

## Response to Questions on the FY 2015 Budget

**Request By:** Supervisor Herrity

**Question:** The Budget Consideration Item reduction “*Eliminate the \$500,000 funding within the Environmental Improvement Program*” has been requested. Provide a summary of the reduction including the impact it would have.

**Response:** FY 2015 includes \$535,000 for Environmental projects which were selected by the Environmental Improvement Program Committee. This Committee annually conducts a rigorous project selection process and prioritizes projects which support the Board-adopted Environmental Agenda. With the Environmental Agenda in mind, the Committee uses specific project criteria, solicits requests from County agencies for project proposals, interviews project teams and ranks each proposal. The Environmental program has been funded primarily by a General Fund transfer in Fund 30010, County Construction and Contributions since FY 2004. Funding in FY 2015 would support:

- \$150,000 to continue the Invasive Plant Removal Program. The Park Authority manages this volunteer program in order to restore hundreds of acres of important natural areas and protect the tree canopy. Currently more than 7,700 trained volunteer leaders have contributed 26,000 hours of service since the Program’s inception in 2005, improving over 1,000 acres of parkland.
- \$75,000 for Energy Education and Outreach initiatives. This program is intended to increase the awareness of Fairfax County residents and businesses regarding their energy consumption and to encourage them to reduce consumption.
- \$10,000 for the Green Purchasing Program. This program is designed to support environmental attributes during the County’s procurement process. Fairfax County has a current inventory of more than 2,400 contracts and emphasizing environmental attributes such as recycling, energy efficiency, durability and reduced toxicity during the procurement process can contribute to the purchase of green products, creating fiscal and environmental savings.
- \$30,000 for a Watershed Protection and Energy Conservation Matching Grant Program. This program is intended to promote community engagement around sustainability and conservation issues. The program would provide financial incentives to empower homeowners through their associations to implement on-the-ground sustainability projects. Projects would improve water quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve energy and water.
- \$170,000 for lighting retrofits and upgrades at Fairfax County Park Authority facilities. Lighting will be upgraded to LED fixtures and lighting controls will be installed to manage operating hours more efficiently. These energy saving retrofit replacements will reduce approximately 80 percent of energy usage, improve lighting, reduce the Greenhouse gas inventory and contribute to the dark skies initiative.

- \$92,000 to install Water Smart web-based irrigation controllers utilizing new weather technology at 20 Park facilities that have existing irrigation systems, reducing water usage.
- \$8,000 to install a Weather Station for efficient water usage at Greendale Golf Course. This system will help measure air temperature, relative humidity, barometric pressure, rainfall, and other weather indicators in order to modify watering requirements. It is estimated that installing this weather station could save 10 million gallons of water per year, an estimated cost savings of more than \$50,000 per year.

A reduction of \$535,000 in FY 2015 would eliminate any funding for new innovative and sustainable environmental projects and would impact the County's ability to realize savings associated with energy efficient LED lighting at park facilities, reduce water usage, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, educate the public about energy consumption and the purchase of green products and eliminate the invasive plant removal program.