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January eNews from VCC

1 message

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Protecting America's Legendary Shenandoah Valley



E-News from VCC

January 2019

Virginia Ag Best Management Practices (BMPs)

The [Choose Clean Water Coalition](#) recently published a video that highlights the necessity of Ag BMPs that are made available to landowners through local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

One farmer in the video put it best saying: **"These programs aren't cheap. It takes thousands of dollars to get this infrastructure on the ground; so, without these programs, we are not getting them on the ground and making the progress we need."** To hear more from farmers who are benefiting from



these practices you can watch the full video using the link below.

[Learn More](#)

Find your local Soil and Water Conservation District:

[Learn More](#)

Obenshain Presented Clean Water Farm Award



Obenshain co-owns the 188-acre Blue Ridge Hall Farm on Beckner Branch in the Mill Creek area, which has been in her family since the 1840s. With her brother Joe, Obenshain (a longtime friend of VCC) has completed two, one in 2014 and another in 2016, "Stream Exclusion with Grazing Land Management" conservation projects on the farm. The conservation

practices featured the installation of over 12,000 feet of fence to exclude cattle from the stream, which divides the farm.

[Learn More](#)

Win for Lasting Conservation

The Land Trust Alliance has long held that amendment clauses in conservation easements serve to strengthen easements and improve their enforceability. That's why we oppose efforts by the IRS to constrain the ability of land trusts to amend easements.

And now — thanks to a recent federal court decision — it's clear that a sound amendment clause upholds conservation purposes.

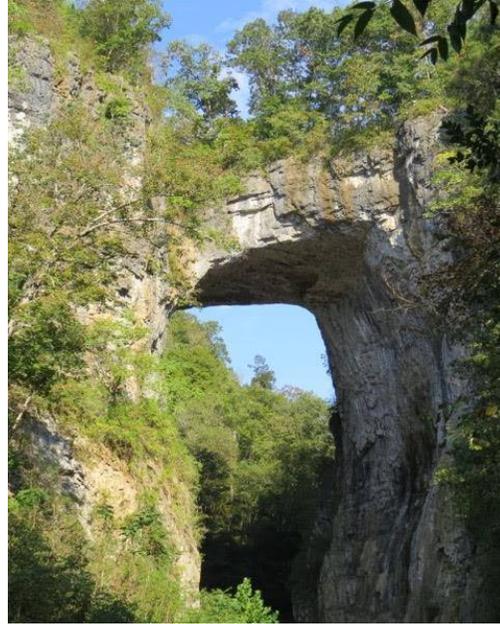
[Learn More](#)

A Lasting Legacy

VCC is remembering a long time friend and conservationist, Angelo Puglisi, who passed away last fall. His contribution to the Valley region and land conservation continues.

Angelo Puglisi saw to it that, finally, after 240 years of private ownership, the national landmark in Rockbridge County, Natural Bridge would forever belong to the public as a State Park.

Puglisi's conservation efforts have left a lasting mark on the landscape of the Valley we know and love.

[Learn More](#)

VCC Awarded 2019 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant



The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced more than \$13.1 million in grants to support the restoration and conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in six U.S. states and the District of Columbia. The 49 grants will generate nearly \$21.9 million in matching

contributions for a total conservation impact of nearly \$35 million.

VCC's project focuses on land conservation tools including Conservation Easements, Nutrient Management Plans and Resource Management Plans.

[Learn More](#)

What the Farm Bill Means For Conservation

On December 20, U.S. President Donald Trump signed the 2018 Farm Bill into law.

This is a momentous achievement for the conservation of private lands in the United States, supporting and funding policies that will help farmers, ranchers and forest owners become more



sustainable and productive, while at the same time protecting lands and waters for the benefit of all.

The Farm Bill is the most important legislation for conserving private lands in the United States. About half the land in the contiguous United States—nearly 900 million acres—is cropland, rangeland, forestland or pastureland that is eligible for programs funded by the Farm Bill.

[Learn More](#)

What the Government Shutdown Means for Food, Farmers, and Eaters

The US government shutdown has left non-essential discretionary programs in nine out of its fifteen departments shuttered. One of these departments, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), oversees or otherwise funds programs related to producing our food, getting it to people who need it, and making sure it's safe to eat.

Almost 67 percent of USDA workers are considered "non-critical" and are thus furloughed; in many cases, they include staffers in offices that allocate



funding to keep programs operational or get them up and running. Everyone else—anyone deemed essential—is currently working without pay.

[Learn More](#)

VCC promotes land use that sustains the farms, forests, open spaces and cultural heritage of the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia. VCC is a 501(c)3 Virginia Corporation.

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