

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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November 20, 2009

Maryland Board of Public Works
80 Calvert Street
Louis L. Goldstein Treasury Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Subject: Preservation of 80 acres in McIntosh Run Watershed, St. Mary's County

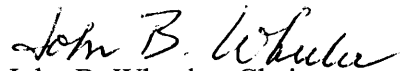
Dear Governor O'Malley, Comptroller Franchot, and Treasurer Kopp:

The Commission on the Environment is an advisory committee to St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners. We strongly support the State of Maryland in its effort to protect 80 acres of critically important land in McIntosh Run in St. Mary's County, known as the Rowland property. We commend the work of the Department of Natural Resources in its attempt to secure a Deed of Conservation Easement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The environmental value of this property is amply described in the 2003 *Breton Bay Watershed Restoration Action Strategy*. The area of McIntosh Run where the 80 acres is located is habitat for eight endangered, rare, or threatened aquatic and terrestrial species. McIntosh Run is designated a Natural Heritage Area by the State of Maryland. McIntosh Run is the largest tributary for the Breton Bay. Maintaining and improving the water quality of Breton Bay requires the careful and thoughtful management of the McIntosh Run sub watershed. The conservation of the eighty acres will be an important step in preserving the extraordinary environmental qualities of McIntosh Run.

We urge that all appropriate avenues be explored to ensure that the Rowland property is conveyed into public conservancy. At this time, the St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners have not agreed to take title to the property in question as envisioned in the Grant Agreement with the State of Maryland and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In view of this, the Commission is afraid that the acquisition process will falter and that the opportunity to preserve this environmentally and ecologically important property will be lost. Therefore, the Commission on the Environment respectfully asks that the Department of Natural Resources and

the Department of General Services move forward with the Grant Agreement and acquisition and place it on your agenda for December 16, 2009. We trust that once you are briefed on the environmental value of this property, you will unanimously support its acquisition and transfer to an acceptable steward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John B. Wheeler".

John B. Wheeler, Chairman

St. Mary's County Commission on the Environment

Cc:

Mr. Alvin Collins, Department of General Services

Mr. John Griffin, Department of Natural Resources

Board of County Commissioners, St. Mary's County