



The Piedmont View

A MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF THE PIEDMONT ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

AUTUMN 2016

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Thank you for helping to protect the Piedmont!



Fenced in at Roundabout Meadows

By Paula Combs

"Polluted water is not only bad for us and the environment, but it's bad for livestock as well," says Celia Vuocolo, habitat and stewardship specialist at PEC.

A significant stewardship project is wrapping up this fall at Roundabout Meadows, the 141-acre property near Gilbert's Corner that was gifted to PEC in 2013. The project is focused on implementing agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will keep livestock away from the property's streams and provide a clean source of water for cattle. As part of the effort, over 2 miles of fencing and almost a mile of pipeline plumbing for a watering system have been installed.

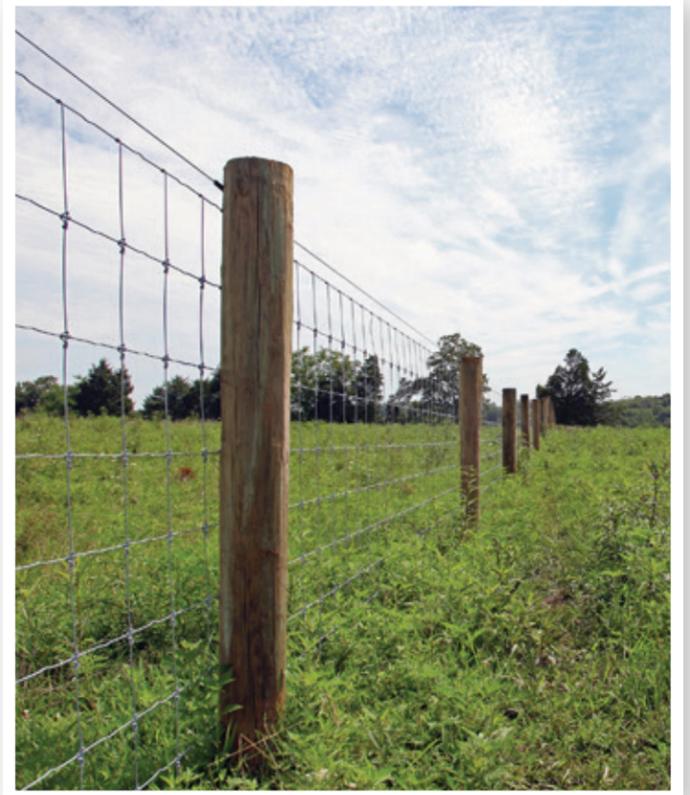
"Our long-term plan for Roundabout Meadows is to retain its agricultural use, and we want to do so in a manner that is in harmony with being good stewards of the land and water resources, while farming continues on the property," says Michael Kane, director of conservation at PEC.

Loudoun County Soil and Water

Conservation District provided technical and funding assistance for the project. "It's exciting to see the property continue in active agricultural use and also see so many conservation practices being put to use," says Chris Van Vlack, urban and agriculture conservationist at Loudoun Soil & Water Conservation District. "We were very happy to help PEC put together a plan that suited the future farming operation as well as protecting Howsers Branch."

Like many farm properties in the Piedmont, the cattle grazing on the property had free access to Howser's Branch and other streams. This situation was contributing to degradation of the property's stream banks and causing fecal contamination of its waters, which played a part in the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) identifying Howsers Branch as having pollution levels that exceed Federal standards.

In 2014, two participants of our Fellowship Program, Michael Ament and Preston White, tested the condition of the streams at Roundabout



A fence runs along the Roundabout Meadows property near Gilbert's Corner in Loudoun County, which will help improve water quality by keeping cattle out of streams.

Photo by Marco Sanchez

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Preserving History at Jack's Shop and James City

PEC received a grant of \$35,300 from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program to research the history of two previously undocumented Civil War battles that occurred at Jack's Shop and James City in Madison County, Va.

"We're grateful NPS has awarded us this grant," says Kristie Kendall, historic preservation manager at PEC. "And we are excited to begin researching the background of the

sites, so we can help preserve the history for locals and others."

In 2013, PEC and the Madison Conservation Fund worked with the community to commemorate the Battle of Jack's Shop, one of

the largest cavalry engagements of the entire war.

Madison County historian Harold Woodward, Jr. often quips that, "it was the biggest cavalry battle you've never heard of."

The Battle of Jack's Shop occurred on September 23, 1863, as Lee's Army was pulling back behind the Rapidan River, following the battle of Gettysburg. The Battle of James City occurred on October 8, 1863, as Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry division headed out of Madison to capture a vital Union signal station on Thoroughfare Mountain.

"The Battles of Jack's Shop and James City are significant as marking the end of the Gettysburg Campaign and the beginning of

the Bristoe Campaign, and documentation of these two battles fill an important void in this piece of Civil War history," says Kendall.

We will document the extent of the battlefields on the landscape using GIS mapping, and create three archeological research designs. This information will be used to inform future archeological investigations of the battlefields, as well as provide justification and context for preservation planning and land conservation.

The research resulting from this grant will raise awareness of these often-overlooked battles. Through a series of public meetings, community members and local government will come together to discuss the research

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The historic tavern at James City in Madison County, Va.

A small town with a lot to offer

Creating a community park takes quite a bit of planning, which is why the historic railroad town of Remington is about to receive support for adding recreational space for its residents and visitors.

Situated on a scenic natural crossing of the Rappahannock River, Remington has an abundance of character and contains elements of a walkable community, including a compact street grid. But the town has few common areas for recreation and no official public access to the river.

Remington is also where some of the most pivotal battles of the Civil War were fought, including the 1862 and 1863 Battles of Rappahannock Station. In 2006, PEC and Fauquier County raised funds to conserve 26 acres of land along the Rappahannock River, where some of the most significant Civil War action occurred. We're now collaborating with the County and other partners to make this area a park.

The PATH Foundation has awarded us a \$64,336 grant to help improve walking, bicycling and trail connections in Remington and increase opportunities for healthy physical activity. The grant will fund efforts to develop plans for a Rappahannock Station Battlefield Park and river access.

The town has seen several positive changes recently such as The Remington Freight Depot moving to its new home as the future Railroad Museum, and there are several new downtown businesses and a successful community garden. Remington also received a grant to implement a Safe Routes to School project, which allows the neighborhood elementary school to be accessed by

sidewalks.

"Some very active citizens and groups have already implemented complex community projects in the town," explains Julie Bolthouse, Fauquier County land use officer at PEC. "Our goal is to build on the existing momentum and develop a detailed park system plan, which will include a network of trails."

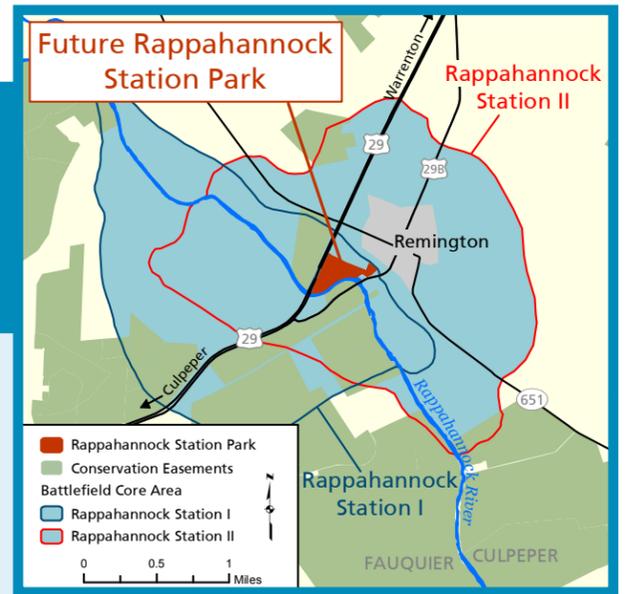
In the coming months, there will be a series of outreach events to determine what types of parks, trails and river access points would be the most desirable to residents.

"We hope this funding will help spur progress on the public access front," says Bolthouse. "Currently, there are no County funds committed to implementing the Rappahannock Station Park, but this grant will provide some initial funding for establishing a trail and creating public access onto the battlefield property."

Bolthouse further explains, "Additional funds will be needed from the County to make these plans happen."

PEC will work with a wide range of partners including Fauquier County Parks and Recreation, Town of Remington, Fauquier County Board of Supervisors, Remington Community Partnership, Fauquier County Department of Economic Development, Southern Fauquier Business Owners Association, Fauquier Trails Coalition, Remington Community Garden and Friends of the Rappahannock to build a plan for the town's recreational options.

"This is perfect for what's currently happening in Remington," says John Waldeck, coordinator of the Remington Community Garden. "Opening resources up



PEC received a grant from the PATH Foundation that will help fund efforts to develop plans for a park at Fauquier County's Rappahannock Station property in Remington, Va. The above map illustrates where the Rappahannock Station Park would be located, along with the areas, Rappahannock Station I and II, where pivotal Civil War battles occurred.

and allowing trails to connect us with the Rappahannock River and battlefield would build upon the promotion of Remington's beauty, and it would show all of Fauquier County and visitors how special this place is."

Director of membership at PEC and long-time southern Fauquier resident Karen Hunsberger-Adam added, "The revitalization of Remington is well on its way. This grant will help to not only bring Fauquier residents to Remington for water activities, but also bring them into town to eat at the Remington Deli, to visit the hardware store or get ice cream at the Pharmacy."

We hope to select a community planning consultant and start community meetings at the beginning of the new year. Community planning efforts are estimated for completion by end of summer 2017.

PEC Donates Land to National Park

Shenandoah National Park just grew a little bigger and a little more beautiful.

This past May, We donated a 17.2-acre property of ours in Rappahannock County to the National Park Service. A forested and vacant parcel on a mountain slope south of Sperryville, Virginia, the land is within the legislative boundary of Shenandoah National Park.

"The property is surrounded by the park on three of its four sides, so it's a key puzzle piece," says Carolyn Sedgwick, PEC's Rappahannock County land conservation officer, who oversaw the donation from PEC to the National Park Service. "This great public-private partnership with the National Park Service has resulted in the expansion of one of the most important wildlife corridors on the east coast."

The donated acreage is by an area in the national park designated as federal wilderness — the highest conservation designation for federal land — making it

an important and strategic area to conserve.

"This property is a wonderful addition, and we are grateful to PEC and the family [the previous owners] for wanting to see this property protected as part of Shenandoah National Park," says SNP superintendent Jim Northup.

We were approached about the opportunity in 2012 when the former owners decided they wanted their property to be a part of the National Park. We later purchased the land at a significant "bargain sale," thanks to funds raised locally through our Krebsler Fund for Rappahannock County Conservation.

The Krebsler Fund, a fund we manage specifically for Rappahannock County conservation projects, has a local advisory board composed of Rappahannock County residents who work with us to identify projects of high conservation priority and help raise funds for additional projects.

"The Krebsler Fund is excited to see this deal completed and to have such a strategic and important parcel added to Shenandoah National Park," says Nick Lapham, chair of the Krebsler Fund advisory board. "The project is a perfect example of how the Fund can flexibly deploy its resources to assist willing parties in completing conservation deals for the benefit of Rappahannock and the public at large."

Now that the property is officially part of Shenandoah National Park, "We hope to work with the Park Service on pursuing federal wilderness designation for the area," explains Sedgwick. "Such designation requires an act of Congress."



Carolyn Sedgwick, PEC's Rappahannock land conservation officer, stands at the border of 17.2 acres that PEC donated to the National Park Service. PEC worked with the land's previous owners, who wanted their property to be a part of Shenandoah National Park. Photo by Jonathan Marquisee

MEET PEC

Nan Moring

Director of Development



Please join us in welcoming Nan Moring, who joined our staff this past July!

Working in fundraising for over 21 years, Nan has extensive experience with nonprofits in major gifts, planned giving, public relations, and special events. She also served as a Captain in the United States Air Force.

"Growing up in Oregon I developed a deep appreciation for the environment. I spent my summers on my family's timber farm," says Nan. "For over twenty years I've called Virginia home and fell in love with the natural beauty of the area. Working at PEC gives me the opportunity to turn that love into action."

If you'd like to welcome Nan or speak to her about a tax-deductible donation, she can be reached at (540) 347-2334 ext. 7005 or nmoring@pecva.org.

Happy Anniversary!

PEC Fellowship!



It all started ten years ago with a phone call to Doug Larson, PEC's former Vice President.

"A prospective donor called him one day and asked if we offered anything that educated the next generation of environmental leaders," said Karen Hunsberger Adam, director of membership for PEC. "We had our internships, but the donor and Doug thought there could be something more."

With his brain wheels turning, Doug worked with staff to devise a detailed proposal outlining curriculum, projects and field trips—and that's how our Fellowship Program came to life.

Boasting 116 alumni since its inception, the seven-week Fellowship Program has helped future environmental leaders gain hands-on experience in a unique mix of topics such as land conservation, land use, sustainable agriculture, energy policy, habitat stewardship, historic preservation, transportation planning and geographic information systems (GIS) with experienced professionals.

We receive applicants from all over the country. Through a selective process, twelve college students are chosen to participate in the summer Program.

"It's a one-of-a-kind program, and it attracts the best and the brightest students," says Mary Liles, Fellowship coordinator for PEC.

"Each year, the Fellowship grows into a stronger program, and we continue to be impressed with the participants."

Over the years, we have taken fellows on a variety of field trips across the Virginia Piedmont and beyond. Common outings involve historic sites such as James Madison's Montpelier in Orange County and Brandy Station Battlefield in Culpeper County. Participants of the Program also visit PEC-owned properties Piedmont Memorial Overlook in Fauquier County and Roundabout Meadows near Gilbert's Corner in Loudoun County to learn about land conservation and habitat restoration. Other trips involve local farms, canoeing, Shenandoah National Park, attending a planning commission meeting, the Virginia General Assembly in Richmond and meeting with Coalition for Smarter Growth in Washington D.C.

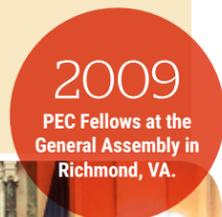
Fellows end the program by developing and presenting in-depth practicums. Some examples of the presentations from this year included researching how to improve public access to local waterways for recreation, creating an inventory of historic bridges within our nine-county service area, and conducting a survey to assess the pollinating insect population at our Roundabout Meadows property near Gilbert's Corner.

The PEC Fellowship Program is made possible by generous support from an anonymous donor, a grant from the Luck Companies Foundation and the in-kind support of a number of individuals. PEC members and other local residents provide housing for the fellows. Numerous guest speakers donate their time and expertise through leading tours and classroom discussions. In addition, many local businesses, nonprofits and landowners host field trips each year.

THE 2016 Fellowship IN NUMBERS

- 59 applicants from 18 states
- 1,272 miles logged in the big white van
- 262 tweets by fellows
- 180 bags of Cheez-its consumed
- 5 pounds of pistachios consumed
- 2 Amandas
- 2 Annes
- 7 weeks of trivia on Tuesday nights
- 2 presidential homes visited
- 14 Field trips
- 23 Classroom sessions
- 6 practicums
- 1 Sunrise Hike

12 new potential leaders in environmental conservation!



2014 PEC Fellows at historic Brandy Station Battlefield in Culpeper County.

2016 PEC Fellows visiting Bruce Jones Nature Preserve in Rappahannock County.

2007 PEC Fellows at Paris Mountain in Fauquier County.



"I consider conservation and preservation volunteer opportunities more strongly since working with PEC. I know these efforts rely heavily on volunteers and have wide-reaching benefits."

— Ben Chrisinger · 2008 PEC FELLOW

Fauquier County, VA
Bachelor of Arts, University of Virginia, Class of 2010
Master of Planning, University of Virginia, Class of 2011
Doctor of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania, Class of 2015
Currently a postdoctoral research fellow at Stanford University School of Medicine



"The Fellowship Program has influenced me to be more curious about the world in which we live from a greater interdisciplinary perspective. The experiences through PEC are practical and have helped me understand and codify a stronger interest in the field of historic preservation."

— Joseph Mutter · 2015 PEC FELLOW

San Antonio, TX
Middlebury College, Class of 2015



"The PEC Fellowship was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! I was not only able to refine my knowledge and skills regarding topics in environmental energy policy, smart growth, and agriculture through classroom discussion, but I was also able to learn about these in practice. This method of learning is something that you do not get in the typical University setting and has truly been invaluable to me."

— Chantal Madray · 2015 PEC FELLOW
Bowling Green, VA · University of Virginia, Class of 2016

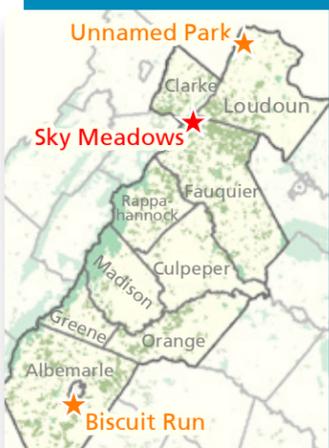


"During one of our first meetings with PEC's President, Chris Miller, he explained how important it was to choose a career that we love—that we'll spend more time at our jobs than anywhere else. Being around so many passionate people who do so many good things, day in and day out, has been a lesson in itself. This fellowship has been an incredible experience for me because it has taught me much more about environmental stewardship in the context of a region that I love and call home."

— Haley Wilbanks · 2016 PEC FELLOW
Orange County, VA
Sewanee: University of the South, Class of 2017

Pop Quiz

PEC's working territory encompasses nine counties, which includes Albemarle, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Loudoun, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties. What is the total number of state parks within these nine counties?



ANSWER

a) 1

Sky Meadows is the only state park that is open in PEC's nine-county region. The Commonwealth owns two other properties that were acquired to serve as future state parks—

Biscuit Run in Albemarle County and a yet-to-be-named property in Loudoun County. Currently, neither have funding to be opened to the public.

Fenced in at Roundabout Meadows

Continued from cover

Meadows. The fellows and PEC's Gem Bingol, a certified stream monitor, performed macroinvertebrate monitoring in two locations on Howser's Branch.

"We assessed the diversity of aquatic insects that live along the streambed," explains Bingol. "Certain macroinvertebrates have a greater sensitivity to pollution, so their presence or absence can indicate the severity of pollution in the water."

Some key findings were the high turbidity levels and stream temperatures, which make it hard for most of the bottom-dwelling insects to survive. The fellows counted more than 80 sites where the cattle were crossing the tributaries, and each one of the documented spots was eroded and causing sediment runoff.

In addition to the stream assessment, PEC staffer Julie Bolthouse and Bingol initiated a bacteria monitoring effort of Howser's Branch, the same year. The monthly samples they took to look for e-coli levels proved that the stream is unsuitable for human contact due to excessive bacteria levels. The collected data was given to the Goose Creek Association for their monitoring database, and it was also shared with DEQ. The baseline data will provide us information to assess the effectiveness of our project in cleaning up the stream. We will also use this information to explain the benefits of fencing to farmers.

"Installation of the fencing on the property is a critical step in addressing the water quality issues we have documented," says Kane. "Keeping the cattle away from the streams will provide immediate relief from the daily sediment deposition and fecal contamination caused by the livestock."

The fencing is set back from Howser's Branch by 50 feet to allow for the establishment of a forested riparian buffer over time, which will help the banks to heal. The regrowth of vegetation will hold the soil in place and filter runoff from the nearby pastures.

Without access to the streams, the cattle needed a new water source for drinking. So, an existing well on the property was tapped and piping was laid for new watering troughs, which provide cool, clean water year round.

By implementing the agricultural BMPs and restoring the water quality, the health of the livestock benefits. "After an exclusion project is completed, cattle farmers will often see a decrease in parasite loads, intestinal diseases, and calf mortality in their herds. This leads to better market weights and less money they have to spend on medication. Its really a win-win for everybody,"

says Vuocolo.

The implementation of BMPs also sets the stage for other practices that can improve agricultural productivity and natural resource protection over time. For example, the installation of the fencing and watering troughs can facilitate a rotational grazing system for livestock. This practice can boost productivity by improving soil health and the quality of the forage.

We are planning to implement rotational grazing at Roundabout Meadows in the future. Other plans for the property include a prescribed burn, which will help control invasive species and increase soil health, among other benefits. The property will also be used as a demonstration site for landowners interested in implementing BMPs.

We will continue to track the impact of our stewardship and other land management practices. If you are interested in using BMPs on your land, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.



Howser's Branch stream at Roundabout Meadows before our recent fencing project was complete. The fencing will benefit the health of the livestock and streams.

Photo by Claudia Elzey



Photo by Paula Combs

Renewed Accreditation

We are happy to announce our accreditation as a land trust was renewed in August 2016 — a mark of distinction in land conservation. Initially accredited in 2011, the renewal by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission signifies its continued confidence that PEC's lands will be protected forever.



"Renewal demonstrates PEC's commitment to permanent land conservation in our nine-county service region," says Michael Kane, director of conservation at PEC. "We're a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous renewal process, and this strength will help make the Piedmont an even better place for us and our children."

We're among 38 land trusts across the United States to achieve accreditation or to have renewed it this past August, and a part of more than 350 accredited land trusts that demonstrate their commitment to professional excellence through accreditation.

"It is exciting to recognize PEC with this distinction," says Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. "Accredited land trusts stand together, united behind strong ethical standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever."

Each accredited land trust must apply for renewal every five years and undergoes a comprehensive review as part of its renewal application.

Headwater Stream Initiative

Do you own land along a stream? If so, then you may be interested in the Headwater Stream Initiative, a joint project from PEC and Friends



of the Rappahannock (FOR). The initiative provides free technical assistance, project design, materials, and labor for the planting of native trees and shrubs in riparian zones in the Upper Rappahannock River Watershed, which includes Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties.

"Planting trees in the headwaters is a win-win for water quality, wildlife habitat and erosion control," says Carolyn Sedgwick, PEC's Rappahannock County land conservation officer. "Even if people don't own land along streams, we're looking for people of all ages to join our planting team."

FOR programs manager Bryan Hofmann explains, "For the past three years, FOR has been working to better protect the headwaters of the Rappahannock, and we are pleased to partner with PEC to take the next step in protecting local waterways."



Visit www.pecva.org/buffers to sign up and see if your property qualifies. For questions, contact Bryan Hofmann at (540) 373-3448 ext. 112 or Carolyn Sedgwick at (540) 347-2334 ext. 7066.

This project is made possible through generous funding from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, Environmental Protection Agency and PEC's Krebsler Fund for Rappahannock County Conservation.

Preserving History at Jack's Shop and James City

Continued from cover

and battlefields. Findings will provide necessary material to, eventually, put a long-term preservation plan in place for the landscapes.

The grant awarded to us is one of 20 from the National Park Service totaling \$1.198 million to preserve and protect significant battle sites from all wars fought on American soil. Funded projects preserve battlefields from the Colonial-Indian Wars through World War II and include site mapping (GPS/GIS data collection), archeological studies, National Register of Historic Places nominations, preservation and management plans.

Federal, state, local and tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions are eligible for National Park Service battlefield grants, which are awarded annually. Since 1996, more than \$18 million has been awarded by the American Battlefield Protection Program to help preserve significant historic battlefields associated with wars on American soil.



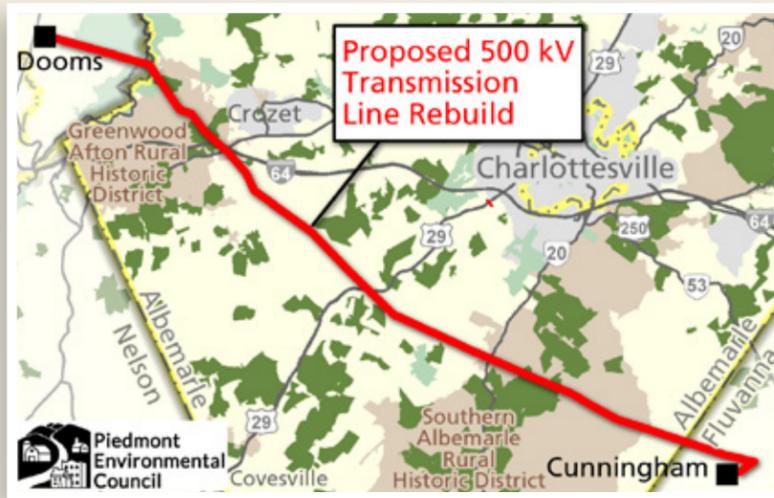
Photo by Kristie Kendall

On the Ground

Albemarle

> Visual Impact of Power Line

On August 8, over 70 people attended a State Corporation Commission hearing to express concern about the visual impacts of Dominion's proposed rebuild of the 500 kV transmission line through southern Albemarle County. Twenty six chose to speak at the hearing. The Board of Supervisors received almost 20 letters from residents, in response to a PEC email alert sent out prior to the meeting. PEC's Jeff Werner reminded the SCC that the line traverses historic districts and conserved land, and it's in the viewshed of numerous historic sites and the national park. The SCC and Dominion have a responsibility to protect these valuable resources by mitigating the visual impact of this new line. The SCC's hearing examiner assured the audience that he would visit sites throughout the county to see firsthand the visibility of the current line. A final decision is not expected for several months.



Clarke

> Give Us Your Best Shot

For those interested in supporting PEC and enjoying the opportunity to also practice their clay shooting skills, the Sporting Clays Fundraising Event is coming up this October. PEC and its Clarke County Advisory Board invite members of the community to come and join in for a day of recreation and good food. For those not interested in shooting clays, please consider supporting our conservation efforts in Clarke County by joining us for lunch. Registration is online at pecva.org/events.

Culpeper

> Clevengers Corner

Early in 2005, Centex Homes gained approval to construct 762 residences and 400,000 feet of commercial space at the southeast corner of the intersection of Route 211 and Route 229. The development proposal included the construction of a \$30 million wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), intended to serve the surrounding area of the County with 900,000 gallons of capacity. After the WWTP was built and turned over to the County, the economy declined. Since that time, little has occurred at the site. The developers recently submitted a request for a change in their proffers, but that request was withdrawn in August. The project appears not to be a priority for Centex. Unfortunately, the County now owns the WWTP that is serving few residents. In our experience, excess capacity is always a driver for growth. Whether or not the property develops as its zoning allows is yet to be seen. We are concerned about what will ultimately happen at this site and the implications of the infrastructure that is in place, so we will continue to keep an eye on this situation.

Fauquier

> Truck Stop in Markham

On August 31, about 100 people attended VDOT's public information meeting about a proposed truck stop west of Markham off interstate 66. VDOT wants to put 22 parking spaces for tractor-trailers as a "rest area." Residents voiced their concerns over noise, environmental and scenic impacts. We've reviewed the 2015 Va. Truck Parking Study, and believe there is a lack of evidence supporting VDOT's proposal. The site was originally paved in coordination with the construction of I-66. VDOT has suggested this area was always planned as a "rest area." But a rest area for the public and a truck stop are two vastly different uses with different impacts. Some important questions we still have are: Is it the public's responsibility to subsidize the commercial trucking industry by providing free 24-hour truck stops? Can the private sector provide alternatives at a lower cost? Where's the data to support VDOT's assertion that a truck stop is needed between Marshall and Front Royal? We do not believe the study provides evidence of this need. Also, why would Fauquier County consider approving a project that's in conflict with their Comprehensive Plan?

In other news, as part of the Thumb Run Watershed Backyard Habitat Program, PEC is teaming up with the Orlean Community Trail System to install a native wildflower meadow and small riparian planting at the Orlean Fire Hall. The planting will showcase Virginia native plants that help support butterflies, bees, birds and other wildlife, all while improving water quality in the Thumb Run Watershed. Site preparation is slated to begin in August, with the first planting planned for fall 2016.

Greene

> Honoring Blue Ridge Mountain Families

On July 26, the Greene County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in support of the Blue Ridge Heritage Project to memorialize and honor the sacrifices of families displaced and affected by the establishment of Shenandoah National Park in 1937. The proposed memorial, a standalone chimney with a plaque listing the surnames of the displaced families and a kiosk structure with related educational material, is to be located on the property of the Greene County Administration Building in Stanardsville. PEC's historic preservation manager, Kristie Kendall, is on the board of the Blue Ridge Heritage Project, the non-profit that is overseeing the memorial spaces around the Park.

Loudoun

> Planning for The Future in Loudoun

Loudoun has started the process of reviewing and updating its Comprehensive Plan with the initiation of its Stakeholder Committee. PEC has a seat on the committee, and there are many members who work for business and development industry interests. In order to ensure that residents' viewpoints are well-represented in the Comprehensive Plan as it is adopted, we will be sharing updates on the process and opportunities for public input. The first of multiple public input sessions will occur sometime this fall. It will be essential for the public to be involved in order to ensure that your voice and vision for the future of the Loudoun is heard. Stay tuned! PEC's historic preservation manager, Kristie Kendall, is on the board of the Blue Ridge Heritage Project, the non-profit that is overseeing the memorial spaces around the Park.

Madison

> Conservation Success

This past June, Tom and Sandy Williams were the first property owners to conserve land in Madison County this year. The Williams family worked with the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) and us to develop a conservation easement for their 165-acre property near Etlan. The conservation easement is designed to conserve, in perpetuity, their large working forest. DOF determined has a high or very high level for forest conservation value, along with a small meadow, freshwater springs, and almost a mile of two tributaries to Leather Run. Tom felt it especially appropriate to work with the Commonwealth's department of Forestry as his late father spent much of his career working as a research economist for the US Forest Service, and had an abiding interest in conservation of forest land.

Orange

> Barboursville Overlay District Proposed

The Orange County Planning Commission presented and discussed the proposed Barboursville Village Overlay District that would change setback distances and introduce design standards to new development around the Rt. 20 and Rt. 33 intersection to a packed house this past August. However, the proposed standards aren't specific enough or strong enough to protect the economic vitality, beauty and character of Barboursville. The majority of residents who spoke were in favor of implementing design standards that are reflective of their community's character, and they felt the proposed standards were lacking and needed more input from citizens.

Rappahannock

> New Park Land, Free Trees, and Happy Livestock

We recently donated one of our properties to the National Park Service for inclusion in Shenandoah National Park. The Rappahannock County property, which is adjacent to the Park, was a key puzzle piece (see page 2 for more details). In other news, we're wrapping up our Conservation Innovation Grant project at Over Jordan Farm where we've been working with farmer Mike Sands on studying the effects of his innovative pasture management techniques on soil health, wildlife and farm profitability.



UPCOMING Events

Sustainable Landscaping Workshop and Native Plant Sale

When > Saturday, October 15 • 1 - 3 PM

Where > Brookside Community Center, Clubhouse Way, Warrenton, VA

If you would like to learn about ways to make your yard more environmentally friendly and attractive to birds and butterflies, join us for our Sustainable Landscaping Workshop. Hill House Farm and Native Plant Nursery will have a variety of native plants for sale after the workshop.

Space is limited; the event's free but registration is required at pecva.org/events. For more information, contact Julie Bolthouse at jbolthouse@pecva.org or (540) 347-2334.

Art at the Overlook

When > Saturday, October 29 • 9 AM - 3 PM
(Rain date: Saturday, November 5)

Where > Piedmont Memorial Overlook, Paris, VA
Directions given upon registration.

Join local plein air artist Armand Cabrera for a landscape sketching class at PEC's Overlook property. Enjoy spectacular views of the Piedmont in autumn while learning from one of our region's best painters!

Registration required. For cost and details, visit pecva.org/events. Contact Celia Vuocolo for questions.

Sporting Clays Fundraising Event

When > Sunday, October 23 •
Registration and lunch, 11:30 AM - 1 PM; Shooting begins at 1 PM

Where > Prospect Hall Gun Club, Kearneysville, WV

If you enjoy clay shooting and like to practice your skills while supporting a worthy cause, please join PEC for lunch at beautiful Prospect Hall Shooting Club. The top three scoring male and female shooters will receive prizes.

Registration required at pecva.org/events. Contact Gem Bingol at (540) 347-2334 with any questions.

Community Tree Planting

When > Saturday, November 12 • 8 AM - 4 PM

Where > Eagle Ridge Middle School, Ashburn, VA

Come spend the day with us, and help plant hundreds of native tree seedlings.

Registration required at pecva.org/events. Contact Gem Bingol at (540) 347-2334 with any questions.

Thumb Run Open House

When > Sunday, November 13
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Where > Orlean Fire Hall, Orlean, VA

Annual open house for the Thumb Run Watershed Restoration Project. Guest speakers will cover a variety of conservation topics such as wildlife habitat restoration, land and farm stewardship, and water quality protection. All are welcome, snacks and beverages provided!

Registration preferred at pecva.org/events. Contact Celia Vuocolo at (540) 347-2334 with any questions.



ABOVE: **Bluemont Vineyard in Albemarle County**—PEC's 2015 Photo Contest winner in the landscapes category. Photo by Wellington Selden

PEC Photo Contest

..... SUBMIT BY **SEPTEMBER 30**

The deadline is quickly approaching, so submit your photographs to our 2016 Photo Contest while there's still time! Send us your stunning natural landscapes or bustling streetscapes, or show us life on the farm and wildlife in its habitat. We want to see it! Please encourage your children or any kids you may know to submit images to our Youth Category (for ages 17 and under).

Each finalist will receive a free PEC membership and have her/his work featured in upcoming PEC print and online publications. The winners of each category will receive a \$75 gift certificate to a nearby Buy Fresh Buy Local restaurant! And the youth category will receive a \$75 gift card to iTunes!

Categories include: Beautiful Landscapes or Streetscapes, Native Plants and Wildlife, Local Farms and Food, and the Youth Category (which may include a variety of subjects from PEC's nine-county region).

The deadline for submission is September 30! For contest details, visit www.pecva.org/photocontest. If you have questions, contact Paula Combs, senior editor & P.R. manager, at pcombs@pecva.org or (540) 347-2334 ext. 7021.

Youth Nature Day

When > TBD, Fall 2016

Where > Rappahannock County, VA

Youth ages 8-12 are invited to join us for a day of hands-on nature exploration. We'll spend time on land and wade through a stream learning about wildlife habitat, species identification, and headwater streams. Boots and supplies for this event are available thanks to a grant from the Lykes Fund of the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation.

Once the date has been determined, event information will be posted online at pecva.org/events. Please register online but contact Carolyn Sedgwick if you have any questions at csedgwick@pecva.org

Rappahannock Mountain Heritage Hike

When > November, 2016

Where > Sperryville, VA

Join us for a guided hike back in time to learn about the history of the families and communities that once lived in the mountains of Rappahannock County on the land that is now Shenandoah National Park.

For more information and to register, please visit pecva.org/events. Contact Carolyn Sedgwick with any questions at csedgwick@pecva.org



Photo by Ginnie Busick

Out & About

6th Annual Summer Safari

FRONT ROYAL, VA • AT THE SMITHSONIAN CONSERVATION BIOLOGY INSTITUTE • JUNE 11, 2016



▲ PEC President Chris Miller and Shenandoah National Park Trust President Susan Sherman give Bill Backer's wife, Ann Backer, a gift from PEC, SCBI and SNPT in honor of Mr. Backer, who was an advertising icon, President of the Piedmont Foundation and avid conservationist. Photo by Gregorio Photography

▼ Guests at Summer Safari during dinner. Photo by Gregorio Photography



Bird Habitat and Pollinator Walk Series at Jones Nature Preserve

LITTLE WASHINGTON, VA • JUNE AND JULY, 2016



▲ On June 30, PEC's habitat and stewardship specialist, Celia Vuocolo, teaches guests at Jones Nature Preserve about Virginia's common and imperiled insect pollinators and current issues in pollinator conservation. Photo by Carolyn Sedgwick

▼ On May 12, Carolyn Sedgwick leads a walk at Jones Nature Preserve, where guests were taught to identify different bird species, including how to identify a bird by its song. The bird watchers also learned about how land conservation is important for bird habitat. Photo by Celia Vuocolo



Over Jordan Farm Pasture Walk

FLINT HILL, VA • JULY 26, 2016



▲ Shayan Ghajar, extension program coordinator for Middleburg Agricultural Research & Extension Center, discusses native warm season grasses and observations in the pasture's plant community over time. Photo by Paula Combs

Guests walk across a pasture at Over Jordan Farm, after hearing Mike Sands, owner of Bean Hollow Grassfed, speak about the benefits of rotational grazing and soil health. Photo by Paula Combs



Feast From the Field

WARRENTON, VA • JULY 30, 2016



▲ Owner of Cool Lawn Farm and Moo Thru in Remington, VA, Ken Smith flashes a smile while attending Feast From the Field. Photo by Susan Bedford

Dear Friends,

Over the past year, PEC's Board and staff have been working on strategic planning for the next five years, when the organization will become 50 years old. As part of that process, we have been reviewing fundamental information about the region, the condition of natural resources, the progress of our communities, current programs, the structure of the Board and staff, the role of volunteers, and more.

What we have determined thus far is the vision of our founding members — a Piedmont region that responds to change and pressure to grow by strengthening its existing cities, towns, and neighborhoods while protecting its abundant natural resources, history and beauty — is being accomplished. Since 1972, the population of our nine-county region has grown by approximately 540,000, with Loudoun accounting for 350,000 of that number, which amounts to an annualized growth rate of 1.29 percent overall. It's important to note, that growth has been concentrated largely in areas planned for development. During that same time, more than 380,000 acres of land have been privately conserved throughout the Piedmont.

We have proven the value of a strong organization that provides a regional vision with a focus on local implementation. We have made investments to insure that the organization will continue in the future such as a great office building to convene and collaborate, along with an endowment to fund our long-term responsibilities. We also have an active Board and energetic staff, and the participation of our members and supporters, like you.

So what should we build on this solid foundation?

One thing that is clear is our communities are

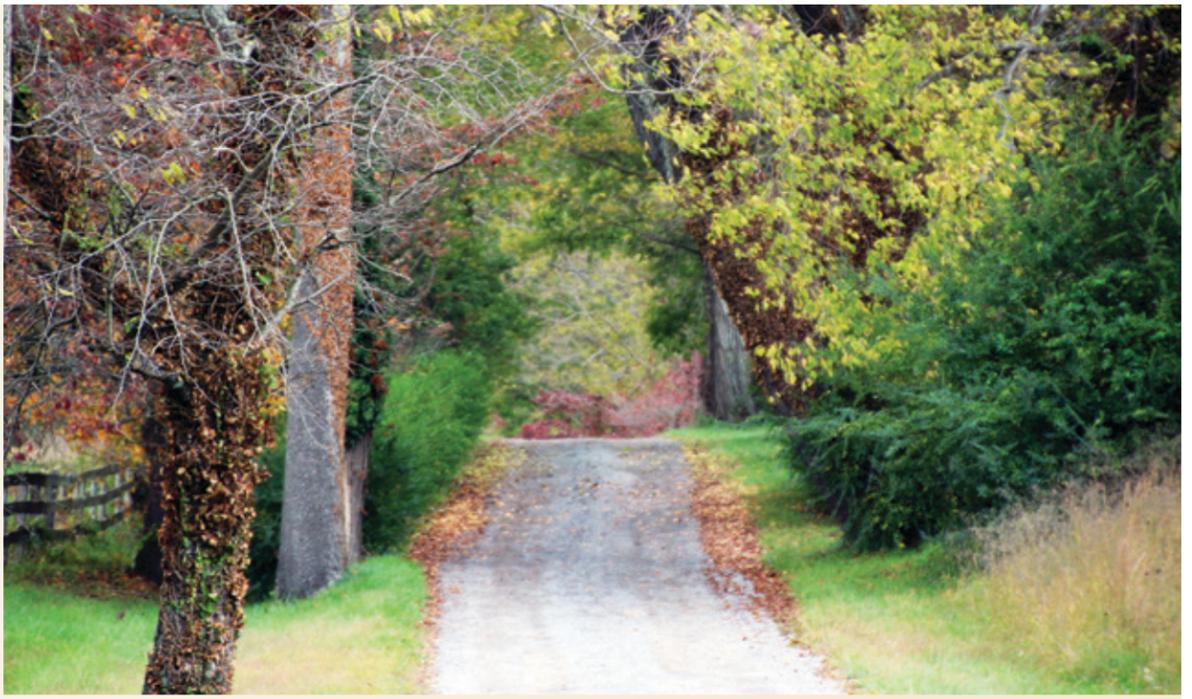


Photo by Oya Simpson

In the coming months, we are turning to you for input. What are your aspirations for the Virginia Piedmont, your land, or your neighborhood?

evolving dramatically. There are more and more residents who are new to the area and unfamiliar with the history and character of this corner of the world. That's one of the reasons we are conducting a public opinion survey in all of our counties to learn more about what existing members and the public care about and prioritize. We are also meeting with hundreds of current and potential supporters, and evaluating responses to our events, communications, and programs.

In the coming months, we are turning to you for input. What are your aspirations for the Virginia Piedmont, your land, or your neighborhood?

What are the challenges and opportunities that PEC should prioritize? How can PEC improve its programs?

I look forward to hearing your feedback and working with you to continue building a strong and healthy region.

Sincerely,



Chris Miller, President



The Piedmont View

A MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF THE PIEDMONT ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL AUTUMN 2016



INSIDE

Land stewardship at Roundabout Meadows, PEC Receives Grant From National Park Service, 10-Year PEC Fellowship Anniversary and more!

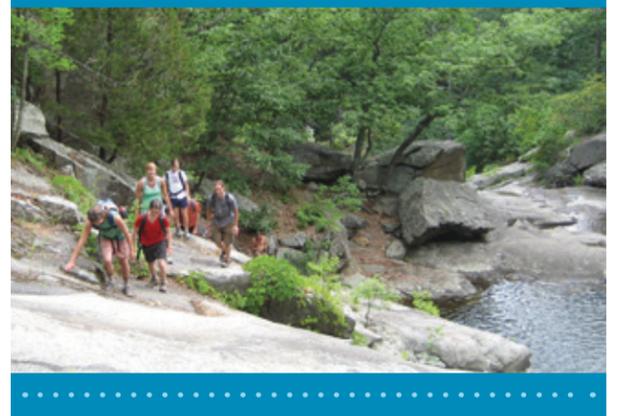
Photo by David Anhold

Pop Quiz

PEC's working territory encompasses nine counties, which includes Albemarle, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Loudoun, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties. What is the total number of state parks within these nine counties?

- a) 1 b) 2 c) 4 d) 6

ANSWER ON PAGE 3



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