



Piedmont
Environmental
Council

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



MONARCH BUTTERFLY ON A THISTLE.
Photo by Amie Ware

COVER: A BARN AND SPRING WILDFLOWERS OFF
BRADDOCK ROAD IN LOUDOUN COUNTY.
Photo by Scott Peacock

"In 2015, Fauquier became the first county in Virginia to surpass 100,000 acres of privately conserved land."

Dear Friends,

We've never been accused of having overly modest goals. Thirty years ago, PEC initiated the concept of the Piedmont Reserve—a permanently protected area comprising 50 percent of privately owned land in Virginia's northern Piedmont, or about one million acres. That was a lofty vision. At the time, less than 40,000 acres in our region were protected by conservation easements.

We love to use maps to tell stories. When you turn this page, take a look at the progress of land conservation over the past thirty years. They show our vision taking shape.

Today, more than 387,000 acres of private land in Virginia's northern Piedmont are permanently protected. In 2015, Fauquier became the first county in Virginia to surpass 100,000 acres of land permanently protected by conservation easements, representing more than a quarter of the land area of the county. Albemarle has more than 97,000 permanently protected acres, including more than 4,000 acres that were placed in conservation just last year alone.

As always, there are challenges and opportunities in the years ahead. But our efforts to demonstrate the conservation of land and water resources as a state priority have resulted in a major increase in funding in the coming years, with more than \$20 million for land conservation and more than \$140 million for water quality programs. These, too, are the result of the ambitious goal of restoring water quality in Virginia's rivers and streams and in the Chesapeake Bay.

We set another immodest goal twenty years ago, when we started the Coalition for Smarter Growth in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Audubon Naturalist Society, the Surface Transportation Policy Project and local funders. The Coalition, PEC and STPP laid out a Blueprint for A Better Region that demonstrated the possibilities of transit-oriented development in the Washington metropolitan region.

Many leaders initially dismissed the Blueprint as wishful thinking. However, communities have increasingly focused on smart growth. Today, more than 80 percent of new office construction in the Washington metro region occurs within a quarter-mile of a Metro station. By advocating successfully for focused growth near our Metro stations, we've helped preserve the rural Piedmont.

The investment in the Silver Line to Loudoun County presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve travel and commutes, restore air and water quality, enhance our ability to preserve the rural economy and ultimately, transform the quality of life in the communities along the Metro line and in the region as a whole. Already in Tysons and other areas along the Silver Line, new housing, stores and offices are being built at a furious clip, to meet the demand of residents and businesses to live and work in walkable communities.

Since 1993, PEC has been based at 45 Horner Street, a historic 18th-century house in downtown Warrenton.

During that time our staff has expanded from 10 to 35, and we outgrew our “home” many years ago, requiring leased space to accommodate them. Consistent with our Smart Growth principles of staying close to government agencies and businesses with whom we work on a daily basis, we chose to stay in Warrenton. We launched a \$3 million capital campaign to expand 45 Horner Street while preserving its historic character. We completed the fundraising campaign in 2015, and moved into our improved headquarters in October.

We are grateful to the individuals, businesses and foundations who generously donated to our building fund, but especially to Doug Larson, who fearlessly led PEC through our building campaign.

For 16 years, Doug has been an extraordinary ambassador and fundraiser for PEC. His passion, knowledge and remarkable gifts as a communicator have been instrumental to PEC’s success and growth. Doug has thought big—and done big things. We wish him well as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

We have to keep thinking, and doing, big to succeed in preserving the Piedmont’s unique landscapes, communities and history.

Sincerely,



Chris Miller
President



Jean Perin
Co-Chair, Board of Directors



George L. Ohrstrom II
Co-Chair, Board of Directors



PEC’S HEADQUARTERS OFFICE AT
45 HORNER STREET, WARRENTON, VA.
Photo by Marco Sanchez

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STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION	INSIDE BACK COVER

Protected Land in Virginia

- Conservation Easements
- Publicly Owned Lands

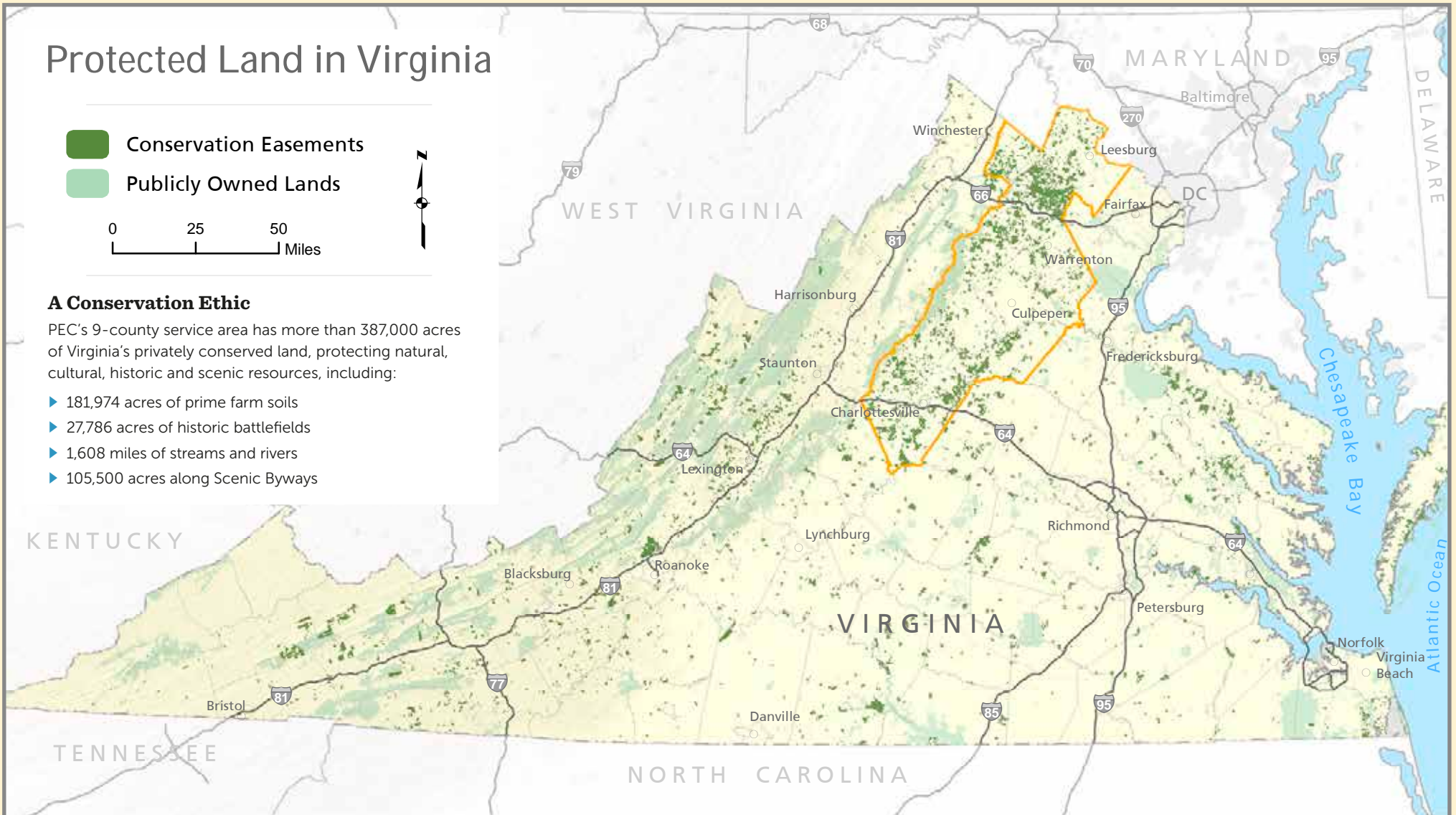
0 25 50 Miles



A Conservation Ethic

PEC's 9-county service area has more than 387,000 acres of Virginia's privately conserved land, protecting natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources, including:

- ▶ 181,974 acres of prime farm soils
- ▶ 27,786 acres of historic battlefields
- ▶ 1,608 miles of streams and rivers
- ▶ 105,500 acres along Scenic Byways



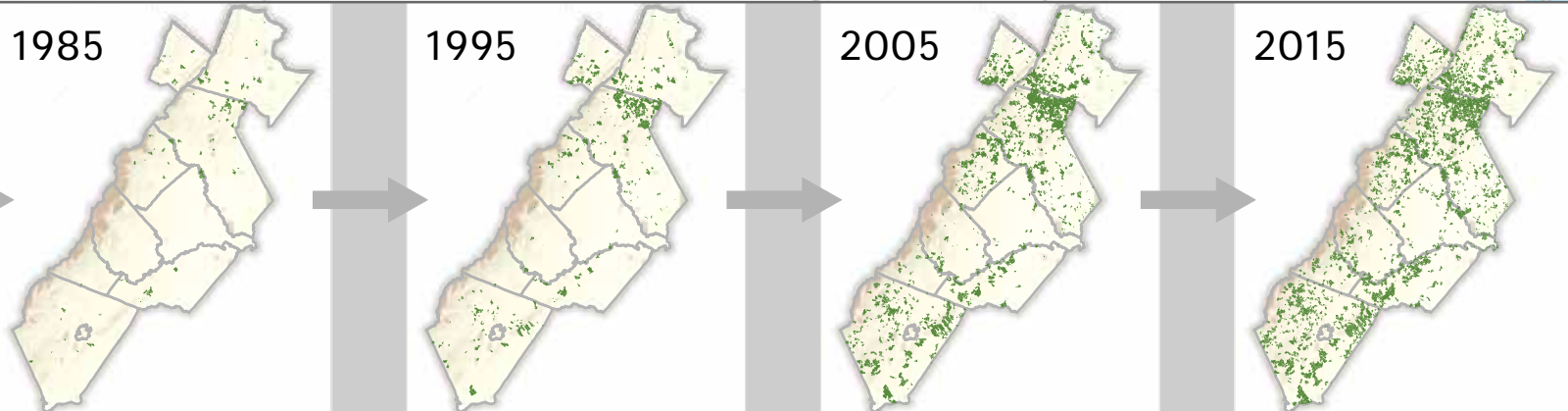
Conservation Easements in the Piedmont

1985

1995

2005

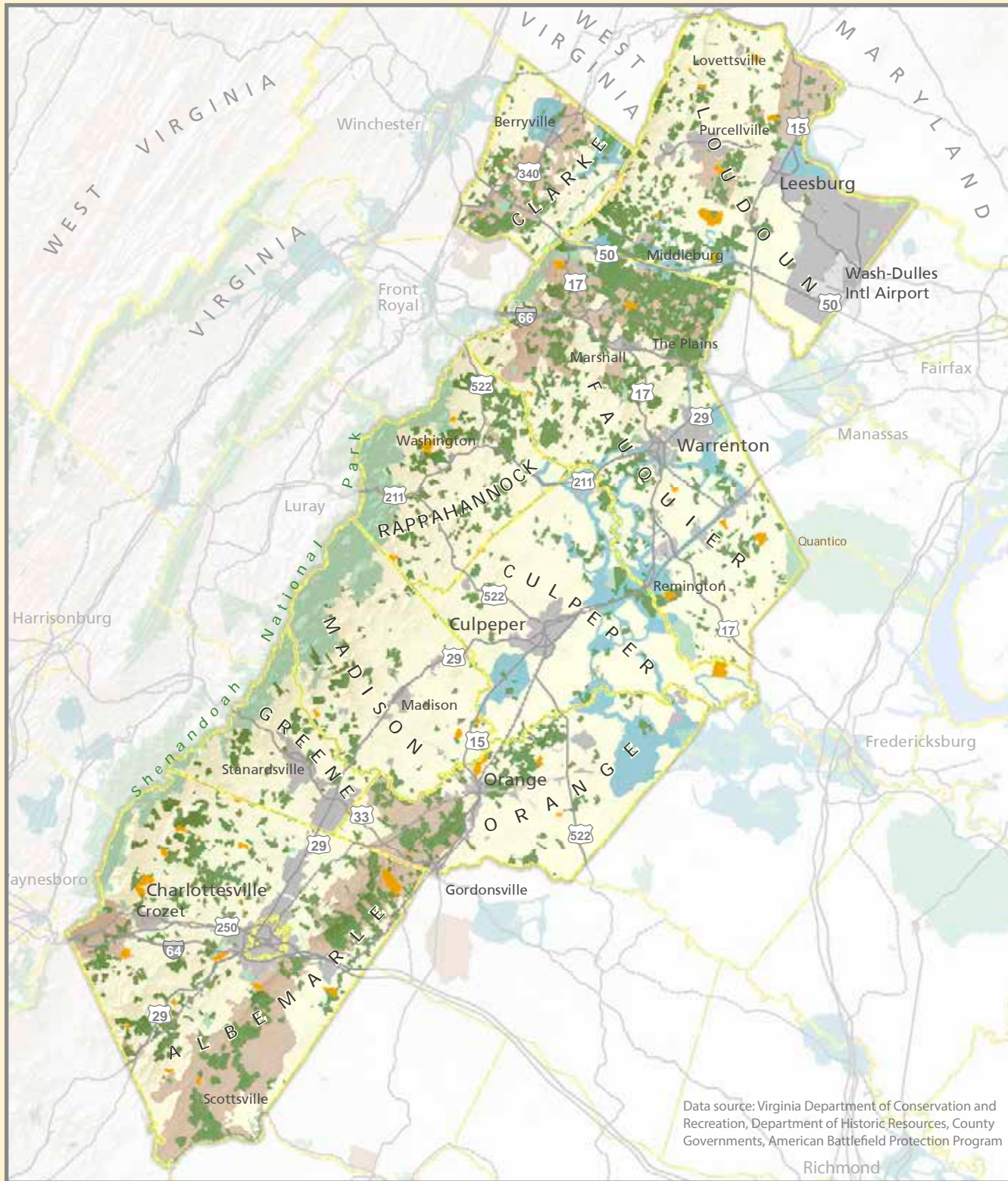
2015



- Conservation Easements
- Public Lands

0 25 50 Miles





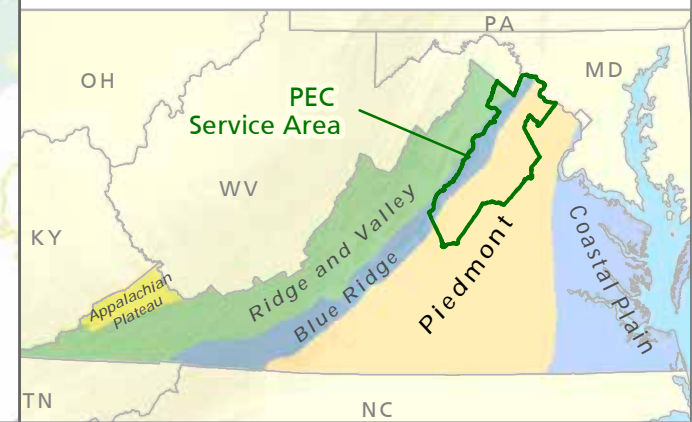
The Piedmont Region

-  Easements Recorded in 2015
-  Conservation Easements
-  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



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



land conservation

VOLUNTARY ACTION • OUTSTANDING SUCCESS • SAVING PLACES PEOPLE LOVE



GREENE COUNTY, VA.
Photo by Patricia Temples

Fauquier hits a **conservation milestone**

In 2015, Fauquier became the first Virginia county to surpass 100,000 acres of permanently protected land. This achievement represents the collective investment of hundreds of landowners and farmers, and the citizens and leaders of the county, in preserving the beautiful landscape and strong rural economy of Fauquier for generations to come.

Wainbur Farm, a working dairy operation near Calverton in southern Fauquier, put the county over the 100,000 acre mark. Four generations

of the Burton family have owned and operated the farm. In 2010 the Burtons entered into an agreement through the county's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to conserve 396 acres. In 2015, the family placed an additional 167 acres in conservation easement.

Fauquier's PDR program has protected more than 10,125 acres in the county since its inception in 2002. Just as important, it's provided income that farmers have plowed back into the land, supporting new investments in their farm operations.



RACHEL BURTON AT HER FAMILY'S WAINBUR FARM.
Photo by Paula Combs

2015 Highlights

- ▶ A total of **11,585 acres** were protected in PEC's nine-county service region in 2015, bringing the total amount of privately conserved land in our region to more than 387,000 acres.
- ▶ One of the lands PEC helped protect was the **Ellis Mine easement in Culpeper County**, a 1,219-acre forested property bordering the Rappahannock River. The Ellis Mine property features 1.5 miles of frontage and 25 acres of floodplain along the river.
- ▶ PEC worked with two landowners in Culpeper and Orange counties to successfully secure **USDA NRCS funding for Agricultural Land Easements (ALE)** on their property. Offered through the federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, ALE focuses on preserving productive working lands like these large family farms.
- ▶ PEC organized several workshops to **help landowners and professional advisors navigate the conservation easement and stewardship process**. In June, we held an "Estate Planning for Rural Landowners" workshop in Culpeper for people interested in how conservation measures can facilitate transferring land to the next generation. Adam Downing, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Rex Linville and Maggi MacQuilliam of PEC discussed the advantages of planning ahead for the succession of farms and forests. In June we hosted a professional education seminar on the lessons learned from recent tax court cases regarding conservation easements. The workshop was attended by approximately 100 professionals from around the region who heard presentations from IRS attorneys, Virginia Department of Taxation staff, a tax court judge and a legal scholar.
- ▶ In December, Congress passed legislation that makes permanent the enhanced federal tax incentive for the donation of a conservation easement. **PEC has been a leading advocate for this provision**, in partnership with the Land Trust Alliance. PEC continues to provide information to members of Congress and their staff on the entire range of conservation incentives, including appropriations for federal conservation programs such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Agricultural Conservation Easements, and the American Battlefield Protection Program.

11,585 Acres Protected in 2015

County	Acres protected in 2015 by Conservation Easements	Total Acres protected by Conservation Easements
Albemarle	4,177	97,063
Clarke	50	23,729
Culpeper	1,318	18,077
Fauquier	1,685	101,070
Greene	68	10,448
Loudoun	2,037	54,839
Madison	533	14,917
Orange	738	34,880
Rappahannock	979	32,345
PEC Region	11,585	387,368



clean water

SAFE DRINKING SOURCES · GOOD HEALTH · PLACES TO SWIM AND FISH

FIERY RUN IN FAUQUIER COUNTY.
Photo by Paula Combs

Protecting Goose Creek

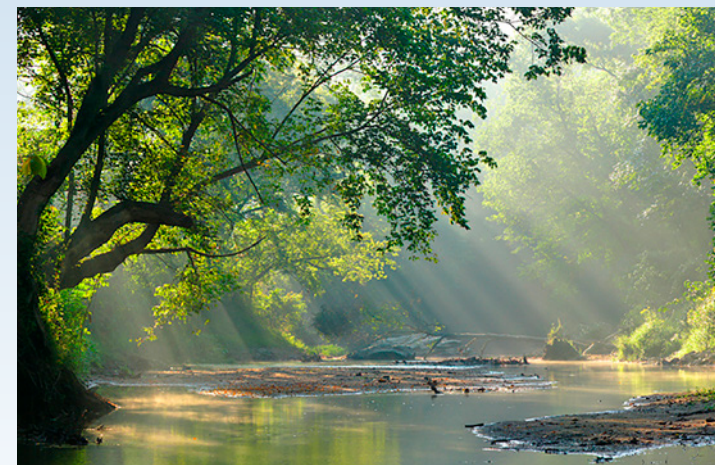
Beginning in the Blue Ridge Mountains and flowing through Fauquier and Loudoun counties before it drains into the Potomac, Goose Creek is a state-designated Scenic River whose streams host an astonishingly diverse range of aquatic life. Preserving its clean waters and healthy stream banks is both a challenge and a necessity. Some of the fastest growing communities in the U.S. are just a few miles away, and many Loudoun residents depend on Goose Creek for their drinking water.

Since our inception, PEC has worked with landowners and community partners such as the Goose Creek Association to preserve Goose Creek's historic lands and communities. Today, more than 40 percent or just under 100,000 acres of the Goose Creek watershed is permanently protected. Goose

Creek landowners have paired conservation with land improvements such as livestock exclusion fencing to protect Goose Creek streams.

Meanwhile, PEC's leadership in preserving Gilberts Corner and the Route 50 corridor has protected this part of the Goose Creek watershed from development that would have irreversibly harmed its streams. In 2015, we moved forward with the next stage of conservation by securing funding to install agriculture best management practices at the livestock farm we own on the southeast side of Gilberts. New fencing and alternative watering systems will be part of a plan to restore the health of Howsers Branch, a Goose Creek tributary that runs through the property.

Through a comprehensive approach on conservation



GOOSE CREEK IN LOUDOUN COUNTY.
Photo by Frederick B. Eberhart

and land use, and durable partnerships with strong allies, PEC is helping protect Goose Creek and preserve the small farms and historic communities in its watershed.

2015 Highlights

- ▶ In April, PEC partnered with Friends of the Rappahannock and the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District to hold "From the Rappahannock, For the Rappahannock" at the Marriott Ranch in Fauquier. The event celebrated conservation successes along the Rappahannock River from the headwaters to the Chesapeake Bay. Seventy-five volunteers planted 350 trees and 700 live stakes over an area of three acres along the bank of a Rappahannock headwaters stream. The event also featured oysters from Tappahannock, local beer and wine, live music, fly tying, and hayride tours of the tree planting sites.

AN OYSTER COMPANY OF VA. EMPLOYEE SHUCKING
LOCAL RAPPAHANNOCK OYSTERS AT THE FOR THE
RAPPAHANNOCK, FROM THE RAPPAHANNOCK EVENT.
Photo by Paula Combs



- ▶ PEC is overseeing two culvert replacement projects that will reconnect more than seven miles of intact habitat for eastern brook trout on two headwater streams near the Blue Ridge mountains. We received grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a gift from the Krebser Fund of the Piedmont Foundation to assist with both projects.
- ▶ A total of 1,608 miles of streams and 9,381 acres of wetlands are now protected by conservation easements.



energy solutions

.....
EFFICIENCY FIRST • LOCAL RENEWABLES • SENSIBLE APPROACH TO TRANSMISSION

SOLAR PANELS.
Photo by Bri West

Power line proposals abound, Piedmont citizens respond

From Orange up to Loudoun County, there are several major new power line proposals, including one from Gordonsville to Remington, a second through eastern Fauquier and Prince William, and a proposed new or rebuilt Haymarket line. PEC assisted citizens and community groups to navigate the complex process of transmission planning, articulate their priorities and influence the decisions that are being made about the Piedmont's energy future.

Piedmont community groups saw their efforts pay off in 2015. In Fauquier, state regulators eliminated the most disruptive proposed alignment from consideration in favor of one that better preserves the area's historic resources and protects its established communities. Meanwhile, smart organizing and advocacy by the Orange Madison Culpeper Alliance helped arouse community support for

better alternatives to the proposed Remington-Pratts-Gordonsville line, and Dominion and energy regulators are now considering less intrusive options.

While helping communities push back against large-scale transmission proposals, PEC is also helping lead the way toward more sustainable energy solutions like solar. During the summer of 2015 PEC members were able to take advantage of Solarize PEC—a cooperative program with PEC, Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP) and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission to bring solar power to more people in Virginia. Three hundred and seventy Piedmont households expressed an interest in the program through PEC. Ten households ultimately made the decision to have solar installed, and many more are likely to follow with PEC's recent launch of our 2016 Solarize campaign.



WARRENTON RESIDENTS AND PEC EMPLOYEES TIFFANY PARKER AND WATSUN RANDOLPH WERE THE FIRST SOLARIZE PEC PARTICIPANTS TO GET THEIR SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED. *Photo by Bri West*

And PEC is practicing what we preach. We've installed solar panels in our newly improved headquarters, enough to power a meaningful portion of our energy use and save us an estimated \$2,000 a year in energy bills.

Just like local food and local political solutions, local power production is part of how we can keep the Piedmont the kind of place where we all want to live.

2015 Highlights

- ▶ PEC participated in the process of determining the route for a **proposed new 230-kV line in eastern Fauquier**. After the State Corporation Commission revived a highly disruptive alignment that would have affected neighborhoods and historic and conservation lands, PEC organized well-attended community meetings in June that received extensive media coverage and helped harden community and policymaker opposition to Option A. Subsequently the SCC dropped this damaging option and approved a less disruptive alignment.
- ▶ PEC assisted community groups in responding to the **Atlantic Coast Pipeline**, a shale gas pipeline whose proposed route would significantly affect communities and the environment in the Shenandoah Valley and nearby areas. PEC provided extensive detailed maps and strategy assistance to help groups respond effectively.



230-KV TRANSMISSION LINE.
Photo by Kent Murrell

- ▶ When Dominion proposed a new major transmission line that would run through some of the most historic and conserved lands in Madison and Orange Counties, PEC assisted citizens in **organizing a regional group, the Orange-Madison-Culpeper Alliance**, to present a unified response to the proposals and engage their local and state elected leaders. After citizens and local leaders spoke out, Dominion changed its tune and stated a preferred option of rebuilding the existing line between Gordonsville and Remington, rather than an entirely new line. While these options could still have major effects on a historic landscape, discussions are continuing and communities have once again shown that they have a powerful voice in decisions about energy.

history and beauty

SENSE OF PLACE • SCENIC VIEWS • BATTLEFIELDS • HISTORIC DISTRICTS



BLUEMONT, VA.
Photo by Wellington Selden

Celebrating historic Blue Ridge communities

Historians and family members have long sought to set the record straight about the mountain communities and cultures that once thrived in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. The establishment of Shenandoah National Park in the 1930s created an extraordinary natural setting for Americans and visitors from around the world, but it was not without costs. Thousands of residents were displaced and their communities destroyed to make way for the park. For years, PEC has been working to recognize and honor these families and their history.

Since 2012, we've organized annual events to educate people about the communities that once flourished throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains. In April 2015, PEC teamed up with the Rappahannock Historical Society and Deacon

Wayne Baldwin to celebrate the heritage of the mountain communities in Rappahannock County, at the Thornton Gap Primitive Baptist Church. More than 250 people attended the open house, including descendants from Rappahannock County who discussed their memories of mountain life. Shuttle buses took interested attendees to the Hull School and Piney Branch trailheads near the park, allowing them to visit and learn about the settlements in Frazier Hollow and along the Thornton and Piney Rivers.

At a time when traditional crafts from the mountains, such as whiteoak basket weaving, storytelling, and bluegrass music are becoming lost arts, these events are an opportunity to showcase those folkways. More than just being a grand homecoming for families who have since moved away from the

mountains, the annual mountain heritage days are a forum for descendants to proudly share their history and culture with everyone.



GUESTS READ A PAMPHLET AT THE RAPPAHANNOCK MOUNTAIN HERITAGE EVENT. Photo by Bri West

2015 Highlights

- ▶ After our successful campaign drawing attention to the closure of **Waterloo Bridge**, PEC is now working with VDOT, Fauquier and Culpeper counties to identify funding options for rehabilitating this historic structure.



- ▶ PEC partnered with the **Blue Ridge Heritage Project**, which in 2015 worked with the Madison County Board of Supervisors to secure a site at the Criglersville Elementary School for installing a county monument that honors the local families who were displaced by the creation of Shenandoah National Park. More than 300 people gathered in November to dedicate the memorial, which includes a stone chimney and granite plaque displaying surnames of the families affected.

JULIE BOLTHOUSE, PEC'S FAUQUIER COUNTY LAND USE OFFICER, STANDS ON THE HISTORIC WATERLOO BRIDGE WITH A "THIS PLACE MATTERS" CAMPAIGN SIGN.

Photo by Kristie Kendall

- ▶ In Fauquier, PEC tracked road improvement proposals that would affect **Buckland Battlefield** near the intersection of Routes 215 and 29, and worked with the Buckland Preservation Society to advocate for minimizing impacts on this historic area.
- ▶ In nearby Warren County, PEC provided extensive support to communities seeking to **preserve the historic settlements near Morgans Ford** and supported the successful efforts to secure historic district registration of the Rockland Rural Historic District.

- ▶ More than **3,300 acres of land along Scenic Byways** were protected last year for a total of approximately 105,499 acres.
- ▶ More than **70 acres of Civil War battlefields** were protected last year for a total of approximately 27,786 acres.



better communities

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

VIRGINIA FIRST LADY DOROTHY MCAULIFFE STOPS TO TAKE A
PHOTO WITH KIDS AT A MONTEPELIER-GREEN TRAIL EVENT.
Photo by Sharon Hujik

New trail connects residents and visitors with Blue Ridge history and vistas

Walking downhill through the open meadow, one gets a sense of liberty that comes when exploring this tranquil, rural place. At the bottom of the hill, there's a historic log structure, which provides a glimpse into the property's past. Once the pathway leads into the forest, you begin ascending the mountain to find spectacular views of the Blue Ridge. You may be asking, "Where is this?" It's the trail at James Madison's Montpelier in Orange County that connects the 2,540-acre historic estate with the Market at

Grelen, which is on a 590-acre working nursery near Somerset.

PEC partnered with Montpelier and Grelen Nursery to develop this new four-mile trail network that links the two sites. Montpelier and Grelen worked together to link old road beds and logging roads to create freshly cleared stretches of trail. The trail opened to the public in April 2015, and recently received statewide recognition by the "Virginia Treasure" award program for outstanding conservation, cultural heritage or recreation projects.

Helping forge this new trail connection was a labor of love for PEC. In 2009, PEC collaborated with the Montpelier Foundation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to conserve more than 700 acres at Montpelier, and they raised \$2 million to purchase the easement through the leadership of PEC board member Jack Snyder and former staffer John "Jeep" Moore.

The new trails more than double the Montpelier's previous trail network. Nine miles of trails are now available to the public between the two sites. The trail network, along with



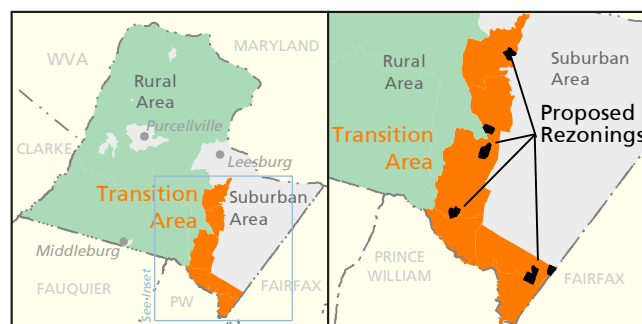
A SIGN AT THE MONTEPELIER-GRELEN TRAIL IN ORANGE COUNTY, VA. Photo by Paula Combs

Montpelier, provides some of the only public access to the largely conserved Madison-Barbour Rural Historic District, along with scenic vistas of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Now Orange County and Montpelier are working on more new trails, including one that would connect Montpelier with the local elementary school.

2015 Highlights

- ▶ Twelve college students and recent graduates participated in our 7-week **Summer Fellowship**, an immersion course in the conservation and environmental issues that inform PEC's work. Students participated in seminars led by PEC staff and completed joint practicum projects that built their knowledge and professional skills.

- ▶ When developers pushed the Loudoun Board of Supervisors for **more houses in the county's rural Transition Area**, PEC worked with residents to push back. Hundreds of local citizens submitted comments and spoke at public hearings to voice concern about rezoning proposals that would have converted open space to subdivisions and fragmented farmland. The Board of Supervisors subsequently denied or deferred all of these proposals—a strong step for better land use planning.



- ▶ In Albemarle, PEC alerted citizens to efforts to **amend the county's land use plan** to add a 223-acre parcel near the Route 29/I-64 interchange to Albemarle's Growth Area. We helped generate citizen requests to the Board of Supervisors to answer questions about the impacts of the proposed expansion on traffic, taxes, public services and the nearby community. Subsequently, the Board approved a much more limited expansion that will keep any new growth within already agreed-upon boundaries.

- ▶ 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 2015, including its continued push for policy tools to address the DC region's affordable housing crunch, its successful campaign to convince Maryland Governor Larry Hogan to build the Purple Line, 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.

strong rural economies

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



HEATHER COINER AND BEN STOWE OF LITTLE HAT CREEK FARM.
Photo by Jami McDowell

Helping farmers find a place to grow

Many Piedmont landowners are interested in expanding the agricultural use of their land, and many farmers are eagerly seeking available farmland at affordable rates. PEC is working to “match” these landowners and farmers to help launch more small farm businesses and increase the local food supply.

In March, with the support of the Beirne Carter Foundation, PEC released *Finding a Place to Grow: How the Next Generation is Gaining Access to Farmland*. Written by Whitney Pipkin, the booklet included eight profiles of farmland lease arrangements in Virginia.

In the fall, PEC hosted two workshops on farmland leasing. More than 90 individuals attended the workshops, one held in Charlottesville and the other in

Middleburg. The workshops provided attendees with information from state and national experts on leasing—from navigating farm entry, succession and tenure and state programs designed to help connect landowner and seekers, to an overview on developing leasing contracts. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions during all presentation sessions and were able to delve into the opportunities and challenges associated with land access. Subsequent networking allowed landowners and seekers to talk with each other to learn about needs and goals and to exchange business cards.

Many landowners and farmers are now actively exploring lease arrangements. PEC’s staff are increasingly fielding questions from landowners about farmland leasing, and are planning more events to help guide the establishment of successful leases.



BRIAN WALDEN OF STEADFAST FARM.
Photo by Jami McDowell

2015 Highlights

- ▶ PEC continued its partnership with Michael Sands and Bean Hollow Grassfed in Flint Hill to demonstrate how **livestock pasture management practices** such as managed rotational grazing and native plantings can increase farm productivity. PEC and Sands held two field days at Over Jordan Farm, attended by more than 40 farmers and landowners.



FIELD WALK AT OVER JORDAN FARM.
Photo by Jess Palmer

- ▶ In July, PEC and Moriah Farm held “**A Feast from the Field,**” our third annual fundraiser to benefit the Fauquier Education Farm in Warrenton. The event raised more than \$10,000, which will help further educate future agricultural enthusiasts while also helping feed families in need with nutritional vegetables.
- ▶ PEC partnered with the Culpeper Tourism Department to hold the “**Magical Farm Tour**” series. Starting in May, we organized monthly visits throughout the spring and summer to five farm businesses including vineyards, tree farms and livestock farms—connecting residents with Culpeper’s diverse agriculture-based economy.
- ▶ In March, horse owners crowded into our “**Greening Your Horse Paddock**” workshop focused on tools and techniques for enhancing small acreage grazing systems. More than 50 attendees heard from and asked questions of expert speakers from the Virginia Tech M.A.R.E. Center in Middleburg and both the John Marshall and Prince William Soil & Water Conservation Districts.
- ▶ PEC is working with American Farmland Trust and other partners on a **Women’s Learning Circle program**—where we engage with women landowners and operators on agricultural matters, such as installing Best Management Practices and enrolling in cost-share programs, and create a network for them to explore topics in a familiar environment. The group met twice in Fall 2015 to learn about agricultural topics and share stories and concerns.
- ▶ A total of **181,974 acres of prime farming soils** are now protected by conservation easements.



habitat restoration

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS • BIODIVERSITY • POLLINATORS • NATIVE PLANTS

"PEEPER" – YOUTH CATEGORY FINALIST
IN THE 2015 PEC PHOTO CONTEST.
Photo by Ryan Garvin

PEC helps Loudoun communities create better places for plants, wildlife ... and people

Several years ago, PEC began new partnerships with Loudoun Homeowners Associations to educate their residents about stream-friendly landscaping practices. In 2015, these partnerships blossomed into a series of plantings at several Loudoun communities that began to transform their grounds into vibrant landscapes with native trees and plants.

At Sugarland Run, Broadlands and Red Cedar, more than 190 volunteers planted over 900 native trees, shrubs and plants under PEC's guidance. Families, Boy Scout troops and even Loudoun Supervisor Suzanne Volpe got their hands dirty digging, filling and adding stakes and wire meshing to nurture the tree seedlings. The Loudoun County Arborist created landscape designs and guided plant selection. The HOAs' landscaping contractors donated labor and equipment to prepare the ground for the plantings.

Loudoun County provided equipment and expertise needed to install the floating islands at Broadlands to filter out pollution from their stormwater pond.

The plantings were part of a PEC program funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Fairfax Water to educate Loudoun residents about

stream-friendly landscaping practices for gardening and lawn care that attract birds, bees and butterflies, reduce fertilizer use and filter out pollution from stormwater before it reaches our streams. PEC also held workshops for homeowners on these practices and partnered with Virginia Master Gardeners and the HOAs to develop plans for controlling their fertilizer use in common areas.

Interest in landscaping practices like these is booming. More than 30 Loudoun HOAs were represented at a recent forum organized by PEC focused on habitat restoration and stream health. Through enabling residents to act on this interest, PEC is helping lay the groundwork for more vibrant and diverse plant and wildlife habitats in Loudoun.



VOLUNTEERS PLANT 160 NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS AT SUGARLAND RUN IN LOUDOUN COUNTY.
Photo by Gem Bingol

2015 Highlights

- ▶ As part of PEC's ongoing **habitat restoration project at the Piedmont Memorial Overlook**, a 5-acre shortleaf pine planting was completed in April 2015. Management of the new pine stand will begin this coming winter and early spring. Control of invasive Japanese stiltgrass will be implemented, and a prescribed burn plan for the pine site will be drafted.

WILDLIFE HABITAT FIELD WALK AT THE PIEDMONT MEMORIAL OVERLOOK.
Photo by Chris Miller



- ▶ Our annual **Fauquier sustainable landscaping workshop** was the biggest yet, with about 100 attendees this year. At the end of the two-hour workshop, attendees were able to get started right away by buying native plants from Hill House Nursery.
- ▶ PEC's annual **Thumb Run Open House** provided an opportunity for watershed landowners to mingle with their neighbors and also learn about ways to improve water quality and wildlife habitat in the Thumb Run watershed.



EASTERN TIGER SWALLOWTAIL.
Photo by John Magee

connecting people and nature

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



FIELD WALK AT OVER JORDAN FARM.
Photo by Carolyn Sedgwick

Partnership connects Orange youth with their rivers, forests and farms

A partnership between PEC and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Virginia created new opportunities for Orange County youth to experience the natural environment and history of the surrounding region. In 2015, more than 30 Orange Boys and Girls Club members participated in monthly outings led by PEC that explored nearby trails, streams and farms.

In the summer, the youth kayaked on the Rivanna River, hiked on the new trail at Montpelier, and picked blueberries and peaches at Grelen Nursery. The seasonally themed events continued into the fall and winter. The members, mostly ages 10-14, visited a turkey farm at Retreat Farm before Thanksgiving and harvested an evergreen tree at Elysium Christmas Tree Farm.

Numerous partners helped make the monthly outings happen and host the events, including many local businesses, the Montpelier Foundation and the Lewis & Clark Discovery Center. The outings were funded by a grant from the Bama Works Fund of Dave Matthews Band in the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation.

“Many of the youth we serve have limited access to the natural environment, and connecting with nature is important to their growth and development,” said Nancy Wiley, who was instrumental in establishing the partnership as a former board member of both the Orange Boys & Girls Club and PEC. “Exploring working farms, and cutting evergreens on a brisk winter day make positive, lasting impressions for the kids.”



ORANGE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB MEMBERS VISIT LANDMARK FOREST AT MONTEPIER.
Photo by Patricia Temples

2015 Highlights

- ▶ PEC teamed up with the Grymes School and Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage to plan and secure funding for a **15-acre native meadow planting at the school grounds** in Orange County.
- ▶ In July PEC partnered with the US-Youth Leadership Program to **engage students from Indonesia in volunteer activities** along the Chapman DeMary Trail in Purcellville. Youth monitored the stream along the trail, and helped with trail restoration activities including repairing a bridge and adding mulch.



INDONESIAN STUDENTS TAKE A STREAM MACROINVERTEBRATE SAMPLE IN LOUDOUN COUNTY.
Photo by Amie Ware

- ▶ PEC organized and facilitated the ninth annual **Clarke Conservation Fair for 4th graders** county-wide in Clarke.
- ▶ Our **Annual Meeting at Annadale Farm** was full of educational opportunities. It featured workshops on transmission lines and gas pipelines, raising backyard chickens, sustainable landscaping, making your home more energy efficient, a hike at Grelen, and a fascinating perspective on national, state and local elections from the keynote speaker Trevor Potter.
- ▶ More than **2,700 acres of land visible from the Appalachian Trail** were protected last year for a total of approximately 115,763 acres.
- ▶ PEC held our **12th annual Bluebell Walk** on April 19 at Bonny Brook Farm along the Cedar Run in Fauquier. More than 60 individuals participated.
- ▶ PEC worked with Mill Run Elementary School in eastern Loudoun to install an **outdoor classroom** with an observation deck and native habitat meadow.

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:

Albemarle County Land Conservation Fund
Bull Run Mountains Land Conservation Fund
Clarke County Land Conservation Fund
Culpeper County Land Conservation Fund
James M. Rowley Goose Creek Land Conservation Fund
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GREENE COUNTY, VA.
Photo by Patricia Temples

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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 2015. 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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PEC BOARD MEMBERS CUT THE RIBBON TO THE NEWLY RENOVATED PEC HEADQUARTERS OFFICE. Photo by Paula Combs





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GUESTS AT THE ORLEAN DAY EVENT HOLD UP THEIR
BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL STICKERS. Photo by Paula Combs



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At PEC, we have the privilege of working with countless individuals who are dedicated to protecting this wonderful region. Carl Zitzmann is one such person. Carl has volunteered his photographic talents to us for about seven years. With more than 30 years in photography, Carl is familiar with capturing people in special moments and landscapes in the perfect light. He gained part of his experience at the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority before moving on to work as an assistant director of photography at George Mason University.

Recently Carl informed PEC that he was including the organization in his estate plan. "Over the years, I have seen PEC working in so many different ways around the region that I know my contribution will be put to good use."

Legacy gifts through a will or trust allow PEC to preserve the natural resources, history, rural economy and beauty of the Virginia Piedmont for future generations.

For information on our legacy program

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GUESTS GO ON A HAYRIDE AT THE "FOR THE RAPPAHANNOCK,
FROM THE RAPPAHANNOCK" EVENT IN HUME, VA. Photo by Paula Combs





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Mrs. Vibeke Ober	Rider's Backfield Farm Beef	Mary and Jerry Sherman	Bob and Sara Templeman	Mr. William von Raab	Katherine Pharibe Wise
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John R. Parks	Richard B. and Kathleen L. Rose	Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Smith	Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Thompson	Mr. and Mrs. Richard S. Wallach	Dr. Harold E. Young
	Mrs. Elsa S. Rosenthal	Mr. Mark T. Snyder	Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Thompson, Jr.	Mr. William M. Ward	Gary Younkin
	Diane Rosin and Mark Okusa	Mr. and Mrs. John Sodolski		Mr. and Mrs. Mark Warren	Mr. John F. Zugswert
				Mr. and Mrs. Harry J. Warthen, III	

PEC Board of Directors

This list includes Board members who served at any time between Jan 2015 and Jan 2016

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Jean Perin
CO-CHAIR

David Crowe
VICE-CHAIR

Mark Ohrstrom
VICE-CHAIR

John H. "Jack" Snyder
VICE-CHAIR

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SECRETARY

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Leslie Cockburn*
Helen DuBois
Bruce Jones
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** Denotes 2015 Executive Committee member*



PEC Staff

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

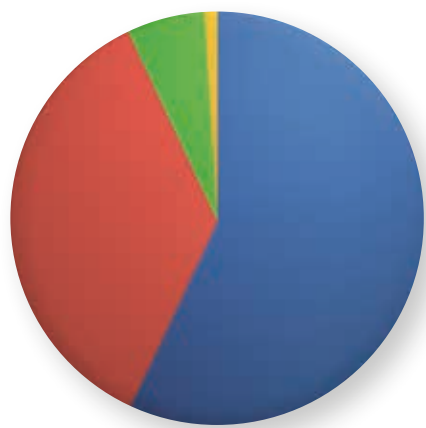
SECOND ROW: Douglas Stewart, Mary Liles, Pam Covington, Mike Kane, Doug Larson, Bri West, Maggi MacQuilliam, Dan Holmes

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, Nicole Erickson, Diana Gebhart, Ed Gorski, David Holtzman, Jeff Werner.

2015 Financial Report

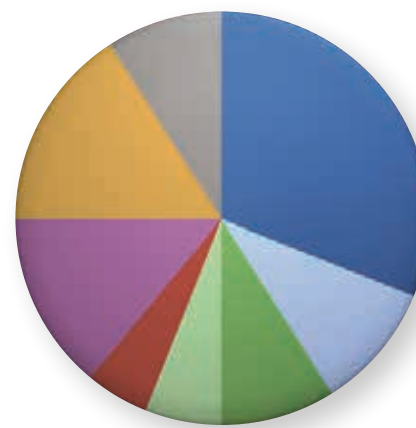
Sources of Organizational Support



Donations and Grants	\$ 3,008,736	57%
Building Contributions	1,908,867	36%
Special Events, Net	290,711	6%
Investments, Other	29,462	1%
Total	\$ 5,237,776	100%

PEC's annual audit is not complete at press time for this report. The figures above reflect financial statements undergoing audit 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. For more information, please contact PEC's accounting office at (540) 347-2334.

Program and Operating Expenditures



Conservation, Stewardship and Habitat	31%
County Issues and Planning	10%
Policy*	9%
Farms and Food	6%
Transportation and Growth Management	5%
Outreach and Education	14%
Development	16%
Administration	9%
Total	100%

* 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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PEC STAFF MARCO SANCHEZ AND MAGGI MACQUILLIAM
AT PEC'S 2015 ANNUAL MEETING.
Photo by Paula Combs

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