

2008 Annual Report

Capital Region Land Conservancy

In 2008, the Capital Region Land Conservancy (CRLC) assisted in the permanent protection of two properties in Hanover County totaling over 200 acres of land. Since our inception in 2005 we have facilitated the protection of 2,700 acres of land in the Richmond area.

CRLC carries out its mission by educating landowners and communities about land protection through the use of voluntary conservation easements and seeks to safeguard natural areas through the donation of easements.

Limited direct state and federal funding is available to purchase land for conservation in the Richmond area. Voluntary, private conservation easements are the primary land protection tool. There is a tremendous need to educate landowners about conservation easements, as no other organization in the Richmond area is actively educating landowners about voluntary land protection tools.

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently prohibits specified uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. A property owner foregoes certain land development options in exchange for the legacy of permanently protecting the land in its natural state and for state and federal tax incentives associated with the charitable donation of an easement. Ownership is not affected and he or she can sell the property or will it to heirs.

Our funding is used to conduct educational outreach to inform landowners about conservation easements and the attendant federal and state tax benefits. A summary of our outreach efforts in 2008 is described below.

CRLC mailed over 1,000 postcards to rural landowners (100 acres or more of land) in the Richmond area to educate them about conservation easements and the related tax benefits.

CRLC initiated contact with 31 local officials (such as ag-extension agents & county foresters) in our seven county service area to educate them about land protection tools and the services we offer.

As a result of our outreach efforts above, CRLC conducted 26 direct landowner meetings and presented to eight civic group meetings, reaching an audience of over 250 landowners. CRLC in cooperation with Powhatan Tomorrow sponsored a forum on conservation easements in Powhatan County.

CRLC hired a part-time executive director to assist in expanding our funding base in the community and part-time outreach coordinator. As a result CRLC sponsored two community leader meetings to raise awareness about our organization among community and business

leaders in the Richmond area.

In cooperation with the Green Infrastructure Center, CRLC initiated a green infrastructure study of the Richmond area to identify high value natural resources. The report is due in June 2009 and will help CRLC strategically focus its conservation efforts on high-value natural resources.

In late 2008 CRLC and the Goochland Land Alliance decided to merge to better serve the Richmond area. The merger was completed in March of 2009 and CRLC is the surviving entity.

Throughout 2008 CRLC worked with the City of Richmond and the Department of Conservation and Recreation to place a conservation easement on the James River Park system. The Richmond City Council approved the conservation easement in early 2009 and the easement is expected to be signed in May 2009.

Total contributions in 2008 were \$37,495 and expenses were \$45,092. Our major contributors in 2008 are listed below:

Altria -\$15,000

Bank of America Foundation- \$5,000

Bullard Foundation- \$5,000

Luck Stone Foundation- \$5,000

Vulcan Materials-\$2,500

Due to the size of the 2008 budget CRLC did not have its financial statements audited.