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## D.C.'s Newest Occupiers Are Fluffy, Furry and Flame-Retardant



Morris, center, with her alpacas in tow.



A group of about 150 seasoned political demonstrators marched today from Franklin Square to the headquarters of the Environmental Protection Agency on Pennsylvania Avenue NW, but the main attractions were the fuzzy creatures at the head of the march.

Leading the path were two brown alpacas, property of Susan Morris, a former EPA official who organized the rally to protest what she and others see as poor treatment of whistleblowers by the

agency. Morris, a former deputy director of the EPA's civil rights office, [says she was dismissed after raising concerns the agency was violating the Civil Rights Act in its treatment of another employee who had suffered a hostile work environment](#).

"Lisa Jackson has got to go," the demonstrators chanted about the agency's top official as they reached the EPA building's courtyard on 12th Street NW.

The march and rally was billed as the kickoff for the [National Occupation of Washington](#), the latest attempt to unify various branches of the Occupy movement under a single banner directed at the federal government. But while income inequality and corporate malfeasance were among the topics bandied about, it mostly trumpeted a mishmash of causes ranging from natural-gas drilling in the Northeast to the killing of Trayvon Martin. The segues by some speakers were quite abrupt.

Brad Blanton, a protester from the Shenandoah Valley, [wore a T-shirt emblazoned with what could only be considered a very direct message](#): "I don't need sex. A giant corporate 'person' fucks me every day."

But it was tough to ignore the alpacas. Morris said they made sense for an Occupy-style protest because "they're ecologically friendly, sweet and gentle." In addition to their kindly nature, Morris said, alpacas also have hypoallergenic and flame-retardant coats. The alpacas, Azriel and an unnamed six-month-old, were carpeted in a lush brown coat that felt not unlike shag carpeting. The quiet creatures moseyed ahead of the protesters, catching and confounding the attention of many sidewalk observers. One marcher toted a pooper-scooper, which surely came in handy when the stench of manure wafted through.

And once Twitter users saw there were alpacas among the occupiers, some of the responses were priceless:



[Benjamin R. Freed@brfreed](#) 30 Mar 12

There are protesters coming down 14th Street with ALPACAS. [pic.twitter.com/2cReU6VG](https://pic.twitter.com/2cReU6VG)



[@brfreed](#) Great. Now we have to add Alpaca Alerts.

 [Helder Gil@hgil](#)

Alpaca burgers for dinner! RT [@brfreed](#): There are protesters coming down 14th Street with ALPACAS. [pic.twitter.com/X2OXbN95](https://pic.twitter.com/X2OXbN95)





[SharrowsDC@sharrowsDC](#)

[@brfreed](#) what are they protesting? The scratchiness of wool?

But when the skies opened up for a light drizzle, the alpacas were rushed inside a waiting minivan, well-stocked with hay and other things alpacas need. The frizzy-haired creatures aren't meant to get wet.

Contact the [author](#) of this article or email [tips@dcist.com](mailto:tips@dcist.com) with further questions, comments or tips.

By [Benjamin R. Freed](#) in [News](#) on March 30, 2012 3:30 PM [12View](#)

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