

Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations

Environment & Recreation Committee

Resolution: E&R-2014-2: Restore and Increase Funding for the Environmental Improvement Program

1. Whereas, on June 21, 2004 and revised March 26, 2007, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted an Environmental Excellence 20-year Vision Plan (Environmental Agenda) which includes six topic areas: Growth and Land Use; Air Quality and Transportation; Water Quality; Solid Waste; Parks, Trails and Open Space and Environmental Stewardship;
 2. Whereas, in response to an Environmental Quality Advisory Council recommendation and after a rigorous review, six high quality and cost effective activities were selected for implementation in FY 2015, all to be covered by the Environmental Improvement Program budget line;
 3. Whereas, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors FY 2015 Adopted Budget dated April 29, 2014 zeroed out the budget line for the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) which includes the highly successful Invasive Management Area (IMA) program and a number of projects with low cost, high short- and long-term cost savings that would reduce energy and water consumption at Fairfax County properties and facilities;
 4. Whereas, the FY 2015 Adopted Budget also provides that, if available, FY 2014 year end carryover funds be used to cover the EIP program for FY 2015;
 5. Whereas, the elimination of the Environmental Improvement Program budget line from the core Fairfax County Budget for FY 2015 suggests that environmental improvement and conservation are not a high priority of the Board of Supervisors;
 6. Whereas the FY 2015 EIP budget request of \$535,000 is 0.014 % of the Fairfax County overall budget;
 7. Whereas the Invasive Management Area (IMA) Program is highly effective and since 2005 has mobilized more than 10,000 volunteers who have devoted 32,000 hours removing invasive plants and restoring habitat at more than 40 IMA sites, improving over 1,000 acres of parkland across Fairfax County;
 8. Whereas since 2005 IMA volunteers contributed 32,000 hours restoring habitat, which at \$22/volunteer hour equals \$704,000; this is a significant enhancement to the \$845,000 funded by Fairfax County for this program over the same period;
 9. Whereas FY 2015 funds requested of \$535,000 for the EIP program will result in environmental improvements valued at more than \$739,000 and successfully leverages Fairfax County tax dollars by 38% ¹;
 10. Whereas consistent and increased funding of the EIP budget line will fund projects that will save money, not just for FY 2015 but for future years, freeing up funds that can be used for other purposes;
- A. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations requests that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors restore funding for FY 2015 Environmental Improvement Program using FY 2014 Carryover funds; and
- B. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Environmental Improvement Program budget line in the Fairfax County Budget for FY 2016 and beyond be restored to the core budget of Fairfax County, be increased, and be consistently funded each year in order to adequately implement important environmental and energy conservation practices that in the short and long term will directly and quickly result in savings of Fairfax County tax dollars.

¹ Calculation: IMA volunteer hours from FY 2014 as base starting point of 5,642 hours @ \$22/hour (rate used to value volunteer hours by FC Park Authority) of \$124,000, plus matching grants of \$30,000, water consumption savings of \$50,000 or more related to installing a technologically savvy irrigation systems at FC properties; and unspecified cost savings on additional water consumption at 20 park facilities and electricity from the retrofit of energy efficient LED lighting at FCPA facilities.