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September 9, 2017

Town of Montague
One Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Dear Board of Selectman, Finance Committee, and Town Meeting Members:

The loss of the Adams grant in FY2018 as a funding source for RiverCulture was sad news. FirstLight staff hopes that something can be done to sustain this vital organization into the future.

FirstLight made financial contributions to past RiverCulture events and Visitor Center staff collaborated many times with RiverCulture on joint programming. The opportunity to link Visitor Center and Fishway environmental programs with arts programs facilitated by RiverCulture offers value to both organizations and more importantly to the Town and its business community. Historically, both organizations have been involved in the Turners Falls Block Party, photography workshops, Family Fish Day and the Pocumtuck Homelands Festival. Each cosponsored program helps spread the word about the natural beauty and cultural community in Turners Falls, but more importantly people are drawn to the Village and in the process learn more about and support local businesses.

RiverCulture and the Montague Planning and Conservation office did a thorough job determining a future path for the organization and there are viable funding opportunities for future fiscal years. Making the requested \$20,000 appropriation seems like a great short term investment to allow the organization that facilitated so many cultural and financial benefits to the Town of Montague continue its work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Bazler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "B" and "L".

Beth Bazler
Land Management Administrator