



**FOUR MILE RUN CONSERVATORY FOUNDATION**

3905 Elbert Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22305

5 January 2017

Chesapeake Stormwater Network  
8030 Main Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

To whom it may concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Four Mile Run Conservatory Foundation to support the City of Alexandria's application for the Best Urban Best Management Practices in the Bay Award for the Four Mile Run Wetlands Restoration Project. Our Foundation's mission is to engage and educate the public, and to maintain the trail system and natural lands around lower Four Mile Run to improve the Park, and to foster respect and stewardship for this unique urban ecosystem and its natural, historic, and recreational resources. Our group, and the community activism from which it arose, are a direct outcome of the planning process that realized the restoration plan.

The Park's wetlands are a central focus, supporting and connecting all the other park elements, which include a community building/plaza, athletic fields, playground, access points to the water, and natural features. The pervious-surfaced wetland trail demonstrates a stormwater best management practice while providing pedestrian access to the recently restored tidal wetland, as well as to a larger forested wetland. Together the trail and restoration have enhanced habitat and offered visitors the chance to connect to the natural world, even in the middle of the city.

During the recent Christmas Bird Count, our volunteers observed twenty-four different bird species in less than two hours walking the park trails. Some were more associated with the river edge and the restoration tidal wetland, like the Great Blue Heron and Belted Kingfisher, while others, like several woodpecker species we observed, prefer the woods across the trail. In December, our wildlife camera project captured images of Rusty Blackbirds, a migratory species in decline over its entire range. In these and other examples at Four Mile Run, we see the reward of years of City planning, investment, and partnership with groups like ours.

For over a decade, our community has worked with the adjoining jurisdictions to improve the quality of Four Mile Run stream and the vibrancy of the adjoining parks. We have secured funding and led volunteer improvement efforts, petitioned for and gained

approval to expand park land, and participated in the ten-year planning effort now culminating in projects to further enhance the stream and park in the next decade.

We share a vision of Four Mile Run Park as fully utilized and appreciated by its neighbors and other stakeholders as an important part of community life, a resource for recreation, and a model for natural lands maintenance in an urban setting. We look forward to continued collaboration with the City on projects at the Park, knowing it will help fulfill this vision and serve our community's interests.

We think the Four Mile Run Wetlands Restoration Project is an exemplary best management practice, and we wholeheartedly endorse the City's award application for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurt Moser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kurt Moser  
President