

Response to Questions on the FY 2011 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Hyland

Question: What would be the cost to restore the Heritage Resources Specialist III in the Park Authority Budget? Are there any alternatives that would allow the work to continue without funding the position?

Response: As part of the FY 2013 Advertised Budget Plan the County Executive recommended the elimination of a Park Authority Heritage Resources Specialist III position. This reduction eliminates 1/1.0 SYE position out of 4/4.0 SYE Heritage Specialist III positions within the Archaeology Division. This is one of four positions that oversee archaeological projects countywide, conduct legally mandated countywide archaeological requirements within Fairfax County, oversee consultants in the field and provide regulatory review of archaeological reports. The elimination of this position will limit the County's ability to perform legally mandated oversight and regulatory review, limit quality control and inventory oversight of the County's 3,000,000 collected artifacts and associated documentation, as well as compromise the County's ability to work with public programs such as, summer camps, Eagle Scout projects and senior citizens programs.

If this reduction is taken, the Park Authority will continue to supplement the archeology program with the use of volunteers, interns and seasonal employees where ever possible to participate in digs with supervision and assist in recording and inventorying items; however, although enthusiastic and passionate for the work, they don't typically possess the experience or credentials necessary to perform the work of a Heritage Resources Specialist III.

The remaining 3/3.0 SYE Heritage Resources Specialists III will provide technical oversight as required to meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards (eg. a Master's degree in Archaeology or history and demonstrated experience) and legally mandated oversight and regulatory review (Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act, Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendment). The result of the loss of the merit Heritage Resources Specialist III position will increase the workload for the remaining three Heritage Resources Specialist III positions affecting less overall output, slower response times, and greater difficulty in meeting deadlines.

The Park Authority has found that in working with consultants to perform Heritage Resources Specialist III related duties that wages are much higher, often including a team rate and a management fee which basically triples the cost.

The restoration of this position would require an additional \$76,326 in FY 2013.