

NATURE

VIRGINIA

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Locke Ogens © Kyle LaFerriere

Making the Case for Nature

As a supporter of The Nature Conservancy, you are testifying to the importance of nature in your life. For many of us, a love of nature came easily. We grew up surrounded by nature, or enjoyed ample opportunities to immerse ourselves in the outdoors. But in our increasingly urbanized world, such formative connections with nature aren't necessarily the norm. And sometimes nature is simply overlooked or forgotten in the face of economic and other day-to-day pressures. That's why so much of our work focuses on engaging diverse partners, sharing our science and demonstrating nature's essential roles in our lives and prosperity. Thank you for helping us make the case that nature is critical to a brighter future for all!

Locke Ogens, State Director



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To learn more and support our work, use the QR code or go online to nature.org/virginia.



Wind turbine off the Atlantic coast © Ayla Fox

Designs With Nature in Mind

Turning offshore turbines into habitat for marine life

More than 2,000 new offshore wind turbines are expected to be installed off the East Coast by 2030. In Virginia waters alone, plans call for construction to begin in 2024 on up to 205 turbines. The nation needs this clean energy production to meet its climate goals, and The Nature Conservancy aims to ensure that science guides where and how this development occurs. Along with identifying suitable sites for offshore wind turbines, TNC's marine scientists are seeking answers to a key question: What if these structures could actually create new habitat—a sort of turbine reef—for fish and myriad marine life?

“Our ocean is not just some vast swath of blue space that’s devoid of life,” says Kate Wilke, marine fisheries scientist for TNC in Virginia. “Ocean development will impact marine life and habitats, but we are looking for ways to avoid or minimize those impacts.” Wilke is part of a task force of TNC scientists and policy experts from the Atlantic states who are studying a variety of materials to determine how to create the best habitat for marine life around the bases of turbines.

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Kate Wilke, Virginia Marine Fisheries Scientist

“Engineers are being asked to optimize for cost and turbine protection only, says Chris McGuire, Wilke’s collaborator and TNC’s Massachusetts marine program director. “We’re asking them to optimize for nature as well.” Learn more at nature.org/turbinerreefs.



Josh and Jen Chapman and their daughters enjoy a “magical” visit to Piney Grove Preserve. © Kyle LaFerriere

A Thirst for Longleaf

Brewer Josh Chapman promotes forest restoration

After reading about efforts to restore Virginia’s historic longleaf pine ecosystem, brewer Josh Chapman reached out to The Nature Conservancy with a proposition. “Hey, I know this is gonna sound crazy,” Chapman recalls saying to open the conversation. “I really want to make a beer using this crazy longleaf pine. Do you think that’s possible? Can we spare some needles?” Chapman and his “crazy” idea found a receptive audience in Bobby Clontz, who manages TNC’s Piney Grove Preserve in Sussex County. Before long, the whole Chapman family joined Clontz at Piney Grove to tour the preserve and clip enough longleaf for a special brew. “It was a magical experience,” Chapman adds. This past December, Chapman’s Black Narrows Brewing released Longleaf India Pale Ale. Cans designed in collaboration with TNC feature a rare red-cockaded woodpecker perched within a pine savanna, along with information about these once-vast longleaf forests and how to support restoration efforts. Watch a video featuring Chapman and quench your thirst for more knowledge about longleaf pine at nature.org/longleafva.

“Knowing the amazing work that TNC has done on the Eastern Shore, it just made sense to reach out and see if we could use local beer to highlight longleaf pine.”

Josh Chapman, Black Narrows Brewing, Chincoteague



Josh Chapman at Piney Grove © Kyle LaFerriere

NATURE VIRGINIA

Virginia Dedicates 66th State Natural Area Preserve



Former Gov. Ralph Northam shows off Longleaf IPA at dedication. © Office of Governor Northam

In November, former Governor Ralph Northam joined with other state officials and staff from The Nature Conservancy to formally dedicate Piney Grove Flatwoods as Virginia’s 66th state natural area preserve. The new designation brings the state’s highest level of protection to the core of TNC’s Piney Grove Preserve—the epicenter of longleaf pine and red-cockaded woodpecker restoration in southeast Virginia.

An Impactful Year



Conservation rightly focuses on our future, but we still benefit from looking back and appreciating how far we’ve come. *Our Virginia: 2021 Impact Report* (available in English and Spanish) does just that. From an in-depth exploration of our work in the Appalachians—one of a handful of TNC global priorities—to advances in climate resilience, we review the top conservation highlights you helped make possible last year. Learn more at nature.org/vaimpact.