



**McHenry County Planning,
Environment & Development**

County Board Room
Woodstock, IL 60098

Meeting: August 6, 2024
Department: Planning and Development
Prepared By: Adam Wallen

SUBJECT: McHenry Lake Soil and Water Conservation District Contract Renewal

Committee Action Requested: To approve an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the McHenry-Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District for the purpose of obtaining the services of a wetland specialist to aid in providing customer service, enforcing the wetland provisions of the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance (SMO), and reviewing permit applications based on the relevant wetland provisions of the SMO.

Background:

Since 2012 the Department of Planning & Development has been utilizing the staff of the McHenry-Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (MLCSWCD) to provide wetland services through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The current IGA was approved for one year and may be renewed pending approval by the PED Committee. The 1-year contract term with is set to expire on November 20, 2024.

Under the current IGA, MLCSWCD, through P&D's Water Resources Division, reviews permit applications for compliance with relevant provisions of the enforce the wetland provisions of the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance (SMO), assists property owners with general wetland requests and information. SMO violations involving wetlands are managed by P&D staff and coordinate site visits and communications with MLCSWCD. The IGA will benefit property owners by providing efficient and expert wetland protections while maintaining staff levels.

The IGA renewal will not change the services provided to the County. Under the terms of the proposed IGA, the MLCSWCD will designate a Certified Wetland Specialist who will provide up to 10 hours per week of services to the Department for an annual fee of \$30,000. A wetland specialist will be able to assist the general public and permit applicants through P&D in person, by telephone, and by e-mail. The wetland specialist will also be available to conduct field inspections/investigations, respond to enforcement actions, and meet with staff and property owners on an on-call basis. Included in the annual fee is the use of a MLCSWCD vehicle for use by the wetland specialist in conducting fieldwork and inspections.

The compliance procedures related to development in or impacting a wetland, drainage ditches, and the like involving MLCSWCD have been and continue to be channeled through the County's Chief Stormwater Engineer. In FY24 there have 78 wetland services performed; site inspections (30), permit reviews (16), jurisdictional determinations (4)., site/office/virtual meetings related to a proposal impacting adjacent wetlands (28). Of the 30 site inspections, 12 were related to violations at 9 unique properties.