

Building on Success...Protecting Priority Open Space in Anne Arundel County for Wildlife and People

Scenic Rivers Land Trust Campaign to 2016



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Scenic Rivers Land Trust Campaign to 2016

Summary - Our Plan in Two Pages

Since 1988, Scenic Rivers Land Trust (SRLT) has protected 60 conservation properties in Anne Arundel County, totaling 2,600 acres. We have an ambitious goal to protect 5,000 acres by 2016, doubling our current holdings in a mere three years. Of equal importance to the quantity of land protected is the quality of that land. We are searching for properties with outstanding natural resources that connect to adjacent protected lands, make valuable contributions to stormwater management and meet the special priorities of Anne Arundel County's Department of Recreation and Parks and the General Development Plan (GDP). Several overlapping tools help us determine the best way of prioritizing the most ecologically important properties. We continue to rely on our most stalwart partner, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for technical advice and support.

Why preserve land? First, a central tenet: land protection is not anti-development. We all hope for comfortable homes, nearby shops, good schools, and local religious institutions essential to a healthy and thriving community. Just as critical to a community's economic and social vitality, however, are ample open green spaces — spaces that counterbalance surrounding development and provide opportunities for exercise and solitary escape. We value the critical functions of healthy natural systems in managing stormwater, protecting groundwater sources, and filtering pollutants.

For these reasons alone, land protection is a worthy cause, but land protection offers so much more to both the landowner and the citizens of the surrounding areas. Preserved lands with forests help cleanse the air of pollutants, buffer streams, add to the landscape's overall scenic beauty, and put us in touch with the natural rhythm of the seasons. Protected agricultural lands allow us to value the agrarian roots of our county. Lands that expand parks and other open spaces offer quiet refuge to a populace besieged by stress, captured both by the newly coined term, "nature deficit disorder," and the old standard of an occasional needed foray off the beaten path.

Scenic Rivers Land Trust protects land to:

- Enable landowners to preserve family lands and retain family ownership;
- Safeguard intact natural areas that offer habitat for native plants and animals, promoting resiliency against future challenges;
- Foster the economic vitality of Anne Arundel County by protecting the natural assets that yield its high standard of living; and
- Secure the scenic value of county open spaces while offering public access, in special cases, to nature's playgrounds.

The primary land protection tools of SRLT are voluntary land protection agreements with willing landowners, referred to as easements. Although landowners relinquish some rights by establishing easements on their properties, they retain ownership and gain benefits — both tangible and intangible. The tangible benefits are tax related. The intangible ones hinge on the satisfaction of setting aside family land that will remain open space in perpetuity — the gratification that this one slice of exceptional land, the one that is most important to you, your ancestors and your heirs, will remain forever protected.

Donated easements alone will not protect our most important lands. Private, government and foundation resources must go towards the purchase of critical tracts along with the use of creative purchase agreements, options, and combinations of cash and tax incentives. Acquisition of land, which is then protected by easement and resold to conservation buyers, must also be cautiously pursued.

SRLT expects our targeted 5,000 acres to leverage protection for thousands of additional acres of forest, wetland and meadow, invigorating the ecological and economic resiliency of the entire region. Throughout its 25-year history, SRLT has identified large swathes of land appropriate for protection and documented a strong community desire to preserve such lands. Although the **South River Greenway** remains a priority, we are expanding outreach to the **West, Rhode** and **Patuxent** watersheds while continually assessing our **Severn** roots for new opportunities.

As SRLT looks ahead, we will remain tightly focused on our mission — to craft creative land protection agreements with willing landowners. Since SRLT's inception, our greatest strength has been effectively operating within this small, yet exceedingly important, conservation niche. Other first-rate organizations in our region fulfill widely varying roles in the conservation arena. We do not duplicate their functions; we complement them with our technical expertise.

To craft land protection agreements effectively, we must maintain our reputation as a source of confidential counsel that carries no burden of partisanship or bias. Moreover, our conservation successes must survive in perpetuity, outliving unknowable shifts in political, economic and social trends. For SRLT's continued success, both private and commercial landowners must feel completely at ease in sharing aspirations for their properties, estate plans and tax situations.

Mission discipline remains the primary reason that our Board has elected to avoid involvement in specific political, development or zoning issues; we also do not endorse or oppose individual political candidates. We will, however, speak out on state and federal government regulatory and tax policies that affect land preservation and we will be aggressive in influencing how county Program Open Space and Forest Conservation Act funds are invested.

The legal and tax community, government agencies, and conservation professionals understand the incredible power of land preservation agreements to deliver concrete on-the-ground conservation victories. Our challenge, however, is educating the general public about the mission of SRLT so that landowners will take advantage of the opportunities provided, and others will support our work financially. While we appreciate being the tool of choice for those who already buy into the concept of land preservation, we must move beyond this small choir to meet our ambitious land preservation goals.

To remain successful, SRLT must keep its nose to the grindstone. Donors must step forward to support the effort. Landowners need to learn about the attractive options that are available to them and become inspired to act.

A Detailed Look at the Path to 2016 and 5,000 Protected Acres

We look to the future from a position of strength...

While Scenic Rivers Land Trust (SRLT) is proud of its accomplishments, much critical work remains. Our obligation is to apply the experience gained and the friends made throughout the organization's history to a much more aggressive pursuit of protected properties. With 43 percent of the county already developed and significant development pressure squeezing the remaining lands, the next five to ten years have become vital to our work in protecting the county's most environmentally valuable land.

SRLT is proudly motivated by the 60 properties we have already protected, totaling 2,600 acres or one percent of the land in Anne Arundel County. Through various partnerships, SRLT has been instrumental in the county's purchase of more than 700 additional acres in Anne Arundel County and is now one of the largest and most active land trusts in Maryland.

The primary tool of our trade is a negotiated land preservation agreement with a willing landowner. This agreement takes the form of an easement deed and is permanent. The landowner retains title to the land, but donates some portion of the development rights and agrees to protect the conservation values of the property. In this way, landowners control the future of their prized properties, contribute to the health of their communities and realize various tax benefits. Property taxes decline, landowners commonly receive a significant income tax deduction and estate taxes shrink.

Recent SRLT Milestones:

- Celebrated protection of our 60th property, bringing the total to 2,600 acres, with an additional 718 acres protected through coordination with the county and Program Open Space;
- Held most successful Walk for the Woods ever with 435 participants and a growing cadre of business sponsors;
- Held first training program for legal and real estate professionals;
- Completed two years of 100 percent easement monitoring, critical for serving our landowners and monitoring land stewardship; and
- Successfully completed the first steps toward national accreditation, working with the Land Trust Alliance and the Brandywine Conservancy, one of the most respected land trusts in the nation.

Obtaining its first easement in 1989, SRLT had acquired only 17 easements by the end of 2000. SRLT's outreach capacity increased with the launch of the South River Greenway project, which focuses on high-quality natural areas in the watershed. Recently, SRLT has expanded outreach to landowners in the West and Rhode River watersheds and has seen growing interest from landowners along the Patuxent.

SRLT initially was an all-volunteer organization, supported later by part-time staff. Today, SRLT has two full-time staff members with significant nonprofit and land preservation experience, backed by a talented and active board. This year, four new members joined the board, bringing the total to 18. Board members guide the business of SRLT, assist with public outreach, and often take the lead on special

projects. Area lawyers, appraisers and financial managers assist the organization with contractual or *pro bono* support.

SRLT's total budget for 2012 was a frugal \$152,000, the organization's largest annual budget to date. We expect our annual budget to increase by 50 percent to achieve our planned growth and meet our growing responsibilities for permanent land stewardship. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service adopted SRLT as a partner in 2008 and provides cost-free technical support, office space, utilities and access to office equipment. This arrangement is of incredible value to SRLT, but is not a permanent commitment.

As SRLT's business has grown, the challenges of the field have also increased. IRS rules for conservation easements have grown more demanding, the risk of easement violations increases as easements age and successor owners take over, and intense competition for philanthropic dollars exists. In 2010, the board launched an initiative to enhance all of SRLT's written policies, business practices and our model easement document. In 2011, the board committed to pursuing national accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance, launching a vigorous multi-year process.

The SRLT board has accepted the responsibility of ensuring the long-term economic viability of the organization and protection of its easements in perpetuity. A donated property was permanently protected by easement and sold to provide \$250,000 in seed money, creating specific reserve funds dedicated to stewardship, legal defense and special opportunities. Consolidation with The Bay Land Trust occurred in early 2013; this union increased SRLT's easement holdings and added to our reserve funds to offset the added responsibilities. (See reserve fund definitions in Appendix A.)

As SRLT looks ahead, we embrace our obligation to steward our current portfolio and will not slight that responsibility as we grow. Revisiting current easements to improve legal protections, encourage habitat improvements and pursue new easements on contiguous properties remain central to our growth plans.

Growth required to meet our new goal will come with costs...

Fundraising demands are challenging, but SRLT carries a respected record for land preservation and our public profile has been greatly heightened. Thousands of acres in Anne Arundel County hold great potential for protection and SRLT has shown that the citizens and business leaders of the county are seeking opportunities to support land conservation. SRLT has a comprehensive list of specific funding opportunities that donors will find attractive. We need to boost outreach to landowners dramatically, invest in management of easements currently held, develop more effective relationships with real estate professionals, obtain additional legal support, and secure funds that can be directly applied to



closing easements on critical properties. SRLT's new reserve funds enhance our financial viability and assure new donors that SRLT remains a wise investment.

Our fundraising plans center around three key proposals, all with accompanying evaluation metrics. These are the action plans for accomplishing our 5,000-acre goal. One builds on our success in the South River Greenway; the second focuses on the West, Rhode and Patuxent rivers; and the third maximizes the ecological value of our current 60 easement properties and

expands their footprint through outreach to neighboring property owners (Appendix B contains additional details).

Growth will require new skills...

Historically, SRLT has preserved land through voluntary easements and by influencing how the county allocates Program Open Space funding to land acquisition. Moving forward, we seek to expand our land protection toolbox. Currently we are working with the county to use Forest Conservation Act fee-in-lieu funds to purchase an easement in the South River Greenway. Other opportunities may allow us to leverage local or federal funds for land or easement purchase. Stretched-thin government agencies have gained confidence in our expertise and welcome our assistance. The keys to meeting our goals successfully will be encouraging use of our data by others, demonstrating how our arguments for prioritization correlate with the county's General Development Plan and related plans, and building our capacity to contribute to boots-on-the-ground landowner outreach. We also need to investigate new opportunities for land preservation through mitigation banks and ecological offsets for nonpoint pollution sources, development and carbon trading.

Our growing strength and ambitious new goal comes at a time when many other programs are challenged...

Government budgets are strained at all levels, leading to great uncertainty. Funding for land preservation within the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, state wildlife grants and the Farm Bill have all suffered cuts. Program Open Space and Rural Legacy funding has declined. The Chesapeake Bay Program and EPA are facing major resistance to implementing Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program and their Watershed Improvement Plans. The Maryland land trust community is stressed. The 56 land trusts in Maryland are often understaffed and underfunded; only a handful are highly active. Congress renewed the Enhanced Tax Incentive for conservation easements — an important bonus to encourage easements — only through the end of 2013. Its future remains subject to the whims of ongoing budget fights. Proposed limits to charitable deductions loom as new threats on the horizon.

We view this difficult state of affairs as a call to arms, not an excuse to throw in the towel. SRLT can work to be more aggressive, more creative and stronger than ever. Local people fighting for local land and quality of life have shown their power through SRLT's recent growth. They will support continued land preservation because we make a difference where people live, work and understand their landscapes.

SRLT looks to the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) to remain a critical partner into the future. Along with the incredible expertise and mentoring MET provides to SRLT, its presence as a co-holder on larger easements offers landowners additional state tax credits. SRLT's partner, the South River Federation, is the leading advocate for the South River and our partner, the Severn River Association, is the leading advocate for the Severn. SRLT also works closely with the Biophilia



Foundation and the West/Rhode and Patuxent Riverkeepers. Various community organizations also provide us with invaluable support; we need to expand that circle of support.

SRLT regularly partners with the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Maryland Department of Planning (MDP). We are broadening our interactions with the County Department of Planning and Zoning, the Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District, Chesapeake Conservancy, and the Maryland Department of the Environment. We also seek opportunities to partner with the national Land Trust Alliance, The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Lands.

Prioritizing SRLT's Land Preservation Outreach

SRLT's overarching mission remains the same: protecting land in the watersheds of the Severn, South, West, Rhode and Patuxent rivers in Anne Arundel County. However, our outreach has grown much more strategic.

Historically, to evaluate easement opportunities, SRLT has meshed disparate information from various sources (including the partners above) with local knowledge provided by our Board and supporters. We will use increasingly sophisticated criteria to evaluate land use while incorporating natural history, community priorities and watershed issues in our targeted preservation work.

Many of our early easement acquisitions were opportunistic. Since then, SRLT has aggressively pursued specific property opportunities, while others simply landed on our desk. We review each property for protection suitability using our easement criteria policy. We must also remain cognizant of IRS requirements for easement donations that may qualify for federal income tax deductions. Not all properties are appropriate for an easement, particularly voluntary easements, which are only incentivized by tax benefits.

SRLT currently holds easements on one percent of the land in Anne Arundel County. We are dedicated to directing our limited resources to protecting the most important properties, preferring to safeguard properties adjacent to other protected lands. The state's and county's Greenprint Program emphasizes the need to protect large, connected and intact ecosystems for ecological resiliency over time.



While SRLT has always keyed property outreach to our targeted rivers, in recent years we have also built outreach around anchor properties: the Bacon Ridge Natural Area for the South River, the Smithsonian for the West and Rhode rivers, the Green Cathedral and Severn Run for the Severn, and the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge and Jug Bay for the Patuxent.

In a preliminary analysis, SRLT has documented landowner outreach targets:

- 33 priority properties greater than 25 acres in the South River Greenway totaling 2,000 acres. This area is a shared priority for SRLT, the county and many of our partners. Individual property rankings were based on field research and DNR’s green infrastructure rankings.
- 133 priority properties greater than 15 acres in the West/Rhode watershed totaling 8,780 acres. Of these properties, 44 (3,359 acres) are ranked fair to excellent by DNR’s green infrastructure ranking program. Many others are “ineligible” for ranking since they do not sit in a specific hub or corridor, but could still prove valuable locally. Many of these properties match the county’s goals of keeping South County rural and are also in accord with the Greenways and Rural Legacy plans.
- 386 properties in the Severn watershed greater than 10 acres totaling 10,350 acres. Of these, 35 (1,349 acres) ranked high in our internal assessment.
- 700 properties in the Patuxent watershed greater than 15 acres. To date, SRLT has not had the funding to evaluate the ranking of these properties.

Outreach to landowners is a constant and long-term process. SRLT’s ultimate goal is for each targeted landowner to develop a keen understanding of land preservation options based on a personal discussion with one of SRLT’s staff or board members. Sometimes five or six points of contact are required to set up a personal meeting with a landowner, and the path from first informal discussions to a completed easement can sometimes take up to two years.

With ambitious goals, limited resources and the press of time, we must narrow our focus...

A primary focal point in prioritizing our outreach is the Anne Arundel County General Development Plan (GDP). This plan is based on detailed analysis of land use in the county and projections for future growth. It was prepared with significant public outreach to capture the community’s priorities for striking a balance between growth and development and between land preservation and open space. Although our aspirations for land preservation may exceed the GDP, it is a critical tool and should form the foundation of our vision. The GDP supports many of the same justifications for prioritizing land preservation that SRLT embraces; it also provides additional tools to assist with this analysis. Complementary to the GDP is the county’s Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan, which narrows our attention to areas such as the Bacon Ridge Natural Area in the South River Greenway.

Located between Baltimore and Washington, Anne Arundel County is a highly developed area with 43 percent of the land classified as developed, compared to 27 percent for the state. Preserved land is currently at 23 percent, the same as the state, including local and state parks, agricultural land and natural resources land. Over half of the county’s land area (52 percent) is planned for rural or low density residential uses. The GDP places priority on specific additional land preservation. The GDP has a goal of increasing the amount of preserved land from 23 percent to 28 percent, an additional 4,000 acres, with 850 acres planned for active recreation and 3,150 acres for open space and natural resources protection.

As projected in the GDP, “The County has capacity for approximately 26,000 additional residential units under the current zoning. The estimate for commercial and industrial development or redevelopment is

roughly 6,200 acres. By 2020 to 2025 the County could reach maturity in terms of new growth and may need to consider the need for additional capacity...it is uncertain if the County will be able to up-zone a significant amount of land in the future to create more capacity. While the existing development capacity is expected to be adequate to serve new growth over the 20-year horizon, any significant increases in capacity in the future would likely require shifts in existing land use policies.” A long-term GDP priority guards against relaxing the protection of environmentally important properties. As an organization for which “long range” is defined as “perpetuity,” SRLT must anticipate and head off pressure for up-zoning in currently protected rural areas. SRLT evaluates every easement opportunity with the understanding that current zoning can change.

Maryland and Anne Arundel Land Use Snapshot (from 2009 GDP and 2006 LPPRP)		
	Maryland	Anne Arundel County
Total Land Area	6.2 million acres	264,200 acres
Total Developed	1.6 million (27%)	112,690 (43%)
Permanently Preserved	1.45 million (23%)	61,673 (23%)
<i>Included in the county’s definition of “permanently preserved” lands are: local park land, 7,985 acres; state park land, 862 acres; agricultural land, 11,475 acres; and natural resource land, 41,352 acres.</i>		

Numerous opportunities exist (detailed in Appendix C) for SRLT to combine its broad priorities with support for the specific land preservation goals of the County GDP. Along with the overarching goal of protecting an additional 4,000 acres, the GDP calls special attention to properties in the Greenways Master Plan, adjacent to Bacon Ridge Natural Area, within Priority Preservation Areas or near Natural Heritage Areas.

Finally, SRLT embraces the many existing state and federal government programs and policies that support and inform land preservation in Anne Arundel County...

In prioritizing landowner outreach and acreage goals, several other programs and policies offer guidance and reinforce the conservation values we document in individual easements. The state’s Greenprint Program, which targets preservation of large blocks of ecologically valuable land, has refined DNR’s Green Infrastructure Rankings. The rankings provide detailed background information on individual properties throughout the state. The Critical Area Program remains one of Maryland’s most effective land preservation tools; SRLT always gives special attention to land in the critical area. Dozens of other programs provide important information on forest and agricultural lands, wetlands and special habitats, as well as on evolving priorities such as public access and buffers for transportation infrastructure, defense properties, and federal refuges (Appendix D provides details on some of these programs).

Key References:

2009 General Development Plan (10 – 20-year horizon)

Grounded on 16 Small Area Plans, a series of 16 Background Reports, and significant public outreach

2006 and 2013 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan

Greenways Master Plan

2012 Draft Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan

2012 Forest Legacy Conservation Land Assessment of Need

Cover Photos Courtesy of Andrew Hazen 2012



Appendix A

Board Resolution on Board Restricted Reserve Funds (Adopted September 12, 2012)

As funds allow, SRLT shall maintain an operating reserve and Board restricted funds as defined below:

Operating Reserve – Funds in this account are to provide a cushion for the operating budget in case of unbudgeted expenses or unexpected income shortages and to cover necessary expenses when cash flow is inadequate. (Protecting cash flow is particularly important with regard to federal grants, which are often paid out on a reimbursable basis.) The reserve will be built from cash remaining in the operating account from any given year and direct allocations from SRLT assets by the board. The operating reserve should equal a minimum of six months of annual expenses. In the event that the reserve account holds assets equal to more than one year of SRLT’s operating budget, the Finance Committee will reallocate the funds to one of the standing restricted accounts. Funds can be moved from the operating reserve to the operating account on authority of the Treasurer with notification to the Executive Committee. The fund balance will be reported on SRLT’s monthly balance sheet.

Stewardship Restricted Fund – Funds in this account are dedicated by the board for the long-term underwriting of easement stewardship expenses – either staff expenses, volunteer expenses or contractual expenses directly related to the annual monitoring and protection of SRLT’s easement properties. This board-restricted fund will be built through allocations from SRLT assets by the board, fundraising specific to this activity, fees charged to easement landowners, and designated gifts from donors. Based on Land Trust Alliance guidelines, the target goal for this fund will be a minimum of \$3,500 per easement held by SRLT. Land Trust Alliance accreditation requires a fund of this type. With approval of SRLT’s annual budget each year, the board will authorize transfers from this restricted fund to the operating account. The amount of the transfer can be determined in three ways:

- 1) A flat percentage transfer in an amount proposed by the Finance Committee and adopted by the Executive Committee, considering income earned and desire to build the principal;
- 2) An allocation based on a specific budget of actual stewardship expenses for a given year as proposed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Executive Committee; or
- 3) A specific allocation approved by a majority vote of the board. The fund balance will be reported on SRLT’s monthly balance sheet.

Legal Defense Restricted Fund – Funds in this account are dedicated to meeting extraordinary expenses associated with managing, upholding or defending an easement or other interest in land held by SRLT. This board-restricted fund will be built through allocations from SRLT assets by the board, fundraising specific to this activity, fees charged to easement landowners, and designated gifts from donors. Based on Land Trust Alliance guidelines, the target goal for this fund will be a minimum of \$50,000 plus \$3,000 per easement held by SRLT over the first 15 easements. Land Trust Alliance accreditation requires a fund of this type. Expenditures from this fund also require a majority vote of the board. The fund balance will be reported on SRLT’s monthly balance sheet.

Opportunity Restricted Fund – Funds in this account are dedicated to meeting extraordinary expenses associated with the preservation of land in accordance with SRLT’s mission and could include land purchase, easement purchase or brokering of land preservation opportunities. This board-restricted fund will be built through allocations from SRLT assets by the board, fundraising specific to this activity, and designated gifts from donors. Expenditures from this fund require a majority vote of the board with the fund balance reported on SRLT’s monthly balance sheet.

Appendix B Donor Underwriting Opportunities

Our fundraising plan centers around three key proposals, all with accompanying evaluation metrics, and all available by contacting our office.

1) **“South River Greenway – Early Success, Time to Accelerate.”** This ambitious proposal will support outreach to all currently identified large property owners in the SRG and add analysis of smaller properties that border or provide links among existing protected properties. Through this outreach, our goal is to add 1,000 acres of permanently protected land in the SRG. The proposal also continues our partnership with USFWS to minimize stormwater damage cost effectively through a series of five stream headcut restoration projects. The total two-year budget is \$270,000, with \$125,000 already pledged for the headcut projects.

2) **“Maintaining South County’s Rural Character through Land Protection along the West, Rhode and Patuxent Rivers.”** In 2012, with NFWF funding, SRLT identified 133 potential properties in the West and Rhode river watersheds alone having high potential for preservation. With this proposal we will enhance our outreach to those original properties and expand our analysis to the Patuxent. Our goal is to protect a minimum of 10 properties in the first two years and build relationships with landowners that will yield additional protected properties in the future. The total two-year budget is \$71,240.

3) **“Building on Land Preservation Success.”** This undertaking is an outreach and education effort to maximize the ecological value of our 60 current existing easement properties. We will increase legal protection by bringing documentation up to modern standards on older easements, promote habitat enhancement projects, and pursue new easements on contiguous properties to expand the ecological footprint of the protected land. The total two-year budget is \$67,430.

Portions of each of these major proposals can be scaled up or down. We expect that funding for each will come from several donors, with large foundation grants matched by individual donations that underwrite specific activities. Several specific components that individual donors may find attractive follow:

Staff field work, research, legal, drafting and stewardship expenses for one easement \$3,000 – \$5,000.
We hope to make proposals for blocks of easement work in specific watersheds

Two annual training programs for lawyers, accountants and real estate professionals on the legal and tax implications and opportunities for easements – \$6,000

Annual participation in the Bacon Ridge Natural Area Advisory Committee and leadership on development and promotion of the Bacon Ridge Access Plan – \$12,000

Annual stewardship visits and documentation for 52 current properties – \$25,000

Special countywide campaign targeted specifically at eased land that could provide public access to waterways and hiking trails – \$9,000

Expansion of our stream headcut restoration partnership with USFWS in the South River Greenway, planning and funding is in place for the first five projects, we would like to immediately apply lessons learned to five additional sites – \$25,000

Annual underwriting of the Walk for the Woods outreach event in the Bacon Ridge Natural Area that attracts 300 hikers annually – \$250 to \$3,000, multiple sponsors

Campaign and conference aimed at the land development community to make the case for the compatibility of land preservation, development and economic prosperity – \$7,000

Underwriting for a series of eight educational boat trips on our targeted watersheds for landowners, local officials and members of the business community – \$4,000

Contributions to our reserve funds for stewardship, legal defense of easements and new opportunities – all defined in Appendix A. The initial goal for each of these funds is to build them to around \$250,000 each. There are opportunities for restricted gifts for particular watersheds or property classes.

Appendix C Correlations with the Anne Arundel County's General Development Plan (GDP)

Numerous opportunities exist for SRLT to combine its broad priorities with support for the specific land preservation goals of the GDP:

- Overall GDP goal to add 4,000 additional preserved acres – As it doubles its holdings, SRLT will add 2,500 preserved acres.
- Greenways Master Plan 2002 – Greenways encompass 72,000 acres of land. Approximately 50 percent is protected either under state, federal or local government ownership, agricultural easements, private conservation land, or under Open Space zoning regulations leaving 49 percent not yet permanently protected. SRLT already prioritizes outreach in these areas and can elucidate the importance of the greenway concept to the general public.
- The Bacon Ridge Natural Area (BRNA), a priority of the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan – SRLT has been a leading partner in this effort, has targeted priority properties surrounding the BRNA, and serves on the advisory committee working on the master plan.
- Current County Open Space – Given changes to open space regulations, opportunities may arise for SRLT to craft easements that affix additional limitations and protections to special properties.
- Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) – Anne Arundel's PPA consists of 39,430 acres, 83 percent of which is in the Rural Legacy Area; 14,262 acres are currently protected, with 19,204 acres to be protected. The goal is to protect 80 percent of undeveloped land in PPA. Many of these acres are in active agriculture. When SRLT is promoting land preservation in these areas, its primary role may be referring qualified applicants to the county for purchased easements or helping landowners with their applications. We will look for any opportunity to support the Rural Legacy Program and the Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Foundation.
- Protection of the county's Historic Inventory of Properties, which includes 2,237 historic sites, 1,444 archaeological sites, 388 recorded cemeteries, and 153 scenic and historic roads – Outreach by SRLT will target both unprotected historic properties and buffer properties.
- Redevelopment of the DC Children's Center and the Crownsville Hospital brownfields sites – SRLT just placed 250 acres under easement at the DC Children's Center site; we are active participants in discussions that seek to link the hospital site to the Bacon Ridge Natural Area.
- Protection of Natural Heritage Areas including Cypress Creek Swamp, Eagle Hill Bog, and Upper Patuxent Marshes which encompass approximately 2,646 acres of protected land – In 2012, SRLT assumed ownership of one of the bog properties and placed 150 acres along the Patuxent shoreline under easement. We will continue identifying easement opportunities to increase protection and buffer these priority resources.
- Protection of Jabez Branch, unique among streams in Anne Arundel County as a naturally reproducing trout stream – SRLT currently holds easements on 86 acres in the Jabez watershed and is reaching out to additional landowners.
- Forest Conservation Act Program – SRLT can help identify properties that might be appropriate for purchased easements and assist with easement crafting and long term monitoring. We are working on our first purchased easement using these funds.

Appendix D Correlations with Federal, State and Local Programs

In prioritizing landowner outreach and acreage goals, several other programs and policies that provide guidance and reinforce the conservation values we document in individual easements. A quick snapshot of a few of these programs follows:

1) DNR Green Infrastructure Ranking – Applies the best scientific information and technology to identify those resource lands most important to wildlife and that yield ecological services to the state. It provides detailed information on important wildlife hubs and corridors and ranking for individual properties. Highest ranking lands are those that are sufficiently large and intact to provide a full range of environmental functions. The program identifies “hubs,” typically unfragmented areas hundreds or thousands of acres in size, and connects them with “corridors,” linear remnants of natural land such as stream valleys and mountain ridges that allow animals, seeds, and pollen to move from one area to another. Properties are ranked based on both their local significance and their landscape context. DNR estimates that there are two million acres of ecologically significant land in Maryland and nearly 70 percent are unprotected. Many government and private land preservation programs include the Green Infrastructure Ranking as a portion of their property evaluation.

2) Program Open Space (POS) – Established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1969 for state land acquisition and local parks, it is funded by bond authorizations and a percentage of the state’s real estate transfer tax. A portion is spent at the state level and a portion is given to counties based on an allocation formula. Priority is placed on targeted ecological areas. POS also manages federal Land & Water Conservation Act funds

3) Critical Area Act – Passed in 1984, this Maryland law identified the “critical area” as all land within 1,000 feet of the mean high water line of tidal waters or the landward edge of tidal wetlands and all waters of and lands under the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. A statewide Critical Area Commission works with local governments to amend local comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations to protect this narrow buffer around our waters. Regulations tend to be particularly strict for the first 100 feet and subject to interpretation for the balance. Particularly significant to a scenic rivers organization, Anne Arundel County has over 533 miles of tidal shoreline and over 1,750 miles of non-tidal streams, yielding 63,690 acres in the 1,000-foot critical area and 6,396 acres in the 100-foot portion.

4) Maryland Forest Legacy Program – A U.S. Department. of Agriculture/Forest Service program that works in partnership with states, supporting efforts to protect environmentally sensitive forest from conversion to non-forest uses. The FLP can provide funds to purchase conservation easements, or when appropriate full-fee purchase. Eligibility criteria include: green Infrastructure, adjacency to already protected areas, and overlap with other programs focal areas. Funds can only be used for state-designated Forest Legacy Areas. The South River Greenway and a long stretch of land along the Patuxent are included in the “Liberty-Patuxent” Forest Legacy Area.

5) Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan: Prepared by the National Park Service in response to President Obama’s executive order on Bay preservation, the plan included a goal of adding 300 new public access sites by 2025 and will direct federal, state, and local funding toward public access opportunities. Annapolis is identified as an area of high demand for additional sites, with many potential sites identified. SRLT will work closely with the county Public Access Committee to secure new sites.

6) Maryland Wildlife Diversity Conservation Plan and Sensitive Species Project Review Areas – These are two sources of highly-detailed information beyond the green infrastructure ranking.

7) Rural Legacy Program (RLP) – Established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1997 to protect areas of large contiguous blocks of rural land including agricultural, natural, cultural and forest resources. Managed largely at the county level with county-defined Rural Legacy Areas. While some acquisitions are in fee simple, a majority of land conservation is accomplished by perpetual easement. Funded in part by POS and by bond funds.

8) Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) – Established by the Md. General Assembly in 1977 to preserve working farmland and forests for the continued production of food and fiber. MALPF functions through partnership with local governments, who appoint local land preservation advisory boards to assist MALPF to administer an easement selection process in each county.

9) Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) – USDA/NRCS grant program to protect prime agricultural lands with conservation easements that are jointly funded by MALPF, the counties or other sources.

10) North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) – USFWS program to protect wetlands and other habitat for migrating waterfowl. Funds are often matched by Rural Legacy or POS.

11) Transportation Enhancement Funds (TEA21): Federal Highway Administration and Md. DOT grant program for land preservation, mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff, reduction of wildlife mortality, bike and pedestrian facilities and preservation of abandoned rail lines and historic structures.

12) Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative – Prioritizes, and may fund, preservation of open space surrounding military installations.

13) USFWS Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Patuxent Acquisition Plan – This draft plan seeks to dramatically increase protected land around the extensive Patuxent Wildlife Research Reserve. These plans build upon the Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Executive Order 13508 signed by President Obama on May 12, 2009.