



Piedmont  
Environmental  
Council

2014

ANNUAL REPORT





CEDAR WAXWING  
Photo by Andrew Haley

"PEC has been there to help these individuals and communities preserve and enhance what they most value."

## Dear Friends,

Now more than ever, people who share a commitment to conservation, good planning of communities, and protection of historic, scenic, and natural resources need to work together.

Over the past 15 years, we have focused on implementing well-supported strategies, with astounding results. The air is cleaner; plans for addressing stormwater pollution in our local streams and the Chesapeake Bay are in place; more than 750,000 acres have been protected statewide; the extraordinary history of our region has been preserved and reinterpreted for new generations through the protection of Civil War sites and the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway; and farming and food production have expanded, spurring new and innovative investment in the rural economy.

But in the current political environment, open spaces that provide clean air, clean water, and the land base for a rural economy are under assault. Conservation and good land use planning are being attacked based on the theory that they have undue impact on the individual liberty of landowners and businesses and as a result, the economic development of the region.

The reality proves otherwise. Communities in the Piedmont are generally more prosperous and enjoy a lower tax burden than nearby areas that have not planned for growth as well. This high quality of life enjoyed by our residents is a direct result of the choices our communities have made to grow

and evolve on their terms, rather than allow growth to be dictated by outside forces. What's unique about the Piedmont is the dominant role of local communities, and their civic and public leaders, in shaping growth.

In 2014, the power of Piedmont communities was readily apparent. An outpouring of community support led to a reconsideration of plans to demolish the historic Waterloo Bridge over the Rappahannock. A coalition of local groups in Loudoun organized to help the Commonwealth develop and enact a new policy for preserving rural roads. And Piedmont landowners placed more than 6,500 acres of land under conservation easement, bringing the total amount of conservation land to over 375,000 acres.

PEC has been there to help these individuals and communities preserve and enhance what they most value. Whether we are providing technical expertise to evaluate the options for rehabilitation of historic structures like Waterloo Bridge, or in-depth assistance to landowners so they can best assess their options for conserving their land, or help in organizing a community coalition, we aim to respond to and channel the energies of our residents and communities to meet their goals through civic action.

More and more, there is strident advocacy in favor of unlimited commercial and industrial development, even if it jeopardizes treasured resources. Whether it is above-ground electric transmission lines in view of Civil War battlefields, or natural gas pipeline rights of way across National Historic

Landmarks such as Montpelier, the argument is that the goal of energy supply trumps all other values. Likewise, the desire to open new transportation corridors has many making false claims that natural resources, historic assets, and scenic beauty must be sacrificed for economic growth and commuter convenience. Even conservation easements, voluntary limits on future development donated by landowners, are under attack as second and third generation buyers seek unfettered use of the land.

The best response is civic engagement by the citizens who share common beliefs about the future of the Piedmont. Our goal at PEC is to educate residents, landowners, and government officials about the policies and individual actions that can help protect and promote the rural economy, natural resources and beauty of the Piedmont region. Whether it is the direct action of conserving land, implementing good conservation practices, restoring natural habitats, taking advocacy action before state or local governmental bodies, or being active in elections, civic engagement makes a difference.

Thank you for all that you did in 2014 and will do in 2015!

*Sincerely,*



**Chris Miller**  
President



**Jean Perin**  
Co-Chair of the Board



**George L. Ohrstrom II**  
Co-Chair of the Board



BELTED GALLOWAY COW CALF  
Photo by Ann Higgins

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# Protected Land in Virginia

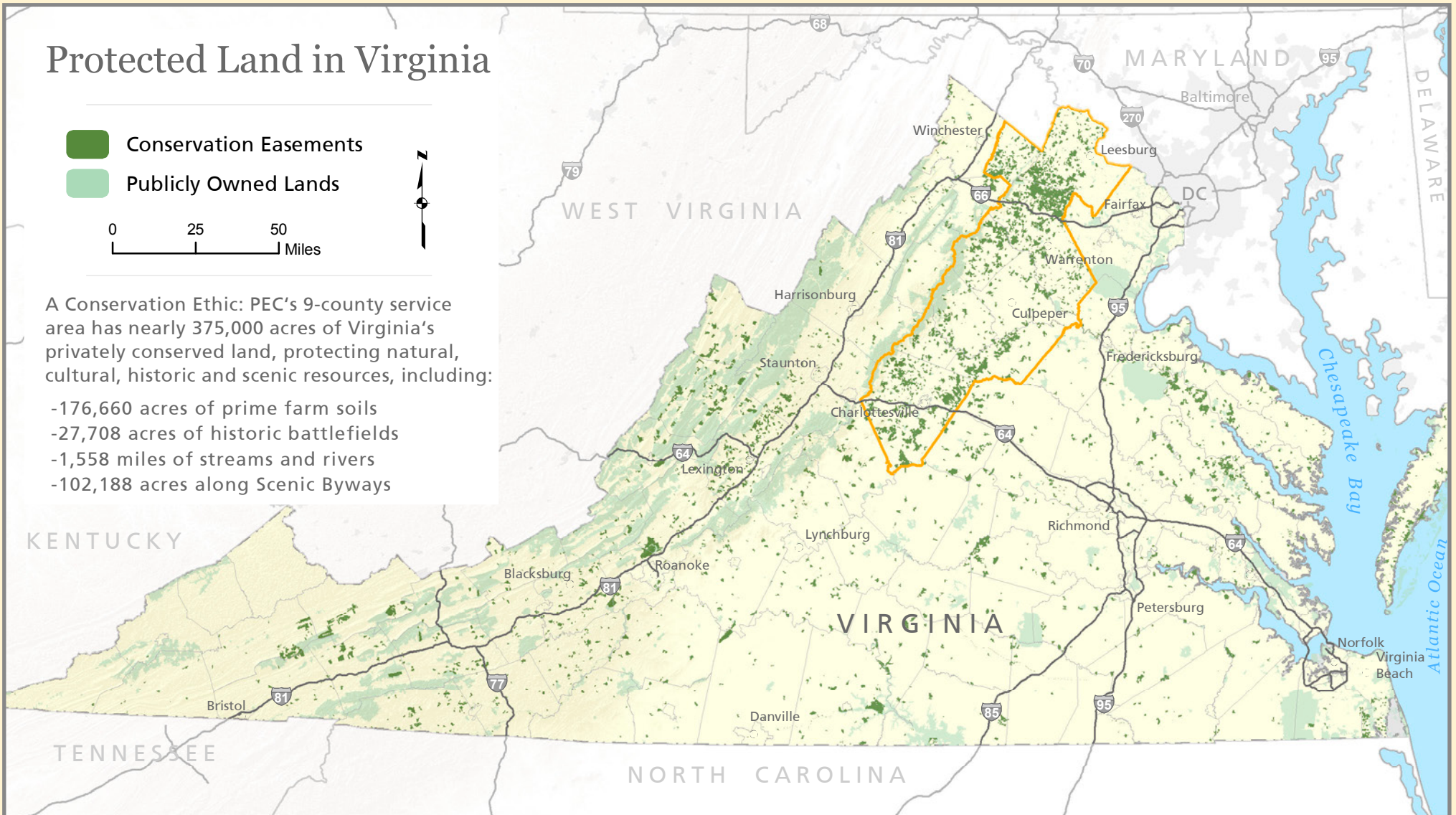
- Conservation Easements
- Publicly Owned Lands

0 25 50 Miles



A Conservation Ethic: PEC's 9-county service area has nearly 375,000 acres of Virginia's privately conserved land, protecting natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources, including:

- 176,660 acres of prime farm soils
- 27,708 acres of historic battlefields
- 1,558 miles of streams and rivers
- 102,188 acres along Scenic Byways



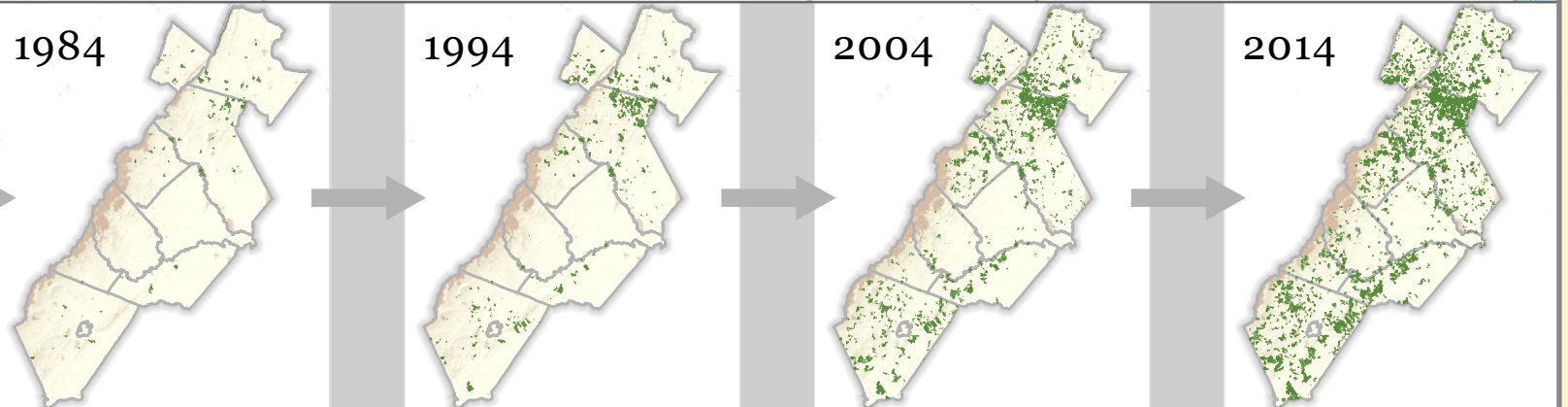
## Conservation Easements in the Piedmont

1984

1994

2004

2014

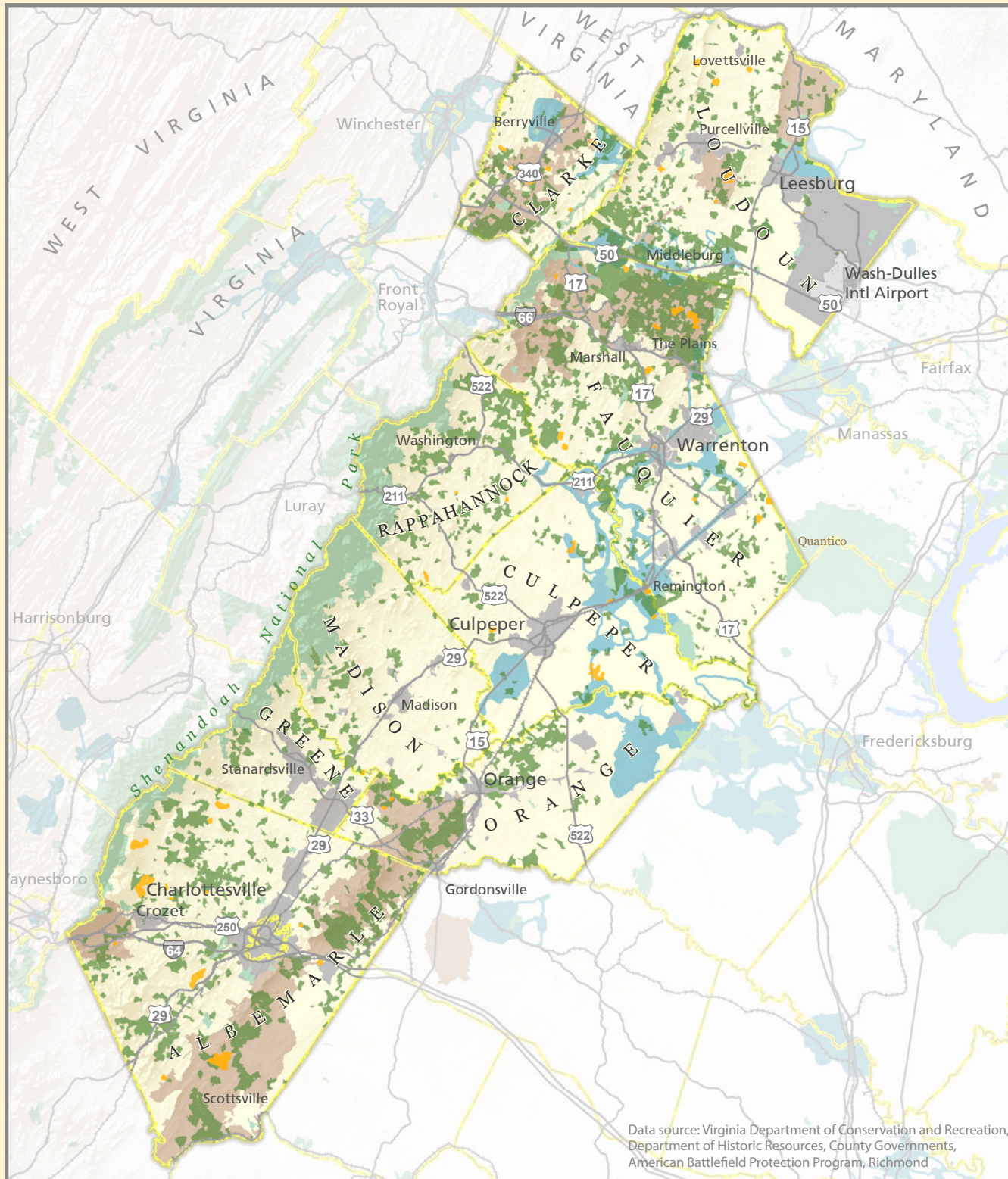


- Conservation Easements
- Public Lands

0 25 50 Miles







Data source: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Historic Resources, County Governments, American Battlefield Protection Program, Richmond

# The Piedmont Region

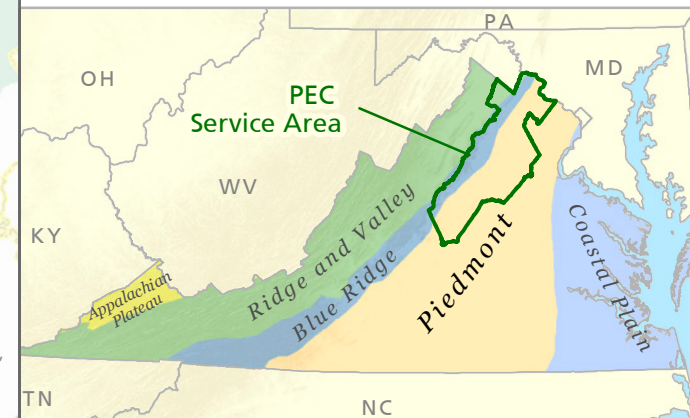
- Conservation Easements
- Easements Recorded in 2014
- Publicly Owned Lands
- Civil War Battlefields
- Historic Districts
- Planned for Growth

0 10 20 Miles



Virginia's northern Piedmont is an exceptional place. Located at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Piedmont is beloved for its scenic beauty, unparalleled in its significance to America's history, and valuable for its productive family farms, thriving communities and vibrant economy.

## Physiographic Regions of Virginia







# land conservation

VOLUNTARY ACTION • OUTSTANDING SUCCESS • SAVING PLACES PEOPLE LOVE



## An inspiration for conservation

Just 5 miles down Route 29 from Charlottesville is Anchorage Farm, a 742-acre 19th-century farm. In 1983 David and Nancy Bass purchased the farm and began raising two herds of cattle. Nancy, an established contemporary realist artist, also discovered in her love of the cows a new inspiration for her work.



Nancy's deeply sympathetic portraits of cows have become highly valued and recognized both by art connoisseurs and residents of the Charlottesville area and beyond. Nancy has also generously supported PEC's work with her art. A silent auction at Anchorage Farm of Nancy's paintings of farms participating in our *Buy Fresh Buy Local* program was a huge success. In 2013, Nancy along with several other local artists generously participated in PEC's Painters of the Piedmont exhibit, and some of the proceeds from sales of their work were donated to PEC.

Our work with the Basses came full circle in 2014, which capped years of work by David and Nancy, PEC, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to protect more than 700 contiguous acres. The first phase

ANCHORAGE FARM  
Photo credit: Nora Seilheimer

of this project was the protection of 76 acres with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation in 2000. Then, in 2011, a conservation easement on 85 acres with a historic 1825 farmhouse was donated to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.



In 2014, David and Nancy donated the final easement to VOF to protect the balance of the historic property. "PEC has been helpful through this entire process guiding us along the way. I really commend their work and commitment to helping landowners. This has been a family farm for generations and it feels good to know that it is now protected forever," remarked David.

## 6,543 Acres Protected in 2014

### 2014 Highlights

- ▶ Through the Piedmont Foundation, PEC manages **nine land conservation funds** focused on specific places within our region (see p. 20). In 2014, our Krebsner Fund helped to facilitate the preservation of a property in southern Rappahannock County. This conservation easement protects water quality, wildlife habitat, forests of high conservation value, and the scenic nature of Rappahannock.
- ▶ PEC's Heather Richards served as Chair of the national **Land Trust Accreditation Commission**, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance which works to help land trusts meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. PEC also participated actively in advocacy to make the enhanced federal conservation easement tax incentive permanent.
- ▶ Loudoun County adopted a strengthened program to standardize the procedures for monitoring the easements that the county holds or co-holds. PEC worked closely with the county to develop the program, which will result in **better stewardship of its conservation lands**.
- ▶ More than 160 people attended two PEC workshops in the spring on **farm and forest conservation programs and funding opportunities for rural landowners and farmers**. The workshops featured representatives from local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Virginia Department of Forestry and Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

See more conservation highlights throughout this Annual Report.

County	Acres protected in 2014 by Conservation Easements	Total Acres protected by Conservation Easements
Albemarle	2,786	92,886
Clarke	429	23,679
Culpeper	759	16,759
Fauquier	1,637	99,385
Greene	0	10,380
Loudoun	727	52,802
Madison	22	14,384
Orange	67	34,142
Rappahannock	116	31,366
<b>PEC Region</b>	<b>6,543</b>	<b>375,783</b>



# clean air and water

SAFE DRINKING SOURCES • CLEAR VIEWS • GOOD HEALTH • PLACES TO SWIM AND FISH



BEAVER CREEK RESERVOIR IN ALBEMARLE COUNTY  
*Photo by David Anhold*



## Improving stream conditions for the “brookie”

The headwater streams flowing out of Shenandoah National Park into the Piedmont offer rare pristine coldwater habitat for Virginia’s state fish, eastern brook trout. But poorly designed culverts can impede brook trout passage and upset their migration and spawning patterns.

PEC collaborated with Trout Unlimited to complete a study that will improve the stream flow on which brook trout depend. Thanks to funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, we surveyed 133 stream crossings to identify barriers to fish passage and develop an improvement plan. Replacing old crossings with fish-friendly versions has the potential to connect miles of habitat and improve brook trout populations.

In December we convened a meeting of officials from state agencies and environmental organizations to discuss the

study and how to apply the information. Many of the crossings are on private land, requiring collaboration with landowners and funding for implementing repairs and replacements. Others are public, requiring action and funding from state and local transportation agencies. Further downstream, where the streamside habitat is more degraded, PEC is working with private landowners to remove invasive plants and plant native trees.

By providing the data, bringing all of the major stakeholders to the table, and planning habitat improvements, we are laying the groundwork for protecting this haven for the “brookie.” Restoring the flow and health of these streams is good not just for trout—and local anglers—but also for a wide range of native plants and wildlife, and for downstream rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.



PEC AND OUR PARTNERS ARE WORKING TO IDENTIFY STREAM CROSSINGS THAT IMPEDE EASTERN BROOK TROUT—VA’S STATE FISH—FROM TRAVELING UPSTREAM TO COOLER WATERS. Photo by Katherine Vance

### 2014 Highlights

- ▶ PEC President Chris Miller serves on the Steering Committee of the **Choose Clean Water Coalition**, which coordinates collaboration on federal policies affecting water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- ▶ More than **30 miles of streams and rivers** were protected by conservation easements in 2014, bringing the total to approximately 1,558 miles. Over **90 acres of wetlands** were protected by conservation easements, bringing the total to approximately 9,089 acres. All of these protected resources contribute to the restoration of the **Chesapeake Bay**, since water flowing through the Piedmont eventually enters the Bay.
- ▶ PEC is working with several Loudoun Home Owners Associations to help them implement **native habitat plantings and stormwater improvement projects**.
- ▶ PEC continued its family and student-oriented educational events at the 13th Annual **Family Stream Day in Loudoun**, giving participants the opportunity to locate their property on county maps and determine their watershed address.
- ▶ PEC-trained stream monitors in Clarke County sampled and recorded the benthic macroinvertebrates found at four sites in the Spout Run watershed. Over time, the data collected will illustrate **long-term trends and health of the watershed**.
- ▶ PEC continued to serve on the Public Interest and Environmental Organization Users’ Group of the regional electricity transmission organization PJM. In this role we are able to **monitor electricity transmission and generation projects** in PJM’s 13-state region.
- ▶ PEC joined other groups in **teaching children about water quality** at the 3rd Annual Field Day in Rappahannock, organized by local nonprofit, RappFLOW.



ALAN BREWER (STRATEGIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR, COUNTY OF LOUDOUN), OYA SIMPSON (PEC’S LOUDOUN COUNTY COMMUNITY PROJECTS SPECIALIST), GEM BINGOL (PEC’S LOUDOUN LAND USE OFFICER), AND MICHAEL SENATE (VICE MAYOR, TOWN OF LOVETTSVILLE).





# history and beauty

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SENSE OF PLACE • SCENIC VIEWS • BATTLEFIELDS • HISTORIC DISTRICTS



## Protecting a historic Rappahannock River Crossing

PEC responded swiftly to widespread community concern about VDOT's proposal to demolish Waterloo Bridge, a historic metal truss bridge built in 1878 that crosses the Rappahannock River between Culpeper and Fauquier counties. In January 2014 VDOT closed the bridge due to safety concerns resulting from the wear and tear of sustained use and structural deficiencies in its iron material. Although VDOT's original plans leaned toward demolishing the bridge, community members and groups rallied around preserving this unique historic asset, and came to PEC for help.

PEC organized citizens to contact their supervisors in support of rehabilitating the bridge and preserving it for vehicular traffic, and reached out to Preservation Virginia, which placed the bridge on their list of Most Endangered Sites for 2014. We also commissioned a technical report which indicated that the bridge could be rehabilitated at a much lower cost than VDOT's estimate. In January 2015 VDOT released a statement acknowledging that rehabilitation was a viable option and they would pursue it.



THE WATERLOO BRIDGE CROSSES THE RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER FROM FAUQUIER TO CULPEPER COUNTY.  
Photo by Julie Bolthouse

### 2014 Highlights

- ▶ The National Society of the Madison Family Descendants honored PEC with the **Madison Family Cup** for its noteworthy conservation efforts at Montpelier, a National Historic Landmark owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the surrounding Orange County environs. Conservation easements completed at Montpelier in 2009 helped spark the growth of conservation lands in Orange County by 20 percent in the last five years.
- ▶ PEC's March Open House at McAllister Cabin in Albemarle County attracted nearly 250 residents to celebrate Albemarle's mountain heritage. This was the third in a series of annual events PEC has organized to **celebrate the communities and cultures of the Blue Ridge Mountains** that were displaced by the establishment of Shenandoah National Park.
- ▶ Our **2014 PEC Photo Contest** was one of the strongest yet. Category winners included Tom Lussier of Loudoun, Denise Machado of Luray, Patricia Temples of Greene, and our first youth-category winner, 14-year-old Jacob Chang-Rasclie of Albemarle.
- ▶ PEC continues to **advocate for alternative transmission projects** that minimize impacts on historic, cultural and scenic resources. In Fauquier, PEC helped local residents explain to Dominion Power and NOVEC the impacts of various options to improve transmission in the Warrenton area. PEC is also assisting communities in Prince William, Orange, and Madison counties with comments on proposed transmission projects.
- ▶ PEC organized communities in Orange, Culpeper and Rappahannock to **respond to a new proposed natural gas pipeline and right of way**. The proposal advanced by Spectra would have affected dozens of conservation easements, the Green Springs Historic District and Montpelier. PEC hosted three community meetings and sent mailings to inform landowners affected by the proposed line. Spectra withdrew the proposal in July 2014.
- ▶ PEC President Chris Miller continues to serve as a Trustee to the **Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership**, which manages the National Heritage Area and other programs, including the Living Legacy program
- ▶ The 42-acre Nestor Farm in Culpeper County was placed under conservation easement with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, ensuring the preservation of this historic site within the battlefields of Kelly's Ford and Rappahannock Station II. In total, **conservation easements now protect approximately 27,708 acres of battlefields** in the Piedmont.
- ▶ The **Carters Run Rural Historic District** was added to the National Register of Historic Places, abetting efforts to preserve and pass on the heritage and historic structures of this northern Fauquier community to current and future generations.
- ▶ More than 2,500 acres of land in **rural historic districts** were protected last year for a total of approximately 120,749 acres.
- ▶ More than 2,900 acres of **land visible from the Appalachian Trail** were protected last year for a total of approximately 113,047 acres.
- ▶ More than 2,218 acres along **Scenic Byways** were protected last year for a total of approximately 102,188 acres.





# better communities

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT • GREAT PLACES TO LIVE • MANAGING TRAFFIC AND TAXES

CHARLOTTESVILLE FARMERS MARKET  
Photo by Katherine Vance



# Planting the Seeds of habitat restoration in Loudoun County

Thanks to a partnership with PEC, Mill Run Elementary School in Ashburn created a naturally landscaped outdoor area for educating students, parents and the community. Fourth and 5th grade students planted more than 200 native trees and plants for a native habitat meadow. Volunteers from The Home Depot constructed a Science and Nature Deck. Many other

local businesses and community groups pitched in by providing landscape design expertise, preparing the soil and helping landscape the school grounds.

PEC worked with the school to ensure that the Outdoor Classroom landscape and restoration project would become an integral part of school programs and educational activities. In August PEC coordinated a professional development program with the Loudoun Environmental Stewardship Alliance. More than 70 participants attended on-site teachers' workshops on interactive teaching, which included 6 Standards Of Learning-based activity stations to give each grade level of

teachers at least one activity to use outdoors.

The new Outdoor Classroom immediately became a focal point for educational activities and school programs in the 2014-15 school year. Classes have been using the outdoor classroom space for lessons on science and a classroom citizenship project. The space also forms an area to explore during recess, and families are now enjoying the gardens after school hours.

A \$10,000 grant from the Dominion Foundation helped support the project. Funds from the sale of Bay license plates through the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund supported the purchase of native plants and trees. The project has also received in-kind contributions from AOL, the Merritt Properties, Loudoun County Stormwater Management, Heritage Landscaping Services, Casey Trees DC, Fairfax ReLeaf and the PTO.



STUDENTS PLANT TREES WITH THEIR TEACHERS AS PART OF THE MILL RUN ELEMENTARY HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT. Photo by Oya Simpson

## 2014 Highlights

- ▶ PEC's eighth annual **Summer Fellowship program** hosted twelve college and graduate level students from around the country for a seven-week experiential education program. We implemented new components in 2014 to shape tomorrow's leaders in environmental conservation, including more pre-professional training and a revised practicum program. As one sign of the program's success, all five Fellows who were 2014 college graduates seeking employment after the Fellowship found jobs and credited the Fellowship.

2014 PEC FELLOWS HARVEST GARLIC SCAPES AT WATERPENNY FARM. Photo by Mary Liles



- ▶ Sponsored by PEC, the **EarthDay@Loudoun Family Festival** has become one of the largest Earth Day events in the region, attracting thousands of residents to the Broadlands community each April. More than 6,400 people attended the 2014 event, and visited booths with more than 100 exhibitors including schools, nonprofits, local green businesses and local government agencies.
- ▶ A fiscal impact analysis commissioned by PEC shed light on the **costs of high-density residential development** in Loudoun and has helped change the public conversation about growth in the fastest growing county in Virginia.





# sensible transportation

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY · LESS SPRAWL · MORE OPTIONS

THE OPENING OF THE SILVER LINE IN 2014 WAS AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN REGION AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA. *Photo courtesy Bechtel*



## Reversal of Fortune: Western Bypass shelved, Route 29 improvements accelerated

Until quite recently, it seemed almost impossible that VDOT would put the brakes on the Western Bypass, or start moving forward with more effective, environmentally sound transportation solutions for Route 29. But PEC and our allies helped engineer an extraordinary reversal of fortune in 2014.

Early in the year, federal highway planners ordered a reevaluation of the wasteful and ineffective Bypass. Soon after this, both Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville instructed their regional planning representatives to remove the Bypass from the transportation plan and to request that the state allocate funds for real solutions on Route 29. VDOT then convened a panel of representatives from the entire corridor to develop a package of projects that would improve travel conditions on the Route 29 Corridor.

In May, after input from the panel, VDOT's consultant recommended moving forward with a series of transportation projects, all but one of which was a solution included in the Places29 plan. PEC's Jeff Werner has been involved in the development of that plan for years, which includes the creation of a parallel road network, changes in signal synchronization and spot improvements to relieve bottlenecks.

In June, the Commonwealth Transportation Board approved over \$200 million for these projects and officially cancelled funding for the Bypass. Since then, PEC and other groups have been working with citizens and community groups on implementation of these local improvements to Route 29.

It takes a long time to stop a bad idea from becoming

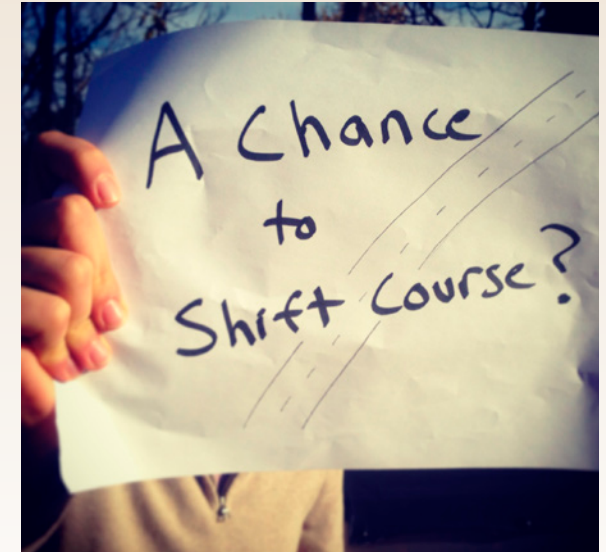


Photo by Marco Sanchez

reality—in this case, more than 25 years. It also takes a long time to bring good ideas to fruition. In 2014, PEC and our allies saw our years of work pay off.

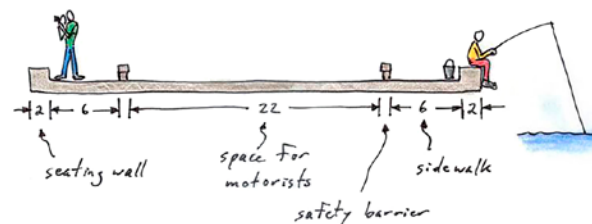
### 2014 Highlights

- ▶ PEC serves as the fiscal sponsor for the **Coalition for Smarter Growth**, one of the nation's preeminent regional smart growth organizations. CSG had numerous victories in 2014, including its successful campaign to require significant affordable housing on city-owned land, its push for increased funding of the Metro transit system, and successful advocacy for transit-oriented development and better criteria for prioritizing transportation projects in Virginia.



ALTERNATIVE DESIGN FOR THE BRIDGE AT MORGAN'S FORD.

- ▶ PEC worked with partners in Warren and Clarke counties to develop an **alternative design for a replacement of the existing low water bridge at Morgan's Ford**, a historic crossing of the Shenandoah River. Based on an assessment of the historic, cultural and scenic setting for Morgan's Ford, consultant Ian Lockwood developed a bridge design that would meet the goal of reducing the number of days that the bridge is subject to flooding while also protecting identified resources and uses of the area.



- ▶ PEC supported a coalition of Loudoun citizens' groups in their successful advocacy to **preserve the county's unique 300-mile network of rustic unpaved roads**. The Loudoun Rural Roads Committee worked with VDOT and state leaders to build support for a new state policy to encourage the maintenance of rural gravel roads, and the preservation of banks, stone walls and roadside trees.
- ▶ PEC's action alerts helped galvanize hundreds of residents to call into question the proposed **Dulles western connector road** in Loudoun. After sustained public input showed strong divisions concerning the road proposals, the project was withdrawn so that it could be further evaluated.





# strong rural economies

THRIVING FARMS • LOCAL FOOD • INNOVATION • HEALTHY, WORKING LAND

MOUTOUX ORCHARD  
Photo by Carl Zitzmann



## Helping aspiring farmers and local food entrepreneurs find the right path

Since 2009 PEC has provided training to more than 100 aspiring farmers through our four-week *Exploring the Small Farm Dream* course. As the title suggests, every participant comes to the course with their own unique dream—an idea that they want to explore. It is these dreams that form the starting point of the course, which help students evaluate their goals, skills, interests, physical and financial resources, and the merits of their ideas in order to finally settle on a course of action.

In Fall 2014 we held our seventh Exploring the Small Farm Dream session at Tri County Feeds in Fauquier, attended by more than 20 individuals. The course was co-taught by PEC's Don Loock and Diana

Boeke. In 2010 Boeke herself had taken the course with her husband, Amir Abdelmalek, and had gone on to establish their own farm business, Glean Acres Farm in Madison County.

Like many of the recent graduates of the course, Allison Jewett is launching her new farming enterprise with a renewed confidence gained from having carefully planned out her ideas through the course. As Allison puts it, “Exploring the Small Farm Dream’ offered me valuable resources, motivation and encouragement just at the time when I needed them most. Now I am in full swing and looking forward to my first farmers’ markets in Spring.”



EXPLORING THE SMALL FARM DREAM COURSE ALUM PABLO TEODORO STANDS OUTSIDE OF HIS STORE, GREAT HARVEST BREAD CO., IN OLD TOWN WARRENTON.  
Photo by Katherine Vance

### 2014 Highlights

- PEC launched **Farmer-Chef Express**, an online, interactive tool that allows buyers and sellers of local food to connect and establish productive business relationships. Local food buyers such as restaurants and caterers can post what they are looking for, and local food sellers such as farmers can post what products they have available.
- PEC's **Buy Fresh Buy Local** guides were mailed to every home in our region—more than 265,000 homes altogether. Together, the guides for the Northern Piedmont, Loudoun County and the Charlottesville Area include nearly 650 listings where people can buy locally grown food—including markets, farms, orchards, wineries, restaurants and retailers.



**Farmer-Chef  
Express**

- More than **3,087 acres of prime farm soils were placed under protection** in 2014, bringing the total protected acreage to 176,660 acres.
- PEC organized a **demonstration project in Flint Hill** where livestock farmers can see how pasture management, involving managed rotational grazing with long rest periods, can translate into increased soil health, greater pasture yields and higher economic returns.



JAMES AND HOLLY HAMMOND OF WHISPER HILL FARM, CULPEPER.  
Photo by Katherine Vance

- In partnership with Slow Food DC, PEC organized a dinner and discussion event in Rappahannock County about the **local food system**, attended by more than 50 individuals. Participants visited both Heritage Hollow Farms and Waterpenny Farm in Sperryville.
- PEC held “Food for Thought,” a summer speaker series in downtown Culpeper, to **showcase the abundance of Culpeper's rural economy**—from the perspective of farm producers, retail entrepreneurs and local consumers.
- In October, PEC and Moriah Farm held **“A Feast from the Field,”** our second annual fundraiser to benefit the Fauquier Education Farm in Warrenton.





# habitat restoration

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS • BIODIVERSITY • POLLINATORS • NATIVE PLANTS



## Coming together to **restore Thumb Run**

In 2012 PEC launched a new initiative to inspire voluntary actions by landowners to help restore the health of Thumb Run in western Fauquier County. Thumb Run, which runs between Hume and Orlean in a heavily farmed area, has high levels of pollution and erosion, but the watershed also hosts a highly engaged and close-knit community of landowners and farmers.

Through a grant from The Volgenau Foundation, PEC organized a series of workshops to connect landowners and farmers with conservation programs that fund land management improvements. We also held small-group events such as walks of native habitat properties to show landowners directly the benefits of these improvements, and encourage networking. PEC's staff have conducted site



RESIDENTS LEARN ABOUT NATIVE HABITAT AT A TOUR OF THE PROPERTY OF BRUCE JONES, A PEC BOARD MEMBER.  
Photo by Jen Davis

visits of Thumb Run properties to help landowners understand their options for land management. Partnering with the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District, we've provided funds and technical assistance for landowners to adopt conservation measures. All told, more than 250 Thumb Run and nearby residents have participated in these activities.

As a result, several Thumb Run landowners have installed fencing to keep their cattle out of streams, created riparian buffers and planted native shrubs and trees. Several more are planning improvements for later

this year. The Orlean Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, which has hosted many of our events, has also agreed to install a native habitat meadow, with assistance from PEC.

### 2014 Highlights

- ▶ We completed **native meadow and forest border restoration** on 14 acres of land at the Piedmont Memorial Overlook at Ovoka Mountain, enabling us to demonstrate native habitat land management practices. (For more on the Piedmont Memorial Overlook, see p. 19.)
- ▶ PEC developed a comprehensive land management plan to **restore stream habitat at a 141-acre farm property at Gilberts Corner**. Two Summer Fellows, Michael Ament and Preston White, performed stream monitoring to help us develop plans for restoring the health of Howsers Branch stream on the property.
- ▶ PEC partnered with Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to design and raise funding for a **native meadow planting** with Grymes Memorial School in Orange. The project is expected to be implemented beginning in 2015.
- ▶ Habitat staff directly assisted more than 65 landowners throughout the region on **native habitat improvements**, and organized seven events on habitat restoration.

SOME OF THE 2,000 TREES THAT WERE PLANTED IN 2014 LINE THE HILLSIDE AT THE PIEDMONT MEMORIAL OVERLOOK.  
Photo by Celia Vuocolo







# connecting people and nature

OUTREACH • PARKS AND TRAILS • OUTDOOR EVENTS • NATURE AT HOME

*Photo by Charles "Locky" Nimick*



# The Piedmont Memorial Overlook

In 2000, PEC purchased over 1,200 acres of Ovoka Farm (in Paris, VA) to ensure that this beautiful property would remain rural for generations to come. After working to place all of the land under conservation easements, PEC retained ownership of 50 acres at the top of the ridge called the Piedmont Memorial Overlook. This beautiful site overlooks one of the most protected landscapes in the Eastern United States. After progressing with an ambitious land management plan to reintroduce native plants and trees to the Overlook, we've started to bring more and more people and groups to this extraordinary place to educate and inspire them about land conservation and the environment.

In 2014 PEC organized a series of field walks, volunteer activities, edible plant tours, native wildlife workshops and several other activities

at the Piedmont Memorial Overlook. The events showcased native habitat improvements and the extraordinary conservation legacy of the Piedmont in the Ovoka viewshed. Visitors were able to see and smell the profusion of black-eyed and brown-eyed susans, partridge pea, ox-eye daisy and butterfly weed that highlighted the first full growing season of our native habitat meadow. Volunteers helped plant thousands of native trees and shrubs such as blackhaw viburnum, Alleghany serviceberry, and red chokeberry. In addition, hikers on the nearby Appalachian Trail and the Whitehouse Ridge Trail can enjoy the views provided by this high overlook to the Piedmont.

Many different species of bees and butterflies are taking full advantage of this first year meadow's abundant blooms. Rescued from the threat of



THE MEADOW AT THE PIEDMONT MEMORIAL OVERLOOK WAS SEEDED THIS PAST SPRING. Photo by James Barnes

development 15 years ago, this spectacular overlook is becoming a place where creatures of all kinds can thrive.

## 2014 Highlights



- ▶ A partnership between PEC and The Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Virginia is creating **new opportunities for Orange County youth** to experience the natural environment and history of the surrounding region. Youth have paddled the Rapidan River, hiked along the Appalachian Trail, monitored bluebird boxes, picked blueberries and apples on local farms, learned about raising turkeys and harvested an evergreen tree for the holidays.
- ▶ PEC organized and facilitated the eighth annual **Clarke Conservation Fair** for 4th graders countywide in Clarke, hosted by Powhatan School. Representatives of local and state agencies and non-profits provided students with experiential activities in an outdoor setting.

YOUTH FROM THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUB VISIT RETREAT FARM IN ORANGE COUNTY. Photos by Peter Hujik

- ▶ PEC organized three **Stream-Friendly Landscaping workshops for homeowners** in Clarke, Fauquier and Loudoun counties. The workshops introduced easily adoptable practices for lawncare, planting and other property maintenance that will reduce the burden on local rivers and streams and help restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay.
- ▶ PEC and Board member Bruce Jones organized **tours of native habitat** at Jones' property in Rappahannock. Dozens of local landowners visited Jones' property and gained new ideas for habitat improvements on their lands.
- ▶ PEC began collaborating with the Montpelier Foundation and Grelen Nursery to develop a **public trail network** connecting the two neighboring sites in Orange County.



# The Piedmont Foundation

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 seven-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.

Currently, the Piedmont Foundation manages funds in the following 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:

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"STAR TRAILS IN OLD TRAIL"  
Photo by Jacob Chang-Rasclie



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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 2014. Although we do not have the space to honor everyone, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of each of our members. We offer sincere thanks for your ongoing commitment to promoting and protecting the Piedmont region.

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2014 PEC FELLOW LAUREL ABOWD ENJOYS A DAY OUT ON THE SHENANDOAH AFTER TAKING IN A LESSON ON WATER QUALITY. *Photo by Natalie Sheffield*

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KIDS IN ORANGE COUNTY ENJOY A DAY OUT AT THE SOMERSET PASTURE PARTY.





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**For information on our legacy program** please contact Doug Larson, Vice President of Development, at P.O. Box 460 Warrenton, VA 20188 (540) 347-2334 ex. 7000 or [dlarson@pecva.org](mailto:dlarson@pecva.org)

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SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION.







BROOKVILLE RESTAURANT OWNERS AND BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL PARTICIPANTS, HARRISON AND JENNIFER KEEVIL, SIT WITH THEIR DAUGHTER AT THEIR RESTAURANT IN CHARLOTTESVILLE. *Photo by Paula Combs*

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*This list includes Board members who served at any time between Jan 2014 and Jan 2015*

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FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, FRONT ROW: Marco Sanchez, Carolyn Sedgwick, Jessica Palmer, Kristie Kendall, Julie Bolthouse, Dawn Wilmot, Paula Combs, Tiffany Parker, Watsun Randolph, Chris Miller

SECOND ROW: Douglas Stewart, Mary Liles, Pam Covington, Mike Kane, Doug Larson, Bri West, Maggi MacQuilliam, Dan Holmes

THIRD ROW: Peter Hujik, Tom Bolan, Jay Clevenson, Jonathan Marquisee, Diana Norris, Matthew Strickler, Rob Marmet, Rex Linville

NOT PICTURED: Karen Hunsberger Adam, Gem Bingol, Tim Dunn, Nicole Erickson, Diana Gebhart, Ed Gorski, David Holtzman, Jeff Werner.

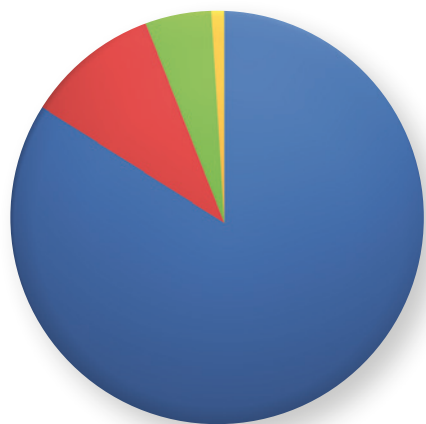


# 2014 Financial Report

2014 was a solid year for the Piedmont Environmental Council. We were able to sustain a high level of program success. We also made needed investments in our operational structure and future office and meeting space at our Warrenton headquarters.

A brief overview of the sources of organizational support, revenue and our operating expenses is reflected in the tables and graphs below:

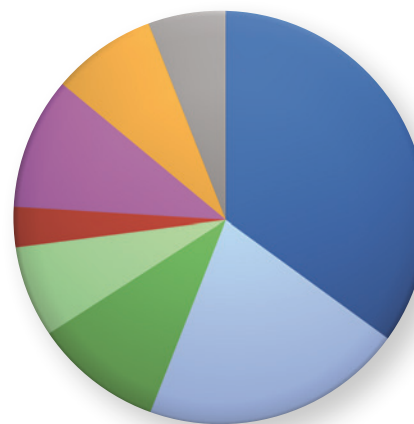
## Sources of Organizational Support



Donations and Grants	\$ 3,978,000	84%
Building Contributions Recognized	480,000	10%
Special Events, Net	263,000	5%
Investments, Other	67,000	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,788,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

The figures above were derived from our audited financial statements and do not include the activities of partner organizations for whom we act as fiscal sponsor, including the Coalition for Smarter Growth, Shenandoah Valley Network and the EarthDay@Loudoun Family Festival. Copies of our audited financial statements and IRS Forms 990, which include the aforementioned partner organizations, are available upon request. Copies of our most recent statements may also be found at PEC's website at [www.pecva.org/donate](http://www.pecva.org/donate). For more information, please contact PEC's accounting office at (540) 347-2334.

## Program and Operating Expenditures



Conservation, Stewardship and Habitat	35%
County Issues and Planning	21%
Policy*	10%
Farms and Food	7%
Transportation and Growth Management	3%
Outreach and Education	10%
Development	8%
Administration	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Policy reflects regional and state-level work on policy related to energy, uranium, air quality, water quality, telecommunications, land conservation and land use.





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FARM WITH A VIEW, GREENE COUNTY  
*Photo by Patricia Temples*

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Find contact information for PEC staff  
throughout our region at [www.pecva.org](http://www.pecva.org)



PRINTED BY Progress Printing, Lynchburg, VA  
DESIGNED BY Keith Damiani, Sequoia Design