

TO: Pat Thomas
Land Planning Division

FROM: Patty Dietz
Watershed Management Branch

DATE: July 13, 2007

RE: Comments on Powell's Creek Scenic Trail plans (Plan #07-00422)

**** Review of this proposed trail layout by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) is recommended to provide review by an experienced natural trail group.**

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMENTS

1. Significant areas of Resource Protection Area (RPA) and 100-year floodplain are mapped on overall site area where the Powell's Creek Scenic Trail is planned. Trail placement in the floodplain is discouraged by most localities and maintenance personnel due to floodplain and deterioration problems.
2. As the Potomac Heritage trail predominantly runs along waterway corridors in the Potomac River watershed, the stream corridor area along a waterway is a common placement for the Potomac Heritage trail, however it is recommended that the trails be placed on a side slope with natural surface (compacted dirt).
3. The trail is located in the 100-year floodplain area in many portions of the trail. Trail surface in these flood-prone areas are generally not a wood-chip type trail due to the maintenance involved with replacing washed out chips. A natural surface trail placed outside of flood prone areas is recommended by most Naturalist trail clubs (Potomac Appalachian Trail Club—Blue Trail (No VA Regional Park Authority)
4. The proposed trail is not continuous between Leesylvania Park and Potomac Club and Route 1. Two distinct areas which lack a trail layout are the area in the south eastern edge of Port Potomac (Sheet 7 of 9) and the area west of Leesylvania Park(sheet 9 of 9). These trail area should be laid out if possible to assure trail continuity.
5. There are two wetland areas crossing with this proposed Powell's Creek trail. These areas will each require over 1/10 acre of wetland impact and will need to be permitted. These wetland impacts should be eliminated/lessened with boardwalk crossings of the actual wetland areas.
6. This trail layout will also run through the Resource Protection Area (RPA). This placement in the RPA is allowed under Chesapeake Bay regulations which permit the

installation of boardwalks and trails for passive recreation. Placement of a trail in RPA which results in the least disturbance to RPA soils and vegetation is strongly preferred. This trail layout appears to minimize disturbance to the RPA area by laying the trail on existing contours, however as stated above, placement of the trail out of the floodplain has been recommended by trail planners for other localities.

7. Review of this proposed trail layout by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) is recommended to provide review by an experienced natural trail group.