



PEC Makes the Connections

2009

Piedmont Environmental Council
Annual Report



Dear Friends,

The great strength of PEC is that we make the connections.

We make the connections between issues, working effectively in an interconnected world, with strategies that take into account the links between air, land and water, between city and country, between nature and people.

We make the connections between local issues and the bigger picture—advocating for local, state and national policies that can help people in the Piedmont achieve their best vision for their communities.

Most importantly, we make the connections between people and what's happening in the world around them—so they can take part as active citizens, rather than passive by-standers to change.

PEC connects people with the information and tools they need to make choices about the future of their community, instead of just accepting the plans that developers bring. PEC's experienced perspective, expert analysis and proactive outreach help more citizens to understand the issues and get involved in local planning and development decisions. PEC is also active in Richmond, where in recent years we have mobilized citizens to defeat developer-backed bills that would restrict localities' ability to control growth.

This principle of increasing options for citizens is vital throughout the various branches of our work.

PEC creates opportunities for land conservation by meeting face to face with hundreds of landowners every year to discuss their options and by advocating at the local, state and national levels for the incentives and tools that make it possible for people to protect their land. So far, landowners in our nine-county region have used these opportunities to voluntarily protect over 325,000 acres.

Our popular *Buy Fresh Buy Local* guides connect people with more choices about where their food comes from

and, in turn, expand the range of economic opportunities for Piedmont farmers.

Our new *EnergySmart Solutions* guide presents hands-on opportunities for people to reform the status quo when it comes to energy. And, PEC's 2009 court victory that prevents the federal government from using unprecedented power to override state decisions on transmission line siting keeps decisions about energy infrastructure closer to the people.

The new traffic calming improvements on Rte. 50 in Loudoun and Fauquier are the fruition of a citizen-led vision that PEC advocated for 15 years as an alternative to four-laning the road. Now, we are starting to work with citizens in Keswick, in Albemarle, on a visioning process for the strained main road through their neighborhood—because we know that if citizens don't make a plan, someone else will. Similarly, when PEC got citizens involved in VDOT's blueprint for the future of the Rt. 29 corridor, they dramatically improved it.

As a final example, the new incentives that PEC helped to provide for fences to keep livestock out of tributaries of the upper Hazel River give

farmers a good reason and a good way to improve water quality. This builds on the substantial progress we have already made to protect rivers and streams in the Piedmont by working with willing landowners—in contrast to divisive top-down efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed, which have floundered for decades.

Policy matters—and PEC effectively bridges the gap between people and the policies that impact them. We take part in a wide range of planning processes so that citizens can fulfill their goals for their communities and we advocate for policies that encourage people to make positive contributions. Ultimately, there is no substitute for the energy of many individuals participating by their own choice, in their own ways. PEC is producing impressive results as we empower leadership from the ground up.

Sincerely,


Chris Miller, President


Tony Vanderwarker, Chair of the Board

COVER: Cliff Miller raises grass-fed beef and lamb and pastured pork at Mount Vernon Farm in Rappahannock County, which is protected with a conservation easement. Mr. Miller often serves as a guest speaker as part of PEC's Exploring the Small Farm Dream course. Photo by Rose Jenkins.



PEC is empowering **PEOPLE** to act as good stewards for the place that sustains us with **LAND**, **WATER**, **FOOD**, **ENERGY**, **BEAUTY**, **HISTORY**, **NATURE** and **COMMUNITY**.



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*Lisa Moussalli worked on farms in Loudoun and Clarke before buying Frog Bottom Farm in central Virginia with her husband.
Photo ©Lisa Moussalli.*

Land

PEC's nine-county region stands out as one of the greatest land conservation success stories in America, with over 325,000 acres of land protected through voluntary conservation easements—an acreage that is over one and a half times the size of Shenandoah National Park. PEC makes this success possible through our energetic outreach to landowners, our one-on-one assistance throughout the conservation process and our advocacy for strong conservation programs at the local, state and federal levels. We are also protecting land by mobilizing citizens to plan for smart growth, by growing the local food movement, by fighting unnecessary transmission lines and other linked initiatives.



PEC's Rex Linville does field work at Redlands. Photo by John Foster.

1,000 Acres of Jefferson Country Protected

Members of the Carter family acted together in 2009 to protect nearly 1,000 acres of land in Albemarle County that has been in their family since 1730, including Redlands, an architectural landmark that dates from 1792. The Carters' ancestors were neighbors to the Jeffersons, with a plantation about seven miles from Monticello.

From the front porch of Redlands, you can see over pastoral, hilly countryside to the Blue Ridge. Dr. Bob Carter, the owner, says, "Except for Route 20, you could be seeing what was there two hundred years ago. That this still exists is amazing."

Last year, four branches of the Carter family coordinated to protect parcels on either side of Rt. 20, which is a Virginia Scenic Byway. The properties are located in the Southern Albemarle Rural Historic District and they include approximately four miles of frontage on the Hardware River and its tributaries.

Although PEC's primary role in land conservation is advocacy and outreach, PEC holds the easements on these properties. When the agency planning to hold the easements was unable to complete them in time, PEC took the initiative to make sure the land was protected.

Highlights


- PEC contributed to the achievement of Gov. Kaine's ambitious goal of conserving 400,000 acres during his term, which more than **doubled the amount of private conservation land in Virginia**. Of the 424,000 acres protected, over 22% was in the PEC region, which comprises only 9% of Virginia.
- PEC supported a compromise solution on state land conservation incentives—keeping the **Virginia Land Conservation Tax Credit** strong in a tough budget year.
- PEC is advancing legislative efforts to expand the **federal estate tax incentives** for land conservation as Congress overhauls the estate tax system.
- PEC continues supporting efforts to establish **local Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs** in Madison and Culpeper and to maintain the active PDR programs in Albemarle, Clarke, Fauquier and Rappahannock.
- PEC helped landowners throughout the Piedmont find **conservation solutions for smaller properties**. Of the 11 properties protected in Rappahannock in 2009, only 3 were over 100 acres but all connected to larger blocks of conservation land.
- PEC purchased conservation easements on **719 acres at Montpelier** in Orange (see p. 13)
- **The Town of Purcellville protected its water supply** by conserving 1,271 acres of forest land in Loudoun (see p. 5)

325,000 Acres Protected in the Piedmont

County	2009 Acres Protected by Conservation Easements	Total Land Protected by Conservation Easements	Percentage of Land Protected by Conservation Easements
Albemarle	5,077	81,300	17%
Clarke	764	19,600	17%
Culpeper	2,222	11,400	5%
Fauquier	3,288	89,700	22%
Greene	606	8,000	8%
Loudoun	2,327	46,200	14%
Madison	1,340	11,700	6%
Orange	1,669	29,300	13%
Rappahannock	772	28,300	17%
PEC Region	18,065	325,500	14%

Water

To keep the water we depend on clean and plentiful, we need to keep our watersheds healthy. Forests are essential—a natural system for filtering water as it flows toward streams and rivers and absorbing precipitation so that droughts and floods are less severe. Trees also prevent erosion and pollution by stabilizing stream banks. That's why it matters that PEC has helped to protect 160,000 acres of forests as well as 1,360 miles of streams and rivers and 7,700 acres of wetlands with conservation easements. Preventing sprawl is important too, because it reduces the amount of land covered in hard surfaces that send dirty runoff rushing straight into waterways. And, energy and transportation choices matter, because air pollution will become water pollution as it dissolves on surfaces and in rain. It's all connected.

A photograph of a stream flowing out of a dense forest. The water is dark and calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery. In the foreground, there's a rocky bank with some grass. The background is filled with tall trees and lush foliage, creating a vibrant green scene.

A stream flows out of a protected forest, feeding a reservoir that supplies the Town of Purcellville. Most of the watershed for this reservoir near the crest of the Blue Ridge is now protected by the largest easement in Loudoun County, nearly 1,300 acres. Photo by Rose Jenkins.



Mike Beniek says he fenced livestock out of the streams at Belle Meade Farm in Rappahannock because “it’s the right thing to do.” Photo by Rose Jenkins.

Unique Incentives Help Farmers to Protect Streams

Farmers in the upper Hazel River watershed in Rappahannock, Culpeper and Madison can now improve their farms and clean up streams by installing fences to keep livestock out of the water, at no cost. PEC is working with conservation partners to provide incentives that add to government cost-share funding in order to cover 100% of the costs of the fencing.

This voluntary program aims to restore water quality so that streams and rivers in the Upper Hazel watershed can be removed from the state’s Impaired Waters list.

This program also benefits farms because livestock are healthier and more productive when they drink clean water. Dale Welch, a Rappahannock farmer who fenced his cattle out of streams and provided alternative water sources, says, “The health effect on the cattle has been 100% beneficial.”

Mike Beniek, who runs Belle Meade Farm on Rt. 231 says that the main reason he decided to fence his livestock away from streams is that it’s the “right thing to do.” He says, “It protects the water. It keeps your soil from eroding. And I think it helps build a higher water table.”

Highlights

- A nearly 1,300-acre conservation easement in Loudoun protects a major **water supply for the Town of Purcellville**—three springs, a reservoir and surrounding forested slopes.
- The PEC-affiliated Cedar Run Land Conservation Fund contributed to the purchase of an easement on 73 acres with 1,000 feet of stream frontage. The **Cedar Run watershed** in Fauquier is now 20% protected, with 25,000 acres under easement.
- The **Goose Creek watershed** in Fauquier and Loudoun, a longstanding conservation priority for PEC, is now **35% protected** with 8,000 acres of public land and 80,000 acres under easement.
- PEC accepted an easement on the **Manly Farm in Rappahannock**, which joins other properties to form an 8,200-acre block of protected land adjacent to the Rappahannock River.
- Overall, conservation easements in the Piedmont now protect a total of **160,000 acres of forest land, 1,360 miles of streams and rivers and 7,700 acres of wetlands**.
- PEC co-sponsored two tree-planting projects and a workshop on better site design as part of our ongoing focus on **improving the urban watershed in Leesburg**.
- PEC held a public meeting and sent Action Alerts to inform citizens about the **Limestone Overlay District** in Loudoun, which passed, reducing threats of groundwater contamination and subsidence.
- PEC began building coalitions to protect **watersheds in Clarke**.
- PEC supported successful grassroots efforts to honor the **Hughes River** in Madison and Rappahannock as a State Scenic River (see p. 11).
- **“Poisoned Waters,”** a PBS Frontline documentary, identified suburban sprawl as a major cause of water pollution and interviewed PEC President Chris Miller about solutions, based on our recent successes in Loudoun.
- PEC helped to forge the new 60-group **Chesapeake Bay Coalition** in order to better ally local environmental initiatives with federal efforts to save the Bay.



PEC President Chris Miller discussed solutions for water pollution on “Poisoned Waters,” a PBS Frontline documentary.

Food

People need farms to grow food, so PEC has long focused on preserving farmland, with the result that 147,000 acres of important agricultural soils in our region are now protected from development. In recent years, PEC has expanded our farmland preservation work into the Piedmont Farm and Food Connection—a broader effort that is helping to bring about a renaissance of farming in our region by growing the local food movement. PEC is increasing demand for local food through our popular *Buy Fresh Buy Local* campaign. We're also supporting farmers so they can increase supply and we're helping to facilitate distribution. A strong local food network can revitalize economic prospects for working farms, provide families with fresh healthy options and strengthen Piedmont residents' connection to the land.



Violet Wiley picks her own apples at Carters Mountain Orchard in Albemarle County. Photo by Melissa Wiley.

PEC's *Buy Fresh Buy Local* Guides Reach 240,000 Homes

In 2009, PEC expanded our *Buy Fresh Buy Local* campaign, sending our highly popular local food guides to every home in our nine-county region—about 240,000 homes! We produced *Buy Fresh Buy Local* guides for the Charlottesville Area, the Northern Piedmont and Loudoun, and we partnered on the Northern Shenandoah Valley guide.

Interest in local food is booming, with direct marketing sales up 74% nationwide and the number of farmers markets in Virginia up 94% over the last five years. PEC's *Buy Fresh Buy Local* guides help producers to capitalize on these trends, maximizing economic opportunities that also benefit our health, our communities and our land.

In a survey of producers listed in PEC's 2008 guides, 90% reported that their customers mentioned the guide and over half said they have seen an increase in sales since being listed in the guide. Judy Stroske, a farmers market manager in Loudoun, told *Leesburg Today* that all markets in the county saw an increase in customers after PEC sent out our *Buy Fresh Buy Local* guides.



PEC's Don Loock and Karen Lamond take part in Local Foods Day in the Rappahannock County Public Schools. Photo by Stacey Carlberg.

Highlights

- Over 8,000 acres of prime agricultural soils were protected by conservation easements for a total of 147,000 acres.
- PEC expanded our website, www.BuyLocalVirginia.org, to include over 1,000 listings from local food businesses statewide.
- PEC co-led our second **Exploring the Small Farm Dream** course, a resource for potential local food entrepreneurs.
- PEC hosted two seminars on **Hosting the Small Farm Dream**, introducing landowners to options for partnering with farmers who need land.
- PEC co-sponsored two **Virginia Agriculture and Food Entrepreneurship Program** conferences for people with an interest in food-based businesses.
- PEC helped the new non-profit **Local Food Hub** get off the ground in Albemarle, helping local food businesses overcome logistical obstacles.
- PEC manages the **Forest Lakes Farmers Market** in Albemarle, which we launched in 2008.
- PEC produced a **holiday Buy Fresh Buy Local guide** for the Charlottesville area that was published in C-ville Weekly.
- PEC co-sponsored the well-attended **Heritage Harvest Festival** at Montalto, near Monticello, where we purchased a conservation easement last year.
- PEC held two **Eat Local Challenge** contests, with over 100 participants finding ways to eat 21 local foods in 21 days.
- PEC helped to start the **Madison Community Garden**, creating opportunities for more families to grow their own food.
- PEC assisted with **Local Foods Day in the Rappahannock public schools**, featuring a delicious local lunch in all school cafeterias.
- PEC produced our first **Farmer-Chef Express** directory, linking local food producers with restaurants and caterers.
- PEC provides *Buy Fresh Buy Local* graphics to over 50 **marketing partners**, to help them promote their locally grown products.
- PEC is monitoring **state and federal bills on food safety**, as well as local regulations, that could impact the viability of small farm businesses.
- PEC is active on the **Virginia Food Systems Council**—a statewide coalition aiming to strengthen Virginia's food system from farm to table.



Fresh chard from Roundabout Farm in Albemarle. Photo by Rose Jenkins

Energy

The effects of energy choices on the Piedmont are real. Our region is being targeted for major transmission lines, and we can expect to see proposals for power plants and other generation facilities. Renewed interest in uranium mining in Virginia raises the threat of toxic and radioactive contamination. We deal with air pollution, from both local sources and distant coal plants. And, we face the intensifying challenge of climate change. To protect the Piedmont, PEC has stepped up as a national leader, pushing for better energy strategies. We emphasize efficiency first—the cleanest, cheapest and most attainable energy alternative. Through initiatives like our EnergySmart Solutions guide, we are providing people with opportunities for direct action—because individual choices do make a difference. In 2009, dropping demand for electricity put the brakes on one major transmission line project in our region and scaled down another.

Videographer Zach Keifer and energy auditor Andrew Grigsby shoot how-to videos to accompany PEC's EnergySmart Solutions guide.
Photo by Rose Jenkins

PEC Moves Efficiency Forward as Dropping Demand Stops the PATH Line

PEC's new *EnergySmart Solutions* campaign is putting resources into people's hands that show how they can save substantially on their energy bills. The guide identifies ten low-cost, high-return do-it-yourself projects that could cut energy use for the average home by about 20%. To put that in perspective, in 2009, a drop in energy use of less than 4% threw the energy industry into turmoil and caused them to call back proposals for new infrastructure, including the 765-kV PATH line.

The ten strategic projects featured in PEC's user-friendly *EnergySmart Solutions* guide would cost a consumer about \$500 and could result in savings of about \$375 the first year, with higher annual savings in the future. PEC is planning to send the guide to every home in our region, like our *Buy Fresh Buy Local* guides. Early in 2010, the guides reached every home in eight counties.

The guide is up online at www.EnergySmartSolutions.org, linked to useful how-to videos.

Highlights

- In early 2009, **PEC won a federal case** restoring to states their right to deny proposed transmission lines. The U.S. Supreme Court has since refused a request by a consortium of utilities to overturn PEC's win in the Fourth Circuit.
- The proposal for the **765-kV PATH line** through Loudoun and other Virginia counties was withdrawn because of a drop in demand for electricity, due in part to energy conservation and efficiency. PEC was a respondent in the successful case against PATH, which drew heavily on expertise and analysis that came out of the fight we led against the 500-kV TrAIL line.
- The proposed **Loudoun-Middleburg 230-kV line** expansion was scaled back from 9.5 miles to 4 miles, due to declining demand for electricity and opposition from landowners, whom PEC helped to inform and mobilize.
- PEC President Chris Miller testified before Congress at a hearing on **"The Future of the Grid."** Rather than a massive "new national grid," PEC is arguing for a smarter grid with cleaner, more distributed generation and an emphasis on energy efficiency—a position that is gaining traction nationwide.
- **PEC alerted land conservationists nationwide** to the potential impact of an expanded transmission grid, with an article in the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) magazine and seminars at the annual LTA Rally.
- PEC marshaled scientific expertise from around the country in an effort to shape the scope of study planned by the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission regarding the safety of **mining uranium in Virginia**.
- PEC used our online advocacy tools to build citizen support for the promising **Loudoun Energy Plan**, which aims to reduce the energy footprint of the county.
- PEC joined local innovators at the dynamic **Alternative Energy Expo** held each summer in Warrenton.



Beauty

One of the main reasons why people want to protect the Piedmont is that they love its beauty. To protect the views that people cherish, PEC leads one of the most successful private land conservation movements in America with over 325,000 acres protected in our nine counties—nearly a third of the way to the Piedmont Reserve, PEC's ambitious vision of one million acres of protected land in our region. To ensure that the value people place on scenery is taken into account as a public benefit, PEC supports grassroots efforts to designate Scenic Rivers and Scenic Roads. Such recognition helps to define priority areas for land conservation and to ensure that scenic values are respected during decisions on land use, transportation, transmission lines and other infrastructure.



*A mountain view in Rappahannock.
Photo by Richard Lykes*



The new park at Gilberts corner preserves a gateway to one of the best protected landscapes in private ownership in America. Just west of the intersection is James Monroe's estate, Oak Hill, shown here. Photo by Ken Garrett

New Park at Gilberts Corner Preserves a Scenic Gateway

and at Gilberts Corner in Loudoun County that PEC saved from development is now part of a new public park at a gateway to some of America's most historic countryside. PEC's Mike Kane says, "If you're driving west on Rte. 50, Gilberts Corner is the point where a sense of relief overtakes you as the pace slows and the landscape's beauty and history becomes apparent."

Last year, PEC saved a key piece of land near the intersection, purchasing 68 acres at foreclosure from a developer. Earlier, PEC helped preservationists secure an adjoining 86 acres. Now, these properties are part of Gilberts Corner Regional Park—over 150 acres where people will be able to connect with local history and explore trails through woods and fields. The new park, which includes the antebellum Mount Zion church, marks the site of an 1864 Civil War skirmish.

At Gilberts Corner, a number of initiatives to protect the landscape come together. The new roundabout at the intersection is the fruition of a traffic calming plan that PEC advocated for 15 years as an alternative to four-laning Rt. 50 through this exceptional countryside—one of the best protected landscapes in private ownership in America.

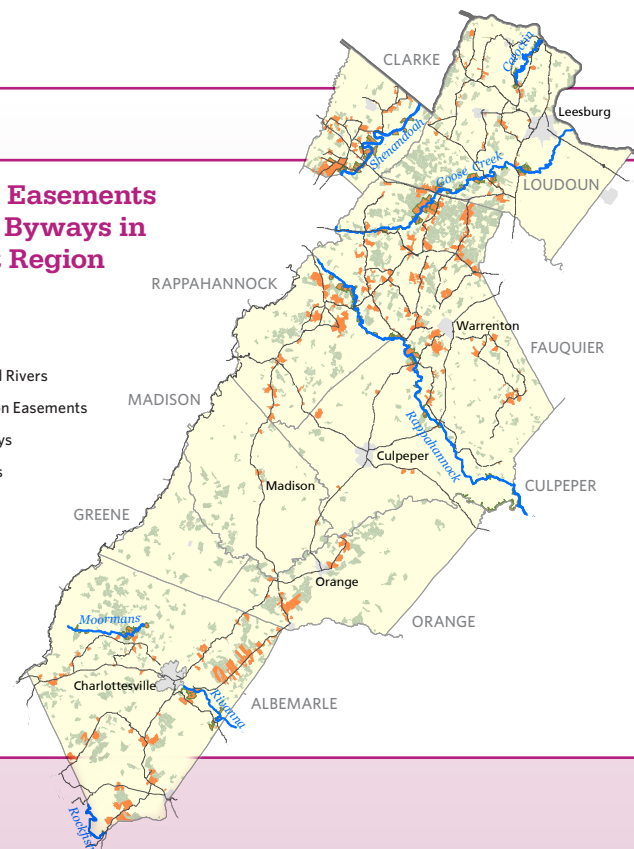
Highlights

- The entire route of the **Journey Through Hallowed Ground**, from Gettysburg to Monticello, which PEC helped launch a campaign to celebrate, was designated as a National Scenic Byway in 2009.
- In Madison County, **the Smith and Faulkner families protected over 1,000 acres** of contiguous land on either side of Scenic Byway Rt. 231 on the banks of the Robinson River.
- Easements donated by the Carter family on **Redlands** and other properties in southern Albemarle protect more than 1,000 acres on either side of Scenic Byway Rt. 20 (see p. 3).
- PEC supported successful efforts to designate the **Hughes River** in Madison, Rappahannock and Culpeper as a Scenic River.
- PEC's nine-county region now includes over **700 miles of Virginia Scenic Roads and 200 miles of Virginia Scenic Rivers**.
- A total of **148,000 acres of land along Scenic Byways** in PEC's region are now protected by conservation easements.
- More than **100,000 acres of land visible from the Appalachian Trail** are protected by conservation easements in PEC's region.

Conservation Easements Along Scenic Byways in the Piedmont Region

110,000 Acres

- Easements Along Scenic Byways and Rivers
- Other Conservation Easements
- State Scenic Byways
- State Scenic Rivers



History

The Piedmont connects people to America's heritage like no other place in the country. This is the home of visionaries who founded the nation and the hallowed ground of the Civil War that tested their vision. In the last two years, PEC has played a direct role in protecting land that frames two major American landmarks—James Madison's Montpelier and Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. We've also helped to protect numerous Civil War battlefields. But PEC doesn't focus solely on the Piedmont's "greatest hits." These treasured historic sites cannot be fully appreciated without the context of the surrounding countryside, where pioneers, farmers, generals, soldiers, slaves and Presidents lived and left their mark. PEC supports grassroots efforts to recognize and to protect the Piedmont's exceptionally historic landscapes.



*PEC purchased a conservation easement on over 700 acres at James Madison's Montpelier.
Photo courtesy of the Montpelier Foundation.*

700+ Acres Protected at James Madison's Montpelier

Over 700 acres at James Madison's Montpelier in Orange County are now protected through conservation easements that PEC purchased in 2009.

These conservation lands expand the protected area at the home of the James Madison, the principal author of the Constitution, and they also shed light on what Michael Quinn, President of the Montpelier Foundation, calls "the next chapter of the Constitution"—the struggle over slavery, freedom and citizenship.

The new easements preserve land where thousands of Civil War soldiers camped through the winter of 1863-64. The imprints of their shelters are still visible there on the forest floor. The easements also protect Freedman's Farm where the family of George Gilmore, who was born a slave at Montpelier, made their home after emancipation. Their cabin is first freedman's home in America to be restored and open to the public.

In addition, the newly protected lands buffer the old-growth James Madison Landmark Forest, one of the best remaining examples of old growth forest in the Southeast—where vast trunks and high green crowns remind us of our native woods' potential.



The Gilmore Cabin, on newly protected land at Montpelier, is the first freedman's home in America to be restored and open to the public. Photo by Rose Jenkins

Highlights

- PEC saved a historic property at **Gilberts Corner**, near James Monroe's estate Oak Hill and important Civil War sites, which will become a part of a new public park at the gateway to the Journey Through Hallowed Ground (see p. 11).
- The route of the **Journey Through Hallowed Ground** from Gettysburg to Monticello—which PEC has promoted for years—was designated a National Scenic Byway (see p. 11).



- PEC was a leader in the nationally significant fight to stop a strip mall with a **Walmart on the edge of Wilderness Battlefield**—pointing out alternative sites nearby with less impact on this major Civil War battlefield. Following Orange County's disappointing decision to approve the development, preservationists are making their case to Walmart's corporate leadership and in court.
- 26 acres of **Rappahannock Station Battlefield** in Remington, which PEC helped to save from development in 2005, were permanently protected, on their way to becoming a public park.
- Over 640 acres of **Brandy Station Battlefield** in Culpeper were protected—including the Willow Run property that was targeted for a mega-development a few years ago.
- A 513 acre property that overlaps the site of the **Battle of Stanardsville** in Greene County was protected.
- PEC co-sponsored an all-day symposium on **Battlefields of Fauquier County** with 200 participants, increasing awareness of local Civil War sites.
- PEC supports ongoing grassroots efforts to recognize the **Broad Run/Little Georgetown Rural Historic District** in Fauquier.
- PEC supported successful efforts to list the **Hoffman Round Barn** in Madison on the National Register of Historic Places and to protect the site with a conservation easement.
- PEC holds easements on nearly 1,000 newly protected acres in the Southern Albemarle Rural Historic District including **Redlands**, a c. 1792 mansion listed on the Virginia Register of Historic Places (see p. 3).
- Conservation easements in the Piedmont protect a total of **22,000 acres of Civil War battlefields and 87,000 acres of historic districts**.

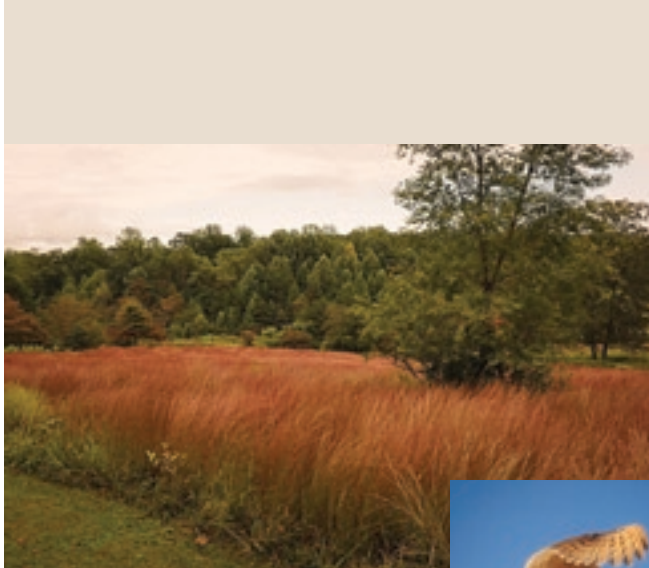
PEC helped to gain historic landmark status for the Hoffman Round Barn in Wolfstown, in Madison County, and to protect the land. Photo by Doreen Jenkins.

Nature

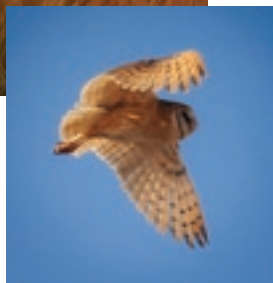
Since our founding, PEC has helped to conserve over 325,000 acres of land, and as this land conservation movement matures, we are increasingly taking the next step of educating people who want to practice good stewardship of their land. We are teaching people to nurture nature—for instance by preserving wetlands, enhancing habitat for wildlife, cultivating native plants, protecting water quality, and practicing sustainable agriculture or forestry. We also create opportunities for people to connect with nature—from day camps and nature walks to public parks and trails—because these connections become the basis for a commitment to good stewardship.



"Legendary" counselor-in-training Dylan Dwyer (in the words of camp director Lyt Wood) at the PEC-sponsored Rappahannock Nature Camp a few summers ago. Photo by Anna Oehser.



Warm season grasses cultivated by Bruce Jones in Rappahannock provide important habitat for barn owls and other native birds. Photos by Bruce Jones.



Restoring Warm Season Grasses— a Native Habitat

PEC encourages landowners to restore warm season grasses—an increasingly rare habitat that is essential for native birds such as bobwhite quail, meadow-larks, bobolinks, sparrows and barn owls.

Warm season grasses grow in bunches, allowing wildlife to move at ground level, and they provide dependable nutrition in the summer. Species that rely on this habitat have been declining—but many Piedmont landowners are taking interest as they learn about the benefits of warm season grasses for both wildlife and people. This habitat can be managed for hunting, boosting populations of turkey, quail and pheasants, and they benefit farmers by promoting pollinators and beneficial insects.

PEC secured a grant to provide State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) cost-share funding to landowners who enhance habitat in the Culpeper Basin Important Bird Area, which spans parts of Culpeper, Orange, Fauquier and Prince William. In 2009, we held a workshop and sent mailings to landowners in the area—spurring interest not only in bird habitat but riparian buffers and land conservation.

PEC is coordinating with other conservation groups to step up outreach about warm season grasses—which could include tours of properties in Rappahannock where landowners have cultivated vibrant native-species meadows and edge habitats.

Highlights

- PEC co-sponsors six **Natural History Day Camps** every summer, in Albemarle, Clarke, Fauquier, Orange and Rappahannock, creating opportunities for children to discover the outdoors.
- PEC co-hosted the third annual **Wildlife Habitat Open House** in Rappahannock, where over 350 people came out to learn about improving habitat on their land.
- PEC continues to distribute the guide we produced with the American Bird Conservancy, **Managing Land in the Piedmont of Virginia for the Benefit of Birds and Other Wildlife**.
- PEC is making incentives available for riparian buffers in the Upper Hazel River Watershed that will improve **habitat for native brook trout** and other species (see p. 5)
- Thanks to a generous donor, PEC created a full-time position for a **Sustainable Habitat Program Manager**, to be filled in 2010.
- PEC's annual **Cedar Run Bluebell Walk** in Fauquier brings neighbors together to celebrate spring and the beauty of native Virginia bluebells.
- The **Rappahannock Station Battlefield Park** in Remington will provide much-needed public access to the Rappahannock River (see p. 13).
- PEC secured land for the new **Gilberts Corner Regional Park**, expanding opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors in Loudoun (see p. 11).
- PEC is developing a new interactive website with information on **the Rivanna Trail network**—over 20 miles of hiking trails around the City of Charlottesville.
- PEC organized the third annual **Conservation Fair** for all fourth-graders in Clarke, with activity stations on native plants, energy conservation and more.

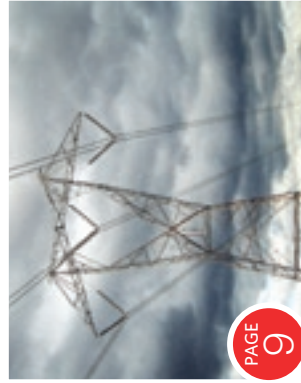


A close-up of pollination, seen at the PEC-sponsored nature day camp in Warrenton. Photo by Patricia Johnson.



PEC Makes the Connections

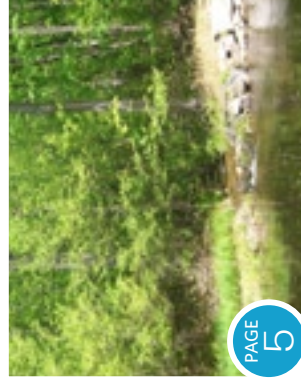
to Protect the Piedmont



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PATH Line

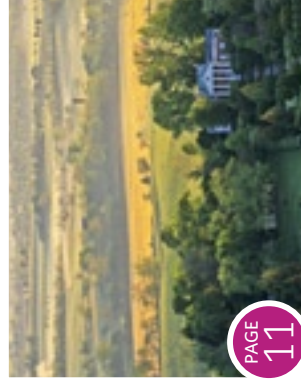
Withdrawn because of dropping demand for electricity



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Purcellville Water Supply

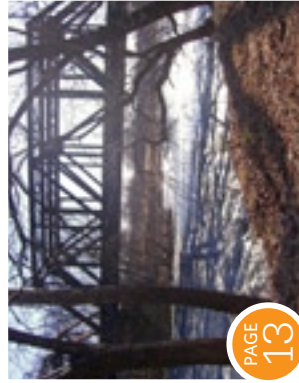
Protected with the largest easement in Loudoun.



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Gilberts Corner

Land saved from development, now a park.



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Rappahannock Station Battlefield

Easement complete, park on the way

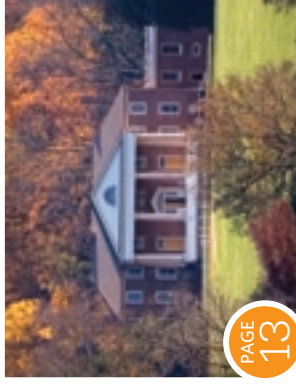
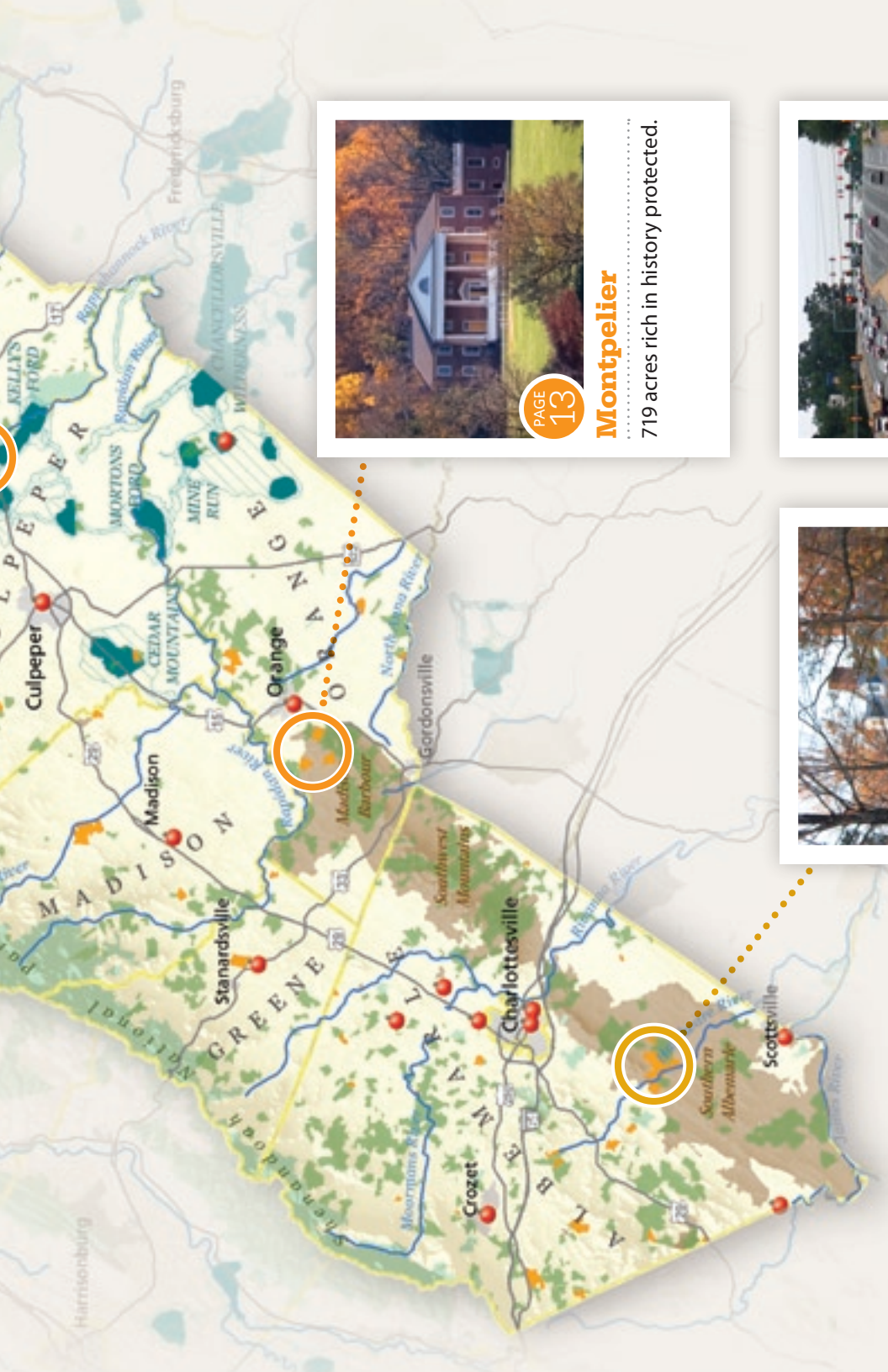


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Hazel River Watershed

Fencing livestock out of streams, for free.

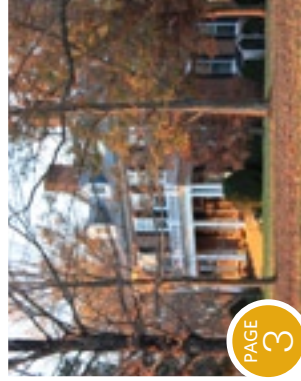




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Montpelier

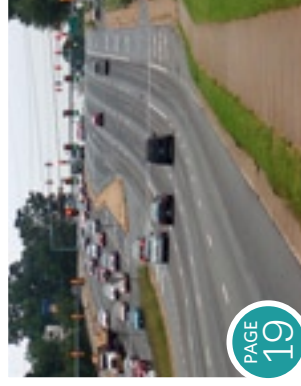
719 acres rich in history protected.



PAGE
3

Redlands

1,000+ acres of Jefferson country protected.



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Rt. 29 Blueprint

Three wasteful bypass roads out.



PAGE
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Buy Fresh, Buy Local Guides

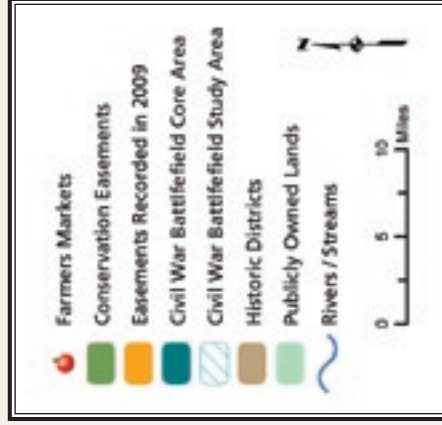
Reached every household in nine counties.



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EnergySmart Solutions

Cutting home energy use by 20%.



Community

The vitality of our towns and cities and the health of our countryside are closely linked, so PEC works actively with citizens to promote both. We help people build better communities—great places to live, work and play, with efficient transportation networks, plenty of parks and trails and a healthy balance between city and country. A key strategy is to link land use planning with transportation planning so that thoughtless growth doesn't overwhelm our roads and new road construction doesn't lead to unplanned growth. Our major achievements in 2009 include transportation solutions that respect the character of rural communities and meet the needs of existing cities, towns and suburbs—instead of big expensive roads that bring more sprawl and more traffic.



An image of downtown Charlottesville by Robert Llewellyn was shown in downtown Charlottesville as part of the PEC-sponsored Urban Places, Rural Spaces exhibit. Photo by John Mitchell.

Blueprint for the Future of Route 29 Improved

What does the future hold for Route 29—the main transportation artery through the Piedmont region? In 2009, VDOT released a preliminary blueprint for the Rt. 29 corridor that was heavy on expensive new roads that wouldn't solve traffic problems and would cause sprawl—including a new four-lane highway running 51 miles through Albemarle, Orange and Culpeper!

PEC mobilized citizen opposition through an email campaign that went viral. Citizen input prompted VDOT to improve the blueprint by removing plans for three unneeded bypass roads:

- A four-lane highway from Keswick to Culpeper, known as Center State or the Eastern Bypass
- Buckland Bypass, on the border of Fauquier and Prince William, which was rejected years ago because of high environmental impact and poor traffic performance
- Part of a bypass around Charlottesville that conflicts with local plans to improve the local street network.

PEC supports strategic transportation projects that will improve the towns, cities and suburbs where people already live instead of fiscally irresponsible new roads that lead to more sprawl and more traffic.

Highlights

- **New roundabouts and other improvements on Rt. 50** are the fruition of a traffic calming project that PEC advocated for 15 years, after a community visioning process identified traffic calming as a desirable alternative to four-laning Rt. 50 through rural Loudoun and Fauquier. These design changes improve safety and traffic flow, cost far less than road-widening and enhance the character of the road.



- PEC is spearheading a community visioning process for **Routes 22/231** through Keswick in Albemarle—a Scenic Byway—which could otherwise be four-laned.
- PEC supports **Places 29** in Albemarle and the **29-H-250** study in Charlottesville—plans to improve the local street network and build smart growth communities.
- PEC hosted a forum in Charlottesville on **“The Route 29 Solution,”** with attention to local, state and federal plans.
- PEC is encouraging citizen input on the **Loudoun Transportation Plan** and advocating that the plan prioritize the needs of existing communities.
- PEC co-sponsored a workshop for Fauquier County officials on **access management strategies** to improve safety on Route 29 while preserving rural character.
- PEC aided citizen opposition to inappropriate **new school sites in Loudoun**, and helped improve the process for selecting sites—achieving better value, better community involvement and better integration into local plans for growth.

New traffic circle at Gilberts Corner.
Photo by Carley Leins

VDOT Route 29 Corridor Blueprint Recommendations



- PEC mobilized citizens in Fauquier to **keep the public in public process**—opposing a change to allow proffers for approved developments to be amended with no opportunity for public comment.
- PEC collaborated on **Urban Places, Rural Spaces**, a unique art exhibit celebrating Charlottesville and Albemarle's vibrant urban center and beautiful rural land—the best of both worlds—with a focus on strategies to maintain the balance.

PEC pursues a comprehensive strategy to effectively protect the Piedmont.

Envision the Piedmont

Instead of leaving change to chance, PEC helps citizens to plan for a positive future—passing on a landscape that will sustain and inspire people for generations to come.

Protect the Land

PEC enables people to act on their love for the land—and they have made the Piedmont one of the most successful places in America for private land conservation.

Confront Challenges

PEC serves as a vital ally for citizens when the places they care about are threatened. We mobilize people to take action and provide professional resources to back them up.

Build Better Communities

PEC works in both urban and rural areas to keep the Piedmont a great place to live, so people can enjoy both high-quality towns and cities and beautiful, open countryside.

PEC is a **Leader**

Fellowship Program Trains the Next Generation of Leaders

The PEC Fellowship Program, which we launched in 2007, is emerging as a premier educational experience for college and graduate students interested in environmental careers. This year, 72 people applied for twelve spots. The seven-week program trains fellows in PEC's model for effective environmental work—making connections between complex issues and mobilizing citizens to take care of the places they care about.



PEC fellows spend the first half of the program learning about environmental issues through lectures and field trips. In the second half of the fellowship, each fellow completes a practicum that advances the work of PEC and partner organizations.

2009 fellow Ben Sedlins said about his experience, "What I thought was really cool was the breadth of ways that people care about this area. There's such a wide scope of people who want to make a change for the better. Addressing environmental issues by reaching out to those people is an approach that can be applied internationally or where we all come from, and that's very helpful and useful."



2009 PEC Fellows gained hands-on experience in a wide range of activities, from growing food to shaping laws.
Photos by Stacey Carlberg

Decisions made at the regional, state and national levels have a profound effect on our local communities, so PEC plays an active role—forming coalitions and mobilizing citizens to achieve the outcomes we need. PEC also serves as a model and an ally for conservationists and community activists across the nation as we get impressive results through our comprehensive strategy, bold vision and grassroots energy.

National Leadership

- PEC and a growing coalition of rural land preservation advocates have made gains toward **expanding the federal estate tax incentives for land conservation**.
- PEC **won a federal case** restoring authority over transmission line siting to the states.
- PEC President Chris Miller was one of 13 experts nationwide to testify before Congress in a hearing on **"The Future of the Grid."**
- **PEC alerted land conservationists nationwide** to the potential impact of transmission line policies.
- PEC provided faculty for six seminars at the national **Land Trust Alliance Rally**, with more than 1,200 land trusts represented.
- PEC's director of Land Conservation, Heather Richards, serves on the national **Land Trust Accreditation Commission**.
- PEC is **regularly consulted by leaders** in the environmental community on national goals and strategies, on issues including energy and transmission lines, land conservation, water quality and grassroots organizing.
- PEC was featured in **national media** in 2009, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, NPR and PBS *Frontline*.

Statewide Leadership

- Citizens used PEC's **online advocacy campaigns** in 2009 to remove wasteful bypass roads from VDOT's blueprint for Rt. 29 (see p. 19) and keep energy efficiency among the factors to consider in transmission line cases.
- In 2009 PEC's staff served on numerous **state boards and committees**, including the Joint Subcommittee on Land Use, Transfer of Development Rights Workgroup, Alternative Septic Regulatory Advisory Panel, State Advisory Board on Air Pollution and Wind Energy Regulatory Advisory Panel.
- PEC is an active participant in the **Virginia Conservation Network**, coordinating on legislative priorities with over 100 partner groups. PEC President Chris Miller serves on the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.
- PEC plays a key role in **Virginia United Land Trusts**, which is chaired by PEC staff—strengthening conservation statewide by coordinating the efforts of about 30 organizations.
- PEC is a strong voice for public safety in the debate over potential **uranium mining** in Virginia—a currently banned activity that could result in radioactive contamination of rivers and groundwater.

Regional Leadership

- PEC serves as the fiscal agent for the **Coalition for Smarter Growth**, the Washington metropolitan region's leading organization helping communities find solutions to the interconnected challenges of housing, transportation, energy and the environment.
- PEC is an active participant in the **Journey through Hallowed Ground Partnership**, which recently succeeded in gaining National Heritage Area and National Scenic Byway designations for the landscape between Monticello and Gettysburg.
- PEC helped to forge the 60-group **Chesapeake Bay Coalition** in 2009 and launch its website www.ChooseCleanWater.org. PEC President Chris Miller is a co-chair of the Steering Committee.
- PEC's **Buy Fresh, Buy Local** guides serve regional "foodsheds" with listings that include Nelson, Louisa, Fluvanna, Warren and Frederick Counties.



PEC sends action alerts to over **16,000 online subscribers**, who use information and advocacy tools from PEC to change the course of local, state and federal decisions. Activists in our online network sent over 10,000 messages to decision-makers in 2009.



The Piedmont Foundation

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Established to hold and manage special funds in support of PEC, the Piedmont Foundation assures PEC's capacity to respond to key opportunities and challenges as they arise and to fulfill our core mission over the long term. A separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization governed by a six-member board, the Foundation accepts gifts of cash, securities, property and appreciated assets. The Foundation also offers opportunities for tax advantaged planned gifts including trusts, bequests and life income plans.

The Piedmont Foundation is 85 percent of the way toward our \$30 million goal in PEC's first ever capital campaign,, *The Campaign For Virginia's Piedmont: An Investment in Our Future*. Funds raised will be managed in six strategic categories:

- **Core Mission Endowment**
- **Conservation Stewardship Fund**
- **Legal Defense Fund**
- **Education and Outreach Fund**
- **Headquarters Expansion Fund**
- **Land Conservation Fund**

Within this fund, the following Regional Land Conservation Funds have been established:

Albemarle County Land Conservation Fund
Bull Run Mountains Land Conservation Fund
Clarke County Land Conservation Fund
Fauquier County Land Conservation Fund
James M. Rowley Goose Creek Land Conservation Fund
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Opportunities remain to establish additional regional conservation funds.

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With much gratitude, PEC presents the names of individuals, families, foundations, businesses and organizations that supported the Piedmont Environmental Council during 2009. Although we do not have the space to honor everyone, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of each of our members. Sincere thanks for your ongoing commitment to promoting and protecting the Piedmont region.

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*Actor Robert Duvall greets other
PEC supporters at a fundraiser.
Photo by Robert Lazaro*

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*Lasha Shields checks out a cicada
exoskeleton at the PEC-sponsored
nature day camp in Warrenton.
Photo by Patricia Johnson*



Megan and Rob Weary grow vegetables for local customers at Roundabout Farm in Albemarle, which is protected by a conservation easement. Photo by Rose Jenkins

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Brothers John and Jack Fray, who both volunteer with the Fire Department, protected over 500 acres in Madison County a few years ago.
 Photo by Rose Jenkins

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Craig Rains is an active volunteer with Friends of Wilderness Battlefield, a citizens group that has worked closely with PEC to protect the battlefield. Photo by Rose Jenkins

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*McKenna Morin enjoys
the local flavor at a farmers
market in Loudoun County.
Photo by Ann Higgins.*

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Statements of Financial Condition

Financial information was derived from the organization's books with adjustments to eliminate the impact of individual land conservation projects of a non-recurring nature. Data related to entities that have become separately incorporated have also been excluded from this presentation.

For more information or a copy of our most recent audited financial statements, please contact PEC's accounting office at 540.341.0175 ext. 5.

	2009		2008		2007	
Support	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Donations and Grants	\$ 5,136,000	97%	\$ 5,877,000	93%	\$ 6,672,000	97%
Special Events, Net	77,000	2%	221,000	4%	163,000	2%
Investments/Other	64,000	1%	197,000	3%	56,000	1%
Total Support	5,277,000	100%	6,295,000	100%	6,891,000	100%
Uses of Funds						
Expenses						
County Issues	\$ 1,633,000	31%	\$ 1,495,000	23%	\$ 1,835,000	26%
Growth Management	318,000	6%	501,000	8%	423,000	6%
Transportation	283,000	5%	369,000	6%	338,000	5%
Land Conservation	1,226,000	23%	1,312,000	21%	1,652,000	23%
Land Use	446,000	9%	1,179,000	18%	1,348,000	19%
Outreach and Education	968,000	18%	1,082,000	17%	1,009,000	14%
Development	177,000	4%	231,000	4%	359,000	5%
Administration	186,000	4%	196,000	3%	209,000	3%
Total Expenses	5,237,000	100%	6,365,000	100%	7,173,000	100%
Change in Net Assets	\$ 40,000		(\$ 70,000)		(\$ 282,000)	



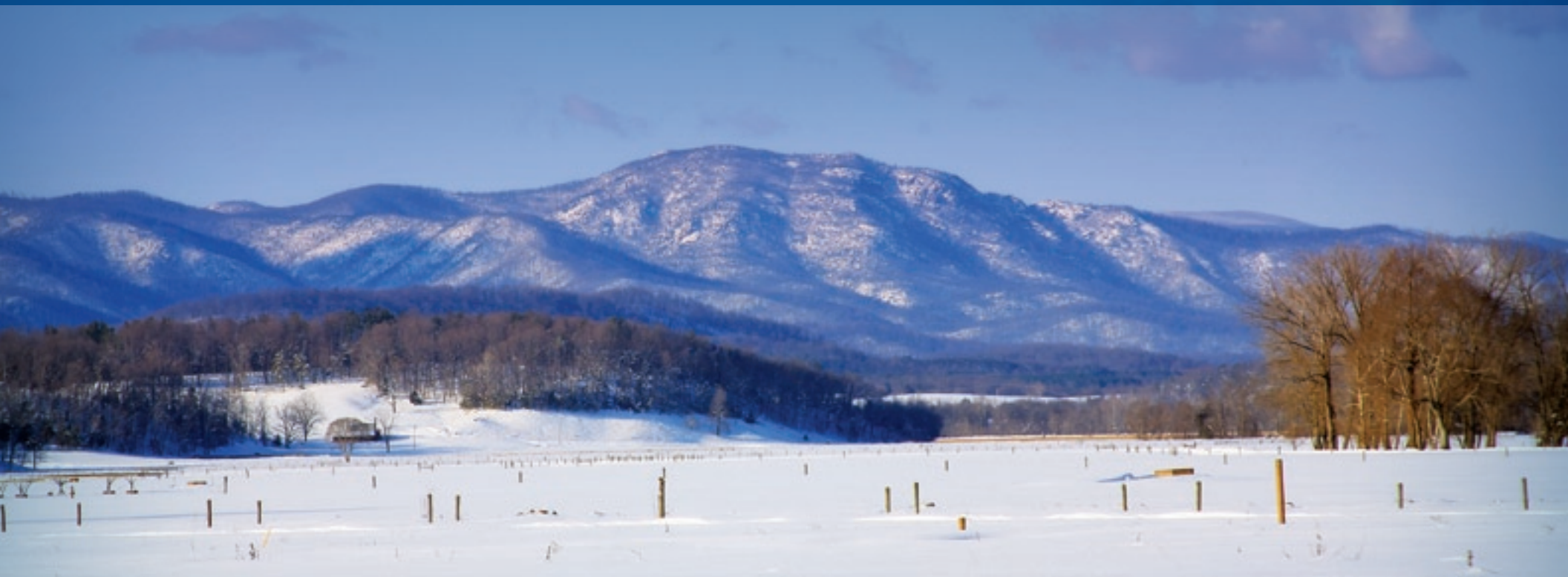
Piedmont Environmental Council

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View of Old Rag Mountain from the Hebron Valley in Madison County. Photo by Earl Ayers.



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