



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF PROTECTING THE POTOMAC RIVER



2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT



POTOMAC CONSERVANCY | 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

POTOMAC CONSERVANCY | 1993-2018

Celebrating 25 years of protecting the Potomac River and the wild lands, endless streams, and communities we treasure.

WHERE IT ALL STARTED

It's been said that to know where you're going, you have to know where you've been. Take a walk down memory lane and discover some important moments and milestones that our supporters made possible. Thank you!

-TEAM POTOMAC



1992

Concerned by the loss of riverside forest, the Canoe Cruisers Association forms the Potomac Gorge Preservation Council – the predecessor to Potomac Conservancy.

1993

Potomac Conservancy is incorporated in Maryland as a nonprofit organization on August 24, 1993.

1996

Potomac Conservancy places its first conservation easement on Minnehaha Island, donated by the Midriver Club. We now hold 81 conservation easements throughout the region.

1999

The Conservancy hosts its first Potomac River cleanup with over 100 volunteers. Since then, more than 44,000 volunteers have donated their time for clean water.

2001

Volunteers attend the first annual Growing Native seed collection. We have donated 41,930 pounds of native seeds to state nurseries for future tree plantings.

Potomac Conservancy stewards the River Center at Lock 8, beginning a 15-year partnership with the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

2005

The Catalogue for Philanthropy recognizes Potomac Conservancy as one of Washington, DC's best nonprofits, a distinction we still hold today. (2005-2018)

2007

Potomac Conservancy releases the first State of the Nation's River report and grades the river's health a D+.

2013

Potomac Conservancy and local conservation partners help pass two, precedent-setting laws to protect roadside trees and increase the tree canopy in Montgomery County, Maryland.

2014

The Conservancy launches our Paddle the Potomac summer series, inspiring 1,300 local residents to get their feet wet and have fun on their hometown river.

2015

Potomac Conservancy purchases White Horse Mountain, halting construction plans on a 1,700-acre riverside forest in West Virginia.

2016

The Conservancy and our allies successfully advocate for \$78 million in state funding for Virginia farmers, providing critical resources for best management practices that protect stream health.

2018

Potomac Conservancy transfers ownership of White Horse Mountain to the State of West Virginia. The new park will open this fall as a wildlife management and recreation area.

25 YEARS

91 MILES OF STREAMS PROTECTED

15,000 ACRES OF WILD PLACES CONSERVED

23,000 CLEAN WATER SUPPORTERS



VICTORY
**RETURNING A
MOUNTAIN TO
THE PEOPLE**

White Horse Mountain – 1,700+ acres of verdant forest on the South Branch of the Potomac River – is now *yours*.

Potomac Conservancy officially protected and transferred White Horse Mountain to the state of West Virginia in May 2018. The new park will welcome the public this fall for hiking, bird-watching, hunting, and other recreation allowed within the site's wildlife and conservation goals.

When we bought the mountain from developers back in 2015, it became the single largest land deal in our twenty-five-year history. Home to bald eagles, bobcats, and black bears, White Horse supports unique habitats, rare plants, and clean water. Its seven miles of streams and springs flow into the South Branch and provide clean drinking water to nearby Green Spring and Springfield, West Virginia.

We thank Janet and Frank Woodson for their vision and determination, and the 300 donors whose generous support made this tremendous conservation victory possible.

LOCAL ACTION

REMOVING HARMFUL PLASTICS FROM LOCAL WATERS

A plastic bucket floats down the Potomac River and washes ashore the banks of Theodore Roosevelt Island. A volunteer scoops up the litter, keeping it from leeching toxins into our drinking water source and breaking down into small pieces that can choke wildlife. Sadly, the shorelines of this park, like so many in our region, are plagued with plastic litter.

But the tide is turning. Growing public support for plastic bag fees, Styrofoam bans, and efforts to eliminate plastic straws are cutting down on local waste that enters the Potomac and Anacostia rivers, and eventually flows downstream to the Chesapeake Bay.

With your support, Potomac Conservancy is doing our part to remove this ubiquitous menace from our waterways. Over 44,000 local volunteers have removed 140 tons of plastic and trash from our hometown river – enough to fill the US Capitol Dome 53 times.





THE NEXT FIGHT

ELIMINATING POLLUTED RUNOFF AT ITS SOURCE

Stormwater flows downhill from a new construction site and pollutes a nearby stream in Montgomery County, Maryland. Stripped bare of trees and vegetation, the site has become the latest hot spot for urban runoff – stormwater that carries excess nutrients, sediment, and toxins into local streams.

Potomac Conservancy is determined to prevent this growing threat from undoing decades of progress to clean the Potomac River. We promote models of river-friendly development in our area and advocate at the local level for streamside forest protections, drinking water safeguards, and nature-based solutions for the capture and filtration of stormwater.

In 2018, over 8,700 activists helped us win legislative victories at the county, state, and federal levels. We fought for \$130 million for clean water initiatives in Montgomery County, strengthened forest protections in Frederick County, and defended \$73 million in federal funding for the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Twenty-five years ago, it started with a simple belief: with relentless focus and public action, the Potomac River could once again thrive.

A community of paddlers rallied behind this vision and formed Potomac Conservancy, a nonprofit entrusted with safeguarding the lands and waters of the Potomac River for future generations.

Since our founding in 1993, our team has worked tirelessly towards this mission. Along the way, we've expanded the boundaries of our conservation work and redefined what a local environmental movement can achieve.

And while a tough journey lies ahead, I am inspired by how far we've come in the fight for clean water and confident about the future progress we will make.

At our founding, the Potomac River's health was in crisis. Parents warned children to avoid touching the river, and those exposed to it were administered shots. Algae blooms formed expansive dead zones. Native fish were dying off, and bald eagles hadn't been seen in the area for forty years.

The Potomac – the river upon which our nation's capital was built – was publically deemed a national disgrace.

This grim past stands in sharp contrast to the remarkable comeback the river is experiencing today.

Thanks to your generous support, and the efforts of countless partners, our hometown river is finally on the road to recovery. Pollution is on the decline, shad and bald eagles are returning, and more people than ever are enjoying the outdoors along the Potomac River.

It's a huge step forward, but there's work left to do.

Polluted runoff and diluted sewage assault local waters. Rapid deforestation destroys streams and wildlife habitats. Anglers can't eat their catch, and children can't safely splash in streams after it rains.

The Potomac River is not yet thriving. And so our work continues.

Amidst growing threats to environmental protections, our local clean water initiatives have never been more important.

Your continued support for Potomac Conservancy in our 25th Anniversary year and beyond will empower us to expand into new communities and accelerate the impact of our conservation and advocacy work in the coming years!

Thank you for leading our movement and for your continued trust as we make the Potomac a healthy and thriving river once more.

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Hedrick Belin
Hedrick Belin, President



THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING THE POTOMAC!

Potomac Conservancy depends on your generous support to carry out our local clean water initiatives. We give special recognition to the listed donors who contributed an annual gift of \$1,000 or more from October 2016 through June 2018.

POTOMAC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

\$10,000+

Donald and Anne Ayer
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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Mark Cohen and Leigh Scott
Sally Davidson
Heidi and John Fahey
Jason Green and Valeria Piñerio
Laura and Rob Griffen
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Robert and Tricia Pinkard
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\$10,000+

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\$1,000 - \$4,999

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VOLUNTEER LEADERS

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WHITE HORSE MOUNTAIN

Thank you to the more than 300 donors who gave generously to save White Horse Mountain, celebrated on pages 6-7.

..... BECOME A LEADERSHIP GIVER



Find fun and philanthropy with a leadership-level donation of \$1,000 or more. Leadership givers make a high-impact investment in clean water and enjoy exclusive invitations to special events, outdoor experiences, and learning opportunities throughout the year. Please consider joining us with leadership-level support.

POTOMAC PROTECTOR SOCIETY
\$1,000 - \$4,999

POTOMAC GUARDIANS
\$5,000 - \$9,999

POTOMAC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
\$10,000 AND MORE

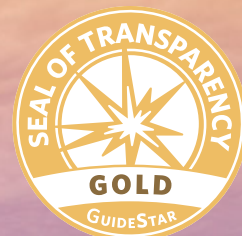


We give our heartfelt thanks to friend and local artist, **William MacFarland**, for providing the beautiful photography found on pages 2-3; 6-7; and 10-11.

ENJOY BILL'S PORTFOLIO AT MACFARLANDPHOTO.NET

The Potomac River is one of the most scenic, recreational, and biologically diverse rivers in the world, even as it passes through the nation's capital. This area is lucky to have such a river, and we are all lucky to have Potomac Conservancy to protect it.

REBECCA WODDER | LONGTIME SUPPORTER AND PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN RIVERS (1995-2011)



WAYS TO GIVE

Make a contribution in a way that best meets your philanthropic goals. Visit potomac.org/donate or call 301-608-1188 to speak with a member of our team.

Mail Your Gift or Donate Online

Mail your contribution using the envelope in this report, or contribute today by visiting potomac.org/donate.

Monthly Sustainer Giving

Increase your impact with a monthly gift and provide year-round support for local water initiatives. You can start, change, or stop your donation at any time.

Give In Honor or In Tribute

Celebrate a milestone, mark a special occasion, or honor a loved one with a tribute gift.

Make a Legacy Gift

Include Potomac Conservancy in your will, living trust, or retirement account. Your funds remain in your control during your lifetime and you can modify your gift at any time.

Gifts of Stock

Donating stock, mutual funds, bonds, or retirement distributions is a tax-wise way to make a lasting contribution to our region's lands and waters.

Workplace Giving

Contact your employer to start workplace giving, benefit from a match program, or participate in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC number 44786).

Donor Advised Funds and IRA Gifts

For those over 70 1/2, you may direct a gift from a tax-deferred saving account's required minimum distribution (IRA or 401k) as a tax-saving way to contribute.

Potomac Conservancy is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all contributions are tax deductible. Our Federal Tax Identification Number is 52-1842501.

Christopher James,
Whippletree Photography

@whippletree

Cover photo credits:
Otter courtesy of Derek Drudge;
Paddlers courtesy of Annie Riker.

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2017-2018 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR AUGUST 1, 2017 THROUGH JULY 31, 2018.

REVENUE

● Individuals	\$ 629,603
● Foundations	\$ 474,024
● Corporations	\$ 108,938
● Stewardship	\$ 7,100
● Government	\$ 328,228
● Investment Income (Loss)	\$ 8,530
● In-kind Contributions	\$ 16,409

Total Revenue \$ 1,572,831

EXPENSES

CONSERVATION & OUTREACH PROGRAMS

● Land Protection	\$ 171,909
● Public Policy	\$ 202,699
● Community Conservation	\$ 566,873
● Communications	\$ 173,242

Total Programs \$ 1,114,724

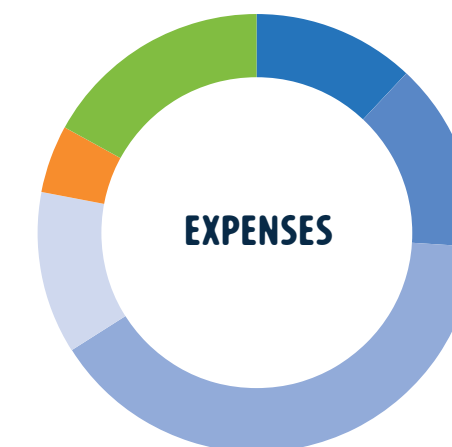
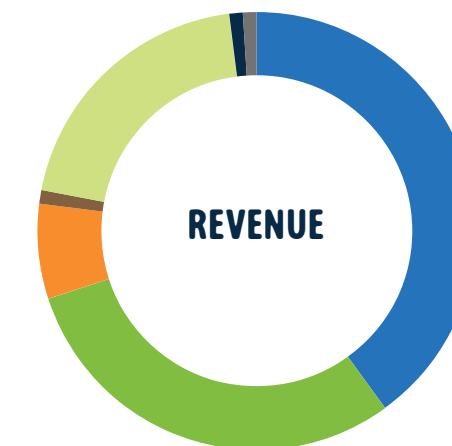
SUPPORT SERVICES

● General & Administrative	\$ 77,637
● Fundraising	\$ 235,606

Total Support Services \$ 313,242

Total Expenses \$ 1,427,966

Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue over Expenses \$ 144,865



View Potomac Conservancy's latest audited financial statements at www.potomac.org/financials.

VOLUNTEER

AND HELP

PROTECT THE POTOMAC!



**Get your hands dirty for
clean water with Team Potomac!**

Join us at our next cleanup and remove litter from a local park along the Potomac River. It's a great way to get outdoors, have fun with your friends, and make a difference in the fight for clean water. Volunteers of all ages are welcome at our events throughout the year.

**Volunteer today! Sign up and we'll let you know
about upcoming volunteer opportunities at**

potomac.org/act-local



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