



Quarter 2 2013 Newsletter

Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute Seeking Its Next Class

If you are interested in gaining a better understanding of key emerging environmental issues in Virginia while enhancing your collaborative problem-solving skills and expanding your network among environmental thought leaders, you may want to consider the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute (VNRLI). The program features a series of three-day sessions across the Commonwealth. The six sessions begin in September 2013 and extend through June 2014. Applications are being accepted through the end of June with approximately 30 spots available for the 2013-2014 class.

“Our alumni include a wide variety of people who care deeply about Virginia’s environment. They are affiliated with non-profit organizations, industry, small businesses and local, regional, state and federal government,” said Mike Foreman, a Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation employee and VNRLI faculty member. “Our goal is to provide a productive dialogue on contentious natural resources-related issues important to community sustainability, and thus, be able to effectively manage, conserve and protect Virginia’s natural resources. “

This year’s program will begin in Central Virginia with a focus on communication, conflict resolution and environmental justice. The following session in Hampton Roads features a boat field trip on the economics of sustainability. Students will concentrate on ethics advocacy lobbying in Richmond in January and then head to the Shenandoah Valley to learn about agriculture and water quality issues in March. Session 5, which will be held in Southwest Virginia, will highlight renewable resources and community revitalization. The series will wrap-up in Charlottesville in June with a program on the open space process.

The program fee for VNRLI is \$2,800. The fee includes all materials and books, field trip transportation, one dinner and one lunch at each session. It does not include lodging and transportation to the sessions. Continuing education credits are available. Many organizations and companies will cover the program fee for participants in lieu of the

educational value provided. VNRLI is a collaboration of the University of Virginia Institute for Environmental Negotiation, the Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Forestry in partnership with Virginia State University and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

For more information on the leadership institute, or to submit an application, go to www.virginia.edu/ien/vnrli or contact program manager Melissa Keywood at mkeywood@virginia.edu or (434) 924-6569.

Environment Virginia Hosts 24th Annual Meeting

The Environment Virginia Symposium, held April 9 -11 at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, was attended by more than 650 participants, including state agency and local government staff, businesses, environmental consultants, and conservation groups. This year's symposium focused charting a path for Virginia's environmental future, with a keynote speech by forecaster Robert Johansen and a session track hosted by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on "Envisioning Our Future." Participants in this track were asked to explore the question, "What issues, if not addressed in the near future, will be of greatest concern to you and your constituency in the next 30-50 years?" with regard to energy supply, water supply, water quality, climate change, and societal growth. Input on these issues was also gathered via an online survey that was presented to conference participants. This session track and survey is part of DEQ's efforts to address the long-term planning part of its mission.

The Symposium also included a presentation by DEQ Director David Paylor that celebrated the environmental improvements and other successes that the agency has enjoyed since it was created 20 years ago. City of Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim discussed the challenges that sea level rise present to his city. Shelton Miles, a former chair of the State Water Control Board, received the Erchul Environmental Leadership Award at the conference. A number of Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards were also presented at the conference. The awards recognize the significant contributions of environmental and conservation leaders in two categories: sustainability and land conservation. They are given to businesses and industrial facilities, not-for-profit organizations and government agencies.

Stay Tuned – VIRGINIA*forever* annual Bridge Builder Event

VIRGINIA*forever* is hoping to host our annual signature event, the Bridge Builder dinner, in September this year to accommodate the two candidates for Governor during the election season. Both Ken Cuccinelli and Terry McAuliffe have indicated a willingness to attend the event and talk about their environmental platforms. VIRGINIA*forever* is also working on a special recognition of a Virginia environmental advocate for more than three decades.

Member Spotlight: Wildlife Foundation of Virginia

The Wildlife Foundation of Virginia (WV) is one of VIRGINIA*forever*'s newest members – joining the organization in January of this year. "VIRGINIA*forever* is a natural fit for us," said WV Director Jenny West. "Our mission is to assist in the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the wildlife and habitat resources throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. This is parallel and supportive of the VIRGINIA*forever* effort to advocate for increased land conservation and water quality funding in the state."

WFV was founded in 1997 by a concerned group of sportsmen who saw the growing problem of diminishing public lands and wanted to do something about it. The organization works with landowners, other non-profit organizations, and state agencies to identify and purchase suitable land for outdoor recreation and public access. WFV is also focused on youth participation by promoting events to teach responsibility and wildlife conservation. "Hunting and fishing in Virginia are dependent upon the participation and support of future generations," said West, "We are committed to educating and working with these young people."

Since it was established WFV has assisted in the acquisition of more than 7,000 acres to open to outdoor enthusiasts. The properties extend across the state in Albemarle, Accomack, Botetourt, Fluvanna, Charles City, Madison and Rockbridge counties. To see a list of key acquisition projects and learn more about WFV go to:

www.vawildlife.org

To nominate a member to be featured in our next e-newsletter, please email info@virginiaforever.org

New Augusta County Waste Water Treatment Plants Funded With WQIF Grants

VIRGINIA*forever* supports increased state funding by the General Assembly for water quality and land conservation projects. The [Water Quality Improvement Fund](#) (WQIF) is one of many funding outlets that the organization encourages localities around the state to access to improve water quality. These WQIF funds allow Virginia communities to develop and upgrade facilities that are designed to address environmental and economic needs.

In 2010, the development of three separate waste water treatment plants (funded in part by the WQIF) was completed in Fishersville, Stuarts Draft and Middle River. These facilities have revitalized land and improved water quality, while also becoming a welcome addition to the community, providing financial relief to customers, improving nutrient management practices, as well as adding a measure of economic stability to Augusta County and the City of Staunton.

WQIF grant funds totaling \$23.5 million were received for the development of these facilities, \$16.8 million of which went to Augusta County alone. These funds have played a major role in preventing an increase in rates for customers. Without the grant, the county indicated that it would have been forced to raise sewage rates by 21 percent.

Primarily an agricultural area, Augusta County has high nutrient levels and is therefore faced with demanding nutrient reduction targets. However, because of the substantial WQIF grant funds, Augusta County now has three facilities that are able to meet Virginia's nutrient management requirements. Since the development and upgrades of the new waste water treatment plants, nutrient levels have been monitored and

managed much more efficiently. On an annual basis, nitrogen and phosphorus levels have been reduced by 83,000 and 20,000 pounds, respectively.

Many new and/or improved features have made these facilities more efficient operationally, and a highly beneficial addition to the surrounding area:

Fishersville

- Screens
- New ENR Basins
- New Aeration Blowers
- Secondary Clarifier, Effluent Filters
- Aerobic Digesters
- Carbon and Alum Chemical Feed Systems
- New Ultraviolet Disinfection System
- New Plant Water System
- Dewatering Centrifuge

Stuarts Draft

- Screens
- Influent Pump Station
- New ENR Basins
- New Aeration Blowers
- Denitrification Filters
- New Ultraviolet Disinfection System
- New Plant Water System

Middle River

- New Grit/Headworks System
- New ENR Basins
- New Aeration Blowers
- New Clarifier
- Tertiary Filters
- Carbon and Alum Chemical Systems
- New Plant Water System
- Dewatering Centrifuges

The development of the Fishersville, Stuarts Draft and Middle River waste water treatment plants will go a long way in helping Augusta County to prepare for the future. A newfound ability to meet Chesapeake Bay nutrient waste load allocations has boosted the county's economy, attracting new businesses that will enhance the civic and economic aspects of the area. Virginia Governor Robert McDonnell recently announced the groundbreaking for Shamrock Farms, a \$50 million dairy product facility that is scheduled to open in Augusta County in 2014.

[Click here](#) to view a complete list of WQIF projects.

(Thanks to Matt Treacy, Public Information and Outreach Writer for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for submitting the WQIF article.)

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Dunn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" being more prominent.

Robert L. Dunn
Chairman