

RESOLUTION

Support of Recreation Within the Forks of Scott Run-Pisgah Project at Coopers Rock State Forest

- WHEREAS,** *Morgantown residents of all ages and income levels enjoy activities such as hiking, hunting, trail running, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and other outdoor recreational activities permitted at Coopers Rock State Forest; and*
- WHEREAS,** *active outdoor recreation contributes substantially to health and quality of life; and*
- WHEREAS,** *the West Virginia Department of Commerce's 2008 Statewide Comprehensive Recreation Plan (SCORP) Survey found that among West Virginians, "walking, hiking, or jogging was the consistent top choice for daily or frequent recreation by all age groups, as well as the top preferred activity by younger residents"; and*
- WHEREAS,** *a key to Morgantown's future growth as a knowledge-based economy depends on its ability to attract and retain young educated professional people, and opportunities for outdoor recreation help attract and retain young educated professionals at very low expense; and*
- WHEREAS,** *the mission statement in the Division of Forestry's Guidelines for Managing West Virginia's Seven State Forests includes multiple uses of the forest including 'developed and undeveloped outdoor recreation' and aesthetic preservation' among others; and*
- WHEREAS,** *the DOF's recently re-proposed Forks of Scott Run-Pisgah (FSRP) Project includes no substantial recreation plan with the exception of unmaintained logging skid roads that may be accessed by the public at the conclusion of the project; and*
- WHEREAS,** *public input regarding this project both at the DOF's public tour and through written comment letters show that unmaintained skid roads designed for logging operations do not constitute a suitable recreational environment; and*
- WHEREAS,** *the DOF's Guidelines further specifies the integration of public comments into its development of its seven state forests; and*
- WHEREAS,** *the DOF originally proposed the FSRP Project in 2012, cancelled the Project, and then re-proposed the same Project in 2014 without any known integration of the public comments received in 2012; and*

WHEREAS, *the DOF's Guidelines further specify that "up to 25 percent of the revenue generated from the sale of forest products on State Forests is returned to the State Forest system for the enhancement of the overall forest environment, including recreation, wildlife resources, conservation, education, forest fire prevention, and watershed protection; and*

WHEREAS, *the FSRP Project includes no documented plan for the reinvestment on Coopers Rock State Forest of up to 25 percent of the revenue generated from the sale of forest products; and*

WHEREAS, *several of the facilities at Coopers Rock State Forest are in severe decline, including the only restroom that is available for free to the public and which is closed to the public during the winter months; and*

WHEREAS, *the Morgantown community would benefit greatly from dedicated, official recreational trails within the FSRP Project, from the re-investment of revenue generated by the Project into upgrading facilities such as the addition of a new restroom, and from the inclusion of public comments into the FSRP development plan.*

Accordingly, the Morgantown City Council asks that the West Virginia Division of Forestry revise its Forks of Scott Run-Pisgah Project in order to develop a credible recreation plan by working with recreational experts, local residents, the Coopers Rock State Forest Recreational Advisory Committee, and local organizations such as the Coopers Rock Foundation. We further urge the DOF to prepare a plan for the reinvestment of 25 percent of revenue generated from the Project into the facilities at Coopers Rock State Forest, and include this plan in the Forks of Scott Run-Pisgah Project documentation. We respectfully request that Forks of Scott Run-Pisgah Project not proceed until these items have been addressed.

NOW, THEREFORE, *be it resolved on this _____ day of October, 2014, that Morgantown City Council asks that the West Virginia Division of Forestry revise its Forks of Scott Run-Pisgah Project in order to develop a credible recreation plan by working with recreational experts, local residents, the Coopers Rock State Forest Recreational Advisory Committee, and local organizations such as the Coopers Rock Foundation.*

MAYOR

CITY CLERK