

*For Immediate Release
June 19, 2009*

Contact: Supervisor Michael C. May 703-910-0500

Contact: Supervisor Marty Nohe 571-238-4169

May and Nohe Announce Conservation Plan for Silver Lake

Today Occoquan District Supervisor Michael May and Coles District Supervisor Marty Nohe announced their joint proposal to convey the Silver Lake property to the Prince William Park Authority with deed restrictions that would limit the property's uses exclusively to passive recreation and horseback riding. By conveying the property with specific deed restrictions, the Board will be able to immediately ensure that Silver Lake will be preserved in protected open space for present and future generations.

"The genesis of this proposal comes from Mike's and my initial desire to convey Silver Lake to the Bull Run Mountain Conservancy (BRMC) several months ago," said Supervisor Nohe. "In discussing the issue, we realized that the deed restrictions that we would have placed on the property in conveying it the BRMC, a private non-profit, would also work well for the Park Authority. In either case, the key is ensuring that Silver Lake remains in passive, low intensity uses."

"I supported the Bull Run Mountain Conservancy's proposal because it would have ensured public access to permanently protected passive open space at zero cost to the county taxpayer," said May. "Although we missed the fiscal opportunities associated with the BRMC proposal, we still have the opportunity to at least ensure that Silver Lake remains protected open space."

May and Nohe went on to note that citizens have made their views with respect to Silver Lake known to the Board for more than two years now through numerous community meetings and public hearings. The overwhelming consensus has been support for passive recreation uses.

Specifically, May and Nohe will be using the restrictions that were associated with the BRMC's application as a guide for their proposal. These uses include, "Jogging, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, picnicking, fishing, non-motorized boating, walking, walking domestic pets, nature and historic interpretive activities and areas, wildlife refuge, bird watching, educational and scientific activities and programs, primitive camping, conservation areas, environmental protection corridors, environmental studies, natural open space resource management activities scenic vista and viewshed, viewing areas." Under the Supervisors' proposal, the conveying documents would also include a "reverter clause," which would give the Board the ability to take the property back in the event the deed restrictions were not honored by the Park Authority.

The Supervisors have shared their proposal with many community and conservation leaders throughout Prince William County. Below are some of their specific comments:

“Silver Lake is a legacy asset for the county. We need to protect it forever. Deed restrictions will ensure that what we see is what we’ll get.”

Charlie Grymes, Prince William Conservation Alliance 703*577*1740

“This is the place for horse trails, hiking, and exploring the great outdoors. Deed restrictions will guarantee we keep it this way.”

Martin Jeter, Mid County Civic Association

“The community is very tired of looking at a beautiful piece of property become a run down eyesore. Our expectation is that this piece of land will be well maintained for generations to come and will be a place we will all be proud to show visitors. The BOCS needs to adopt a DEED restriction before passing the land on the Park Authority, and the land needs to be developed into serene walking and bike trails as soon as possible...just as was promised to the citizens when Toll Brothers gave us the land.”

Rose Benkus, President, Thunder Oaks Home Owners Association

“As demonstrated in PWC survey results and Occoquan District Charrette results, it is clear that residents want more passive recreation within the County. Silver Lake deed restrictions which ensure passive uses will be welcomed by my family as well as many County residents.”

**Eileen Sheridan, Occoquan District Land Use Advisory Committee Member
Occoquan District Charrette Participant**

###