



## Potomac Agenda: 2010

More than half of the Potomac region is forested. When combined with agricultural land, the land mass covers more than three quarters of the watershed. Our natural and working landscapes face pressures from human causes, primarily development. We must recognize the high value of forested lands, and also the importance of well-managed farms, especially when compared to developed or built environments.

Our goal is to preserve existing forests and lower the negative effects of farming by using agricultural best management practices to control pollution from runoff. To achieve this goal, we call on government decision-makers to take the following specific actions.

### County Level

We call on all 40 counties in the Potomac River watershed to review and revise their local ordinances to protect natural lands and maximize open space and to minimize runoff from roads and building lots.

Specifically, we call on Loudoun County, Virginia, to strengthen its streamside buffer rules to prevent the clearcutting that took place this summer when Trump National Golf Course removed more than 450 trees, leaving a barren stretch of more than 1.5 miles on the main stem of the Potomac.

The County Council in Montgomery County, Maryland, should enact and strengthen the Forest Conservation Law.

### State Level

**Virginia:** We call on Virginia Governor McDonnell to honor his promise to preserve 400,000 acres of open space before his term ends in January 2014. Achieving this goal will require Gov. McDonnell to

- Lay out a specific plan by January, 2011 to achieve this goal;
- Double the support annually the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and the Office of Farmland Preservation's Purchase of Development Rights program receive. Financial support for these two programs should double in 2011 and 2012, and then increase substantially to move toward the \$60 million level.
- Continue the highly effective Land Preservation Tax Credit program at current levels, which has led to tremendous growth in donated easements in recent years.

Governor McDonnell has committed to "identify adequate and stable sources of funding for the Agricultural Best Management Practices Program." A stable source of funding must be established to ensure sufficient resources are available after 2011. We ask Governor McDonnell to

- Provide \$40 million in cost-share funds for 2011, and \$44 million for 2012.

- Identify an adequate and stable source of cost-share funding in his 2013 state budget presented in January 2012.

**West Virginia:** The Forest Legacy Program, Agricultural Land Protection Authority, and Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund are protecting working forests, active farms, and important ecological features, respectively. The latter two programs receive an estimated \$1.6 million per year to protect the state's exceptional natural heritage. We call on the state to continue to maintain and promote these programs.

### **Federal Level**

We ask Congress to renew and fully fund conservation programs under the 2012 federal Farm Bill and fully fund the conservation programs authorized in the 2008 bill.

We call on EPA, specifically Administrator Lisa P. Jackson and Chesapeake Bay Program Administrator J. Charles Fox to:

- Compel states to improve the inspection and compliance programs for CAFOs (concentrated, or confined, animal feeding operations). The states should hold regulated facilities accountable to the conditions of their Clean Water permits.
- Complete work on its new data system for CAFOs, to better determine agricultural trends.