

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Contact:**

Joseph H. Maroon
Executive Director
info@vee.org
(804) 644-5000

**THE VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT AWARDS
MORE THAN \$260,000 FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Grants awarded focus on enhancing water quality, restoring the Chesapeake Bay, and advancing land conservation, environmental literacy, and climate change adaptation

October 27, 2015 - The Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) today announced awards of more than \$260,000 to protect and improve the region's natural resources and environment. Eleven organizations will receive financial support, benefitting communities throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Kanawha and Ohio River Valleys of West Virginia and Kentucky. The Endowment's total support in 2015 for more than twenty organizations exceeds \$500,000. When combined with matching funds, VEE has invested more than \$77 million in environmental improvements statewide since it was founded in 1977.

"The Endowment's grants continue our strategic investments in local water quality and the health of the Chesapeake Bay, the conservation of sensitive landscapes, and the education of students and the general public regarding important environmental issues, including the impacts of climate change," said Joseph H. Maroon, Executive Director.

VEE GRANT AWARDS**Climate Change Adaptation**

- Science Museum of Virginia Foundation: Support for the Museum to hire a Fellow to expand its social and digital media presence and interactive onsite labs, for wide-reaching communications about climate change and its impacts. This grant is part of a collaborative project between the Science Museum Foundation, VEE and the Virginia Sea Grant Program located at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. (\$25,000 - Richmond / Central VA)

Improving Local Water Quality and the Chesapeake Bay

- Center for Watershed Protection: Support for three regional workshops in Virginia on illicit discharge detection and elimination for 50-60 local government stormwater / public works

managers and state regulatory personnel. (\$13,400 - Northern Virginia, Richmond / Central Virginia, Hampton Roads)

- Chesapeake Conservancy: Support for the planning and implementation of sediment and nutrient reduction best management practices throughout the James River watershed, in partnership with four Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts. This implementation grant is part of the Envision the James project facilitated by the Conservancy, James River Association and National Geographic Maps. (\$33,300 - James River Basin)
- Choose Clean Water Coalition: Partnership support for the evaluation of pollution reduction credits associated with agricultural conservation efforts tied to Bay restoration. (\$5,000 - Coastal / Chesapeake Bay)
- West Virginia Rivers Coalition: Support for the Coalition's efforts to positively influence policies related to West Virginia State Water Quality Standards and Source Water / Headwaters Protection. (\$80,000 over two years from VEE's Kanawha and Ohio River Valleys Program)
- Kentucky Waterways Alliance: Support for the creation of a nonprofit advisory body to assist in the work of the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission. (\$13,775 from VEE's Kanawha and Ohio River Valleys Program)

Conserving Virginia's Lands

- Living River Restoration Trust: Support to determine the feasibility of creating a sustainable local land trust to conserve smaller, urban tracts of land in the Elizabeth River watershed. (\$10,000 - Hampton Roads)

Enhancing Environmental Literacy and Public Awareness

- Friends of Southwest Virginia: Support for a specialist to develop and test model environmental education curricula for K-12 students and innovative programming for adults and families focused on using the Clinch River as an outdoor classroom. This grant is part of the Clinch River Valley Initiative, a collaborative effort among many partners. (\$15,000 - Southwest Virginia)
- Nansemond River Preservation Alliance: Support for an Environmental Education Coordinator to oversee experiential outdoor learning programs for more than 1,000 middle school students in Suffolk. (\$20,000 - Hampton Roads)
- Virginia Junior Academy of Science (VJAS): Four-year support and administration for the Judge Henry W. MacKenzie, Jr. Scholarship of \$5,000, awarded to the high school student whose project evidences the most significant contribution in the field of Environmental Science dealing with the James River Basin and the Chesapeake Bay. (\$24,000 - Statewide)
- Chesapeake Media Service: Support for enhanced capacity and coverage of Virginia environmental issues in the highly regarded Bay Journal. (\$25,000 - Coastal / Chesapeake Bay)

To learn more about awardees or obtain additional information about the projects, please contact Joseph H. Maroon at info@vee.org or (804) 644.5000.

The Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) is a non-profit, grant-making foundation based in Richmond, Virginia that is focused on improving the quality of the environment by using its capital, expertise and resources to encourage all sectors to work together to prevent pollution, conserve natural resources and promote environmental literacy. Learn more about VEE by visiting vee.org.