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**MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE
FISCAL YEAR 2021 CAPITAL BUDGET HEARINGS**

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Capital Budget Subcommittee
Senator Douglas J. J. Peters, Chair
March 2, 2020**

**House Appropriations Committee
Capital Budget Subcommittee
Delegate Mark S. Chang, Chair
March 4, 2020**

The following responses address the Legislative Analyst’s recommended actions:

Recommended Actions

- 1. Reduce the Maryland Environmental Service’s general obligation bond authorization for the Infrastructure Improvement Fund by \$1,500,000.
UB01A Infrastructure Improvement Fund.....\$10,076,000**

MES Response: MES appreciates the work done by Andrew Gray and DLS. The analysis highlighted two key points. One was a recommended reduction in funding of \$1,500,000 and a budget of \$10,076,000 for seven major projects. The initial request was \$11,576,000. A reduction in the budget request would have a significant impact on infrastructure improvements and could result in further violations and potential financial impacts to the Maryland Park Service and Garrett County. According to TripAdvisor.com, the top tourist attractions in Garrett County include New Germany State Park and Swallow Falls State Park.

For instance, New Germany State Park has a significant inflow and infiltration problem. It is also imperative MES begin the designing upgrades to treatment facilities to address aging infrastructure. During rain events, there have been flows close to ten (10) times higher than the daily average. This also creates a potential for raw sewage overflows, which could shut down State Park facilities. Last year alone,

New Germany State Park had over 36,000 visitors, with more than half staying in cabins and utilizing camp sites. Both would be impacted by a park closure.

Swallow Falls funding was designated to address a leaking water distribution system, which is in poor condition. A major leak or break would shut off potable water to the Park. This key upgrade and infrastructure improvement are fully designed and ready for contractor bidding. Last year, Swallow Falls State Park had 284,000 visitors, and closure of the Park would significantly impact visitors, especially during the summer months when it's their peak season.

MES respectfully requests the full funding amount of \$11,576,000.

- 2. Approve the preauthorization of \$12,606,000 in general obligation bonds for Fiscal 2022 for the Maryland Environmental Service's Infrastructure Improvement Fund to design, construct, and equip water and wastewater facility improvements for State institutions.**

MES Response: MES concurs with the analyst's recommendation.