

Let's JOIN Volunteer EXCITEMENT

What's Inside?

Let's Jump!

Land Stewardship Workdays
Places We Protect

In Review

Conservation Highlights

Let's Jig!

Additional Opportunities

EARTH DAY

Preserve Highlight

Technology Corner

Global Strategies

Let's Jazz it up!

Did You Know?

A beaver can hold it's breath for 45 minutes.

Green Idea

Instead of using paper towels, reuse your old clothes as dusting cloths for spring cleaning.

"Have you ever observed a humming-bird moving about in an aerial dance among the flowers - a living prismatic gem.... it is a creature of such fairy-like loveliness as to mock all description." -W.H. Hudson,

FACES OF CONSERVATION

In the words of KATIE VAUGHT, volunteer, volunteer coordinator, Clinch Valley Program

I love the outdoors. One of my favorite things is stepping out of a tent first thing in the morning and enjoying the scenery right in front of me. I volunteer because I want to do anything I can to keep beautiful spaces clean and teeming with life.

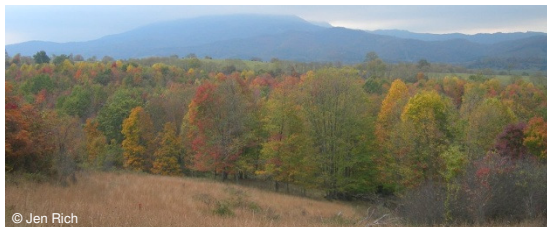
I recently moved to Blacksburg from Winchester, where I have worked as a dance instructor and substitute teacher for the past five years. I wanted to find a way to volunteer, enjoy the mountains and meet people in my new home. I was thrilled when I saw an opportunity to be the volunteer, volunteer coordinator for the Clinch Valley.

The Clinch is home to much biodiversity and I am looking forward to helping the staff who protect the land and waterways there. We are already planning quite a few events for the spring and I will be gathering contacts and sending out event details. I cannot wait for warm weather and all the opportunities ahead.



© Katie Vaught

Katie Vaught is the new volunteer, volunteer coordinator for the Conservancy's Clinch Valley Program. If you would like to volunteer or have ideas for southwest VA please contact Katie at kvaught@tnc.org.



© Jen Rich



© Jen Rich

MY VOLUNTEER STORY

A True Gift in the words of CHRISTIE THOMAS, associate director of operations, The Nature Conservancy

As a new Conservancy employee almost ten years ago, I remember being amazed when I learned that a long-term volunteer had helped take care of our Virginia Coast Reserve lands and buildings for more than a decade (he's still at it too!). After moving to Charlottesville, I met more long-term volunteers who have helped the Conservancy with a myriad of projects and details over the years. In reading the volunteer statistics that Jennifer Rich compiles annually, I know that these two geographic areas are not unique in this regard. Virginia has a lot of amazing folks giving of their time and talents to help us advance conservation. **This is a true gift.**

I, too, believe in volunteering my time, not only on the occasional Nature Conservancy project, but on faith-based and community action projects. It is a way for me to give back, to meet great people, and to help make a difference. It's most often a lot of fun, too, no matter the project or topic! Volunteering helps me feel connected – either to a place, to an organization, or to a cause – and sometimes all of these!



© Jen Rich

let's Jump! Land Stewardship

Largest SEAGRASS RESTORATION in the World!

late-May to mid-June: SNORKELERS and WATER LOVERS

The Nature Conservancy, along with several partners in the Seaside Seagrass Community Restoration Program, is once again gearing up for the **largest seagrass restoration project in the world!** We are looking for 100 local volunteer snorkelers and water lovers to collect millions of eelgrass seeds.

For more information visit www.nature.org/seagrassrestoration. Check out the video and slideshow. 2011 Schedule is not yet available. Look for the schedule available in May. To get on the list to receive more information as it becomes available call or email Jen Rich, volunteer coordinator, 434-951-0572 or jrich@tnc.org.



Trail Workday: Berger Preserve (near Fredericksburg)

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m.-3 or 4 p.m.

We are in need of 20 or more volunteers to help on Saturday, May 21 at our Berger Preserve near Fredericksburg. Tasks may include: 1. General trail maintenance/stewardship: clipping overgrown vegetation, re-blazing, removing downed trees/branches from trail; 2. Re-arrange puncheon, move heavy concrete slabs- must be physically fit, strong and able to lift heavy materials; 3. Open up a new section of trail; 4. Potentially building a kiosk: carpentry skills preferred; 5. Fix log bridge that is rotting; 6. Fix steps/entrance to crossing a large bridge.

If you are interested and available please contact Jen Rich, volunteer coordinator at jrich@tnc.org or 434-951-0572. You may be asked to provide tools if you have them. More details available for those who sign up.

Avian Monitoring: Warm Springs Mountain Preserve (Bath County, VA)

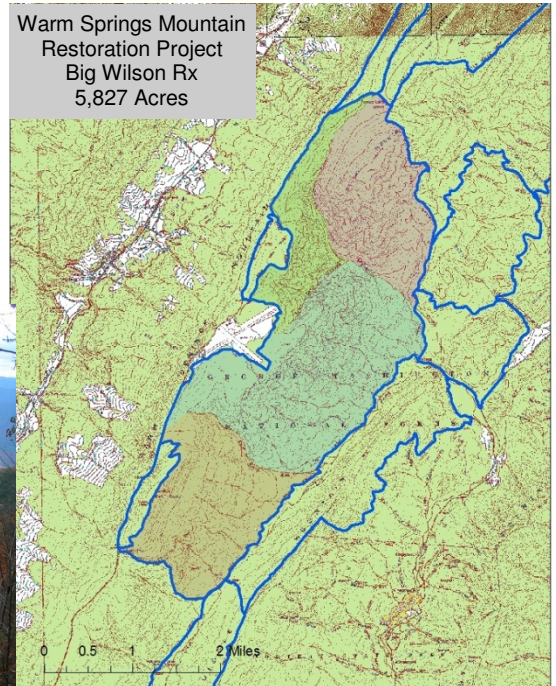
Mid-April to mid-June: Carpooling from Charlottesville available

The Nature Conservancy is studying breeding birds in the western mountains of Virginia and are looking for volunteers who have ornithology experience and bird identification through sound experience. We will be monitoring for breeding birds at our Warm Springs Mountain Preserve (Bath County). Carpooling may be available from Charlottesville. You must be available for overnight trips (staying at a remote, primitive cabin on the preserve free of cost) and/or very early morning starts at dawn. We plan to be in the field starting to monitor at 6 AM, which may mean leaving Charlottesville the night before or at 3:30 AM. You must be physically fit and able to traverse steep, rocky mountainous terrain in remote locations in various weather conditions. Volunteers will be working in teams of three with staff. Support volunteers are also needed where ornithology skills may not be required. Support volunteers will be needed for writing down data, timing and finding points with GPS units. If interested please contact Jen Rich, volunteer coordinator at jrich@tnc.org or 434-951-0572 with a resume or list of birding experience.

PLACES WE PROTECT

Where is the Big Wilson Burn?

Forests and fire are naturally intertwined, and in many cases healthy forests benefit from natural fire regimes. The Nature Conservancy, in partnership with the US Forest Service, is planning a prescribed burn in the spring of 2011 called the "Big Wilson Burn," named for the drainage where the burn will take place. The nearly 6,000 acre prescribed burn crosses multiple property boundaries and will be a multi-day affair. The map right, created by Sam Lindblom, director of land management and fire manager, shows the location of the planned burn. The photo right is overlooking the Big Wilson drainage and the burn will cover part of this area and forests north and south of this photo.



IN REVIEW

 a look at some accomplishments

Winter was **WONDERFUL!** A big **thank you** goes out to the many people who have helped us both in the field and in the office. Over 100 volunteers boast more than **1,130** hours since January, with an estimated value of over \$33,200; however, to the Conservancy they are priceless. Enjoy a little winter review.

Cumberland Marsh Trail Workday: A dozen volunteers helped to re-open trails for visitors by blazing, raking, and lopping at Cumberland Marsh just east of Richmond. See photo right.

Fire Line Prep: It was chilly and windy (and there was snow on the ground in places), but volunteers helped prep for the Big Wilson Burn by leaf blowing and removing deadfall. See “Places We Protect.”

APO Landscapes: Members of the University of Virginia’s Alpha Phi Omega helped landscape at the Charlottesville Office. Read more on how you can help on page 6.



AmeriCorps Builds Boardwalk:

Our Virginia Coast Reserve Program got help from an AmeriCorps crew who built boardwalk, planted trees and maintained tree tubes. Read more in “Conservation Highlights.” See photo left.

Barberry Control: Throughout the winter volunteers, led by volunteer Margaret Chatham, helped control the invasive species, Japanese Barberry at our Fraser Preserve.

GIS in Arlington: Our Worldwide Office in Arlington received help from several volunteers who made maps in the Geographic Information Systems Department. See photo right.



ASB Crews:

Two separate Alternative Spring Break Crews helped the Conservancy in Virginia. A crew from the University of Pittsburgh spent the week at Piney Grove Preserve with prescribed fire prep. A crew from Suffolk University spent a week in the Clinch planting trees. See photos lower left.



Tree Planting at Fortune’s Cove:

Volunteers spent a March day planting hardwood trees at our Fortune’s Cove Preserve while volunteers from the American Chestnut Foundation planted more American Chestnut hybrids. See photo right.

Prescribed Fire: From around February through May, qualified volunteers help our burn team conduct prescribed fires around Virginia from our Piney Grove Preserve to our Warm Springs Mountain Preserve.



Volunteer Visitation Committees:

Preserve monitors have been at it for several years and our trails look great thanks to the many volunteers who help do regular trail maintenance and report back.



What about me?: Thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers around the state who have been working hard this winter to volunteer from home, to help do research and to help out in the field or in the office. Your work is greatly appreciated!

“The shortest answer is doing.” -Lord Herbert

CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS with the help of volunteers

River 7 on the Eastern Shore by Chris Money and team, AmeriCorps NCCC



AmeriCorps NCCC is a team based, residential service program that offers young men and women between the ages of 18-24 the opportunity to give back to their country and their communities through service. Operating from five regional campuses located around the country, NCCC teams travel across the U.S. lending support to non-profit organizations as well as federal agencies for a ten month period, divided up into four, two month projects. Projects are many and varied, traversing the spectrum of work from

environmental protection to construction and home repair to disaster response and recovery.

For several weeks spanning most of January and February, AmeriCorps NCCC team River 7 worked with the Conservancy and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (State Parks and Heritage Division) on a number of projects to better protect the Virginia Coast Reserve as well as offer better access to visitors. Arriving late at night after two long, long days of driving up from Vicksburg, MS, the team was immediately impressed by the beautiful cabin Kiptopeke State Park was using to house the team. After a restful night of relaxing in front of the fire, the crew was ready for work and the sponsors provided. Over the course of the project, River 7 repaired a boardwalk and an observation deck, cleared 2 miles of trails, planted 2,350 trees, and removed 4,000 lbs of trash from reserve land. The team also built and installed signs, painted park buildings, tended several acres of previously planted trees, removed old irrigation pipe, and restored campsites.

The Virginia Coast Reserve is an incredibly beautiful and unique natural area. All members of River 7 had an excellent time and were very glad for the opportunity to help support such wonderful place. The team offers its thanks to the Nature Conservancy, the Heritage Division of DCR, and Virginia State Parks for being wonderful sponsors and for sharing their incredible workplace every day.

University of Pittsburgh at Piney Grove Preserve by Kim Frantz, Alternative Spring Break volunteer

Many people, including myself, have grown up with the same attitude toward forest fires, an attitude of ultimate prevention and fear. This judgment engenders itself, in part, to the forest fire campaign launched by the United States Forest Service in 1947 with the familiar slogan of Smokey the Bear, "Remember... Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires." However, as I recently learned during my week at the Piney Grove Preserve in Sussex County, Virginia, Smokey's campaign was somewhat elusive, for what I believe he meant to say was something along the lines of, only you can prevent uncontrolled and unmaintained *wildfires*.

Piney Grove Preserve works to actively sustain the pine savanna habitat in which the last breeding population of red-cockaded woodpeckers in Virginia survives by conducting prescribed burns. While the staff and volunteers also work to enhance the red-cockaded woodpecker population in other ways, our group's focus centered around fire management. During the week, we mainly worked on raking fire lines and raking around woodpecker trees in preparation for future burns in the area, which, according to staff, can happen at almost any time, being that these prescribed fires call for a strict set of weather and other conditions. While the work was certainly tiring, the beauty of the preserve and friendly staff and volunteers more than made up for my aching muscles.

I return from my time at Piney Grove more informed about the many ways of "protecting nature and preserving life," in the words of The Nature Conservancy. Before attending this trip, I was not aware of the ideas behind fire ecology for the preservation of plant and animal life and its role in helping some habitats to prosper. I chose to attend the trip because, as a general Biological Sciences major with an interest in the diverse field of ecology, I wanted to spend my week actively working outside and learning about one of the many ways in which the staff and volunteers of the Nature Conservancy work to, "save the last great places on earth." By the end of the trip, though, I came away with more than just knowledge about the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and its habitat, but a greater appreciation for the preservation of life on planet earth and the work it takes to do so.



"Cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there." -Virginia Burden

let's Jig! Additional Opportunities

11th Annual Backyard Plant Sale: Ashland, VA

Friday, April 29 from 4:00 pm – dark

Saturday, April 30 from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

PLANT DONORS NEEDED, donor preview sale April 28, 4pm- dark

Volunteer, Julie Ericksen is holding her Annual Backyard Plant Sale at 203 Howard Street in Ashland, VA. Proceeds from the sale benefit the Conservancy's Chesapeake Rivers Program specifically for land acquisitions. If you have plants to donate, leave them with your name on Julie's front porch any time during the week before the sale, or call her to arrange for pick up. There will be a preview sale for plant donors on Thursday, April 28, from 4:00 p.m.– dark. On this day only, donors may purchase up to the number of plants donated by that person. Some items actually sell out on this day. It is permissible to bring a friend to share your "credits." Contact Julie at jbericksen@comcast.net or (804) 752-7671 for questions and more information. Check out her blog too, <http://backyardplantsale.org/>, or join on Facebook.



23rd Annual CLEAN THE BAY DAY is Sat, JUNE 4! Sites throughout Virginia

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and its 20+ partners throughout the Commonwealth invite you to help save the Bay by picking up shoreline, waterway, and watershed litter during **Clean the Bay Day on June 4, 2011**. Join thousands of fellow Virginians in removing unhealthy debris from cherished waterways throughout the Commonwealth. By boat or on foot, gather your family, friends, neighbors, groups, and co-workers for a fun day and a worthwhile way to help *Save the Bay*.

To clean up litter or coordinate volunteers at a cleanup site in your area, visit cbf.org/clean, call 800/SAVEBAY, or send an e-mail to ctbd@cbf.org.

Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Stewardship Day June 4, 8:30 a.m.

To participate contact Kitty Cox, MPRA'S River Stewardship Day coordinator, at 804-769-3939. Volunteers are needed to work from numerous landings on both rivers in boats, canoes and on foot for this year's clean up. If you have a boat or canoe, please bring it. Volunteers will meet for the morning briefing at 8:30 a.m. at one of three places: Dick Campbell's place near King William Courthouse, the West Point boat landing, or Rainbow Acres Campground in King and Queen. A picnic at Dick Campbell's place will follow the event at 2:00 p.m.

EARTH DAY REFLECTIONS

Tom McIntosh

Earth Day to me is two things. First, it is a celebration of what a wondrous world that we inhabit. Two, it is a call to action to protect this beautiful planet.



Join The Nature Conservancy to celebrate Earth Day on April 22.

Read more about Picnic for the Planet at

www.nature.org/earthday.

Jim Wilcox

About 20 million Americans participated in the first Earth Day (1970); 400 million in 183 countries in 2000; and about one billion world citizens in 2007. So what does Earth Day mean to me? We can "get the job done," folks!



Caroline Green

Earth Day to me is a celebration of this wonderful, amazing and delicate planet that we live on. It is a day that we should appreciate what Mother Earth has given us, and think about how we, as humans, can better coexist in it. I think everyday should be Earth Day.



PRESERVE HIGHLIGHT

Eastern Shore Barrier Islands: In 1969, the Conservancy began purchasing the 14 islands and associated marshes that today comprise the heart of the Virginia Coast Reserve. This landscape comprises the longest expanse of coastal wilderness remaining on the east coast and serves as one of the most critical migratory bird habitats on Earth.

Most of the VA Conservancy owned barrier islands are open for daily use to the public for low impact, non-commercial, recreational day use, such as hiking, bird watching, surf fishing and photography. These islands include: Hog, Cobb, Myrtle, Smith, Sandy, Rogue, Godwin and Mink Islands, Dawson Shoals and the Conservancy owned portions of Metompkin and Cedar Islands.

Pets, motorized vehicles, camping and campfires are prohibited at all times. Please help protect nesting birds by observing the following additional guidelines during the breeding season, April 15 through September 1: Remain at the water's edge at all times; Avoid upper beaches, dunes and mudflats; Respect posted bird nesting areas.



From Boston to Virginia by Martine Ciccio, ASB student

This March, nine students and two facilitators from Suffolk University spent their spring break working with the Conservancy's Clinch Valley Program. Tim Albers, Kelli Connors, Chrissy Tucciarone, Martine Ciccio, Sarah Goscinak, Jenny Jepson, John Paul Livingston, Rachel Rondon, Thay Thao, Michael Tumilty, and Abi Warren spent three days planting red oak, shortleaf pine, and black locust trees on several properties throughout the Clinch Valley.

The students and facilitators are no strangers to volunteer work, but planting trees was a new experience for most. Before signing up for Alternative Spring Break, many of the students had never heard of The Nature Conservancy, but now that spring break is over and the students and facilitators are back in Boston, they are spreading news of the Conservancy's work. Some students have even decided to become members and a hand-



ful of students are planning to start an outdoor club at Suffolk University.

During the trip the group really challenged themselves and definitely broke in their work boots planting over 4,000 trees! Thay Thao, a student on the trip, "loved how everyone was so close by the end of the trip. We really bonded through our planting, I couldn't have asked for a better group of people to spend the week with". Planting the trees was no easy task, but it was extremely rewarding. One of the group's most memorable moments from the trip was after their first day of planting. After they climbed back down from the worksite, they looked at the pink tree tags sprinkled all over the mountain. They proudly talked about how some of their trees would survive and grow to become a very important and necessary part of the Clinch River Valley.

Volunteer Opportunity - Adopt a Garden! by Theresa King



The Nature Conservancy in Virginia has initiated a fun and exciting way to volunteer, adopting a garden space at our Charlottesville office location. Volunteer-

ing will require one (or more) people assigned to a section of our building's gardens. This will entail cutting back shrubs, deadheading perennials, weeding, mulching and raking. No more than a few hours of volunteering per month for each area are required to keep everything looking beautiful.

The Nature Conservancy had the pleasure of working with Brian Iverson, owner/designer of Anything Grows Landscape & Construction last month. Brian generously volunteered his time to get the project rolling with his expertise and skills by giving our gardens a much needed "hair cut" – cutting back overgrown shrubs and hauling everything away. This set the stage for our larger volunteer garden work day later in Feb-

ruary, when Brian and Alpha Phi Omega Theta Chapter at The University of Virginia worked extensively in the gardens. The group was able to tackle the front and back of our large garden spaces through cutting back old shrubs, deadheading perennials, weeding, mulching and raking. The gardens look beautiful, and through our efforts, each garden section is in great shape and will be an excellent starting point for those who want to adopt a space.

Now that the gardens are prepped, please consider adopting a space to maintain. All levels of experience are welcome, tools will be provided. Please contact Theresa King, operations assistant at theresa_king@tnc.org or 434-951-0586.

GLOBAL STRATEGIES big ideas for the future of conservation

CAMPAIGN FOR A SUSTAINABLE PLANET a focus on SOUTHERN ANDES a conservation priority.

El Roble within Chile's Matorral ecoregion. ©Tom Crowley



As we approach the final months of the Campaign for a Sustainable Planet, Conservancy donors, staff and volunteers have much of which to be proud: In less than four years we have raised nearly \$1.6 billion in outright gifts and \$400 million in deferred gifts — fueling tangible conservation outcomes around the globe. But meeting these overarching campaign goals does not mean our work is done.

Southern Andes: Where the Pacific Ocean meets the coastal aridlands and

Andes of Chile and Peru, where Bolivia's high peaks give way to dense lowland forests and where the vast temperate grasslands of Argentina's Patagonia stretch all the way to the Atlantic the Conservancy has put into motion an action plan around three key strategies: protected areas, sustainable harvests and private conservation.

What can you do? Please join us in conserving our world's protected areas and make an investment through the Campaign for a Sustainable Planet.

ONE CONSERVANCY beyond our borders

Restore Coastal Alabama in the words of Lindsey Cline, volunteer

© Lindsey Cline



My feet, and now my calves have disappeared into thick, dark brown mud. As I struggle to pull one foot from the muck, the other sank, and for a moment I felt like a contestant in some ridiculous reality show in which players attempt to cross several hundred yards of mud without falling. **Extra points for slipping, sliding, laughing, and helping others.**

Except all 545 of us are part of a much more important mission. We're helping kick off the 100-1000 Restore Coastal Alabama Project, a coalition of organizations building 100 miles of oyster reefs and restoring 1000 acres of coastal marsh. The project not only provides habitat for oysters, but supports commercial and recreational fishing industries by promoting finfish, shrimp, blue crab, trout, reddrum,

flounder, ladyfish and gray snapper habitats. The effort puts Alabama's coast in better shape than before Deepwater Horizon occurred and provides safe habitat for creatures surviving the spill.

We join a group of volunteers mid-morning at Helen Wood Park, in Mobile Bay, to complete safety training before descending into the muck. We fill in the line of volunteers passing 40-lb. sand bags from pallets to an organized formation three wide and two tall. These sacks will protect the shore from erosion and turbidity (caused by busy boat traffic in the Bay) and provide an anchor for the oyster shells. Within minutes, we're covered in mud like all others, and listening to the stories about the coast--communities, habitats lost and habitats protected.

That afternoon, we form a 'firefighter's brigade,' a line of volunteers stretch across the quarter mile of coastline and we pass thousands of oyster shells from the shore to the newly built oyster reef. We cover the burlap sacks

with clean, gray shells to make them ready for oysters, which will eventually harbor shellfish, then fish and ultimately a complete ecosystem.

I'm surrounded by everyone from college students to Fish & Wildlife Service staff and lifelong fisherman to The Nature Conservancy's Alabama Marine Director. Locals thank us for driving nearly 900 miles and 13 hours to join the effort, but we're grateful to be part of an extraordinary day. We're not the only ones.

During a break from passing oyster bags, a high-five passed down the line, from one volunteer to another, and that gesture said it all: we're smelly, muddy and tired, humbled by the mud, inspired by the stories, and most importantly **we're here to make a difference--**a drop in the bucket to restore Alabama's coast.

Lindsey Cline, Corey Shrader and Crystal Helberg volunteered for Restore Coastal Alabama on January 23rd in Mobile Bay, AL.



© Lindsey Cline

“You cannot plough a field by turning it over in your mind.” -Author Unknown

let's Jazz it up!

MISSION

To preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

let's J.I.V.E. is the volunteer newsletter of The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Program.

Please contact Jennifer Rich, volunteer coordinator, at (434) 951-0572, or jrich@tnc.org, for more information on volunteering or if you have any ideas, suggestions or questions.

If you are interested in helping with the production of this newsletter through writing, artwork or by sharing ideas for future editions please contact Jen Rich at (434) 951-0572 or jrich@tnc.org.

Visit our website at www.nature.org/virginiavolunteer for more volunteer updates.

Have you participated in a Nature Conservancy volunteer workday or related event? Do you like to take pictures? Do you want to share your experience with others? If you've answered yes to any of these questions, we have a fun contest for you. In each issue of *let's J.I.V.E.*, Conservancy staff will select and publish the most interesting volunteer-related photo right here for over 1,000 volunteers to see. We will also feature it online at nature.org/virginia/volunteer. Photos may be used in other Conservancy products too. Email your photo to Jen at jrich@tnc.org or send a non-returnable copy to 490 Westfield Road, Charlottesville, VA 22901. Please include a photo title/caption, your name and contact information, and a brief description of the photo, location and workday event.

Share your volunteer picture. Email Jennifer at jrich@tnc.org to submit your photo.



© Martine Ciccio

This photo was submitted by volunteer Martine Ciccio who was part of the Alternative Spring Break Crew planting trees in the Clinch Valley.



© Bobby Clontz

This photo was submitted by Conservancy land steward, Bobby Clontz and shows a recent longleaf pine restoration prescribed burn in southeast Virginia.