

WASHINGTON SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE

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BUSINESS AND CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS UNITE FOR REGION'S 2007 CONSERVATION PRIORITIES "Call to Action" Highlights Conservation and Improvement of Waterways, Parks and Open Spaces

Washington – Today the Washington Smart Growth Alliance highlighted the need to conserve and improve the region's natural heritage and working landscapes when it released its 2007 Regional Conservation Priorities Call to Action report. The Alliance, made up of business and conservation organizations, recognizes and supports conservation priorities that are critical to the quality of life and economic health of the region.

The 2007 Regional Conservation Priorities are: • The National Mall (Washington, DC); • Port Tobacco River Watershed Action Plan (Charles County, MD); • Mattawoman Creek Watershed (Charles County, MD); • Building Lot Termination Program for the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve (Montgomery County, MD); • Merrimac Farm (Prince William County, VA); • Four Mile Run Restoration (Alexandria & Arlington, VA).

"Organizations that have often been adversaries on major issues in the past have united in Smart Growth Alliance to endorse both smart growth development projects and conservation projects that are crucial to the region," said Sam Black, chair of the Alliance. "We must conserve and improve the natural resources we have, which will enhance our quality of life and help attract new businesses, creating and retaining jobs."

The Washington Smart Growth Alliance is spotlighting conservation initiatives around the region that are essential to the well-being, environmental health and cultural heritage of our region, which will have two million new residents by 2030. These initiatives -- the conservation of rivers, creeks, parks, farms and other open spaces -- will help shape the region's growth patterns.

"Conservation of land and cultural resources helps to prevent sprawling development patterns that harm the environment and diminish the natural rural heritage and vitality of our urban places and neighborhoods," said Bob Kaufman, an area developer from Augustine Land and Development Co. and a member of the Alliance's Land Conservation Committee. "The business and development organizations in the Alliance support these initiatives and their contributions to our communities."

The Alliance calls on the public, civic and private sectors to work together to preserve, restore and maintain the National Mall, the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, the Port Tobacco River and Mattawoman Creek watersheds, Four Mile Run and Merrimac Farm.

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"We're blessed with great natural, cultural and historic resources across the region that must be conserved not only for their environmental value," said Lee Epstein, of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and chair of the Alliance's Land Conservation Committee, "but also for what they provide us, our families and friends: green open space, clean drinking water, local produce, and places where we can fish, camp, hike, and walk."

This is the second annual release of the conservation priorities of the Washington Smart Growth Alliance. The Alliance reviewed scores of submitted conservation project ideas, from individual farms and forest land projects, to local government conservation policies, to funding initiatives, and identified the year's most important ones for the 2007 list of conservation priorities.

Editor's Note: The following representatives from each project are available for quotes:

- The National Mall, Georgina Sanger, 202-285-6444
- Port Tobacco River Watershed Action Plan, Tammy Vitale 410-326-9473
- Mattawoman Creek Watershed, Jim Long 202-767-0605
- Building Lot Termination Program for the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, Jeremy Criss 301-590-2830
- Merrimac Farm, Kim Hosen 703-499-4954
- Four Mile Run Restoration, Bill Hicks 703-642-4628

To download a copy of the report, see the Conservation Priorities web page at <http://www.SGAlliance.org/lcrp.html>.

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