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Karri Atwood Named New Executive Director of VIRGINIA*forever*

RICHMOND, Va. (November 13, 2023) – VIRGINIA*forever* is pleased to announce it has hired Karri Atwood as its new Executive Director. With more than 16 years of experience in the environmental sector, Ms. Atwood brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to lead the organization in its mission to advocate for increased government funding for water quality improvements and land conservation across the Commonwealth.

"We are thrilled to have Karri join VIRGINIA*forever* as its new Executive Director. Her extensive experience and impressive track record in advocating for the environment and public health align perfectly with our mission," said Peggy Sanner, Chair of the VIRGINIA*forever* Board of Directors. "We are confident that her leadership will enhance and propel our efforts to protect and preserve Virginia's natural resources to new heights."

Ms. Atwood possesses an extensive background in working with state and local governments on legislative and policy initiatives aimed at safeguarding the environment and Virginia's natural resources. She has played a pivotal role in assisting agencies in developing legislative and policy goals, as well as educating decision-makers on pressing environmental concerns and the impact of funding and budget amendments on agency programs.

Prior to joining VIRGINIA*forever*, Ms. Atwood most recently served as the Director for Legal Services at the Virginia Department of Health. She is also an attorney who previously served under two former Virginia Attorneys General.

"Joining VIRGINIA*forever* as its executive director is a tremendous honor and I look forward to hitting the ground running," said Ms. Atwood. "As someone who has worked with, and alongside, state government agencies, I am familiar with the legislative process as well as the players involved. I am excited to work with our organization's business leaders and environmental advocates to ensure protection of Virginia's land and water resources are among the state's top priorities, which are also funded appropriately."

Among her key accomplishments in the environmental space, Ms. Atwood was instrumental in the success of the Wastewater Infrastructure Workgroup, which she helped establish alongside the Virginia Deputy Secretary for Natural Resources. The workgroup, composed of leaders from state agencies, professional organizations, and community activist groups, successfully lobbied for legislation prioritizing universal access to wastewater treatment that protects public health, the environment, and local economic growth and stability.

Her dedication and advocacy also led to the allocation of \$11 million in funding for the repair and replacement of private wells and onsite sewage systems in the Commonwealth through the American Rescue Plan Act. This funding has facilitated 257 projects aimed at providing clean water and effective wastewater solutions to Virginia's citizens while reducing harmful constituents in the state's groundwater and surface water.

About VIRGINIA*forever*:

VIRGINIA*forever* is a diverse coalition of businesses, environmental organizations, and outdoor enthusiasts that advocates for increased funding for water quality improvements and land conservation across the Commonwealth. We are the only statewide organization that has a primary focus on increasing funding for natural resources protection. VIRGINIA*forever* is a 501 ©4 organization. For more information about VIRGINIA*forever* and its work, please visit www.VIRGINIAforever.org.

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