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VEE ANNOUNCES OVER $3.7 MILLION IN GRANTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

October 31, 2019 - The Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) is today announcing over $3.7 million in new grants to 22 partner organizations dedicated to advancing water quality and Chesapeake Bay improvements, land conservation practices, environmental literacy, climate resiliency, and invasive species control. These awards – together with those announced last spring -- bring the total VEE grants for calendar year 2019 to over $4 million, which is the second highest yearly amount awarded in its 42 year history. The list of awards includes $3.45 million in grants to seven partners to directly improve water quality in the James River. When combined with matching funds, VEE has contributed to more than $105 million in environmental improvements since it was founded in 1977.

The 22 projects supported from VEE’s Virginia and James River Water Quality Improvement grant programs will contribute to extensive pollution reductions, restored stream channels, improved livestock and poultry waste management, new acres of living shorelines and conserved land, increased engagement of local officials on Bay restoration, enhanced water quality monitoring programs, environmental education experiences for thousands of inner city students, several college scholarships, and more, across the state.

“We are pleased to be working with an outstanding group of organization and agency partners to help catalyze a broad range of on-the-ground environmental improvements in Virginia,” said Joseph H. Maroon, VEE Executive Director. “The grants will allow our partners to work with farmers, agricultural producers, landowners, local communities, school children, volunteer citizen scientists, and others to accelerate improvements in the health and understanding of Virginia’s important natural resources,” Maroon noted. Over $2 million was awarded to projects benefiting the Peninsula and Coastal regions, nearly $850,000 to the Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont regions, and almost $700,000 in Richmond and Central Virginia.

A listing of this fall’s grant recipients by region follows.

For more information about these grants or about the Endowment, please contact Joseph H. Maroon at info@vee.org or (804) 644.5000 or visit vee.org. The Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) is a non-profit, grant-making foundation based in Richmond, Virginia that is focused on using its capital, expertise and resources to improve the quality of the environment. The Endowment celebrated its 40th Anniversary in 2017.
LISTING OF VEE GRANTS FOR FALL 2019

RICHMOND AND CENTRAL VIRGINIA

Blue Sky Fund, Richmond, VA ($25,000): Support to expand hands-on monthly outdoor educational program for local students from eight to 14 Richmond City public elementary schools.

Capital Region Land Conservancy, Richmond, VA ($40,000): Support for the Conservancy’s organizational growth and development, it being the only private land trust working to conserve land in the greater Richmond region.

Friends of the James River Park, Richmond, VA ($10,000): Support for the Invasive Species Task Force to begin work on removal and treatment of invasive species in the James River Park.

City of Hopewell, Hopewell, VA ($261,203): Support for restoration of a perennial stream located adjacent to Hopewell High School and Mathias Park; the restoration will reconnect the stream with the adjoining floodplain.*

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond, VA ($315,000): Support for restoration of Glen Stream, located on the Garden’s property in the city of Richmond; restoration of this stream will both reduce pollution to the James River and provide educational opportunities to the Garden’s many visitors.*

Maymont Foundation, Richmond, VA ($10,000): Support for the upgrading of interactive displays aimed at better connecting visitors to the James River and environmental stewardship.

Virginia Junior Academy of Science, Richmond, VA ($24,000): Support for the Judge Henry W. MacKenzie, Jr. college scholarship, a competitive 4-year scholarship awarded to high-school students who demonstrate a significant contribution in the field of James River and Chesapeake Bay environmental science. VEE awards two college scholarships annually in honor of founding members of its Board.

PENINSULA AND COASTAL REGION

Ducks Unlimited, Memphis, TN ($701,408): Support for the construction and installation of a living shoreline at the Hog Island Wildlife Management Area in the James River, designed to reduce erosion, thereby improving water quality in the James and protecting the Island’s tidal marshes.*

James City County, Williamsburg, VA ($396,000): Support for the restoration of two highly degraded stream reaches of Grice Run that are located on property directly adjacent to the Surry-Skiffes transmission line.*

James River Association, Richmond, VA ($1,039,170): Support for a three-year program providing technical and financial assistance to landowners in the Lower James River basin and Elizabeth River for the implementation of homeowner living shorelines in conjunction with the Elizabeth River Project and other partners.*

University of Virginia’s Institute for Engagement and Negotiation, Charlottesville, VA ($20,000): Support for the implementation of the coastal Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool to develop innovative and meaningful approaches helpful to facing the challenges of increasing coastal storms, flooding, and sea level rise in localities on Virginia’s Northern Neck; project involves experts from UVA, William and Mary, and ODU
SHENANDOAH VALLEY AND PIEDMONT REGION

Blue Ridge PRISM, Crozet, VA ($20,000): Support for a challenge grant for an innovative program aimed at recognizing, understanding the damage from, and replacing invasive species.

Friends of the Rappahannock, Fredericksburg, VA ($27,250): Support to accelerate implementation of priority conservation practices such as planting stream buffers in the middle and upper Rappahannock River watershed.

Land Trust of Virginia, Middleburg, VA ($19,500): Support to advance proactive and highly targeted conservation work along the ridgeline of Northern Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains focused on working with willing landowners with large parcels having the highest conservation values.

Piedmont Environmental Council, Warrenton, VA ($20,000): Support for the accelerated implementation of conservation easements with water quality practices in the upper Rappahannock-Rapidan Rivers watershed including Culpepper and neighboring counties.

Rivanna Conservation Alliance, Charlottesville, VA ($25,000): Support for the continuation and expansion of the Alliance’s certified water quality stream monitoring program and educational programs in the Rivanna River region.

Sustainable Chesapeake, Richmond, VA ($237,610): Support to establish the innovative practice of manure injection in the James River watershed, a practice currently utilized by farmers in PA and MD.*

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Richmond, VA ($500,000): Support for a three-year program to assist farmers in the installation of storage facilities for waste generated by livestock and poultry in the Upper and Middle James regions.*

VIRGINIA’S BAY REGION

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Annapolis, MD and Richmond, VA ($11,938): Support to engage local governments in restoring water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its Virginia tributaries through a series of roundtables hosted by local elected officials.

Bay Journal Media, Annapolis, MD ($25,000): Support for the Bay Journal’s new local government edition and continued Virginia coverage.

Virginia Conservation Network, Richmond, VA ($20,000): Support for the expansion of the “Chesapeake Bay and Healthy Rivers Campaign” to help coordinate efforts of diverse groups to promote clean water safeguards and protect federal environmental standards.

NOTE: Grants awarded from VEE’s James River Water Quality Improvement Program are marked with an *.