

Conserving Land and Mitigating Impacts in the Elizabeth River Watershed 2021

Dear Friend of the Living River Trust,

We want to share with you the latest accomplishments of the region's only local land trust. Despite the pandemic, Living River Trust (LRT) has **made great strides in conserving land and mitigating impacts in the Elizabeth River watershed.**

As you know, the Elizabeth River watershed is a unique community asset; it is a gorgeous and vital coastal river providing the region with water quality, wildlife habitat, and environmental benefits. The Elizabeth River is also an economic asset, part of the transportation network of the largest port on the East Coast. **The river is a unique place where we live and work; and LRT is here to protect this community treasure.**

LRT **understands the balance between community health, environmental quality and economic development and creates smart innovative solutions to help the Elizabeth River continue to LIVE and WORK for our community.** Recent highlights include:

Conservation



The family gives LRT a tour of their land.

- **Locust Lane** – Portsmouth – A 5-acre parcel, in ownership by the same family for a century, was placed in conservation and will be forever protected. This was the first ever conservation easement in the City of Portsmouth and this **model may be used throughout the Elizabeth River Watershed for similar small urban residential parcels.**
- **Ferry Point Park** –Virginia Beach -LRT purchased 9 acres of wetland and forest, conserved the acreage, and transferred the land to the city to become the City's **newest park.** The **only public kayak launch area on the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River is planned.**

- **Dismal Swamp** – Suffolk/Chesapeake -LRT secured outside funding, purchased, and **transferred 500 acres to the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.** **Southport/Newton Neck** –Chesapeake- **LRT secured more than one million dollars in state funding** to purchase 90 acres in Chesapeake and entered an agreement with the city to conserve the land and transfer ownership to the city for a **new regional park.** It is anticipated that this deal will be complete by year's end.



The shoreline will accommodate a kayak launch open to the public.

Mitigation



- **Paradise Creek** – Portsmouth -Later this month, LRT will begin a full-scale restoration of the bottom of Elizabeth River utilizing **new technology that absorbs pollutants**. The project will kick off this month.

This heron will soon enjoy healthier waters here at Paradise Creek.

Innovation

- **Residential Pilot Programs – Norfolk and Chesapeake** - LRT continues work in partnership with area cities on a model that conserves open space and wetlands when homes become uninhabitable due to flooding. Two pending conservation easements may utilize this model.
- **Strategic Plan** – LRT begins a strategic planning process this month that will map the future for the organization looking critically at the ability to expand to other areas, the continued use of mitigation funds, and organizational solutions.
- **Leadership** - LRT recruited and hired its first Executive Director earlier this year. Liz Friel met the LRT's unique needs with her diverse background in urban planning, environmental planning, and conservation.



Neighborhood flooding is a common site in our area.

Would you consider again supporting the Living River Trust? Your donation is leveraged against grant funds and mitigation monies, to create maximum impact in conserving and restoring the Elizabeth River. New this year, our supporters will receive the new "Living River News" e-newsletter monthly! Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Rob Robins

Rob Robins
Chair

Elizabeth Friel

Elizabeth "Liz" Friel
Executive Director

Letter of Intended Support 2021

I/we wish to support the Living River Trust! I/we pledge a total of \$ _____, of which \$ _____ is enclosed (may be paid in cash, check, by credit card, or with securities). My gift will make possible the entire mission of the Living River Trust, such as:

- ✓ **Purchase Priority Lands and Place in Perpetual Conservation**
 - \$20,000 Conserver of the Land Benefactor
 - \$10,000 Steward of the Land Patron
 - \$5,000 Forest Conservator
 - Other (surprise us!)

- ✓ **Champion Land Conservation Planning**
 - \$2,500 – Support development of a land conservation corridor plan
 - \$1,000 – Support working with local governments on sound land use planning

- ✓ **Fund Key Conservation Efforts of LRT Staff**
 - \$1,500 – Respond to a landowner application for donation of land or easement
 - \$250 – Conduct annual monitoring and stewardship of a conservation easement

- ✓ **Be a supporting member of LRT – \$100**

Name(s): _____
(Please print name the way it is to appear in print or _____ I/we wish to remain anonymous.)

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

____ (If applicable) This contribution will be matched by: _____, a matching company.

____ I wish to pay by check, payable to the "Living River Restoration Trust" for \$ _____

____ I wish to pay with my Visa/MasterCard/AMEX Card for \$ _____

Card # _____ Expiration Date _____ Verification Code _____

Unless otherwise indicated, a due date of September 30, 2021 is assumed to coincide with our fiscal year.

