

**Resolution to the U.S. Forest Service on the George Washington
Natural Forest Plan, Drinking Water Resource Management
and Hydraulic Fracturing Natural Gas Mining**

WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service is preparing a draft forest plan and environmental impact statement for release in January 2011 that will govern management of resources within the George Washington National Forest for the next 15 years, and

WHEREAS, drinking water sources within the George Washington National Forest serve an estimated 25,000 residents in the City of Staunton, and

WHEREAS, the Staunton City Council passed a resolution on April 23, 2009 calling on the Forest Service to provide comprehensive management and protection of drinking water resources in the Forest, and

WHEREAS, over half (55.6%) of the George Washington National Forest on the western border of Augusta County is underlain by the Marcellus shale geological formation, a potential source of natural gas that is mined by a drilling process known as hydraulic fracturing, and

WHEREAS, horizontal hydraulic fracturing requires from two to 10 million gallons of water per well, combined with sand and numerous chemicals, to break up shale and access natural gas, a drilling and mining process that has been linked to surface water and drinking water contamination, air pollution and soil contamination in a dozen states, and

WHEREAS, horizontal hydraulic fracturing gas mining has been linked to other significant adverse environmental impacts, including massive water withdrawals, gas migration from new and abandoned wells, the inability of public treatment plants to adequately treat millions of gallons of gas mining waste water, underground injection of brine waste water, improper erosion and sediment control, improper cementing and casing of wells, over-pressurized wells, significant increases in industrial truck traffic with subsequent increases in accidents on rural roads, and other accidents and spills, and

WHEREAS, Congress' 2005 Energy Policy Act exempts the hydraulic fracturing drilling process from long-held environmental regulations such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Superfund law and other environmental regulations and,

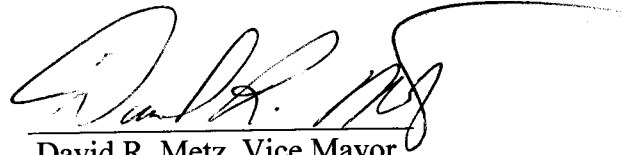
WHEREAS, the exact chemicals used in the horizontal hydraulic fracturing process are currently considered 'proprietary' and therefore are not disclosed to federal, state or local health officials or the public, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the midst of a two-year study of effects of hydraulic fracturing gas mining on water quality and other resources, to inform the development of regulations and recommendations to reduce environmental impacts,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Staunton City Council requests that the U.S. Forest Service, in the revised management plan for the George Washington National Forest, act to aggressively protect drinking water resources by prohibiting

horizontal hydraulic fracturing natural gas wells in the George Washington National Forest.

Adopted: October 14, 2010



David R. Metz, Vice Mayor

ATTEST: Deborah A. Lane
Deborah A. Lane
Clerk of Council