OUR MISSION

The mission of the James River Association is to be guardian of the James River. We provide a voice for the river and take action to promote conservation and responsible stewardship of its natural resources.

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2009-2010

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FY10 has been a crucial year for the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and JRA has remained the leading voice in advocating for strong water quality policies at the state and local levels and through the Choose Clean Water Campaign at the federal level. The Chesapeake Bay Presidential Executive Order resulted in strategies to increase water quality requirements for the six tributary states and the District of Columbia. It also gave the EPA power to invoke consequences if those states do not achieve their cleanup goals. In addition, the Executive Order set goals for Bay restoration that included protecting 2 million acres of land, putting 4 million acres of conservation practices on farmland, restoring 180,000 miles of riparian forest buffers and opening 1,000 miles of streams to fish passage within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These are significant initiatives that will potentially affect the James River and the work of JRA.

The Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Plan (also called the Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL) set new pollution limits for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment. As a result of these strategies, Virginia must create a tributary implementation plan that outlines the actions necessary to achieve those allocations on a watershed by watershed basis. JRA served on Virginia’s stakeholder advisory group to develop the watershed implementation plan (WIP) required by the TMDL.

To encourage low impact development practices through local policy change, JRA’s Building a Cleaner James worked on behalf of the Powhatan County Planning Commission to facilitate a roundtable of different perspectives to review Powhatan’s development codes and ordinances.

Agricultural land use has a major impact on the James River. Through the Healthy River Initiatives, JRA has formed strong and effective alliances with other conservation organizations and the agricultural community to advocate for funding of the Virginia Agricultural Cost Share Program. Last year, HRI played a critical role in establishing a dedicated source of funding for the program, a long standing goal of our initiative. Furthermore, in the face of the most severe budget deficits for the state, at least $9.1 million per year was appropriated for the program with the potential for more through this year’s budget surplus funds.

In December 2009, JRA issued The State of the James Report. In the latest Report, the overall grade for the health of the James River increased by 1%, enough to raise its grade from a C to a C+. Copies of this biennial publication were delivered to each member of the General Assembly and distributed to the public. The report was printed as a generous in-kind contribution from Universal Corporation.
JRA’s multi-level involvement in protecting the water quality of the James extends from educating legislators to engaging Virginians in roadside and stream cleanups.

JRA PRESENTS “2009 Guardian of the River Award” to Bob Hicks

Retiring board member J. Robert Hicks, Jr. received the “2009 Guardian of the River Award” from JRA in grateful recognition of his many years of service to the organization and for his lifelong dedication to preserving Virginia’s natural resources. Bob’s conservation accomplishments include serving as the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation; Chairman on the Guilford Pinchot Institute for Conservations; serving on the Falls of the James Scenic Advisory Committee; Chairman of the Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee; founding member of the Virginia Conservation Council; Executive Director of Maymont and founder and co-owner of Alpine Outfitters. He has been President of the Rotary Club of Richmond and is currently the Vice President of Development and Community Affairs for Goodwill of Central Virginia.
During FY10, a total of 1,092 area students participated in classroom and on-the-river experiences led by JRA’s Education Manager and Environmental Educator. To provide additional outdoor opportunities to groups and schools, JRA launched its fee-for-service programs with the publication of a Group Education Program Catalog. With affordable fees ranging from $100 to $250 per group, the programs included watershed and wetland lessons, wildlife encounters and dynamic canoe programs along the James River.

For the past two years Watershed Education by Students (WEBS), a NOAA-funded program administered by JRA and VCU, has been connecting high school students with middle school students in peer-led outdoor learning experiences. In its final year of funding, WEBS benefitted 92 high school students from Open High School and Goochland High School and 425 middle school students from Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School and Goochland Middle School. Activities included in-class presentations, outdoor field stations and teacher workshops. Throughout its two-year run, WEBS reached 710 students and teachers. The WEBS program was designed to create a self-sustainable program in the participating high schools.
PEEP, or Presquile Environmental Education Program, is one of JRA’s leading educational programs. During FY10, PEEP connected 64 children and adults to nature through intensive overnight camping trips. By creating a strong relationship with the Girl Scout Commonwealth Council, urban scouts have been the focus of these overnight trips on the James River.

The new Chickahominy Water Trail was created in partnership with JRA, the Chickahominy Tribe, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Charles City County, New Kent County, James City County, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, Virginia Council on Indians and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Ten interpretive panels and a map and guide were developed to bring to life the themes of John Smith’s explorations, Chickahominy Indian culture and the ecology of the river. To introduce the public to this section of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Chickahominy Water Festival was held May 30-31 featuring the first-ever paddling race on the Chickahominy River.

For the second summer, an educational partnership between JRA and Maymont conducted “Wild About Richmond,” a summer day-camp program that featured outdoor adventure and environmental learning within the Richmond area. During the week-long session, 14 campers in grades 6 through 9 experienced canoeing on the James, learned about zoology careers, explored Belle Isle by compass and spent two days on Presquile National Wildlife Refuge where they became pollution experts, fished, hiked and made new friends.

Plans were developed to create the James River Ecology School at Presquile National Wildlife Refuge. When completed in Spring 2012, the school will include a “green” bunkhouse that can accommodate 30 students and their chaperones; a learning center that contains a kitchen/dining hall/meeting hall; and a wetlands walkway and learning pavilion. The ecology school represents the first program of its kind for students in the James River Watershed.
WATERSHED RESTORATION

During the week of October 19, 2009 volunteers from the Lynchburg area participated in the James River Association’s Extreme Stream Makeover III: Blackwater Creek. JRA’s third ESM program encompassed the Blackwater Creek watershed, an impaired stream system reaching into parts of the City of Lynchburg as well as Bedford and Campbell Counties. This represented JRA’s first major watershed restoration project in the Upper James region.

Over the course of the week, 396 volunteers, including 294 students from 7 schools ranging in age from 4th graders to college students, completed 7 projects in 4 different locations and planted a total of 1857 trees, shrubs and native plants. Projects in the City included a stormwater pond retrofit project at a shopping center, the construction of a rain garden and buffer planting at Peaks View Park. Projects in Campbell County included a major stream bank stabilization that included the grading and replanting of 75 linear feet of stream bank. The Bedford County projects included the construction of a BayScape and educational garden at Jefferson Forest High School.

In March, JRA launched an online Runoff Calculator for homeowners, available at www.WhatsInYourRunoff.com. The calculator, created in cooperation with Timmons Group, allows homeowners to enter basic information about their house and lot size to receive a report about the amount of stormwater runoff, nitrogen and phosphorus that leaves the property. Based on the individual report, the site also provides suggestions for reducing runoff and pollution.

In conjunction with the calculator, JRA sponsored a “Green Homes” Essay Contest for middle school students in the Richmond area. To enter, students worked with their parents to analyze their home using the calculator and, based on their findings, wrote a short essay telling JRA why their home needed a green home makeover. The winning essay was written by Ruhan Farsin, a 7th grade student at Midlothian Middle School, who won a
$5,000 yard makeover for his family. The makeover will be implemented in October 2010 and March 2011.

As part of the James River Advisory Council’s annual James River Clean Up, JRA sponsored activities at the Reedy Creek site. More than 150 volunteers, including 16 boaters, collected and sorted 84 bags of trash and 92 bags of recycling from locations throughout Richmond’s James River Park System during the four-hour event. The theme of the cleanup was “Cleaning Up the Source” and the goal was to educate people about the concept of a watershed and to promote the message that no matter how far you live from the water, you have an impact on the river. To illustrate this message, JRA sponsored Cash for Trash. The week prior to the event, five biodegradable wooden disks were placed at key points throughout the Reedy Creek watershed where rainfall could eventually wash them to the river. The disks instructed the finder to submit the disk to JRA for a cash prize.

Everything a homeowner needs to know about installing and maintaining rain gardens, rain barrels, soakage trenches, disconnecting downspouts and landscaping with native plants is now available for download on the JRA website. A series of illustrated Homeowner “How-To” Guides created by the JRA staff provide easy-to-follow instructions to help property owners control pollution and runoff to protect their local waterway.

Planning has begun for ESM IV. JRA has solidified a partnership with the City of Newport News for the next ESM to be conducted in the Stoney Run watershed. The Stoney Run watershed encompasses 6.5 square miles and is in the area of the City known as Denbigh. The watershed is heavily developed, with less than 10 percent of the land remaining as open space. Stoney Run flows directly into the Warwick River, which is a tributary of the James. This area provides an outstanding opportunity for A large portion of Stoney Run, as well as the Warwick River, is listed on the EPA’s 2008 Impaired Water’s List. ESM IV will take place during National Volunteer Week, April 11-16, 2011.

20th Annual Westover Lawn Party

The 20th Annual Westover Lawn Party honored Westover and Fred and Muschi Fisher for two decades of their generous hospitality. During the event, Executive Director Bill Street presented the Fishers with three Black Tupelo trees to be planted on the grounds of Westover.
LOWER JAMES RIVERKEEPER

Sturgeon restoration efforts made headlines and history on the Lower James River in early 2010. Thanks to a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and generous in-kind support from Luck Stone Corporation, Norfolk Tug and Coastal Design, the Eastern Seaboard’s first artificial spawning reef for Atlantic sturgeon was constructed near Presquile National Wildlife Refuge in the James River.

On a cold February morning, 2,300 tons (approximately 2,000 cubic yards) of rock was carefully placed on the river bottom to an artificial reef that measures 70’x 300’x 2’. The site will be monitored for seasonal spawning activity and to record sedimentation rates in the river. While no Atlantic sturgeon spawning activity was seen on the reef during monitoring efforts in the spring of 2010, spawning by American shad, herring, white perch and silversides was documented, indicating that the habitat is suitable and promising. To date, 71 Atlantic sturgeon from the James River have been tagged for tracking purposes. For partners JRA, Virginia Commonwealth University, National Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Corps of Engineers, the artificial reef represents the culmination of more than six years of research and planning.
UPPER JAMES RIVERKEEPER

The health of fish populations was also an issue in the region of the Upper James in FY10. In a territory comprised of hundreds of miles of small upland streams, the Upper James Riverkeeper was actively engaged in monitoring the seasonal fish kills that have affected the region in recent years. The Upper James Riverkeeper continued to work with members of the Fish Kill Task Force and the Shenandoah Riverkeeper to review findings from related studies and to present the information in a form designed to educate and involve the general public in reporting the sightings of diseased fish. Included in these presentations he advocated for funding for future studies and actions to eliminate obvious problems in our streams. One of the problems he has been investigating is the presence of arsenic contamination found in fish tissue samples and sediments in streams.

Arsenic pollution is one concern related to poultry litter regulation. The Upper James Riverkeeper worked with other conservation groups to encourage citizens to comment on the public notice for increased poultry litter regulation. The Riverkeeper served on the Technical Advisory Committee for Virginia Poultry Abatement and went on record with the Shenandoah Riverkeeper and Eastern Shorekeeper to prepare comments on the Virginia Pollution Abatement General Permit. The VPA permit was passed without the improvements for which the Riverkeepers and others had advocated.

Two-Year Grant From the RBC Blue Water Project™ Supports JRA Watershed Restoration Projects

JRA was honored to be the recipient of a two-year grant from the Royal Bank of Canada’s RBC Blue Water Project™ in support of its Watershed Restoration initiatives. In 2009, JRA was the only organization working solely in the U.S. to be awarded funding by the Project.
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT

OPERATING REVENUE:
- Membership Fees and Contributions: $291,314
- Program Revenue and Grants: $726,340
- Special Events: $150,720
- Miscellaneous: $3,287
- Investment Income: $41,274
- Total Operating Revenue: $1,212,935

OPERATING EXPENSES:
- Program Services:
  - Education & Outreach: $315,429
  - Watershed Restoration: $221,622
  - James Riverkeeper: $233,682
  - River Advocacy: $169,724
  - Management and General: $147,685
  - Fundraising: $174,361
- Total Operating Expenses: $1,262,502

Financial statement was compiled by Gregory and Associates, PLLC. of Petersburg, VA. A copy of the James River Association’s IRS Form 990 is available for review online at www.jrava.org/about-jra/financials.

The James River Association meets the Better Business Bureau’s Standards for Charity Accountability.

A copy of the latest financial report and registration filed by this organization may be obtained by contacting the James River Association, 9 South 12 Street, 4th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219 or (804)788-8811 or by contacting the Virginia State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218. Registration does not imply endorsement.
### ASSETS:
- Cash and cash equivalents $665,717
- Property, equipment and software (net of accumulated amortization and depreciation of $116,426) $85,554
- Investments in marketable securities $792,326
- Land $81,700
- Security deposits $1,875
- **Total Assets** $1,627,172

### LIABILITIES:
- Sales tax liability $35
- Payroll withholdings $721
- **Total Liabilities** $756

### NET ASSETS:
- Unrestricted $1,626,614
- Temporarily restricted --
- Permanently restricted --
- **Total Net Assets** $1,626,416
- **Total Liabilities and Net Assets** $1,627,172
$100,000 +
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JRA wishes to thank its many contributors whose support during FY10 made our work possible. Each supporting and in-kind gift is genuinely appreciated. Unfortunately, space does not permit the listing of all those who have contributed. This list represents only gifts at the $250 level and above received between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010.

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Independence Golf Course
The next generation of the river’s guardians learn stewardship through the example of those who treasure our natural resources.