



OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 3
April 21, 2022
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Fire Management Plan Revisions	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Discuss and approve revised Fire Management Plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

STAFF:	Alaine Sommargren, Deputy Public Works Director Lizzy Stone, Natural Resource Project Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Lisa Anderl
EXHIBITS:	1. Revised Appendix M: Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space Fire Management Plan

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan, adopted by City Council in November 2003, includes the Pioneer Park Fire Management Plan (Appendix M), which was intended to guide the City in protecting Trust properties and the surrounding neighborhoods in the event of fire. This plan details the firefighting resources available to address such a fire, summarizes the challenges and mitigating factors involved in fighting a wildland fire on these properties, and outlines actions that the Mercer Island Fire Department and Parks staff can take to minimize fire risk in the park.

In January 2021, Trust Board members reviewed the 2003 Pioneer Park Fire Management Plan with City staff and provided suggestions for updates and edits.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATES

After initial discussions with the Trust Board, City staff consulted with the Mercer Island Fire Department (MIFD) Fire Marshal, Jeromy Hicks, and Interim Deputy Fire Chief, Doug McDonald, to provide details about current mutual aid agreements, updated information about fire hose reach/water availability in the park, and MIFD's assessment of the challenges that the properties present for wildland firefighting. In addition, Parks staff consulted with King Conservation District's Forest Stewardship team and reviewed current literature from Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Washington State University Extension, and King County's Forestry program to update best management practices for mitigating wildfire risk in the wildland urban interface of western Washington.

Staff recognize that several of the action items included in the plan, meant to address areas for improvement, are not reflected in current work plans and practices. While staff has continuously worked with neighboring property owners to improve habitat value along the park boundary, staff has not recently sought to educate homeowners about fire-wise landscaping techniques or worked with them to reduce firewood and debris adjacent to the park. Such educational outreach can be prioritized in the coming year.

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and approve revised Fire Management Plan.