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Potomac Conservancy & Partners Plan Extensive Stormwater Assessment
\$500,000 grant to fund Virginia county scorecard project

(SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND) – Potomac Conservancy was presented with half of a million dollars this morning by the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, to support one of the largest stormwater assessments in the Commonwealth. Through a partnership with universities, state agencies and two other Virginia river groups— Friends of the Rappahannock and the James River Association— the project will undertake a comprehensive assessment of stormwater runoff in non-tidal portions of Virginia’s rivers to see how local development policies can be improved to promote Low Impact Development (LID) practices.

Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA) announced the awards, along with Shawn Garvin, EPA Regional Administrator; Jeff Trandahl, Executive Director of National Fish & Wildlife Foundation; Dave Johnson, Director of Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation; and Barbara Favola, Arlington County Board Member.

According to Potomac Conservancy President Hedrick Belin, “The Conservancy is committed to supporting practical, realistic solutions that reduce the impact of stormwater and the heavy concentrations of pollution it transports into waterways. Not only are we honored to receive funding for this innovative project, but also excited to make advances in promoting Low Impact Development practices as a key method for reducing stormwater runoff. Thanks to this grant, we will work to change how we can design and construct roads, buildings, and homes.”

Stormwater is the fastest growing source of pollution to Virginia’s rivers and the Chesapeake Bay and will determine the future health of Virginia’s waters. Many LID practices, including environmental site design, have been developed to reduce the impact of stormwater on water quality and stream health. By establishing codes and ordinances that remove barriers to and encourage the use of LID techniques, substantial amounts of polluted runoff can be prevented from entering local streams, rivers, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

During this three-year project, conservation groups, local universities, and state and county agency staff will review the local stormwater codes and ordinances in 121 localities throughout Virginia. Overall results will be used to create a county “scorecard” that compares these codes and ordinances, and will eventually be shown to key decision makers to raise awareness about a range of changes that can be made to reduce the amount of runoff.

Initial assessment results will first help target code revision processes in nine targeted, localities to help improve policy in areas where high growth is expected. Through a collaborative effort, local university

students from urban planning and environmental policy departments will conduct analyses and present summaries for these targeted localities. A final component to the assessment will entail a design competition where teams of engineers, architects and landscape architects will generate creative, cost-neutral approaches to LID implementation. These projects can then be used by firms as examples for incorporating low impact practices into project design.

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. Visit www.potomac.org for more information. More information is available at www.potomac.org.

About the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

The Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund is administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and funded by the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program.

About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant Program

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation provides funding on a competitive basis to projects that sustain, restore, and enhance our Nation's fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats. The Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants are funded by the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program and administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This year, a total of \$5.8 million was awarded to 11 projects in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Grant recipients provided an additional \$10 million in matching funds. The grants for these projects were awarded through NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, which provides up to \$1 million to innovative and cost-effective projects that dramatically reduce or eliminate the flow of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution into local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

About the Chesapeake Bay Program

The Chesapeake Bay Program is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. The Chesapeake Bay Program partners include the states of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative body; the Environmental Protection Agency, representing the federal government; and participating citizen advisory groups. For more, visit our overview of the Chesapeake Bay Program.

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