

**MOTION: FREED**

**July 23, 2026  
Regular Meeting  
Res. No. 26-013**

**SECOND: BOUTTE**

**RE: RECOMMENDATION TO PETITION THE GOVERNOR AND THE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY FOR INCLUSION IN  
WESTERN VIRGINIA GROUNDWATER REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

**ACTION: APPROVAL**

**WHEREAS**, western Prince William County shares identical hydrogeologic vulnerabilities with western Loudoun and Fauquier counties, specifically sitting atop the Culpeper Basin—a fractured-rock sedimentary aquifer system characterized by low specific yield, minimal localized water storage capacity, and extreme vulnerability to rapid depletion; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 50,000 residents in rural western and mid Prince William County rely entirely upon roughly 16,000 private wells for their sole source of potable drinking water; and

**WHEREAS**, groundwater discharge serves as the vital baseflow sustaining localized stream systems during dry periods, which in turn feed directly into major regional public surface water assets, including the Occoquan Reservoir; and

**WHEREAS**, the overall imperviousness of the Occoquan watershed is about 10% and rising, with several subwatersheds as high as 24% to 72% impervious cover according to the Center for Watershed Protection; and

**WHEREAS**, the Prince William Sustainability Commission previously recognized the severe data deficit and vulnerabilities facing the county's aquifers under Resolution No. 24-013, which motivated the Board of County Supervisors to initiate collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to execute a Soil-Water-Balance recharge study; and

**WHEREAS**, the Virginia General Assembly enacted Budget Amendment Item 366 #2c, which mandates that the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) evaluate the necessity of establishing a Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) and propose statutory restrictions to protect future water supplies, but restricted the geographic scope exclusively to Loudoun and Fauquier counties; and

**WHEREAS**, excluding Prince William County from this state-level evaluation creates a dangerous regulatory gap, allowing uncoordinated, high-impact industrial and residential groundwater withdrawals to compromise the shared structural fracture networks of the Culpeper Basin without state oversight;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Prince William County Sustainability Commission does hereby recommend and advise the Prince William Board of County Supervisors to immediately draft and adopt a formal resolution petitioning the Governor of Virginia and the Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to:

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1. **Expand the Geographic Scope:** Formally include western Prince William County in any active and future DEQ working groups, study areas, and resulting regulatory frameworks regarding western Piedmont and Culpeper Basin groundwater management.
2. **Integrate Local Data:** Direct DEQ to synthesize Prince William County's USGS Soil-Water-Balance data alongside the Loudoun and Fauquier datasets ahead of the December 31, 2026 legislative reporting deadline.
3. **Establish Protection:** Ensure that any future western Groundwater Management Area designation or water-efficiency restrictions on data center cooling and high-volume utilities apply to the fractured-rock aquifers of western Prince William County as well as to those aquifers in Loudoun and Fauquier Counties.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Sustainability Commission requests that a copy of this resolution be forwarded directly to the Prince William County Legislative Delegation to the General Assembly to initiate corresponding legislative budget amendments as needed to implement these recommendations.

**Votes:**

**Ayes:** By acclimation

**Nays:** None

**Absent from Vote:** Commissioners Warren Beeton, Edwin Gonzalez

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*Salita Gray*

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Sustainability Commission