



## Quarter 3 2012 Newsletter

### **VIRGINIAforever Updates Our Contact List**

In the six years since the founding of VIRGINIAforever, we have communicated with hundreds of Virginians, and even a few folks out of state, who support water quality and land conservation efforts in the Commonwealth. Our periodic newsletters are distributed as a source of information and reminder of the important work we are supporting as we want to make sure everyone affiliated with VIRGINIAforever receives timely notices about our annual legislative briefing and annual fund raising roast event. Recently we updated our mailing database, and your receipt of this newsletter indicates you are included in that database. We hope you will remain a supporter but if for any reason you would like to be removed from our lists of contacts, please click the link at the bottom of this email.

### **VIRGINIAforever Highlighted at Corporate Sustainability Roundtable**

Governor Bob McDonnell convened a roundtable on corporate sustainability on April 23, 2012 where VIRGINIAforever and several of its board members played a prominent role in leading the conversation. James River Association Executive Director Bill Street and VIRGINIAforever Executive Director Missy Neff Gould spearheaded a discussion on how non-profit associations can promote sustainability. Later in the program, Smithfield Foods Executive Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer Dennis Treacy, Dominion Resources Senior Vice President of Law, Public Policy and Environment Bob Blue, and Jennifer Hunter, senior vice president of corporate affairs for VIRGINIAforever member Altria, joined Governor McDonnell in a discussion of "The Virginia Way" to support and promote sustainability. The program was well received and offered VIRGINIAforever some valuable exposure. Ms. Neff Gould commented after the meeting, "I think the event provided a wonderful opportunity to talk about who we are at VIRGINIAforever and how we work together to affect change for water quality and land conservation across the state."

### **Chesapeake Bay Shows Signs of Progress; Work Remains**

A July 6 news release issued by Governor Bob McDonnell proclaims significant progress has been made in regards to the Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts in addition to substantial nitrogen reductions at major wastewater facilities across the Commonwealth. The Governor indicated Virginia is exceeding commitments under the Chesapeake Bay Program to reduce nutrients in the bay from wastewater

treatment plants and says Virginia is well on track to meet future two-year “milestones” for bay restoration. The release went on to announce four important accomplishments:

- Virginia major wastewater facilities in 2011 exceeded pollution reduction goals by more than 2,000 percent for nitrogen and more than 450 percent for phosphorus.
- The U.S. EPA’s Region 3 has awarded Virginia their “Biggest Loser” for ranking first in the region and second in the nation for reducing nitrogen pollution as reported through the Clean Water Act nonpoint source program. In 2011, Virginia’s activities prevented 2.5 million pounds of nitrogen from entering streams and lakes.
- Virginia reported more phosphorus and bacteria load reductions than any other state in EPA’s Region 3, an area that includes Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Phosphorus loads were reduced by 216,000 pounds.
- Virginia’s state budget will allocate \$92 million toward point and non-point water quality programs – the highest general fund appropriations to the WQIF in the past five fiscal years.

See the full press release here:

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/News/viewRelease.cfm?id=1325>

The Governor’s announcement was followed by a opinion editorial in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* by VIRGINIAforever board member and Virginia director of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Ann Jennings. She wrote about what has, and has not, been accomplished in Bay cleanup efforts. Jennings stated, “Some sources, particularly wastewater treatment plants, have made significant progress in reducing pollution, largely due to Virginia’s commitment to set strict regulatory limits and finance plant upgrades. But not all sources have made such progress. In fact, the history of Chesapeake Bay restoration remains one of long-term goals set, then missed.” The Chesapeake Bay Foundation has conducted its own assessment of “milestones” and found Virginia has met six out of the nine. Jennings goes on to say, “Additional efforts, however, are needed for implementation of cover crops, forest buffers, and lawn fertilizers to stay on track to achieve 60 percent implementation by 2017 and full implementation by 2025. We also found that more work is needed to fully track storm water runoff controls. What’s our bottom line? We’re cautiously optimistic.”

See the full article here: <http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/commentary/2012/jul/15/tdcomm01-virginia-makes-progress-on-bay-clean-up-g-ar-2055960/>

### **Member Spotlight – Altria Works to Reduce its Companies’ Environmental Footprint**

Altria Group, headquartered in Richmond, Va., is the parent company of Philip Morris USA, U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company, John Middleton Co. and Ste. Michelle Wine Estates. As the parent of companies that depend on our planet’s natural resources, Altria Group has set a goal to reduce the environmental impact of our businesses and to promote the sustainability of the natural resources on which they depend.

Water is one of those important natural resources. Our companies work to reduce and optimize their water usage, to develop ways to protect the habitats and ecosystems affected by their operations, and to take positive steps in partnership with others to protect biodiversity. In our business, examples include:

- At Altria headquarters, groundwater serves a dual purpose. It is first used to supply water to an onsite reflecting pond, then reused for landscape irrigation.
- Ste. Michelle Wine Estates' vineyard operations in Washington state employ drip irrigation and use weather stations and soil moisture-measuring probes to monitor water use and eliminate wasted water in the vineyards.
- To help address excessive levels of nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay, Philip Morris USA's Park 500 facility, which is located in the bay watershed near Richmond, Va., has implemented engineered wetlands to filter treated wastewater before returning it to the James River. Since 2008, more than 230 plant and animal species have re-populated the area including native deer, frogs and birds. This represents over a 350 percent increase in wildlife usage of the site since the Natural Treatment System was developed.
- The Snoqualmie winery was one of the first Washington wineries to craft wines from USDA-certified organically grown grapes at its certified organic winemaking facility. Snoqualmie's sustainable practices in the vineyard include water conservation, use of biodegradable natural pest control agents, and the planting of beneficial cover crops to reduce soil erosion.

We also work with our suppliers and partners to help reduce the impact of our businesses on the environment. Philip Morris USA and U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company promote the use of Good Agricultural Practices with their contracted growers to help reduce the impact of tobacco farming on local waterways and other environmentally sensitive areas. These practices include soil conservation methods, nutrient and crop protection agent management, and buffer strips to reduce water runoff from farmland.

Our companies invest in non-profit organizations and programs that help address key environmental sustainability issues. Altria has contributed \$1 million to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to support Chesapeake Bay restoration, and we support the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Western Waters Initiative, which helps improve water management and streamflows in the Columbia River basin near Ste. Michelle Wine Estates' facilities and vineyards.

Please visit [www.altria.com](http://www.altria.com) to learn more about Altria's approach to environmental management.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Dunn", with a stylized, cursive script.

Bob Dunn