



DATE: August 5, 2024

MEMO TO: Jessica Vealitzek, Chair
Operations Committee

Gina Roberts, Chair
Finance Committee

FROM: Pati Vitt
Director of Natural Resources

REQUEST: Provide policy direction whether to solicit competitive bids combined multi-year contracts for both woody and herbaceous species control, instead of soliciting competitive bids for separate, one-year contracts (one for woody control and one for herbaceous control).

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS SUPPORTED: Conservation; Organizational Sustainability

FINANCIAL DATA: There is no expected financial impact

BACKGROUND: Invasive species control is a critical issue across all of the District's preserves. Woody invasive species are best treated during the winter when the ground is frozen to minimize soil disturbance. The timing for control of herbaceous invasive plants depends on their growth cycles. Historically, the District has solicited separate competitive bids for separate contracts (one for woody species control and one for herbaceous species control). In each case, the contract has been for a one-year term.

However, as climate change disrupts our typical seasonal weather patterns, the Natural Resources Department has faced a significant mismatch between the historic timing of these contracts and the actual conditions on the ground.

To ensure the effectiveness of invasive species control efforts, staff proposes entering into one or more multi-year, regionally appropriate invasive species control contracts, which would each cover both woody and herbaceous species. Under this proposal, staff would solicit competitive bids for contracts under which the contractor would provide on-demand natural resource restoration work, on a per-hour or per-acre cost. These contracts would allow a Natural Resources Project Manager to call in a "work order" to a contractor for an appropriate project or treatment area in a "just in time" manner. This type of contract would enable a quicker response to new invasive species or changing ground conditions. For example, if a mid-winter thaw occurs, a Project Manager could promptly address a treatment or project area. The current practice necessitates either a contract change order or the initiation of a completely new bidding or quoting process, both of which result in delays to project completion.

The funding level for invasive species management would still be determined by the annual budget process. However, the deployment of contracted resources would be more responsive to current on-the-ground conditions.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Purchasing Manager, Manager of Board Operations, Corporate Counsel.