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VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT AWARDS
MORE THAN $100,000 FOR PROJECTS IN THE JAMES RIVER REGION,
HAMPTON ROADS AND THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY

Dec 13, 2016 - The Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) today announced awards of more than $180,000 to fourteen organizations dedicated to protecting and improving the Commonwealth’s natural resources and environment. Over $100,000 of this amount is targeted to the seven organizations highlighted below, whose projects focus on improving the James River, Hampton Roads and the Shenandoah Valley. When combined with matching funds, VEE has invested more than $77 million in environmental improvements statewide since it was founded in 1977.

“As the Endowment looks ahead to celebrating our 40th anniversary in 2017, we are once again honored to support outstanding partners focused on improving local waters, restoring Chesapeake Bay, conserving land, and increasing public awareness,” said Joseph H. Maroon, VEE Executive Director.

James River grants, including those in the Richmond region, total over $65,000 for the development of innovative conservation tools, demonstration stormwater projects and land conservation:

* Chesapeake Conservancy: Challenge grant for the development and use of innovative technologies to identify where best to conduct conservation efforts in the James River watershed to drive more cost effective restoration. A significant part of this project will be the development of a computer-based tool that determines parcel-level restoration priorities and opportunities for water quality improvement that would maximize benefits for water quality improvements in urban and rural locations throughout the river basin. ($30,000)
* Maymont Foundation: Challenge grant for stormwater management programming as part of the renovations of the Children’s Farm in Maymont Park in Richmond. This grant includes support for educational signage and a challenge grant for community outreach and education initiatives related to the project. ($19,050)
* Capital Region Land Conservancy: Support for the conservation of tracts of land in the greater Richmond region adjacent to the James River through voluntary easements. The importance of permanently protecting the James River is undeniable to the region as it provides water to residents and industry, offers world class recreation, sustains indigenous habitats, and defines the sense of place. ($15,000)

Grants in Hampton Roads, totaling $25,000, are aimed at coastal resiliency and land conservation:

* Wetlands Watch: Development of a guide for local governments to educate them on the multiple benefits of nature-based approaches to increasing coastal resiliency and reducing stormwater pollution. The project is designed to assist localities in more cost effective approaches to addressing multiple environmental issues simultaneously. ($10,000)
* Living River Restoration Trust: Challenge grant to support the conservation of smaller, urban tracts of land in the Elizabeth River watershed. ($15,000)

Grants in the Shenandoah Valley, totaling $25,000, will fund efforts to better protect farmland through a flexible approach and aim to improve trout stream restoration efforts:

* Valley Conservation Council: Development of a farm-oriented template to use for the increased protection of agricultural lands and water quality in the Shenandoah Valley. The Shenandoah Valley contains four of the top five agricultural counties in the state, but these counties lag in total acreage of land under conservation easement. ($15,000)
* Trout Unlimited: Challenge grant in support of a pilot project in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Survey to generate new data to guide stream restoration efforts in the Upper Shenandoah River watershed and engage citizen volunteers to help factor climate changes into trout habitat conservation efforts**.** ($10,000)

To learn more about the Endowment, or to obtain additional information about the complete list of projects or organizations receiving funding, 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 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. The Endowment will celebrate its 40th Anniversary in 2017. Learn more about VEE by visiting vee.org.