

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

2014 Legislative Session

Resolution No. CR-22-2014

Proposed by Council Member Olson

Introduced by Council Members Olson and Lehman

Co-Sponsors _____

Date of Introduction April 29, 2014

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION concerning

Safe Drinking Water in Prince George's County –

Drilling in George Washington National Forest

For the purpose of expressing the concern of the Prince George's County Council to the United States Department of the Agriculture and United States Forest Service regarding horizontal drilling in the Potomac River watershed area and its potential to impact Prince George's County's drinking water.

WHEREAS, the George Washington National Forest, which includes more than 1 million acres in northwestern Virginia and a small part of eastern West Virginia, was established on May 16, 1918 as the Shenandoah National Forest and was renamed after the first President on June 28, 1932; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington National Forest contains the headwaters of the Potomac and James Rivers and contributes to drinking water supplies to over thirty (30) communities, including Prince George's County, Montgomery County and Washington, D.C; and

WHEREAS, the United States Forest Service, which has responsibility for management of the George Washington National Forest, began in 2010 to update the George Washington National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan ("Management Plan"); and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority, in a letter dated September 10, 2013 by General Manager George Hawkins, supported a prohibition on horizontal drilling in the George Washington National Forest because the "Potomac River is the sole water source for the more than 600,000 residents . . . and 700,000 people who are employed in the

District of Columbia”; and

WHEREAS, horizontal drilling, particularly a method of extracting basin gas from the Marcellus Shale through a process known as “hydraulic fracturing or fracking” has been linked to contamination in ground water; and

WHEREAS, the Prince George’s County Council is committed to ensuring safe drinking water for our residents and supports making communities in the Washington D.C. metropolitan region more livable by protecting the environment, preserving water quality, and improving the health, safety and welfare of its residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Prince George’s County, Maryland, that the Prince George’s County Council urges the United States Department of Agriculture and the United State Forest Service to prohibit horizontal drilling in the George Washington National Forest until such time as a full scientific and environmental review of the process is completed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent by the Clerk of the Council to Secretary Thomas Vilsack, United States Department of Agriculture, Tom Tidwell, Chief, United State Forest Service, Senator Ben Cardin, Senator Barbara Mikulski, Congressman Steny Hoyer, Congresswoman Donna Edwards, Governor Martin O’Malley, Jerry Johnson, General Manager, and Gene W. Counihan, Chair, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Council President Phil Mendelson, District of Columbia, Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett and Council President Craig Rice and Prince George’s County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III.

Adopted this 23rd day of July, 2014.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Mel Franklin
Chair

ATTEST:

Redis C. Floyd
Clerk of the Council