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Contact: Joseph H. Maroon, Executive Director
info@vee.org / 804.644.5000

**VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT AWARDS
OVER A QUARTER MILLION DOLLARS FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL
NATURAL RESOURCE INITIATIVES**

June 7, 2019 (Richmond) - The Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) is pleased to announce grant awards of \$284,800 to 12 organizations dedicated to protecting and improving the region's natural resources and environment. When combined with matching funds, the Endowment has provided over \$95 million in environmental improvement support since it was founded in 1977.

"The latest grant awards include funds for bolstering private land conservation options in Southern Virginia, supporting innovative climate related land trust work in Hampton Roads that could prove to be a model for other coastal communities, establishing a new citizen science river monitoring program in Northern Virginia, continuing post-graduate fellowships with state natural resource agencies, and contributing to the conservation of an iconic place on the Rappahannock River," noted Joseph H. Maroon, VEE's Executive Director. "The Endowment's grants continue our strategic investments in local water quality and the health of the Chesapeake Bay, the conservation of sensitive landscapes, educational opportunities, and climate adaptation."

VEE's latest grants, grouped by area of focus, are as follows:

Southern Virginia Land Conservation

Blue Ridge Land Conservancy, Roanoke, VA: Support for the development of a Southern Virginia Land Conservancy initiative, including the formation of an advisory council and hiring a part-time manager in Martinsville. (\$10,000)

Ever Green Team, Kenbridge, VA: Support for its partnering work with the Land Trust Alliance and Blue Ridge Land Conservancy as it expands its land conservation efforts in portions of Southern Virginia, works to obtain its land trust accreditation, and hires its first staff in Kenbridge, Virginia. (\$20,000)

Land Trust Alliance, Washington, DC: Support for continuation of its mentoring role in advancing land conservation in Southern Virginia, providing expertise and assistance to coaching and assisting other private land trusts. (\$15,000)

Land Conservation

The Conservation Fund, Arlington, VA: Support for non-acquisition costs incurred in the preservation of the iconic Fones Cliff on the Rappahannock River in Virginia's Northern Neck. (\$10,000)

Virginia's United Land Trusts, Richmond, VA: Support for ongoing work as a convener of Virginia's land trust community, providing education on innovative practices and the role of land conservation in emerging issues (e.g., incorporation of water quality improvement practices on conserved land, responses to solar farming opportunities, and ensuring the availability of conservation opportunities in all regions of the state and to families of all income levels). (\$20,000)

Local and Chesapeake Bay Water Quality

James River Association, Richmond, VA: Support for the enhancement of the *State of the James* biennial report card on the condition of the James River and for parallel efforts to connect the report card with citizen engagement. (\$30,000)

Southern Environmental Law Center, Charlottesville, VA: Support for the Center's policy and advocacy work on a host of state and national environmental issues, in particular those impacting water quality and land use. (\$30,000)

Potomac Riverkeeper Network, Washington, DC: Support for the development of a new citizen science water quality monitoring program in the Potomac River focusing on bacterial contamination in the river, establishing safe swim advisories, increasing public understanding of water quality risks, and assisting local government responses. (\$15,000)

Climate Adaptation

Wetlands Watch, Norfolk, VA: Support for two pilot projects, one with the City of Chesapeake and one with Norfolk, which utilize land conservation as an adaptation tool in responding to sea level rise and recurrent flooding. Both pilot projects could serve as national models replicable in other coastal communities. (\$35,000)

Virginia Coastal Policy Center, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA: Support for its highly successful annual forum, its assistance to state and local governments on funding mechanisms for responding to climate change challenges, and its research on legal obstacles to implementing effective resiliency actions. (\$40,000)

Natural Resource Post-Graduate Fellowships

Virginia Sea Grant, Gloucester Point, VA: Support for the placement of Masters and Ph.D. post graduates in state natural resource agency professional positions for up to 12 months through the joint Virginia Sea Grant and VEE Commonwealth Coastal and Marine Policy Fellowship. (\$15,000 a year for two years)

Citizen Monitoring

Watershed Watch in Kentucky: VEE awarded an additional \$29,800 under VEE's Kanawha and Ohio River Valleys Grant Program to strengthen and expand the organization's citizen science monitoring network and program.

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 celebrated its 40th Anniversary in 2017. Learn more about VEE by visiting vee.org.