

2016  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



50<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
1966-2016



# ABOUT THE VIRGINIA OUTDOORS FOUNDATION



The Virginia Outdoors Foundation was created by the General Assembly in 1966 to promote the preservation of open-space lands in the Commonwealth. VOF currently protects nearly 800,000 acres of donated conservation easements in 107 counties and cities. It also manages about 3,000 acres of public land in four counties.

## A Powerful, Cost-Effective Tool for Land Conservation

Conservation easements—their negotiation, acquisition, recordation, and stewardship—are the primary tool used by VOF. An easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified holder that permanently limits development of the land to protect its natural, scenic, historic, open-space, or recreational values, while allowing landowners to continue to own and use the land and sell it or pass it on to heirs. Because these values yield substantial public benefits, landowners are eligible for both state and federal tax incentives for donating easements.

## Partnerships

Partnerships with government agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector are critical to VOF's success. Among state agencies, a particularly close working relationship is maintained with the departments of Conservation and Recreation, Forestry, Game and Inland Fisheries, Historic Resources, and Agriculture and Consumer Services.

## Board of Trustees

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation is governed by a board of seven trustees appointed by the Governor for staggered four-year terms.

**Stephanie Ridder, Chair**  
Rappahannock County

**John L. Richardson**  
Fauquier County

**Viola O. Baskerville**  
City of Richmond

**Thomas G. Slater, Jr.**  
Henrico County

**Eleanor Brown**  
City of Hampton

**Brent Thompson**  
Rappahannock County

**Elizabeth Obenshain**  
Montgomery County

## VOF STAFF

### Senior Management

Brett Glymph, *Executive Director*  
Anna Chisholm, *Director of Administration*  
Leslie Grayson, *Deputy Director of Policy & Acquisitions*  
Martha Little, *Deputy Director of Stewardship*  
Tamara Vance, *Deputy Director of Easements*

### Program & Administrative Staff \*

Justin Altice, *Stewardship Specialist*  
Anita Angelone, *Administrative Assistant*  
Ruth Babylon, *Easement Project Manager*  
Brad Baskette, *Land Conservation Specialist*  
Karla Berkenpas, *Land Conservation Assistant*  
Sara Brooks, *Human Resources Manager*  
Sherry Buttrick, *Assistant Director of Easements*  
Bobbie Cabibbo, *Executive Assistant*  
Anna Clayton Bullock, *Easement Specialist*  
Brian Fuller, *Assistant Director of Stewardship*  
Mike Hallock-Solomon, *GIS/IT Specialist*  
Harry Hibbitts, *Assistant Director of Stewardship*  
Tracy Hibbitts, *Stewardship Specialist*  
Krista Hozyash, *Stewardship Specialist*  
Kristin Jones, *Assistant Director of Easements*  
Abbe Kennedy, *Stewardship Assistant*  
Neal Kilgore, *Easement Project Manager*  
Joseph Kuhn, *Stewardship Specialist*  
Cole Matthews, *Office Assistant*  
Jason McGarvey, *Communications & Outreach Manager*  
Cindy Montgomery, *Administrative Assistant*  
Dave Morton, *IT/GIS Manager*  
Tommy Oravetz, *Land Conservation Specialist*  
Erika Richardson, *Stewardship Manager*  
Amanda Scheps, *Owned Lands Manager*  
Bruce Stewart, *Staff Counsel*  
George Sutton, *Stewardship Assistant*  
Sue Taylor, *Administrative Assistant*  
Estie Thomas, *Easement Project Manager*  
Laura Thurman, *Easement Project Manager*  
Hannah Tiffany, *Administrative Assistant*  
Bill Wasserman, *Stewardship Assistant*

\* Includes both full-time and part-time positions.

# DEAR FRIENDS OF VOF

Land and conservation in Virginia reached two major milestones this past year. First, several pillars of Virginia's land conservation program, including the Open Space Land Act, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, and the Board of Historic Resources, celebrated their 50th anniversary. Second, the state recorded its one millionth acre protected by conservation easements.

To celebrate our 50th anniversary, VOF hosted several regional events for partners and landowners. The main event, called the Virginia Outdoors Festival, was held in October at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve in Loudoun County. Banshee Reeks was once a private farm. The owner passed away in 1979. In his will, he provided for an easement to be placed on the land "for the education and scenic enjoyment of the general public." The easement was recorded with VOF in 1984. In 2001, the property became a county nature preserve and has since provided thousands of area families with opportunities to connect with nature through education and recreation.


Banshee Reeks is a shining example of the work that VOF set out to do when it was created by the General Assembly in 1966. At that time, the urban and suburban areas in Virginia were growing rapidly. Citizens recognized that they needed to preserve open spaces so that future generations would have places where they could connect with the outdoors. Conservation of open space would also help to ensure protection of clean water and air, wildlife habitat, and productive farms and forests.

In 1965, led by Senator FitzGerald Bemiss, the Virginia Outdoor Recreation Study Commission published *Virginia's Common Wealth*, which served as the blueprint for one of the most progressive statewide conservation initiatives in the nation. That blueprint resulted in the 1966 legislation that created VOF. The foundation's job was to facilitate private philanthropy in support of these goals.

Since that time, VOF has been one of the most successful land conservation programs in the nation. We have protected open space at a rate of nearly two acres every hour. Our portfolio of 800,000 acres is almost the size of Rhode Island. Today, 95% of all Virginians live within 10 miles of

VOF-protected land. Most of this land is farmland and forestland, but VOF also protects parks and preserves that serve thousands of families throughout the Commonwealth. Public polling continues to identify public access as a major concern in the Virginia Outdoors Plan, especially as people better understand the relationship between outdoor experiences and health, especially children's health.

What is the best role for VOF to play in meeting this need? That is the question we are asking policymakers and partners as we position VOF for the next 50 years. Competing priorities for state funding means that it will be more important than ever for VOF to facilitate the kind of private philanthropy that Senator Bemiss and other authors of *Virginia's Common Wealth* envisioned. We believe we have a strong foundation to build upon, but we will need your help. Together, we can make sure that future generations will be able to enjoy the cultural and natural treasures of our "Common Wealth" for decades to come.



Brett Glymph  
Executive Director



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kind of private philanthropy that Senator Bemiss and other authors of *Virginia's Common Wealth* envisioned.

# 50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

In 1965, the Virginia Outdoor Recreation Study Commission produced *Virginia's Common Wealth*, "an analysis of the present and future outdoor recreation demands on the Commonwealth, an inventory of the State's recreation resources and facilities ... [and] a long-range comprehensive plan of action, The Virginia Outdoors Plan, to meet these demands."

The commission was chaired by Senator FitzGerald Bemiss, who wrote in the introduction, "The rich and varied resources of the Virginia Outdoors are indeed our Common Wealth, and every Virginian justly expects to enjoy its benefits.... The

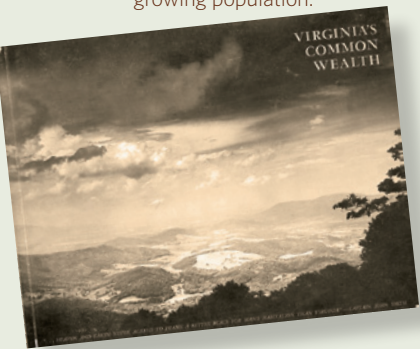
opportunities for enjoyment are severely limited by inadequate facilities and by a threatened and diminishing supply of enjoyable lands and waters."

The report included 21 recommendations that became the basis for the Virginia Outdoors Plan, which remains the state's comprehensive plan for land conservation, outdoor recreation and open-space planning. It called for expansion of the State Park system, formation of the Scenic Byways system, creation of the Historic Landmarks Commission, and adoption of a legal framework for expanded protection of open space and recreational opportunities.

## 60s

### MARCH 1964

Virginia's General Assembly establishes the Virginia Outdoor Recreation Study Commission to inventory public outdoor recreation resources and create a strategy for meeting future needs of Virginia's growing population.



### NOVEMBER 1965

The 18-member Commission, chaired by Senator FitzGerald Bemiss, publishes *Virginia's Common Wealth*, a report on the Commission's two-year study and plan for conserving and developing outdoor recreation resources "for the lasting public benefit." Among the recommendations is the creation of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

### JULY 1966

§ 10.1-1800 establishes VOF "to promote the preservation of open-space lands and to encourage private gifts of money, securities, land or other property to preserve the natural, scenic, historic, scientific, open-space and recreational areas of the Commonwealth."

### JUNE 1968

VOF protects its first property under the Open Space Lands Act—a 102-acre easement in Goochland County on land that was gifted to the University of Richmond for use in its ecology, geology and other natural science programs. A month later it records four more easements on nearly 300 acres at historic Oatlands in Loudoun County.

## 70s

### JULY 1973

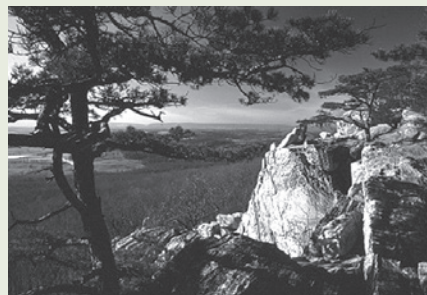
VOF receives an appropriation from the General Assembly to hire its first Executive Director, William T. Bolger, a 38-year-old planner with the State Commission on Outdoor Recreation.

### DECEMBER 1974

VOF experiences its first real surge of easement donations, quadrupling its portfolio and finishing the year with 2,729 acres under its stewardship.

### AUGUST 1979

VOF completes acquisition of roughly 2,500 acres from the Natural Area Council in the Bull Run Mountains, becoming the crown jewel in VOF's portfolio of conserved lands.



### DECEMBER 1979

VOF accepts a bargain sale of roughly 600 acres in Prince William County from the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company, which it later transfers to the Division of State Parks to become Leesylvania State Park.

## 80s

### OCTOBER 1981

VOF accepts title to Aldie Mill, a rundown historic gristmill in Loudoun County, with the intention of restoring it and opening it to the public.

### MAY 1987

Philanthropist Paul Mellon gives \$2.2 million to VOF for the acquisition of land in Fauquier County that will eventually be added to Sky Meadows State Park.



The report's authors also recognized the potential of citizens to contribute to these efforts through private philanthropy. To facilitate such philanthropy, the commissioners recommended—and the General Assembly approved in 1966—establishment of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Five decades later, the commission's work has yielded amazing results. The number of State Parks has more than doubled, nearly 3,000 miles of scenic byways have been designated, and nearly 3,000 historic landmarks have been registered. For its part, VOF has preserved close to 800,000 acres of open space—nearly two acres

every hour. Today, VOF's portfolio is among the largest and most diverse in the nation, protecting everything from working farms to urban parks to historic battlefields to critical habitat. We now work in 107 of Virginia's 133 localities. Approximately 95 percent of all Virginians live within 10 miles of VOF-conserved land.

The timeline below highlights some of VOF's most notable achievements. If you would like to learn more, visit our website, [virginiaoutdoorsfoundation.org](http://virginiaoutdoorsfoundation.org). There you can find more stories, videos, statistics and other information about our work to conservation open space for future generations.

# 90s

## JUNE 1992

VOF acquires an option to purchase land in Lancaster County that eventually becomes Belle Isle State Park.

## OCTOBER 1994

VOF transfers 257 acres in New Kent County to the Virginia Department of Forestry to become Crawfords State Forest.

## OCTOBER 1996

After a 15-year, \$1.5-million restoration effort driven largely by private contributions, VOF begins offering public access to historic Aldie Mill in Loudoun.

## DECEMBER 1996

VOF protects its 100,000th easement acre.

## MARCH 1997

The General Assembly establishes the Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund to help with the costs of conveying an open-space or conservation easement. VOF is charged with

administering the fund.

## MARCH 1999

The Virginia Land Conservation Incentives Act of 1999 is adopted, making gifts of "land or interest in land located in Virginia" eligible for a state income tax credit after January 1, 2000.

# 00s

## DECEMBER 2000

Fueled by a surge in easement donations following the creation of the Land Preservation Tax Credit, VOF protects 28,000 new acres on 189 projects—more than double its previous largest year.

## DECEMBER 2001

VOF records its 1,000th easement.

## APRIL 2002

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation designates Bull Run Mountains a state natural area preserve.

## SEPTEMBER 2002

VOF designates its first Special Project Area on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

## AUGUST 2006

VOF experiences its biggest year ever, protecting 71,000 new acres on 358 projects. It now protects about 400,000 acres in 96 localities.

## DECEMBER 2007

James City County becomes the 100th locality to contain VOF-protected land with the recordation of an easement on historic Carter's Grove Plantation, donated by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

## DECEMBER 2008

VOF protects its 500,000th easement acre.

## SEPTEMBER 2009

VOF completes its largest conservation project ever—an 11,000-acre easement on Carvins Cove, donated by the City of Roanoke to protect its main drinking water source in perpetuity.



## JANUARY 2016

Its portfolio now at nearly 800,000 acres, VOF begins a year-long celebration of its 50th anniversary, hosting several events for partners and landowners across the Commonwealth.

## APRIL 2016

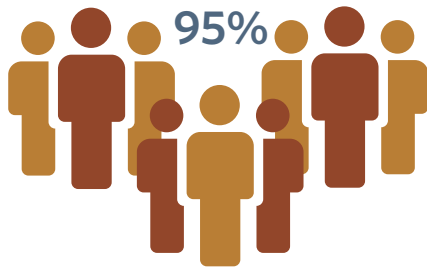
Governor Terry McAuliffe presents VOF with the Gold Governor's Environmental Excellence Award for its five decades of achievement.



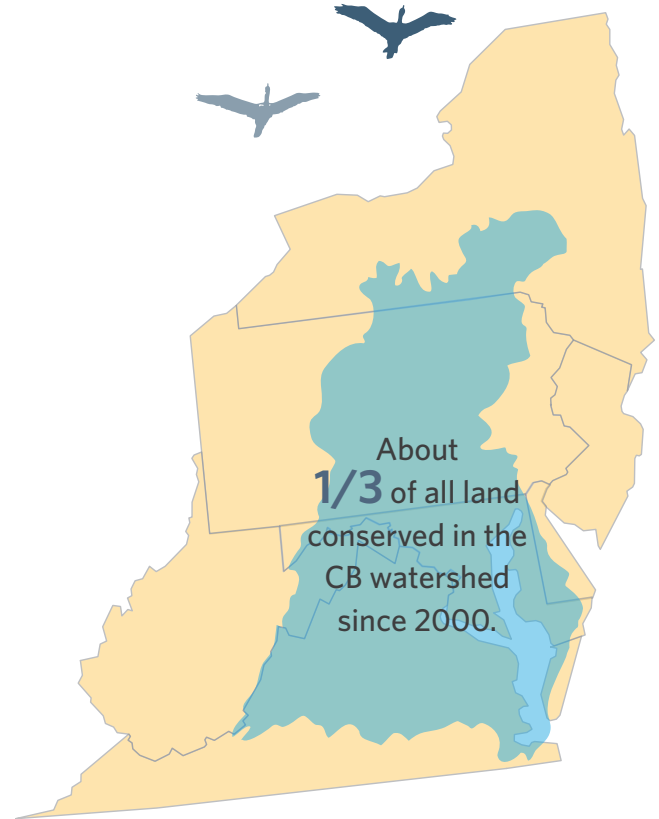
# VOF HAS PROTECTED...



Since 1966



Number of Virginians living within 10 miles of VOF-protected land.

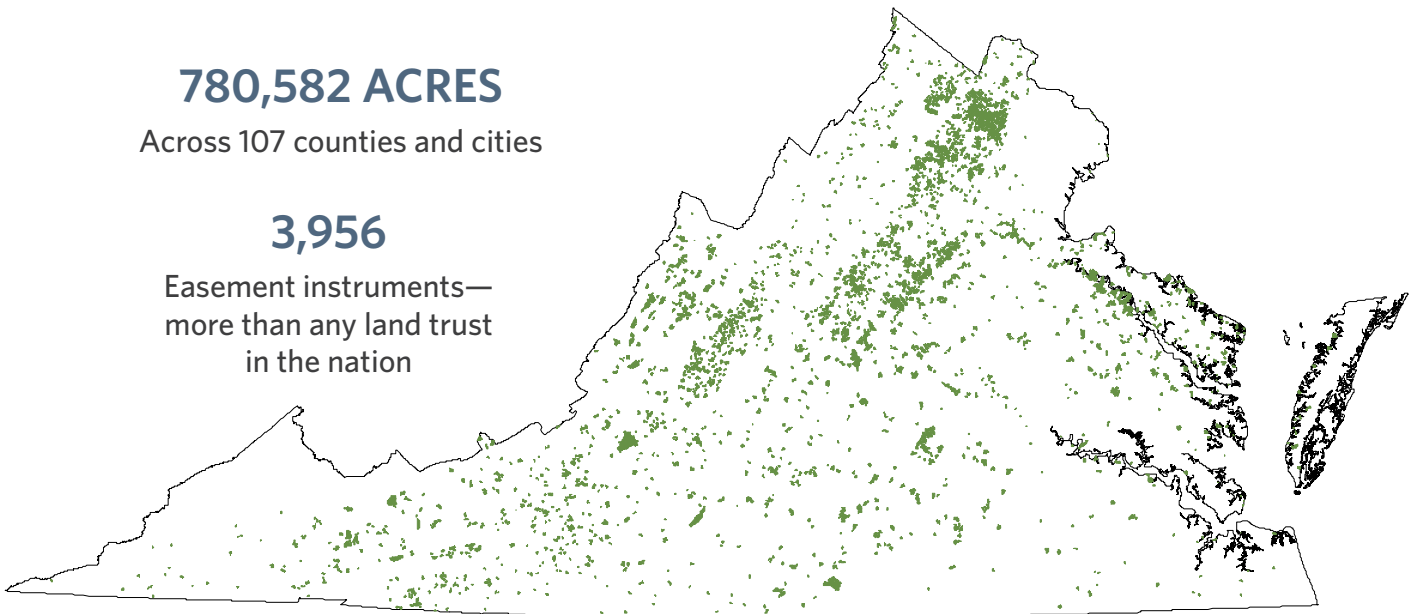


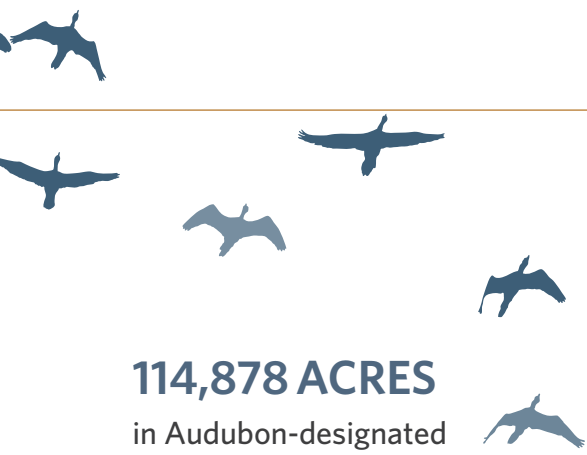
**780,582 ACRES**

Across 107 counties and cities

**3,956**

Easement instruments—  
more than any land trust  
in the nation





**114,878 ACRES**

in Audubon-designated Important Bird Areas



along designated scenic roads



**4,009**

miles of streams and rivers

**87**

miles of wild trout streams

**101**

miles along designated scenic rivers

**213**

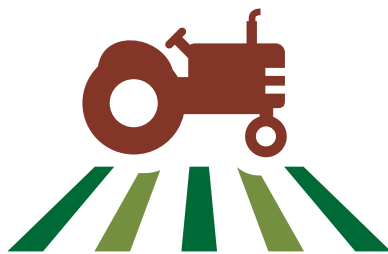
miles of threatened and endangered species waters

**308,907**

in high-integrity watersheds

**596,985**

acres in the Chesapeake Bay watershed



**355,664 ACRES**

of USDA-designated prime farming soils



along designated hiking and biking trails

**3,394**

recorded historic sites

**24,252 acres**

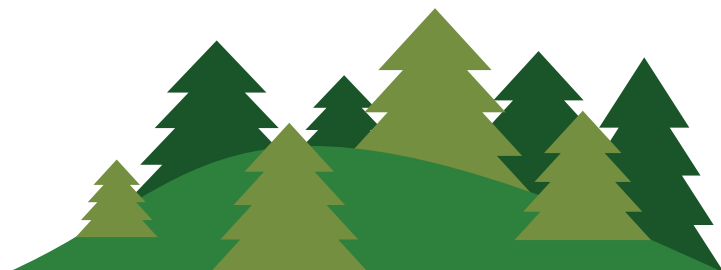
on Civil War battlefields

**96,370 acres**

in state and federal Historic Districts

**233,161 acres**

in ecologically significant landscapes



**324,664 ACRES**

of the highest conservation priority forests

# APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS

From lofty mountaintops to river-carved valleys, the Appalachian Highlands recorded seven new easements during FY 2016. As a result, another 1,438 acres will now be protected forever by VOF. Most are working farms that raise agricultural crops and/or beef cattle. Among these, two are designated as Virginia Century Farms with more than 100 years of continuous operation.

More than half of the new easements have soils classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service as Prime Farmland. Many have significant forested land as well, including a 323-acre Smyth County property ranked high in forest conservation value by the Virginia Department of Forestry.

The largest addition is a 387-acre farm in Wythe County. The property offers scenic interludes for travelers along Virginia Byway State Road 619, and is visible from the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. In nearby Smyth County, one easement's mountain ridge is visible from State Route 16 (a designated scenic road), as well as from Hungry Mother State Park.

Among the newly recorded easements, more than 900 acres are situated in the Clinch Valley region, which is designated by The Nature Conservancy as one of the 39 "Last Great Places" of the world with the most-important remaining intact ecosystems.



Several of the new easements are adjacent or near previously recorded VOF easements, which together help maximize protection of scenic views, watersheds, habitats—and ultimately, the inherent character of the Appalachian Highlands landscape.

## SPOTLIGHT



AN EASEMENT ON A FORESTED, 114-ACRE MOUNTAIN tract was recorded by the Town of Marion during FY 2016. The property's Currin Valley Spring provides public drinking water for the town's residents. The easement's tributary to Merchant Creek is flanked by forested and vegetated riparian buffers, which help ensure good water quality for the town and the biologically diverse Tennessee River watershed.

Additionally, the easement lies within the pristine Clinch Valley region and abuts the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. The close proximity to protected lands further contributes to the region's continuity and expanse of open space. The

"The Currin Valley spring is the single most important physical asset of the Town of Marion, and it is imperative that we continue to protect the watershed of the spring to enable our ability to provide clean, abundant water for our citizens and portions of Smyth County for generations to come."

— *Town of Marion Mayor David Helms.*

forever-protected acreage also helps with flood control, enhances air quality, and supports diverse wildlife habitats.

"The Currin Valley spring is the single most important physical asset of the Town of Marion, and it is imperative that we continue to protect the watershed of the spring to enable our ability to provide clean, abundant water for our citizens and portions of Smyth County for generations to come," says town Mayor David Helms. "We are grateful for the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's commitment to protecting our precious outdoor resources and their willingness to accept and maintain the conservation easement that will ensure our efforts, now and in the future."



# CENTRAL REGION

A notable 3,843 acres across six counties were protected by VOF during FY 2016 in an area already one of the richest in VOF-protected lands. The picturesque scenery features prominently in these new easements, now forever preserved by VOF for the enjoyment of residents and tourists.

The 15 new easements protect both working farm and forest land, and help to preserve native ecosystems and wildlife. Two easements support previously declining populations of vulnerable birds: bald eagles and Northern harrier hawks.

An Albemarle County property, which is the largest of the new easements, is a 1,200-acre working farm that primarily raises sheep. It is located within the Southwest Mountains Rural Historic District that is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

Central Virginia's new easements also protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed, as well as public drinking water supplies for localities across the region.



## SPOTLIGHT

IN FY 2016, VOF PROTECTED ELK MOUNTAIN, a largely forested mountaintop estate that fills a gap between National Forest and National Park Service land. The 957-acre easement overlaps Nelson and Augusta counties, flanks the Blue Ridge Parkway on both sides, and adjoins the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. In addition, the land lies within the area designated by the National Audubon Society as the Upper Blue Ridge Mountains Important Bird Area, which supports bird habitat and species diversity, and is adjacent to Humpback Rocks, a major climbing destination within the Appalachian Trail Corridor lands. At its 2,600-foot peak elevation, Elk Mountain is highly visible from the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, the Thomas Jefferson Birding and Wildlife Trail, and several Virginia Byways. The property's tributaries flow to Mill Creek, a Class II trout stream within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The new easement helps to protect Central Virginia's scenic viewsheds and natural habitats for enjoyment by public travelers, as well as hikers, rock climbers, and birders.

The Elk Mountain Lodge, established by Thomas Fortune Ryan in 1928 as a summer house and hunting lodge, also provides an intriguing glimpse of 20th-century life in the Commonwealth.

"We consider the Elk Mountain Lodge easement to be a fitting tribute to the long legacy our family has had in this region, as well as our civic duty to respect the public lands, trails and by-ways that have come to surround us over the years," says the family that donated the easement. "It has been a great help for us to be able to partner with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation in permanently protecting our land from unchecked development in the future. May their vital service to 'our common home' continue to be valued and supported by the legislature."



# NORTHERN REGION



and stewardship gained more momentum in the Northern Region with the recording of new VOF easements and amendments in the counties of Culpeper, Rappahannock, and Fauquier. Several of the FY 2016 easements are near or adjacent to lands already protected by VOF or the Shenandoah National Park. Conservation of these extended open space preserves in perpetuity protects natural resources, native habitats, and scenic vistas across northern Virginia.

The region additionally benefits from new easements that conserve valued water resources. A property that overlaps Culpeper and Rappahannock counties fronts the Blackwater Creek and the scenic Hazel River, which is part of Virginia's blueway system and is included in the Nature Conservancy Aquatic Portfolio.

Elsewhere in Rappahannock County, the Hughes River and its tributaries flow through another new easement. Limiting development of both properties helps protect water quality of the Rappahannock River watershed, which is a public water supply for downstream communities, such as the City of Fredericksburg and the County of Stafford. Subsequently, the easements help to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

Habitat preservation along the Hazel River also helps protect aquatic life, including the green floater, which is a freshwater mussel that is globally rare and considered a species of concern by both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Likewise, the Hughes River is a designated native trout stream that will benefit from VOF's land conservation endeavors.

## SPOTLIGHT



**SHADOW RIDGE FARM, WITH ITS IDYLIC LOCATION** and marvelous scenic views, is another highlight among the Northern Virginia easements recorded this fiscal year. The

property's 531 acres contain predominantly forested and pasture lands that run from the Rush River to Jenkins Mountain, and another 40 acres nearby that once contained a ski lodge and ski runs. The easements are located within one mile of the Shenandoah National Park and are adjacent to approximately 3,100 acres already under VOF easement. Both properties' significant conservation value is recognized by their inclusion in the National Audubon Society's Upper Blue Ridge Mountains Important Bird Area, which supports bird habitat and species diversity.

The Virginia Department of Forestry has designated both Shadow Ridge Farm easements as having forests with the highest ranking in forest conservation value. Protection in perpetuity helps ensure that the forested areas remain available for wood products, watershed protection, and wildlife habitat. Additionally, the land features freshwater streams and open spaces.

Shadow Ridge Farm, which has been in the same family for 50 years, contains several cabins, a barn, spring and smoke houses which exemplify the design of structures built during the Great Depression.

# SHENANDOAH VALLEY REGION

Conservation of the Shenandoah Valley's productive farmland, forestland, and open spaces was enhanced as 2,444 new easement acres were protected by VOF during FY 2016. Blue Grass Farm in Rockbridge County, in the same family since 1882, was the largest addition with nearly 400 acres.

Several of the newly recorded easements are prominently located adjacent to or near the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. Other properties lie in Important Bird Areas designated by the National Audubon Society or are near public trails and greenways.

More than 300 acres boast a high-ranking forest conservation value, while some 200 acres are rated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation as very high in ecological integrity. Several easements also have potential to help improve natural waterways referenced on the 2010 Impaired Waters list, and in turn, the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Stewardship of the Shenandoah Valley's fauna and flora was boosted, as well. Freshwater streams on an Augusta County farm feed into Back Creek, a designated habitat for the imperiled slimy sculpin. A Frederick County easement provides habitat for endangered wood turtles, while one in Bath County supports sword-leaf phlox, listed as rare in Virginia. Several properties are graced with native trout streams, including a designated Class II Wild Trout



Stream along the Jackson River.

Four properties protected in perpetuity are the settings for dwellings built between 1753 and 1857, including the original caretaker residence of Frederick County's "Poor Farm." All significantly enhance the Shenandoah Valley's portfolio of protected land with heritage resources.

## SPOTLIGHT



"PROTECTED FOREVER" IS THE MANTRA THAT SPURRED Ken and Diana Brasfield to donate an easement to VOF on their 82-acre Certified Tree Farm in 2015. Located in Augusta County, the Middlebrook property fronts SR 602 and is surrounded by undeveloped land along Little North Mountain and close to the 33,000-acre Goshen-Little North Mountain Wildlife Management Area.

The Brasfields planted 18,000 trees, earning a Conservation Tree Farmer of the Year Award in 1991. They nurtured over-plowed, over-grazed land, reducing erosion on soil that is classified by the USDA as Soils of Statewide Importance. Six potable springs feeding four streams enhance water quality along a section of the Middle River that is included on the 2010 Impaired Waters list.

The couple diligently restored the property's 186-year-old house, known as the Kerr House, which was constructed of brick made from earth the house is built on. Its significance extends to the Civil War, with a cupboard bearing scars of Union soldiers searching for food and war booty.

"When we first saw this property there was only 35 acres and an unloved house," says Ken. "I did not want to purchase it but Diana saw the diamond in the rough it really was. I listened to her and time coupled with hard work has proven her correct. Leaving this small place in better shape than we found it continues to be our goal."

# SOUTHEAST REGION

An impressive 3,303 total acres in the Southeast Region were placed in open-space easement with VOF during FY 2016. The largest of the ten new easements is 1,000 acres of forestland in Chesterfield County. This rural tract boasts several miles of frontage along the Appomattox River, which flows into Lake Chesdin—a source of drinking water for the City of Petersburg and other communities. Other new easements feature tributaries to and frontage along the James, Nottoway, and Blackwater rivers. Protection of these waterways helps preserve the water quality, shoreline sights, and recreational opportunities afforded by these rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

Supporting the Commonwealth's historic resources are two new Amelia County easements that share boundaries with the Sailor's Creek Battlefield Study Area Protection. Limitation on further division and dwellings, as well as a significant no-build road setback, helps protect in perpetuity the integrity of this historic battlefield site. In addition, a newly recorded Charles City County amendment involves 196 acres at Riverview Farm, one of the few remaining historic Virginia plantations.

Natural heritage resources were positively impacted by the new easements, as well. A Dinwiddie farm borders a relatively unaltered Piedmont-Fall Zone aquatic system, home to the Roanoke logperch that is a federal and Virginia state endangered species. A



Goochland easement fronts the James River in a section containing populations of the Atlantic pigtoe mussel, another federally listed species of concern and a Virginia state threatened species. Elsewhere, property adjacent to the Appomattox River harbors numerous aquatic species, including the green floater mussel, a Virginia state-threatened species.

## SPOTLIGHT



DREWRY FARMS, A NEW EASEMENT IN SOUTHERN Surry County, is a 246-acre heritage livestock and grain operation that primarily consists of rolling timberland and cropland. The farm supports a pick-your-own blueberry operation open to the public, providing enjoyment and a farm-to-table experience. The property fronts State Route 31, protecting the rural and agricultural views for the traveling public. The property also borders Milltail Creek, a Blackwater River tributary that joins the Nottoway River downstream to form the Chowan River. The VOF easement helps support the land conservation goals of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership, which is coordinated by the the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and supported by Virginia and North Carolina.

# SOUTHSIDE REGION

Southside recorded the largest total acreage in VOF protection during FY 2016: a remarkable 4,708 acres. The new easements are located in seven counties, with close to 40 percent of the acreage located in Lunenburg County.

The properties range from rolling piedmont farmland to rich timberland. Several of the newly recorded easements contain Prime Farmland soils or Soils of Statewide Importance, as designated by the Natural Resource Conservation Service. More than half of the easements boast forests with high Forest Conservation Value, as designated by the Virginia Department of Forestry.

The majority of the easements' ponds and creeks flow into tributaries that feed the Nottaway, Staunton (Roanoke), Meherrin, and Dan rivers. The stream buffers in these easements contribute to water quality in the Southern Rivers region and ultimately the Albemarle–Pamlico Estuary. The Dan River, which flows into Kerr Reservoir and Lake Gaston, serves as a source of drinking water for the counties of Mecklenburg and Brunswick; the Town of Clarksville; and the cities of Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, and Norfolk.



A Nottaway County easement features a Century Farm with an historic house built in 1835. VOF's protection of the land in perpetuity helps preserve this cultural resource.

## SPOTLIGHT



DEVIN LOGGING RECORDED NEARLY 550 ACRES OF well-managed timber in a VOF easement during FY 2016. The working forestland provides raw materials for Virginia's forest products industry, as well as wildlife habitat and improved air and water quality by its ecosystem functions. The easement borders the Clover Wildlife Management Area and serves to increase and buffer the wildlife habitat nurtured there by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Tributaries of the Staunton (Roanoke) River, a designated State Scenic River, flow through the property. Maintenance of the tributaries' water quality also helps protect the Albemarle–Pamlico Estuary, the second-largest estuary system in the country.

Through the protection of open space, Halifax County enjoys assured continuity of a scenic, rural viewshed.

# SOUTHWEST REGION

In the heart of Southwest Virginia, conservation-minded residents designated more than 1,400 acres of rich farmland, forests, and waterways for VOF protection during FY 2016. Of the ten new easements recorded, 70 percent are working farms. The largest addition is a 412-acre family farm in Pulaski County that has been owned by the same family for more than 50 years.

The region's new easements expand ecological protection in significant ways. A Bedford County property along Goose Creek provides native habitat for the Roanoke logperch, a state and federally endangered fish. Further south in Patrick County, VOF now affords protection for the federally endangered small-anthered bittercress. Nearby, a newly recorded Carroll County easement lies within the Crooked Creek Wetlands Conservation Site. Preservation of this wetlands ecosystem is critical for numerous natural heritage resources that the Division of Natural Heritage has documented there, including Carolina laurel, large cranberry and dewdrop.

The prominent locations of several new easements preserve yet another precious resource: natural scenic views. A Franklin County working farm fronts on a portion of Virginia's "Crooked Road," a 250-mile tourism trail spotlighting mountain music tradition and history. A Montgomery County easement fronts the New River, one of the original ten "American Heritage Rivers" and a popular recreation site. Several newly



New easements in the region help to protect viewsheds along the Crooked Road Trail, the New River, and the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail.

recorded properties adjoin a Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, which celebrates the diversity of native flora and fauna. Along the highly trafficked U.S. Highway 221 and State Route 40, other new easements similarly protect Southwest Virginia's scenic splendor in perpetuity.

## SPOTLIGHT



A 228-ACRE CARROLL COUNTY FARM, ORIGINALLY known as Moomanner Dairy Farm, has been owned by the Edwards family since the 1890s. It was protected by a VOF easement during FY 2016, with an application pending for designation as a Virginia Century Farm by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Multiple tiny creeks cross the property's pastures and converge to form a tributary to Beaverdam Creek, which is designated as a Class III Wild Trout Stream. The easement lies close to a Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, which connects a series of protected wildlife viewing sites throughout the Commonwealth. In addition, the property provides rural landscape views for travelers along State Route 706.

Preservation of the property in a relatively undeveloped state protects its agricultural land, fish and wildlife, and natural scenic views for future generations.

# TIDEWATER REGION

Water continues to be a major focus of the Tidewater Region's conservation endeavors. Among the newly recorded easements, several boast picturesque river shorelines and freshwater creeks. Others flank or enjoy proximity to vibrant wetlands, including Great Wicomico River, Dawson Swamp, and Dragon Run Swamp. All 2,350 new acres comprising the FY 2016 easements have potential to protect and enhance the region's water quality, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Other beneficiaries range from flora and fauna that rely on the region's ecological environments, to residents and travelers who treasure Tidewater's recreational activities and scenic views.

The lands represented by the 11 new Tidewater easements vary from open spaces and soil-rich farms, to working forestlands replete with hardwoods and pines. Equally rich and diverse are the easements' native habitats and wildlife.

An Essex County farm that contains Rappahannock River shoreline is clearly visible from U.S. Highway Route 17, which is a Virginia Scenic Byway. Protection of the farm contributes to the region's agricultural economy and rural landscape, which supports tourism.

Of historic significance is a new easement on the King William County property known as "Green Level," circa 1750,



including the historic house with its brick slave quarters. Both are eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Now, as the centerpiece of a VOF easement, the iconic farm and its cultural heritage will be protected in perpetuity.

## SPOTLIGHT

BRUINGTON, A NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PROPERTY, features large sections of open farmland with areas of mixed hardwood and pine forests. It contains a shoreline and wetlands on Bridge Creek, which is a tributary of the Potomac River. The water quality of the region and Chesapeake Bay will be enhanced by VOF preservation and prevention of some types of non-point source pollution through the easement's restrictions.

The majority of this Northern Neck property contains soils

classified as Prime Farmland Soils by the United States Department of Agriculture. The easement ensures that the productive soils will be available for future farming.

The 222-acre easement also is clearly visible from a public road. By recording an easement with VOF, the property owner, Dr. Elizabeth Crowther, demonstrated her desire for Bruington's scenic views and open spaces to be forever enjoyed by Northumberland's travelers.



# VOF RESERVES



## Open-Space Reserves

The largest VOF reserve is the 2,500-acre Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve located in Northern Virginia. This wooded, mountain landscape was designated as a State Natural Area Preserve in 2002 in recognition of its exemplary ecological communities. Located just 35 miles from Washington D.C., the preserve attracts visitors from across the region who come to explore the 10 miles of trails and take in the spectacular views.

VOF also owns 900 acres on House Mountain near Lexington in Rockbridge County. House Mountain is a treasured destination for area residents and students from nearby Washington & Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute.

In Northumberland County, VOF owns Kohls Island at the confluence of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. The island is home to a globally rare tiger beetle and other species that find refuge on the island's undeveloped dune and marsh systems. The island also provides a beach area that is open the public by boat.

## Land Purchases and Trade Lands

VOF assists other state agencies in fee simple real estate transactions for conservation lands. During its 50-year history, VOF helped to facilitate the acquisition and protection of Sky Meadows State Park, Leesylvania State Park, Crawford State Forest, and Aldie Mill Historic Park, among others. Most recently, VOF worked with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries on the acquisition of the 4,232 acres Short Hills Wildlife Management Area in Rockbridge and Botetourt Counties. Short Hills is now open to the public.

Landowners in Virginia also donate property to VOF with the intention that the property will be sold and the funds used to further VOF's conservation mission. VOF is currently marketing one property, and the funds have been designated by the VOF trustees to be used for stewardship on VOF's preserves.

## FY 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ VOF received a \$15,000 grant from the Sacharuna Foundation to fund the collection and digital archiving of approximately 100 years of planning documents, histories, and scientific research conducted on, or related to, the Bull Run Mountains. This library will be integrated into a new website dedicated to the preserve, expected to go live in 2017. The archive will be searchable and available to the public.
- ▶ The Bull Run Mountains Preserve hosted multiple scientific studies last year, including a 50-year-old study of rattlesnakes on the property and a study of insects led by the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History as part of the Virginia Beetle Project. A one-year survey of bats at the preserve began in May, led by Chris Hobson of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Also, Dr. Kirk Smith, a research affiliate in George Mason University's Environmental Science and Policy Department, contacted VOF about potential reintroduction of brook trout into the Bull Run Mountains. After a review of several potential reintroduction streams, Catharpin Creek has been selected as a prime candidate. Dr. Smith and his students will work with VOF and others as they continue their work on the property.



- ▶ VOF received by bequest the Margaret Smith Farm, a property on the New River in Pulaski County, and is working with the county on the potential to establish a park on the site.



# DONORS

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The Virginia Outdoors Foundation has always relied on private philanthropy to help accomplish its mission. We thank the following donors for their gifts of \$100 and more in fiscal year 2016.

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	Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Jeffries		

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The following information covers the period between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. For more details about VOF's budget, contact Anna Chisholm, director of administration, at (540) 951-0704.

## SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET

### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$2,134,945
Accounts Receivable	\$760,854
Prepaid Items	\$48,044
Temporarily Restricted Cash (Bull Run Mts NAP)	\$1,500,157
Land	\$5,417,125
Buildings, Fixtures, Vehicles, net	\$114,859
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$9,975,984</b>

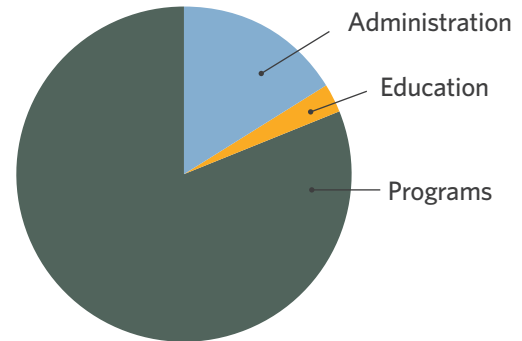
### LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$170,090
Accrued Salaries	\$73,570
Leave and Other Post Emp. Benefits	\$175,199
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$418,859</b>

### NET POSITION

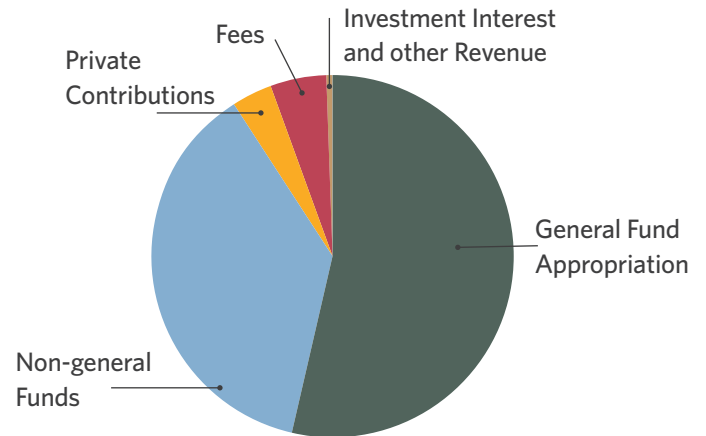
Net Investment in Capital Assets	\$5,531,984
Restricted for:	
Unavailable	\$46,847
Restricted for Bull Run	\$1,526,085
Restricted for OSLPTF	\$737,113
<b>Restricted Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,310,045</b>
Unrestricted	\$1,715,096
<b>Total Net Position</b>	<b>\$9,557,125</b>

## OPERATING EXPENSES



Administration	\$578,982
Education	\$102,473
Programs	\$2,883,435
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,564,890</b>

## REVENUE SUMMARY



General Fund Appropriation	\$1,752,750
Non-general Funds	\$1,223,083
Private Contributions	\$115,106
Fees	\$164,301
Investment Interest and other Revenue	\$11,943
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,267,183</b>

# VOF REGIONAL OFFICES

## EXECUTIVE OFFICE

39 Garrett St., Suite 200  
Warrenton, VA 20186  
(540) 347-7727

## APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS

468 Main St., Suite 400-B  
Abingdon, VA 24210  
(276) 628-5210

## CENTRAL

1010 Harris St., Suite 4  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
(434) 293-3423

## SHENANDOAH VALLEY

103 E. Beverley St., Suite B  
Staunton, VA 24401  
(540) 886-2460

## SOUTHEAST

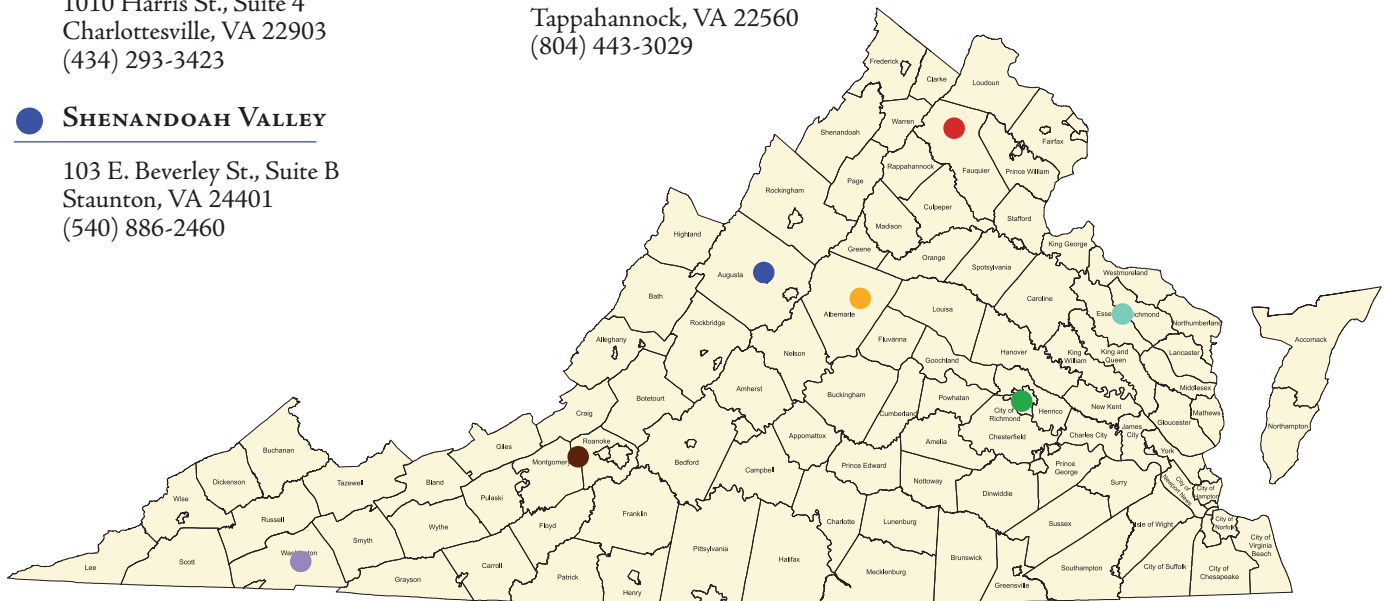
600 E. Main St., Suite 402  
Richmond, VA 23219  
(804) 786-9603

## SOUTHWEST

900 S. Main St.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
(540) 951-2822

## TIDEWATER

P.O. Box 909  
139 Prince Street  
Tappahannock, VA 22560  
(804) 443-3029



“I remain committed to the concept of the preservation of our open spaces as envisioned by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Under VOF’s stewardship, I believe we can protect Virginia’s most valuable asset for future generations.” —Rappahannock County easement donor

[virginiaoutdoorsfoundation.org](http://virginiaoutdoorsfoundation.org)



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