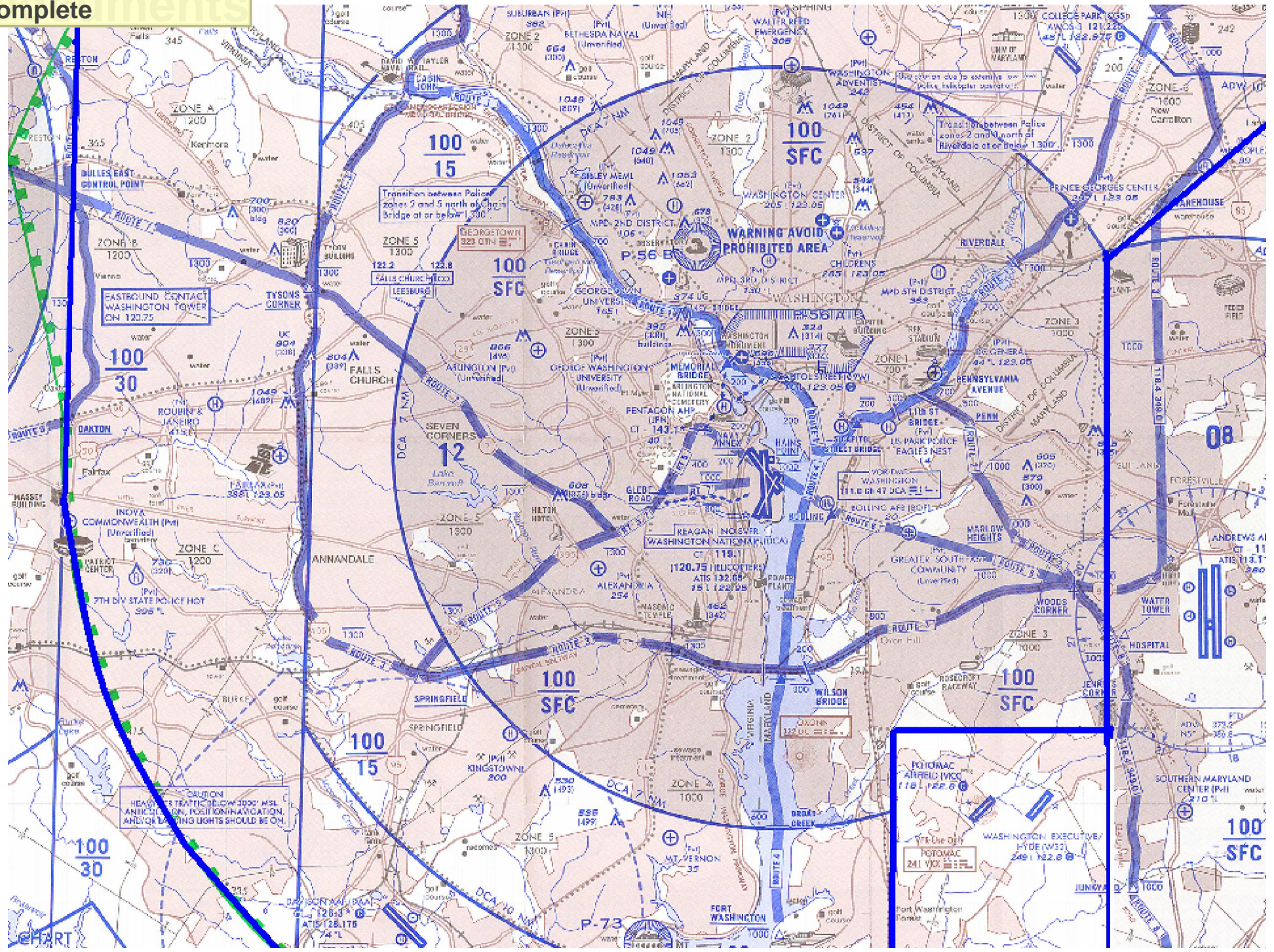
Helicopter Operator and Market Needs

- n Private Use Hospital Heliports
- n Public-Use Helistops
- n Public-Use Downtown Heliports



Study Recommendations

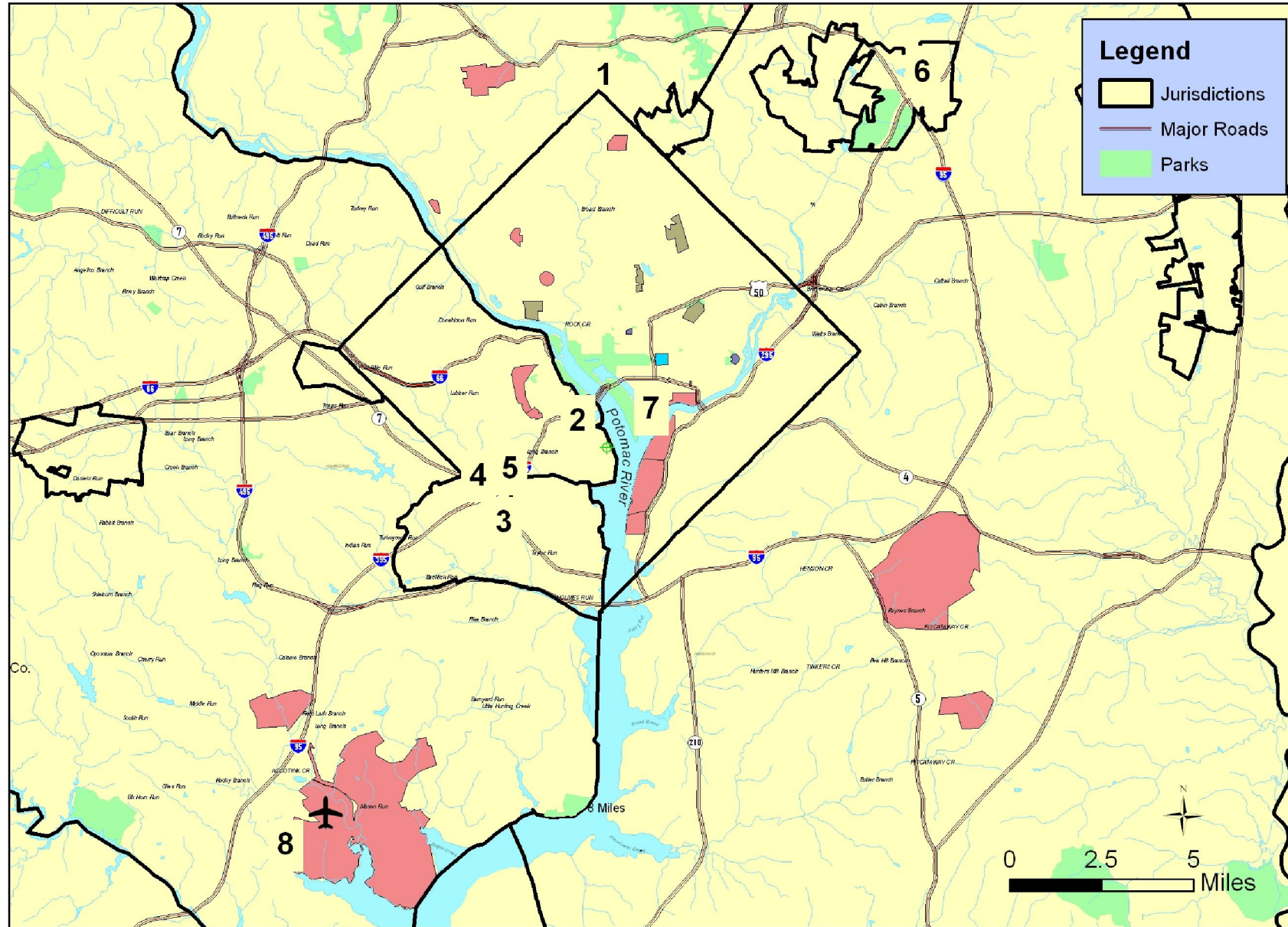
- n Create program to collect helicopter activity data
- n Establish a permanent helicopter working group
- n Create a centralized and formal system to address helicopter noise complaints
- n Establish a program to support helicopter operator and market needs and to address zoning issues.



Community Hot Spots for Helicopter Noise Impacts

- n Bethesda, MD
- n Aurora Highlands, Arlington County, VA
- n Fairlington, Arlington County, VA
- n Claremont, Arlington County, VA
- n Shirlington, Arlington County, VA
- n Greenbelt, MD
- n SW Washington, DC
- n Communities around Davidson Airfield, VA

Helicopter Noise Impact Communities



Basic Question: How to minimize negative impacts of helicopters on communities?

- n Do pilots follow the prescribed routes?
- n Are there alternative routes?
- n Are our routes optimized?
- n Since our route structure was designed many years ago and we have since had many enhancements and airspace redesign, should we re-examine the existing route structure?
- n What are the general principles of change or no change?