

FOCUS ON:

# Reservoir View Corridors

April 1, 2015



As the city strives to establish reservoir buffers consisting of mature trees and understory, consideration has been given to allow view corridors which do not compromise reservoir water quality nor greatly impact riparian habitat. The following information sheet presents guidelines on the establishment and maintenance of view corridors across city-owned property. Interested property owners should contact the Columbus Watershed Management Office at (614) 645-1721 for further information on this new option within the land stewardship program.

## Establishing A View

Residents living around Hoover, O'Shaughnessy and Griggs Reservoirs have expressed interest in establishing or maintaining a view of the reservoir. In some cases, mature trees and dense understory have obscured or greatly limited a view once enjoyed.

In reviewing options to open views, the city has agreed to allow the creation and maintenance of limited view corridors, as long as the creation of such does not negatively impact water quality or riparian habitat.

## What properties are eligible?

Because the creation of a view corridor requires a disruption of shoreline habitat, some properties with sensitive species or other environmental constraints will not be eligible. View corridors across city property will not be permitted in cases where:

- Property is within a designated nature preserve
- The property line is more than 250' from shore
- Wetlands, state or federally endangered or threatened species, as listed by ODNR, could be affected

## Can a view corridor be maintained?

Maintenance of an approved view corridor may be requested annually, to retain, but not expand the view. Corridors may not exceed 50 feet in width at any point.

## Where can the view corridor be located?

Through a site visit, Watershed Management staff will work with the landowner to review corridor options and draft a land stewardship plan. View corridors will be sited foremost to minimize environmental impact, and to reflect the contiguous landowner's preference where compatible.

View corridors can be designed in various configurations but must not exceed 50 feet in width at any point. The view corridor shall overlap a designated access path if one exists, and only one view corridor is permitted per property. See reverse side for sample corridor layouts.

## How will the view be created?

Methods to create a view corridor are listed in order of most preferred to least. Latter methods will only be permitted if lesser options are not effective in creating a view.

- Removal of invasive species and noxious weeds
- Removal of above and planting of low-growing native plants from an approved plant list.
- Pruning multi-trunk saplings and/or replacing tall native shrubs with lower growing native shrubs
- Crown raising by pruning trees - limitations apply

A valid land stewardship agreement must be obtained prior to any disturbance of city property.

(See reverse side for additional information.)

## The Process to Obtain a View Corridor

View corridors are a new option within the City of Columbus Land Stewardship Program. Other new options include the ability to maintain an access path to the water, and options to address invasive and noxious plants. The following presents information specific to view corridor creation.

Current participants in the land stewardship program can amend their land stewardship agreement to include new options, where desired and permissible. New residents and those interested in enrolling should contact the Columbus Watershed Management office at (614) 645-1721.

### Step 1 - Assess the Landscape

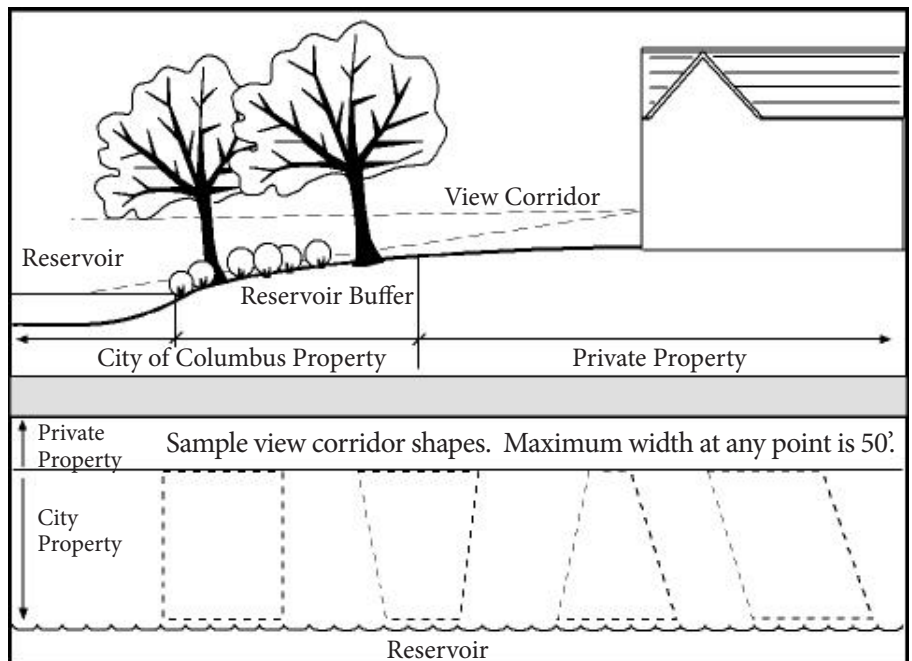
Each stewardship property is unique. Factors such as topography (slope), size and distribution of trees, and other plant species will influence the available options for creating a view. Landowners may contact the Watershed Management office for assistance in identifying plants and to discuss the potential view corridor design during an onsite visit.

### Step 2 - Develop a Land Stewardship Plan

Watershed Management staff will help a contiguous landowner to create a new or amended plan detailing the planned landscape modification.

Land stewardship plans are property-specific and may also include elements such as an access path to the water or invasive plant removal.

Once a plan is approved, the landowner will sign a land stewardship agreement (LSA). Work may begin as soon as the LSA is submitted and approved.



### Requirements for those performing view corridor creation or maintenance:

Tree trimming and other vegetation removal must be conducted by qualified landscape professionals who will perform the work at the contiguous landowner's expense. No plant removal, trimming or other modification of city-owned property may occur unless specified by an approved land stewardship agreement.

Those performing the work must have valid and specific qualifications and experience according to the type of work planned. A commercial pesticide applicator's license, certified arborist designation, and demonstrated knowledge of plant identification are among the qualifications which may be required. A list of pesticides approved for use near water will be provided to the selected contractor and only pesticides on that list may be used.

Limitations and restrictions on vegetation removal are designed to protect the quality of the water supply reservoirs and encourage a healthy riparian buffer. Prospective contractors and contiguous landowners may contact the Watershed Management office in advance of any work plan for more detail.