

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

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WINCHESTER LANDOWNER PROTECTS CITY WETLANDS

June 20 Dedication Highlights Importance of Natural Habitats and Green Areas

Winchester, VA. – On Friday, June 20, a bit of nature will be officially dedicated inside the Winchester city limits. The one-acre plot on Cedarmeade Avenue, owned and preserved by David Worthington, provides a natural wetland area drainage and a home for city-dwelling wildlife.

The interpretative sign, which will be unveiled at 11 am, is situated along a trail beside the wetland. The sign explains the function of the wetland and has photographs of many of the plants and flowers that can be seen growing there.

"The idea was to create a natural wetland habitat in the city to provide shelter and food for wildlife," says Worthington. "At the same time, the plan will provide for stormwater runoff management by improving the infiltration of stormwater through the soil to remove the initial flush of pollutants associated with storm events.

Since the completion of the project, Dave has enjoyed seeing mallards, songbirds, squirrels, box turtles, snakes, deer, and the occasional fox. In addition to the wildlife, wildflowers can be seen in full bloom throughout the spring and summer.

The project started in 2005 when Worthington purchased the one-acre lot next to his home, located across the street from the Frederick Douglass Elementary School. Since the purchase of the property, Mr. Worthington has worked to preserve the wetlands with partners, including Potomac Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, the City of Winchester, Ricketts Construction, and Richmond American Homes.

Potomac Conservancy's Conservation Program Associate Seth Coffman says, "Wetlands, especially in urban and suburbanized areas, are often the first things to disappear when there is development, yet they are one of the most effective ways of controlling stormwater runoff. It is critical that we reestablish these wetlands areas when and where we can." Coffman adds, "We are grateful to landowners like Dave Worthington who have the foresight to preserve these critical habitats"

About Potomac Conservancy

Since 1993, the Potomac Conservancy has protected the health, beauty, and enjoyment of the Potomac River and its tributaries. Its conservation programs address the goals of improving water quality, protecting the river's scenic integrity, enhancing recreational resources, and building an informed and engaged constituency, using a range of tools, including restoration, permanent protection, advocacy, and citizen education and engagement. To learn how the Potomac Conservancy can help you protect the land you care about, contact the Director of Headwaters Conservation at 540.667.3606 or visit www.potomac.org.

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