



The Piedmont View

A MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF THE PIEDMONT ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL SUMMER 2015

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Thank you for helping to protect the Piedmont!



Finding a Place to Grow

How the Next Generation is Gaining Access to Farmland

Access to affordable tillable farmland and pasture is one of the primary barriers for next-generation farmers and a healthy evolution of the agricultural economy in the Virginia Piedmont.

Many next-generation farmers from non-farming backgrounds have contacted PEC seeking access to available farmland. Conversely, many non-farming landowners are interested in agricultural land use, but the process of leasing land for this purpose can be daunting.

In response, PEC has put together "Finding a Place to Grow: How the Next Generation is Gaining Access to Farmland," which includes eight profiles of successful farmland lease arrangements in Virginia.

In this issue, we are featuring Part 1 of "The Model For So Many Others."

THE MODEL FOR SO MANY OTHERS

By Whitney Pipkin



Cliff Miller, landowner who leases land to Eric Plaksin and Rachel Bynum for Waterpenny Farm. Photo by Jamie McDowell

A long-term lease that creates ownership

Eric Plaksin and Rachel Bynum are standing near a row of peak summer tomatoes in a field that, after 15 years of farming, feels very much like their own, when the landowner pulls up in his golf cart with his dog Hannah perched in the backseat.

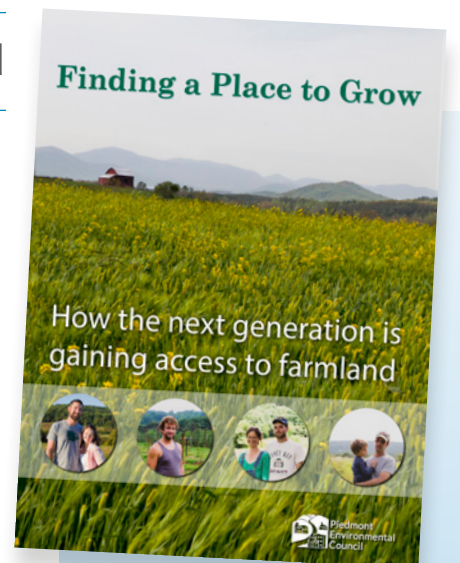
"They aren't disparaging me are they?" Cliff Miller asks with a grin.

He knows enough about the farming couple — with which he has a 40-year long lease agreement — to answer his own question. But, in his early 70's and as sharp as ever, he doesn't miss an opportunity to jibe them.

Miller goes on to offer up his perspective on the lease, and why more people should consider partnerships like the one he's forged here. "A 40-year lease throws us both on the same trail. We both want the best thing to happen," he said. "More people should do that, but they've gotta trust each other."

Bynum and Plaksin were in their early 30s when they first signed the lease to farm 27 of the 850 acres that Miller's family owns in Rappahannock County. In the 15 years since, Waterpenny Farm has flourished as an example of what ecological growers can accomplish with the support of a long-term lease.

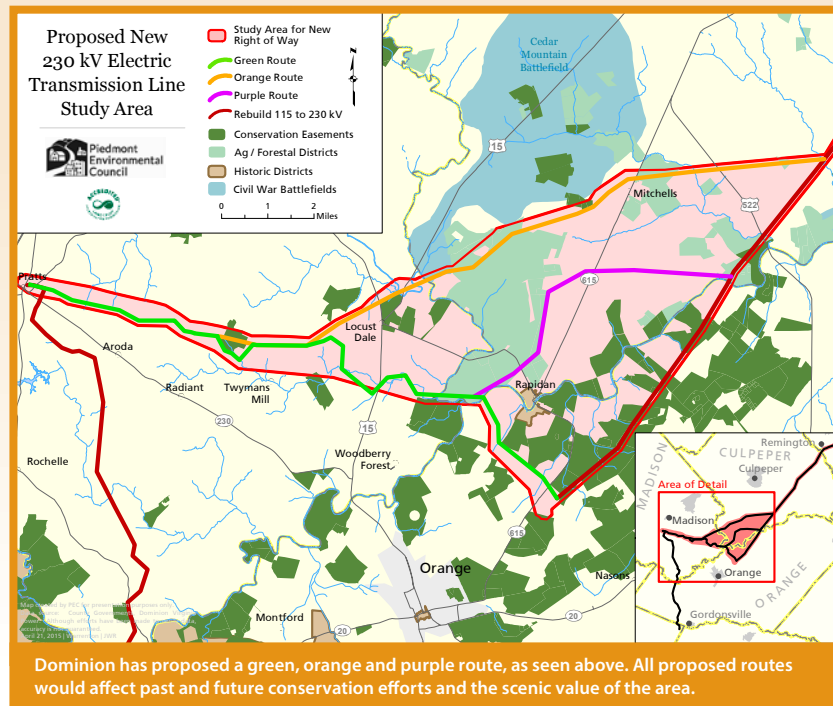
Continued on page 3



Visit peva.org/placetogrow to view the eight profiles in "Finding a Place to Grow."

Power Hungry

By Dan Holmes



Dominion has proposed a green, orange and purple route, as seen above. All proposed routes would affect past and future conservation efforts and the scenic value of the area.

This past May, 125 people gathered at the Rapidan fire hall to discuss how to protect the community and its historic and scenic landscape from Dominion's newly proposed Remington-Pratts-Gordonsville Transmission Project.

From PEC's initial look, the new 230kV line is expensive and doesn't address local needs. At best, it provides some additional redundancy. More likely, it's part of Dominion's long-term effort to build a bigger transmission system that allows them to sell more power outside of Virginia.

PEC and the newly formed Orange Madison Culpeper Alliance (OMC) hosted the May meeting to provide information and discuss next steps. Since then, Dominion has added a new routing proposal (the "purple route"), and it runs through the heart of the study area.

During the meeting, we discussed the permitting process that the State Corporation Commission (SCC) will conduct, which is a process that begins with a filing of an application, expected in early June. We also showed the destructive impact of the proposals on the community, agricultural operations, historic resources and the scenic character of the area.

There is a need to engage elected officials now, securing resolutions from the Board of Supervisors, and reach out to Delegates, Senators and candidates running for office. OMC effectively organized participation and

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Finding a Place to Grow

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“We feel ownership for this land,” Bynum said. “We care about it and we know it. We feel like we’re going to be here for our careers.”

When it comes to long-term leases, the kind that support growers who are benefiting the landscape and the community, “that ownership feeling is kind of what you’re going for,” Bynum adds.

But the deal that reinforces their thriving business here was several years in the making.

The Early Years

After meeting Bynum at college in Minnesota, Plaksin went on to Wheatland Vegetable Farms in Loudoun County, where he cut his farming teeth during four years in the fields. Bynum worked in environmental education at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s Clagett Farm while also doing seasonal work at the vegetable farm.

But they were ready to start their own operation. “We drew a big circle around DC” and started looking for land to buy. But, a few trips with a realtor showed that most of what they could afford didn’t include a place to live, let alone the infrastructure and community they’d need to make a farming business work.

“As we looked at what we

could have afforded to buy, it was like a bad house or no house in the middle of a field,” Bynum said of their search for land within a drive of DC’s markets.

Around the same time, Miller had begun his own search for an organic vegetable grower. He had rented land to conventional farmers in the past but, after enrolling several hundred acres in conservation programs, had a change of heart about the best use for the land his family had owned for generations.

“When the previous managers left, there was a lot of bad stuff like Johnson grass growing in here,” Miller said during a drive across his land in the fall. “My solution was to get an organic vegetable farm to come in and pull the Johnson grass out by hand, rather than put a bunch of Roundup on the soil.”

Miller reached out to Wheatland for farmer recommendations, and “Eric and Rachel were as good a fit as there is.”

The pair didn’t jump on the opportunity at first, because it came up too close to the spring planting season.

“We wanted to plant cover crops. Nobody’s going to successfully bust sod in the spring and have a good farm going,” said Bynum, who now grows produce on just 8 of the acres they manage.

When he asked again later in



Eric Plaksin and Rachel Bynum of Waterpenny Farm.

the year, they were ready. In 1999, the farmers moved into a small white house that had years ago housed migrant orchard workers, and they began planting.

The farmers paid their rent in sweat equity those first two years, chipping away at projects on the old house and the landscape. They paid to rent farming equipment from Miller as needed.

“It allowed us to try it out and see if it was going to work for us,” Plaksin said.

Waterpenny Farm — named for an ecologically sensitive bug seen in streams on the property — had in that first year landed a coveted spot at the Takoma Park Farmers Market in DC. The market

is their biggest source of income to this day, along with the Arlington Farmers Market and a 100-member CSA program.

After deciding the land was the right fit, the couple expressed interest in a long-term lease, something that would basically allow them to stay on the land “until we die.” Miller wanted that, too, but he also wanted the next generation of his family to have choices.

“My history of short-term

leases with good farmers indicated that that doesn’t work for me anyway,” he said. “So if you can get a 40-year lease, that’s like owning it.”

Plaksin and Bynum agreed that such a long-term lease would be the best fit for them as well, but it still took about three years to craft the 50-page agreement. Bynum said that was partly because there were few, if any, examples of such arrangements that they could use as templates...

To read the remainder of “The Model For So Many Others” or additional profiles, visit: pecva.org/placetogrow

**The “Finding a Place to Grow” project was made possible by a grant from the Beirne Carter Foundation.*

In Memory of Kitty P. Smith

On April 23, we lost a great member of our community—Dr. Kitty P. Smith. She passed away peacefully in her home, surrounded by family and close friends. Kitty was a long-time Fauquier resident, and worked tirelessly over the past several decades to support land conservation and good land use planning in Fauquier County.

Kitty was on the staff of PEC from 1988 – 2006, and served as a board member of Citizens for Fauquier County and Goose Creek Association. She also served on the County’s Agricultural and Forestal District Committee and Capital Improvements Committee, as well as participating in numerous other local organizations and initiatives after retiring.



Conservation Easement Enforcement Goes to the Virginia Supreme Court

The Piedmont Environmental Council, Civil War Trust, Land Trust Alliance, Land Trust of Virginia, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and The Nature Conservancy are petitioning the Virginia Supreme Court to allow them to weigh in on a case that could change the course of conservation easements in the Commonwealth. The groups are asking the Court to follow the clear direction of the General Assembly and to honor the pledge in the Virginia Constitution to support clean air, clean water, history and resource protection when determining how to uphold the integrity of conservation easements.

The case itself centers around a dispute that began in 2013 between Wetlands America Trust, the easement holder (a supporting entity to Ducks Unlimited), and White Cloud Nine, which operates Chrysalis Vineyards, over the size, location and use of structures on its property under easement in Loudoun County, Virginia. Wetlands America Trust found 14 easement violations on the

property, but none were upheld by the Circuit court.

The brief challenges the lower court ruling, **specifically, the judge’s decision to dismiss the requirements of the Virginia Constitution, the Virginia Conservation Easement Act and Open Space Lands Act in favor of common law standards of restrictive covenants.** In addition, the groups assert that the court’s application of common law standards would:

- Cause considerable harm to efforts to conserve Virginia’s open spaces, natural resources, battlefields and historic sites;
- Embolden landowners to challenge easement terms and likely lead to increased litigation;
- Undermine the donative intent underlying conservation easements; and
- Set precedent that could adversely affect land conservation not only in Virginia but throughout the United States.



Prior to filing, the organizations filed a Motion for Leave to File the *Amicus Curiae* brief. As of early June, that motion had yet to be decided on. The Office of the Attorney General of Virginia also filed an *Amicus Curiae* brief in support of Wetlands America Trust.

A Quest for Wildlife Habitat Restoration at Home

By Celia Vuocolo

When you first visit Bruce Jones’ property, you’re apt to get overwhelmed. Everywhere you turn, something is fluttering, flowers are blooming, and life is happening. “Once you get it in your blood,” Bruce says, “it’s hard to switch to TV.”

That “it” that Bruce is referring to is what has been his constant quest for the last 20 or so years—wildlife habitat restoration. Bruce and Susan Jones began this quest rather unassumingly. It began with the purchase of 75 acres about 35 years ago in Rappahannock County. They began coming to the property as weekenders, but around 1998 retired and moved there to live full-time.

Bruce’s interest in restoring his property’s biodiversity began with a human connection. The Jones’ son would often hike around the wooded area of the property and return with unusual plant species that they would try identifying. First it was a Puttyroot Orchid, then came a Crane-fly Orchid, and another time,

a Showy Orchis. Bruce was inspired to learn about what else was growing in his woods and fields, and that spark became a decades-long fiery dedication to restoring plants and encouraging wildlife on his land.

Bruce began tackling the invasive plant species that had taken hold of certain areas of his property and enrolled 90 acres of open land in NRCS’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). In order to combat deer over-browse on newly installed plantings, Bruce installed a 12-acre deer fence, which had dramatic results. Native plants were finally given the opportunity to grow and thrive, without the suppressing effects of invasive plants and deer.

Today, the Jones’ property hosts a variety of native plant gardens, pollinator plots, and restored native-warm season grass meadows. Over 1,000 plant species have been identified on the property, along with 187 bird species and 56 butterfly species. Bruce has installed over 50 bluebird boxes, and the old silo in the native meadow hosts a breeding pair of barn owls. But it wasn’t an easy road.

Bruce attributes the high wildlife diversity to the native plants that he has put back into the landscape. “Native plants are the basic building blocks for the whole ecology of our area,” he says. And for the past several years, he’s been sharing his stories of failure



▲ Bruce Jones talks about the native plants and wildlife on his property. Photo by Jen Davis



▲ A swallowtail butterfly on liatris, a native plant on the Jones’ property. Photo by Bruce Jones

and success with interested folks through property tours. “By exposing people to the beauty of nature, I am hoping for the ‘multiplier effect,’” Jones says.



▲ A barn owl flies out of an abandoned silo on the Jones’ property, which hosts a breeding pair of owls. Photo by Bruce Jones

To learn more about Bruce and Susan Jones’ work, visit their website at jonesnaturepreserve.wordpress.com

Pop Quiz

How long does it take to grow a tomato?

- a) Between 15-40 days
- b) Between 45-60 days
- c) Between 75-90 days
- d) Between 95-110 days



Photo by Jessica Palmer

ANSWER

C) It takes between 75 and 90 days to grow a tomato from seed to harvest. That’s about three months of tender love and care. Don’t have the time to grow your own, but still crave right-out-of-the-garden freshness? Visit our *Buy Fresh Buy Local* website (www.buylocalvirginia.org) to find local farms and markets.

Every 5 Years...

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) is pleased to announce it is applying for renewal of accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant’s policies and programs.

Independent accreditation provides the assurance of quality and demonstrates PEC’s ability to protect the Piedmont’s working farms and forests as well as its diverse natural, historical, and scenic resources.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how PEC complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards, see www.landtrustaccreditation.org/tips-and-tools/indicator-practices.

To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on PEC’s application will be most useful if received by August 4, 2015.



On the Ground

ALBEMARLE

Albemarle’s Revised Comprehensive Plan

After almost four years of community input and careful review, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on the final draft of the revised Comprehensive Plan on June 10 in the County Office Building. The revisions generally maintain longstanding policies supported by PEC, which include: preserving the rural area, creating a development area with the services and amenities necessary to accommodate growth and development, and protecting critical natural resources throughout the entire County.

CLARKE

Conserving land

Nearly 500 acres of land were protected with conservation easements in Clarke County in 2014. Now, 23,679 acres of conservation easements exist in Clarke County, including both donated conservation easements and easements that have been purchased through the county’s Purchase of Development Rights program.

CULPEPER

Growth area inching northward

The County is looking at allowing the growth area to expand north and northwest of the Town of Culpeper. One proposal would make Catalpa, the intersection of Rt. 229 and Chestnut Fork Road, a convenience center and provide it with public water and sewer service. A second idea is to change the future land use designation of a swath of land northwest of town from agricultural to rural. This makes it easier to gain support for rezoning land for residential lots. Community meetings on the Comprehensive Plan update started on May 27.

FAUQUIER

Proposed cell tower

Verizon is proposing a 154’ monopole cell tower off of Casanova Road in Fauquier, just outside the historic village of Casanova. Fauquier’s telecommunication ordinance requires that any towers over 120’ include an “exhaustive” evaluation of alternative sites and designs. Unfortunately, Verizon has been unwilling to seriously consider lower heights or alternative locations. If approved, Casanova’s landscape will be permanently marred and future applicants down the road may try to seek the same type of relief from the ordinance. For these reasons the County Planning Commission voted to recommend denial and the Board of Supervisors has asked the applicant to revise their application. Federal law only allows the locality a limited amount of time to decide on the application, so they will have to make a decision soon.

PEC’s Office Renovation is Coming Along!

The beautiful spring weather helped speed the progress of PEC’s headquarters office construction project, nearing completion in Old Town Warrenton. The building addition is now under a roof, and it’s scheduled for completion in the fall of 2015. When finished, the additional office space will allow the Warrenton staff to be located under one roof, instead of occupying two different offices. The addition will also provide expanded meeting rooms for PEC and community use.



LOUDOUN

The five-year plan for the 141-acre property near Gilbert’s Corner

In December 2014, the PEC Board of Directors adopted a five-year plan for managing the 141-acre property that PEC owns near Gilbert’s Corner in Loudoun. In addition to protecting the scenic landscape, the plan focuses on restoring the property’s degraded natural resources and improving its functionality and productivity for agricultural uses. PEC is working with the Loudoun County Soil and Water Conservation District and other organizations on implementing a series of agricultural best management practices designed to achieve these objectives. The practices, which are also intended to enhance wildlife habitat, include fencing to exclude livestock from streams, improving pasture management, and reforesting marginal farmland and environmentally sensitive areas.

MADISON

Agro-artisan trail

Madison County is working with the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission, which received funding from The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Agricultural and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Planning Grant to develop an agro-artist trail designed to support, expand and sustain agricultural and forestry based businesses. The trail, called “Tween the Rivers Trail: Grown & Crafted in The Foothills,” will be comprised of local farms, wineries, farmers markets, pick-your-own operations, orchards, artisans and tradesmen.

GREENE

Agritourism bill

The Board of Supervisors deferred action in May on an ordinance related to activities for agritourism businesses. Changes to the ordinance were spurred by legislation that passed the General Assembly regarding agritourism and are similar to changes made by Albemarle County. However, Greene’s ordinance would be less restrictive. It would allow up to 24 events each year on a farm, with up to 400 people each.

ORANGE

New trails at Montpelier

This past winter, PEC worked with Montpelier and Grelen Nursery, its neighbor to the south, to develop a new 5-mile trail network linking the two sites. On April 4, the new hiking trail opened to the public. With already existing trails, the Montpelier-Grelen trail network collectively provides the community with 10 miles of hiking trails.

RAPPAHANNOCK

Conserved property protects many resources

Three properties in Rappahannock were protected in 2014, bringing the total number of acres protected by conservation easements in Rappahannock to 31,366. PEC’s Krebsner Fund for Rappahannock County Conservation facilitated one of these easements by providing a grant to the landowners to help offset the legal fees associated with donating a conservation easement. That property protects water quality, wildlife habitat, working forests, and open space. In other news, PEC and the Rappahannock Historical Society hosted a successful event celebrating Rappahannock’s mountain heritage at the Thornton Gap Primitive Baptist Church this past April.

Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders

in Environmental Conservation

PEC FELLOWSHIP

This summer marks our ninth Summer Fellowship Program, an annual seven-week educational program for college students and recent graduates. The fellowship combines classroom discussions, field trips, hands-on activities and collaborative practicums. Through this experience, the fellows gain practical knowledge and skills necessary to successfully transition into careers in conservation, urban planning, agriculture, public policy and other related fields. After a competitive selection process, we are pleased to announce this year's fellows.



PEC's 2014 fellows at the Brandy Station Battlefield.

2015 PEC Fellows

Michael Carter Purcellville, VA University of Virginia, Class of 2015	Kendall Grannis Ridgefield, CT Grinnell College, Class of 2015
William DeCesare Massapequa Park, NY University of Virginia, Class of 2015	Andrea Levy Miami Beach, FL University of Florida, Class of 2014
Silas Domy Kellogg, ID Bowdoin College, Class of 2016	Chantal Madray Bowling Green, VA University of Virginia, Class of 2016
Rachel Earnhardt Raleigh, NC Wesleyan University, Class of 2017	Caitlin McCarthy Kenilworth, IL Sewanee: The University of the South, Class of 2016
Claudia Elzey Charlottesville, VA University of Virginia, Class of 2015	Joseph Mutter San Antonio, TX Middlebury College, Class of 2015
Kori Goldberg Clermont, FL The Ohio State University, Class of 2016	Nicholas Wells McLean, VA University of St. Andrews, UK, Class of 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Magical Farm Tour

Travel by trolley in Downtown Culpeper to learn about farming practices at these four farms. Space is limited to 28 riders per tour, so register soon by calling Culpeper Tourism at (540) 727-0611.



JUN 27 **WHEN:** Saturday, June 27, 1 – 4 PM
WHERE: The Depot, downtown Culpeper

Learn about farming practices at Saddle Ridge Farm in Culpeper County.

JUL 25 **WHEN:** Saturday, July 25, 1 – 4 PM
WHERE: The Depot, downtown Culpeper

Learn about farming practices at Glengary Farm in Culpeper County.

AUG 29 **WHEN:** Saturday, August 29, 1 – 4 PM
WHERE: The Depot, downtown Culpeper

Learn about farming practices at Old House Vineyard in Culpeper County.

SEP 26 **WHEN:** Saturday, September 26, 1 – 4 PM
WHERE: The Depot, downtown Culpeper

Learn about farming practices at Bees and Trees in Culpeper County.

River and Roots

JUN 26 JUN 27 **WHEN:** Friday & Saturday, June 26 & 27
WHERE: Watermelon Park, Berryville, VA

Music festival that also celebrates healthy streams and local food. Register at www.riverandroots.com.

Feast From The Field

JUL 25 **WHEN:** Saturday, July 25
WHERE: Moriah Farm, Warrenton

Join us for the 3rd Annual Field to Plate Dinner to benefit the Fauquier Education Farm. \$75 per person, includes farm tour of the Fauquier Education Farm, dinner and music from local favorites "The Cabin Raiders."



Contact Karen Hunsberger Adam at (540) 347-2334 ext. 7001 to register.

Native Meadow Habitat Field Day

SEP 11 **WHEN:** Sunday, September 11, 9 AM
WHERE: Farms in Rappahannock & Madison Counties

The Virginia Quail Recovery Initiative, Virginia Working Landscapes, Virginia Department of Forestry and PEC will host a tour of two farms with native meadow plantings for land-owners interested in creating and managing new habitat.

Contact Charlotte Lorick, Virginia Working Landscapes, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, at (540) 635-0038 or lorickc@si.edu.

For more events and additional information, please visit pecva.org/events

Out & About

A Meeting at Annadale Farm: Making a Difference, From the Ground Up

GORDONSVILLE, VA



▲ Phil Irwin, one of the original founders of The Piedmont Environmental Council, and Jean Perin, Co-Chair and board member of The Piedmont Environmental Council, attend the PEC Annual Event. *Photo by Paula Combs*

Trevor Potter, founding President and General Counsel of the Campaign Legal Center and Senior Advisor to Issue One, was the keynote speaker at this year's PEC Annual Event. Potter also served as legal counsel to Stephen Colbert's SuperPAC. *Photo by Paula Combs*



▲ Austin Jamison, Blue Ridge Division Coordinator with Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, gives a workshop for landowners trying to convert their land to more natural landscapes that benefit our native wildlife. *Photo by Paula Combs*



▲ Marco Sanchez, PEC's Communications Coordinator, and Maggi MacQuilliam, PEC's Land Conservation Officer for Southern Fauquier & Culpeper Counties. *Photo by Paula Combs*



▲ Harvey Ussery, author of *The Small-Scale Poultry Flock*, speaks with a guest at PEC's annual event. He lead a workshop on sustainable homes and small farm poultry flocks. *Photo by Paula Combs*

From the Rappahannock, For the Rappahannock

HUME, VA



▲ Guests take a tour of the Marriott Ranch property (Farfield Farm and Fiery Run Ranch) to see the stream buffer that was planted that morning along the Fiery Run and Rappahannock River. *Photo by Paula Combs*



Friends of the Rappahannock volunteers, Megan Pyles (left) and Christine Warner (right), help plant trees to create a stream buffer along Fiery Run. *Photo by Paula Combs*



▲ PEC, Friends of the Rappahannock and John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District partnered to host "From the Rappahannock, For the Rappahannock." Guests enjoyed local oysters from the Oyster Company of Va., and the discarded shells from the event were used for the Oyster Company's reef sanctuary to help protect the Chesapeake Bay. *Photo by Paula Combs*

Mountain Heritage Event at Thornton Gap Primitive Baptist Church

SPERRYVILLE, VA



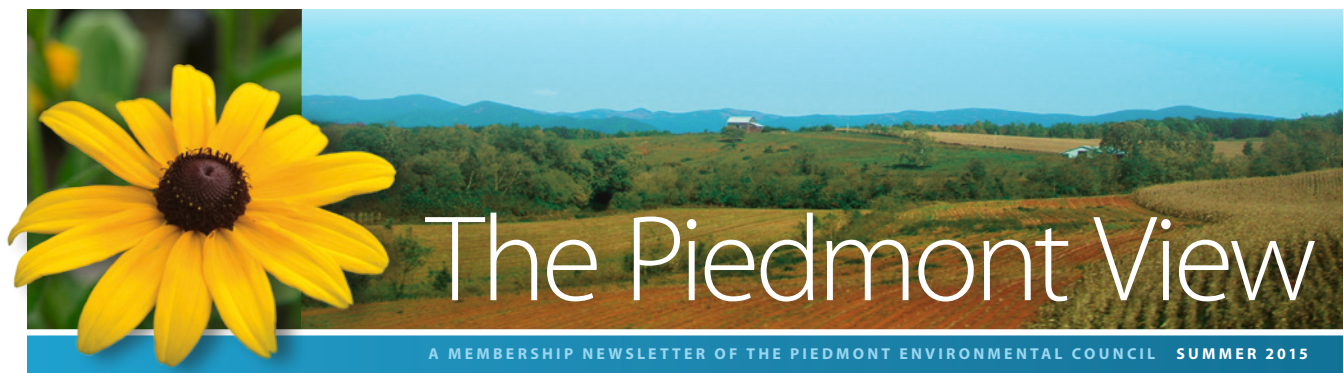
▲ PEC Land Conservation Officer for Rappahannock & Clarke Counties Carolyn Sedgwick (left) and PEC Land Conservation & Stewardship Coordinator Kristie Kendall (right). *Photo by Marco Sanchez*



▲ Local band Evergreen Shad played at the Mountain Heritage event. *Photo by Marco Sanchez*



▲ PEC President Chris Miller chats with Shenandoah National Park Superintendent Jim Northup. *Photo by Marco Sanchez*



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INSIDE

Finding a Place to Grow- How the Next Generation is Gaining Access to Farmland **PLUS: Read about Dominion's recent transmission line proposal; how a family turned their property into a native plant and wildlife haven; and PEC's 2015 Fellows.**

Pop Quiz

How long does it take to grow a tomato?

- a) Between 15-40 days
- b) Between 45-60 days
- c) Between 75-90 days
- d) Between 95-110 days

ANSWER ON PAGE 4



Photo by Katherine Vance

Dear Friends,

For as long as I have been at PEC, we have been engaged in fights to keep unnecessary infrastructure projects out of the Piedmont. In response to recent transmission line cases [see "Power Hungry" article on cover page], we have called attention to the need for less reliance on long distance transmission of electricity produced at huge power plants and a greater focus on clean distributed generation. 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.

I am pleased to announce that through **July 31**, PEC members with property in our service territory can take advantage of a campaign called Solarize PEC. Solarize PEC is a cooperative program with The Piedmont Environmental Council, Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP) and Northern Virginia Regional Commission to bring solar power to more people in the Piedmont.

The Solarize program is a grassroots effort that has already been successful in communities across Virginia. If you've been thinking about putting solar power on your home or farm, this is a great opportunity to find out if it will work for you here in the Piedmont, and to take advantage of some very competitive pricing.

PEC is not making any money off this program and we are not sharing any of our lists. If you are wondering about whether solar power might work for you, I invite you to take a look at pecva.org/solarize. If you are interested, fill out the form and a representative from LEAP will contact you.

The pricing and financing options through Solarize PEC are available for property owners within our 9-county region. If you live outside of our region, but are interested in participating in Solarize, there's an online form to fill out at solarizenova.org/other-localities. You will be contacted with information on whether or not there is a campaign that covers your neck of the woods.

Sincerely,

Chris Miller, President



Solar installers in Charlottesville. Photo Courtesy of Local Energy Alliance Project