

# The Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative

Supporting bird-friendly practices on working lands

## October Greenfield

The Piedmont Environmental Council

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Smithsonian  
National Zoological Park  
Conservation Biology Institute



Piedmont  
Environmental  
Council



**American Farmland Trust**



# Meet VGBI



## ***Piedmont Environmental Council***

October Greenfield  
Lauria McShane



## ***Quail Forever***

Alison Menefee  
Cathryn McVicker



## ***Virginia Working Landscapes***

Dr. Amy Johnson  
Justin Proctor



## ***American Farmland Trust***

Jacob Gilley

# Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative

## Working Region

- Public Lands
- Conservation Easements
- Grasslands







## Why Grassland Birds?

- More than 80% of native grassland ecosystems across North America have already been lost
- Since the 1970's, we've seen over 50% decline in grassland bird populations
- No one reason for decline but effect of agricultural intensification is profound

# Incentives Program

- Financial incentive for farmers willing to adopt specific BMPs to protect the vulnerable nesting season (April 15 - July 1)
  - ❖ Delayed Haying
  - ❖ Summer Stockpiling
- Up to \$35 per acre to offset the initial costs of piloting these best management practices



# Field Suitability

**Size:** 20 or more acres are required.

**Shape:** Square or rectangle fields are preferred (but not required).

**Surroundings:** Fields surrounded by other hay fields or pastures are preferred over those bordered by forest or development.





# Program Enrollment

Application for 2026 is OPEN!

October 1 - November 30

To learn more and apply, visit

[www.vagrasslandbirds.org/incentives/](http://www.vagrasslandbirds.org/incentives/)

or scan the QR code!



# Other Offerings

- 1-on-1 site visits to provide advice on habitat management, including pastures, hay fields, meadows, wetlands, riparian areas, etc.
- Connect landowners with other technical service providers and cost-share programs.
- Landowner workshops across the region - visit [pecva.org/events](https://pecva.org/events) to learn more!

