

OCTOBER 2021

# CONSERVANCY FIELD NOTES

## Updates from Board of Trustees



Willowsford Neighbors,

As we move into a new season of weather, changing leaves, fall farm food and more, we hope this finds you and your family well.

As always, a special greeting to all of our new Willowsford neighbors (either through new construction or resale) – welcome!

We held a Conservancy Board of Trustees meeting Sept. 28 and we wanted to share some of the highlights below, as well as other items of interest.

Regards,

- Chase Rowan, President
- Claudette Papathanasopoulos, Vice President
- Greg Licamele, Secretary
- Karyn Moreland, Treasurer
- Avi Sareen, Trustee
- Mark Trostle, Trustee
- Jake Virag, Trustee





## WELCOMING A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In our August update, we shared the news that the Conservancy's founding executive director, Iris Gestram, will be departing in November.

After a nationwide search that yielded several highly qualified candidates, we're pleased to announce Ann Alleva Taylor as our new executive director beginning in November.

Ann will join us after serving the Botanical Garden of Piedmont in Charlottesville, which was preceded by eight years at Indian River Trust in Vero Beach, Florida. In both of those positions, Ann served as director of marketing and philanthropy, which included overseeing strategic planning, budgets, staff, marketing and events.

Both organizations have clear similarities to our Conservancy's mission:

- Botanical Garden of Piedmont: "Invite all community members and visitors to engage in nature, to educate and inspire through the beauty and importance of plants, to advance sustainability, and to promote human and environmental well-being."
- Indian River Trust: "Continue to Save the Indian River Lagoon by preserving wildlife habitat, protecting scenic waterfront and providing access for public recreation and education."

We welcome Ann and we are confident in her leadership skills, abilities and passion to lead us into the next chapter of the Conservancy's life. In our November update, we'll share her contact info.

And once again, we offer a heartfelt thank you to Iris for her tenure serving our community. We passed a resolution honoring her at our meeting. As the founding executive director, Iris moved the Conservancy from start-up mode (primarily funded by the developer) to a self-sufficient operation that enriches our community through farming, recreation, conservation and education.

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## STRATEGIC PLAN SURVEY

THANK YOU! Thank you to the nearly 1,100 respondents who completed the "Planting the Future" strategic plan survey, which was available from Aug. 25 to Sept. 12. This initial insight and feedback kicks off our community planning that will result in a strategic plan in 2022 (and budget alignment in 2023). Thank you for sharing your hopes, dreams, ideas and areas for improvement. With more than 4,000 written responses, we will take the proper time to analyze common themes, listen for consensus, uncover confusion about the Conservancy, while also acknowledging many differences of views (as is natural!). Our goal is to draft a plan to guide our Conservancy for the next three to five years. The next step will be focus groups. Thank you to the 300 respondents who volunteered to join a focus group. We won't be able to invite everyone, but thank you for your desire to help us dive deeper into key issues.



## A DECADE OF FARMING

Willowsford Farm began in 2011 as the centerpiece of our agrihood. 10 years later (and many changes later), the Farm celebrated its decade anniversary Oct. 2 with 160+ residents.

We know the farm is an essential piece of the Willowsford experience. With Farmer Andrew and his team now settled into their stewardship of our agrihood, the Farm is positioned for an even stronger 2022 and beyond, but the Farm could always use your help. If you're interested in volunteering -- whether you've lived here 10 years or 10 months, reach out to [farm@willowsfordfarm.com](mailto:farm@willowsfordfarm.com).



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## DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM RESUMES

To help manage the overpopulation of deer, the Conservancy's deer management program has resumed in The Greens, The Grant and The Grove:

- Archery hunting (NO trail closures): Oct. 2-31 and Nov. 20-Dec. 14.
- Firearm hunting (trails CLOSED): Nov. 2-6; Nov. 16-19; Dec. 15-18; Jan. 4-7.

**For YOUR safety, please do not enter the trails during firearm hunting** listed above. Do not walk around or move signage to enter the trails. The Grange trails remain open at all times, so we invite you to explore those great paths, including the Farm Trail Loop.

We live in a community that's close to nature in many ways. We also live in an area with a lot of development. That puts pressure on the local deer population to find new places to roam -- and our 2,200 acres of protected open space are often ideal. However, we have to protect our trees and forests, too, from deer who love to browse on new tree growth.

To access full details, including the documents shown to the right, [visit the Conservancy's website](#).

### Deer Management Program

[2021-2022 Deer Management Schedule](#)

[2021-2022 Deer Management Program](#)

[The Greens Hunting Zone Map](#)

[The Grant Hunting Zone Map](#)

[The Grove Hunting Zone Map](#)

[2020-2021 Deer Management Program](#)

[2020-2021 Deer Management Schedule](#)

[Deer Management FAQ](#)

[2019 Smithsonian Deer Impact Study Report](#)



## FILL YOUR FALL FIRE PITS WITH CONSERVANCY FIREWOOD

We all love firepits and fireplaces, especially in the Fall. Be sure to stock up on firewood from the Conservancy -- wood that is from our land and not imported from elsewhere, which could introduce pests to our community. More residents are discovering our firewood program (sales are up to nearly \$10,000 this year versus \$6,000 at this time last year). Check out the [Conservancy website for details](#).

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## OTHER QUICK HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR MEETING

- Allen Farm Pond in The Grant continues to be a major area of focus for the Land Stewardship Team. This area, which was turned over to the Conservancy by the developer earlier this year, will undergo significant work, including planting 900 tree tubelings via grant funding from Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District; planting 300 trees with a grant from Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy; and our team's continued work to battle algae in the pond.
- Willowsford experienced another successful bluebird monitoring season (thanks to our volunteers for helping!). There were 84 fledglings total, with 45 being bluebirds.
- While discussing land stewardship and how we care for Conservancy land, we ended up also talking about how we as homeowners can do more to protect the land we own. One way is by eliminating the use of phosphorous on our lawns. We realize many contractors use phosphorous as a matter of course, but we'd ask you to talk with your contractor to not use that chemical or if you maintain your own lawn, avoid purchasing those products. In some cases, that phosphorous becomes runoff and impacts Conservancy (and HOA) bodies of water.



## UPDATED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As always, we invite you to view the many financial documents on the Conservancy website, including the updates we reviewed at the September meeting. The latest financial statements are in the Document Center. Questions? We're happy to answer. Reach out to [info@willowsfordconservancy.org](mailto:info@willowsfordconservancy.org).



## NEXT BOARD MEETING

Our next Board meeting is scheduled for Nov. 9, 5:30 p.m. at The Boat House. The 2022 budget will be adopted at this meeting.

