

MEMORANDUM

To: MCWD Planning and Policy Committee

From: Becky Christopher

CC: Tiffany Schaufler, Laura Domyancich, James Wisker

Date: March 16, 2015

Re: Land Conservation Program and Next Generation Comprehensive Plan

Purpose:

At the March 19, 2015 Planning and Policy Committee (PPC) meeting, staff will be seeking committee recommendations for three specific properties – Diercks, Stonegate Farms, and South Katrina Marsh. These properties will also be used to facilitate a broader discussion about the future of the Land Conservation Program and its role in the next generation Comprehensive Plan.

Background:

One of the concepts proposed for improving implementation under the next generation Comprehensive Plan is the “two-track” approach. This approach is a means of allocating the District’s resources to their highest and best use by (1) allowing for sustained focus in areas of high need, and (2) using the District’s various programs to remain responsive to needs and opportunities District-wide.

Another central theme for the next Plan is the focus on partnership and integration with community goals and initiatives. Both the two-track approach and partnership focus stem from the Balanced Urban Ecology Policy adopted by the Board in January 2014.

Staff has been considering implications for how each of the District’s programs operate under this new model. At the February PPC meeting, staff discussed how the Cost Share Program supports the two-track approach and partnership focus of the next generation Plan. Staff will use the March 19 meeting to continue this discussion, this time with regard to the Land Conservation Program.

March 19 Discussion:

The discussion will include the following:

- History of the Land Conservation Program (program structure, acquisitions, finances)
- Land conservation and the “two-track” approach: program focus, responsiveness, unique opportunities for conservation
- How to use the District’s land conservation authority in a way that promotes partnership and joint planning with communities

In addition, staff will be seeking committee recommendations regarding issues on three specific properties – Diercks, Stonegate Farms, and South Katrina Marsh. These properties will provide context for the broader agenda, facilitating discussion of how the District has used its land conservation authority in the past and how it might be used in the future.

If there are questions in advance of the meeting, please contact Becky Christopher at 952-641-4512 or bchristopher@minnehahacreek.org.