

Land Trust Hires Stewardship Manager

The Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust's efforts to enhance landowner stewardship and strengthen the local farm and food network got a boost this summer with the hiring of Hali Flourde-Rogers as Stewardship Manager.

Hali is working with the Land Trust's more than 65 landowners who have donated conservation easements on more than 13,000 acres. She visits properties and provides landowners with information about new stewardship practices to manage shorelines, wetlands, wildlife habitat and other natural resources. Hali will also work to connect easement donors with land to lease to local growers seeking to supply produce and other products to Shore residents.

Hali has a corporate marketing background and extensive experience writing for print and online media. She earned a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning with a focus in sustainable local food systems, as well as a B.A. in English, from Virginia Tech. Hali and her husband live in Onancock.

Hali joins Executive Director Peter N. Henderson and Administrative Assistant Nita Daley on staff. The new stewardship manager position was made possible by grants from The Hillsdale Fund and The Volgenau Foundation.



Hali Flourde-Rogers on Onancock Creek

Land Trust Organizes Nature Walk for Second Graders

Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust (VES Land Trust) organized and sponsored the second Nature Walk for second graders from Occohannock Elementary School on October 17th. VES Land Trust partnered with The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Virginia Coast Reserve (VCR), Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore (CBES), and the Barrier Island Center (BIC) to take 65 children to the Brownsville Preserve in Nassawadox. Peter Henderson, VES Land Trust Executive Director, led students, teachers,

and parent volunteers along the 1.1 mile William B. Cummings Birding and Wildlife Trail from the TNC office to the observation deck overlooking the salt marsh toward Hog Island. Along the trail Bo Lusk, VCR Restoration Specialist, pointed out the difference in the habitats the trail passes through, including upland forests and marsh. The kids saw persimmon trees and fruit, pine trees and ghost pine trees, tree frogs, spiders, retired farmland, and lots of birds.



2nd graders take turns holding a young female crab.

At the end of the trail, VES Land Trust, TNC, CBES, and the BIC set up stations for smaller groups to explore. These stations introduced the children to Eastern Shore Native American culture, farming, salt marsh, a waterfowl pond, and the barrier islands. Pete Henderson explained where the first Native Americans came from and how they processed corn into corn meal. The students took turns using mortar and pestle to grind corn. Denard Spady, CBES Executive Director, talked about how farming and farm tools and equipment on the Eastern Shore have advanced over time. Bo Lusk introduced the children to salt marsh habitat, tidal waters, and even let them handle a young crab. Marcus Killmon, VCR Preserve Manager, showed the kids how the waterfowl pond's water pump runs off solar energy. He demonstrated the pump running with full sun on the solar panels and then covered the solar panels with a tarp to show how the water flow slows when the sun goes behind clouds or sets. Jerry Doughty, BIC Historian, discussed the history of the barrier islands, including stories of Native Americans and pirates as well as how and why the islands move. At this station, students climbed a platform and looked out across the salt marsh to Hog Island Bay and the thin line of Hog Island.

The afternoon ended with an outdoor picnic lunch and a hike back to the TNC office where the buses waited to take the students back to school. "The students truly enjoyed themselves. They loved having the maps and locating the markers along the way," said Susan Kellam, Northampton County Public Schools.

VES Land Trust looks forward to continuing these fieldtrips in the future and expanding the program to include elementary schools all over the Shore. If you'd like to see more photographs from the trip, visit our

Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/VESLandTrust> or our website at www.VESLandTrust.org.

The Brownsville Preserve is owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy. It's an historic property of over 1,000 acres. The Preserve contains a wealth of diverse habitats from woods to marsh. The trail is open to the public for hiking, birding, and photography during daylight hours.



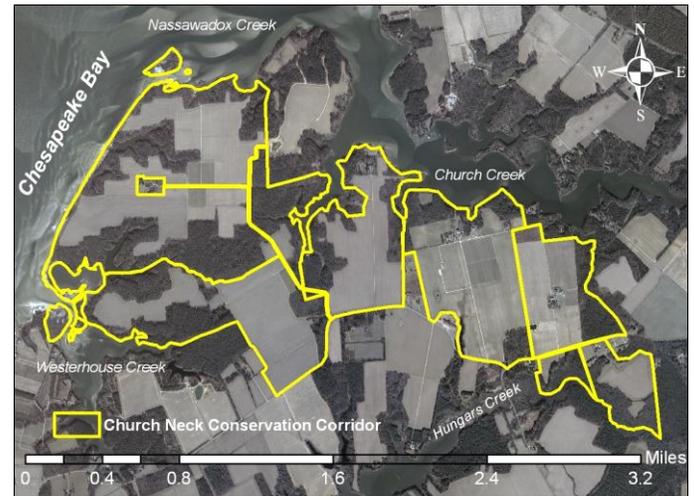
2nd graders consult their map along the wildlife trail.

Northampton County to Protect Third Farm Bringing Church Neck Conservation Corridor to 1,853 Acres

By this winter, Northampton County expects to protect its third working farm on the Church Neck Conservation Corridor through the local Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program. The 197-acre farm near Bridgetown is contiguous with five farms protected by conservation easements held by VES Land Trust and one held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF). The easements on Church Neck collectively protect nearly 950 acres of farmland and more than 15 miles of shoreline and marsh buffers along Church Creek, Westerhouse Creek, Nassawadox Creek, Hungars Creek and the Chesapeake Bay.

Funding for the county's third PDR conservation easement was secured from state, federal and private sources by leveraging transient occupancy tax monies (collected in hotels, motels and B&B's) totaling 8% of the purchase price. "The beauty of this program is that Northampton County taxpayers are not burdened by its cost. The transient occupancy tax is ultimately paid to the county by people passing through the Shore, not its residents," said Dave Harris, the PDR committee's lead negotiator. "It really is a win-win for the county. Protecting land is an integral part of the county's comprehensive plan, and it does not cost them much to do it."

The Northampton program is managed by Peter Stith in the County's Department of Planning and Zoning. Supervisors appoint the PDR Program Committee, currently composed of farmers, conservationists and public servants. VES Land Trust Executive Director Peter Henderson serves as the committee chairman.



Church Neck Conservation Corridor

For more information about the Northampton County PDR program or to obtain a PDR application package, contact Peter Stith, 757- 678-0443 Ext. 27 or pstith@co.northampton.va.us

Backyard Habitat Enhancement Workshop is a Success!

On October 10th, the Land Trust led a Backyard Habitat Workshop through the Academy for Lifetime Learning at the Eastern Shore Community College in Melfa. The workshop included presentations from Master Naturalists Clyde Morris, Tony Picardi, and Peggy Swan as well as a fieldtrip to two established backyard habitats. The day started off at 9 a.m. with coffee and muffins from Yellow Duck Bakery. Once appetites were satiated and coffee was in hand, participants settled down to hear from Clyde Morris, Tony Picardi, and Peggy Swan.

Peggy Swan kicked things off with a presentation about her *Wild Garden*. Peggy's presentation chronicled the progression of her Wild Garden over the past 15 years. She also introduced the participants to forbs, which are wildflowers, flowers, vegetables, and herbs; native versus non-native species; and seed saving. Peggy even sent participants home with *Kosteletzkya* seeds she harvested from her garden.

Clyde Morris followed Peggy with his presentation, *Birds of the Eastern Shore: How Can You Help Them?* Clyde identified the significant economic impact of birding on the Shore; explained the significance of the Eastern Shore as bird habitat; discussed threats to birds on the Shore, the largest threat being loss of habitat; and offered several ways to help birds, including creating habitat in your yard using native species.

Tony Picardi wrapped up the presentation portion of the workshop with a presentation called, *What Does it Take*

to Create Wildlife Habitat? Tony discussed the importance of native plants, the average time he spends each year maintaining his herb garden and wildflower meadow, as well as the challenges he has faced, including replanting his meadow and managing plants that are naturally more vigorous.



Participants and instructors pose for a photo at Tony Picardi's before beginning the garden walk.

Left to Right: Peter Henderson, Peggy Swan, Tony Picardi, Miriam Riggs, Wendy Miles, Clyde Morris, Carol Tunstall, Kent Sudman, Bill Mastyl, and Sue Mastyl. Not shown: Hali Flourde-Rogers, Kitty Croke, and Donna Ware.

During lunch, VES Land Trust's Executive Director, Pete Henderson, briefly spoke with participants about the Land Trust and its role preserving land on the Shore. Then participants, presenters, and Land Trust representatives piled into the rental van and headed out to Tony's home, Holly Point Farm, on Occohannock Creek and Peggy Swan's Wild Garden on Onancock Creek. Holy Point Farm, a VES Land Trust protected farm, was the first stop. The group walked through Tony's wildflower meadow, herb garden, frog pond, down to the creek, and to the larger fish pond. Tony pointed out tree, wildflower, grass, butterfly, and insect species. And Clyde Morris identified birds along the way. Once finished at Tony's, the group headed over to see Peggy's Wild Garden. Peggy kindly provided water and homemade cookies while the group walked through her garden. She pointed out species and areas she had discussed in her presentation. Between the two habitats, the group saw everything from Beauty Berry, Black Gum, Golden Rod, Passion Flower, Bird Pine Siskins, Hawks, Monarchs, and Tiger and Black Swallow Tail caterpillars.

If you'd like to see more photographs from the workshop, visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/VESLandTrust> or our website at www.VESLandTrust.org.

Farm Tour Offered – Learn About Conservation Easements While Hiking

VES Land Trust will be hosting a series of farm tours in the future to educate folks about the many benefits of land protection on the Eastern Shore. Many people think

land protection only benefits prosperous landowners. A conservation easement may give the donor some significant short-term tax advantages. But the public shares in the lasting rewards realized by protecting our farm and forest land, valued open spaces and critical natural resources, like water quality.

The Farm Tour program will let people see for themselves the real benefit of protecting land and will also give them the opportunity to walk and talk with easement donors and land trust staff. "We hope this program provides a better learning environment as well as the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors," said Hali Flourde-Rogers, Stewardship Manager.

The first Farm Tour is scheduled for November 16th at the Glebe Farm on Church Neck starting at 11:00 am and lasting until 2:00 pm. Snacks will be provided. Please call the land trust office at (757) 442-5885 for details if you are interested. Space is limited to 15 persons.



Bowman's Folly, home of Nick Covatta & Robin Rinica

VES Land Trust Annual Oyster Roast April 13 at Bowman's Folly

Mark your calendars! VES Land Trust will host its sixth annual fundraiser on Saturday, April 13, 2013, at Bowman's Folly near Accomac, home of Nick Covatta and Robin Rinica. This year's menu will include beef tenderloin and, as always, roasted oysters and clams and clam chowder. A silent auction will showcase local artwork and promise great trips and excursions. Tickets are \$75 per person, with many sponsorship opportunities available. Invitations will be mailed in mid-February. Please call the Land Trust office, (757) 442-5885, for more information. Tickets will be limited so get yours early!

VES Land Trust Newsletter: Winter 2012

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HELP KEEP OUR RECORDS UP TO DATE

Please notify us if you have a new mailing address, e-mail or phone number. Send your new info to VES Land Trust@verizon.net or call 757-442-5885.

To support our work, please send your donation to: VES Land Trust, P.O. Box 1114, Exmore, VA 23350, or Online at www.VES Land Trust.org. Call us 757- 442-5885 for instructions on making gifts of stock.



VES Land Trust seeks to conserve rural lands which will best preserve the farms, forests, fisheries and heritage of Virginia's Eastern Shore for the benefit of future generations.

VES Land Trust
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