

RESOLUTION ON GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST HORIZONTAL FRACTURING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- WHEREAS, the George Washington National Forest is located in the Potomac River Watershed, plays a vital role in protecting downstream water quality, is the closest national forest to the City, and is therefore an important location for outdoor resources for our residents; and
- WHEREAS, it is well documented that forested watersheds serve an important function in protecting downstream water quality and the Potomac River flows to the Chesapeake Bay, a vital estuary for which the City of Falls Church continues to invest substantial sums to protect from pollution; and
- WHEREAS, the Potomac River is a significant water source for Fairfax Water, which provides drinking water to nearly 1.7 million people, including the citizens of the City; and
- WHEREAS, the lands within the George Washington National Forest comprise about 80% of the entire drainage area upstream of Fairfax Water's drinking water supply intake on the Potomac River; and
- WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service is currently in the process of updating the plan which will direct forest management for 10 to 15 years, including the possibility of horizontal hydraulic fracturing; and
- WHEREAS, horizontal fracturing is currently exempted from many of the requirements of the federal laws that protect our nation's water supply, such as the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act; and
- WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is conducting research on the potential impact of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Falls Church, Virginia, that the City of Falls Church:

1. Expresses concern about the potential impact of horizontal fracturing in the George Washington National Forest on the Potomac River Watershed, and therefore on the quality of the City's water supply; and
2. Supports the U.S. Forest Service proposal, contained in the George Washington National Forest Draft Plan (Chapter 3: Strategy, p. 3-15) and Environmental Impact Statement, to prohibit, pending future confirmation of water quality impacts, the use of horizontal fracturing in the George Washington National Forest.

1st Reading: 07-14-14
Adopted: 07-14-14
(TR14-24)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the foregoing was adopted by the City Council of the City of Falls Church, Virginia on July 14, 2014 as Resolution 2014-20.

Veronica K. Prince
Interim City Clerk