



Testimony on Parks' Budget

Montgomery County Council

FROM: Friends of Sligo Creek, PO Box 11572, Takoma Park MD 20913

April 7, 2025

Friends of Sligo Creek (FOSC) supports a Montgomery County budget that includes a 6.7% increase. This would be a similar increase as the other county departments, rather than less than half, as proposed. Parks' needs are massive and don't merit such treatment.

We are keenly aware of the array of climate change issues facing the county, and in particular to the plants and animals of our Parks. Heat, flooding, drought, extremes of temperature, salt, all are taking their toll on our Parks. As FOSC well knows, as one of the groups volunteering more hours than almost anyone, volunteering alone cannot save the Parks, which in turn help save us. Aiding cooling, stormwater capture, habitat for birds and pollinators, fish and mammals, Parks are a place of calm and education and exercise for so many of us as well. Parks' efforts help us further our outreach to underserved communities to help them engage with and enjoy the Park.

The proposed budget would keep Parks from any new/expanded programs and services. There would be no capacity to purchase and preserve additional green space. Maintenance, always a challenge, would be reduced. Its hardworking employees would face reduced salaries and benefits. This is preventable.

Please consider these concerns as you vote on the budget. We know these issues from the ground, literally. We are weed warriors, supported by Parks. We pick up litter, supported by Parks. We work collaboratively to address pipe breaks and stormwater fixes and tree and other native plant plantings. We and Parks see that Purple Line, WSSC and other agencies treat the Park as required by law, and together we help hold them accountable. We measure salt in the creek, and water quality in additional ways, collaboratively with Parks to understand and help address concerns. Please don't limit their catalytic support.

Friends of Sligo Creek is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to protecting, improving, and appreciating the ecological health of Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding watershed.

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