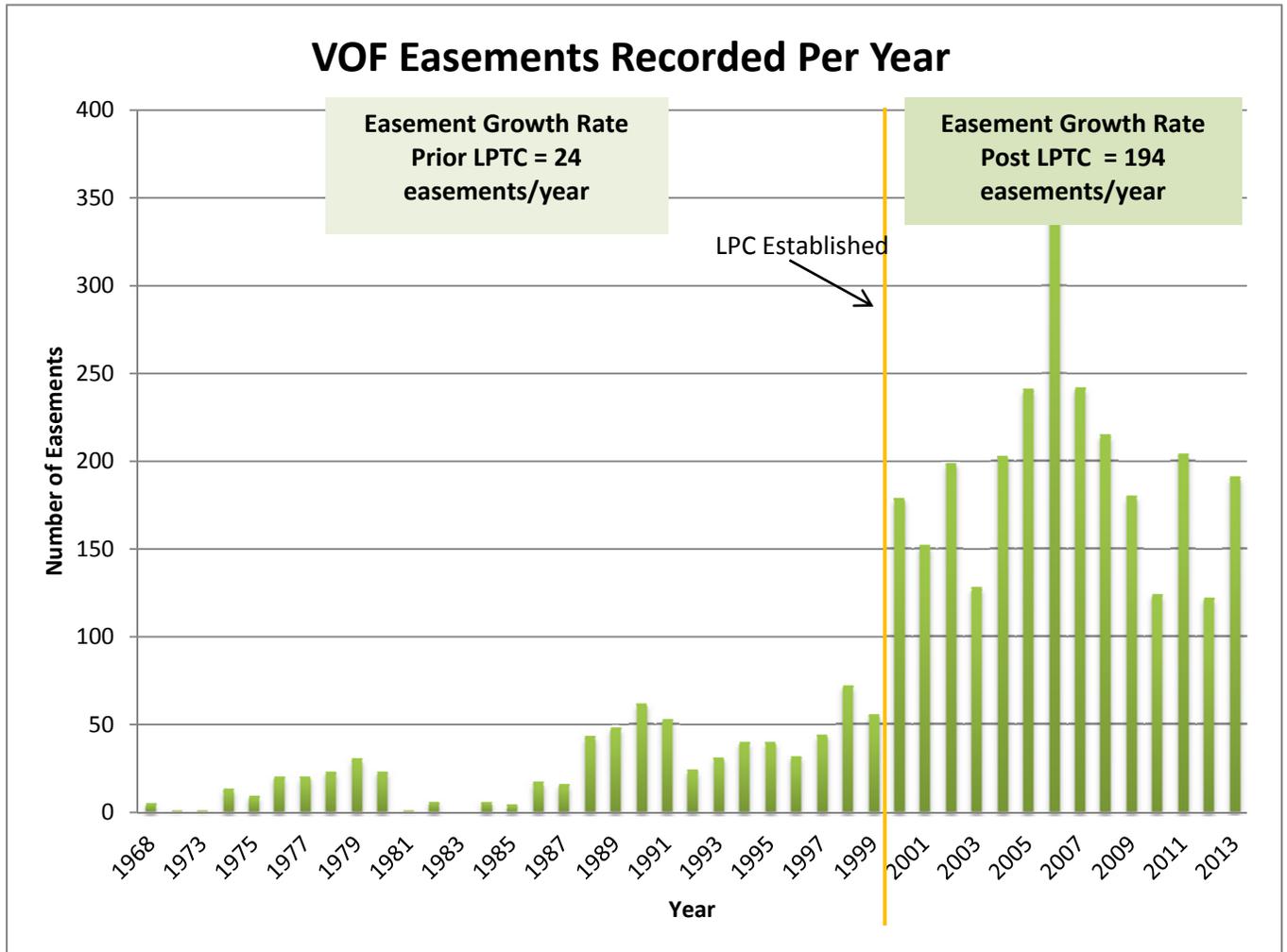


Stewardship Highlights – June 2014

Interesting Stewardship Statistics

VOF stewardship division manages all of the recorded easements in VOF’s portfolio. This portfolio continues to grow each year both through the recordation of new easements and the through the exercise of permitted division rights. Here are some overall statistics on this (LPTC = Land Preservation Tax Credit)



VOF Easement Recordation Rate: 69 new easements per year (average)

3,103 unique open-space easements have been recorded with and held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) during the 45-year period between 1968 and 2013. The annual rate of

easements recordation during that time represents, on average, 69 new easements per year. Prior to the establishment of the Land Preservation Tax Credit in 2000, the growth rate for easements was 24 new easements a year. Since that time, VOF has averaged 194 new easements per year.

VOF Easement Properties: in total, 394 new easement properties have been created through the exercise of divisions.

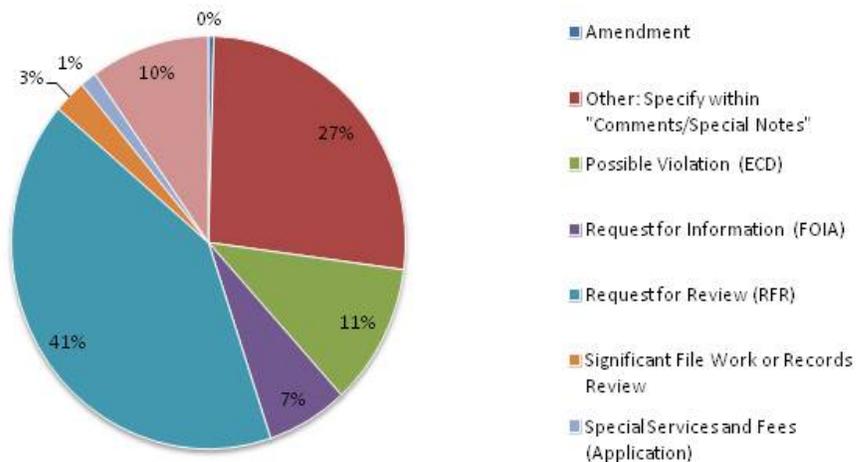
- 3501 total easement properties (EMA Report #17 - Property Division).
- -3107 total easement polygons (EMA Report #1).
- 394 New easement properties have been created through the execution of retained division rights.

SMART System Stats, January – May 2014

Issue Type	Count of Issue Type
Amendment	1
Other: Specify within "Comments/Special Notes"	60
Possible Violation (ECD)	25
Request for Information (FOIA)	15
Request for Review (RFR)	93
Significant File Work or Records Review	6
Special Services and Fees (Application)	3
Welcome Packet or Outreach	22
(blank)	
Grand Total	225

Approximately 1.5 issues are accommodated each day by Stewardship.
 (225 issues / 150 days = 1.5 issues/day)

Easement Issues and Stewardship Work



Recent Stewardship Successes

White's Ford Regional Park (LDN-VOF-3510-2501)

QDP, LLC donated the original easement on 295 acres in Loudoun County in 2007. The property has 0.6 miles of frontage along the Potomac River, directly across the river from the C&O National Historic Park in Maryland. It is located within the Catoctin Rural Historic District and contains a historic house, known as the Colonel White House (ca. 1880). In addition, a Phase I archeological investigation identified numerous potential archeological sites, with date ranges from 19th century to the Middle/Late Archaic period (2500-1000 BC).

In 2008, VOF was approached by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) to determine if the property could be used as a public park under the existing easement terms. For many months, stewardship staff and the legal team worked diligently with the NVRPA to address potential issues and approve the park use. The property is now owned by NVRPA and will accommodate passive recreation in several stages. In June 2014, Erika Richardson, VOF Stewardship Manager and Leslie Grayson, VOF Deputy Director will attend the official opening of White's Ford Regional Park as it begins to offer the public access to hiking and the Potomac River.

Arrowhead Farm (ALB-VOF-3489-0463)

Since mid-2013, Brian Fuller, VOF Assistant Director of Stewardship and Tracy Hibbitts, VOF Stewardship Specialist of the Charlottesville Office have been assisting the landowners with their desire to donate the 410-acre easement property to Albemarle County for use as a public nature preserve. This assistance has included several meetings and discussions with the landowners, meetings and onsite tours with members of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors and Parks Department staff, written and verbal determinations on permitted "park" uses for the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors and Parks Department staff, verification of easement boundaries, and verification of existing ingress/egress easements to and across the property. It is anticipated that the County will formally accept the gift of donation by the end of June 2014, and then be opened to the public for passive uses in the coming years.

In a letter to VOF, the landowners, Jose V. Lambert and Montgomery Bird Woods, praised Brian and Tracy for their "*valuable assistance to [us] in the long negotiation of trying to gift this Virginia Outdoors Foundation Easement property to the County of Albemarle. Your generous gift of time and counsel has made us secure in proceeding with what at times has been an onerous endeavor. Both of you ensured that we remained, as was and is our intent, within the stipulated restriction of the easement.*"

Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Agreement

In early 2014, Brian Fuller, VOF Assistant Director of Stewardship worked with the leaders of the Rivanna Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists (in Charlottesville) to develop an agreement between the local VMN chapter and the local VOF Office to permit easement stewardship monitoring as an approved volunteer activity for the VMN. Once students finish their initial VMN course work, they are required to complete 40 hours of natural resource-related volunteering each year. Each local chapter has approved agreements with reputable organizations to help direct volunteers in order to complete their

hours. Stewardship monitoring for VOF in the Charlottesville Office is now one of those approved activities for the Rivanna Chapter. Brian will continue to work with the statewide director of VMN, Dr. Alycia Crall, to develop agreements between all VOF offices and the respective local VMN chapters in those areas. We expect that this will increase our number of potential volunteers in our monitoring program, and streamline our recruitment and training of those volunteers through group learning opportunities.

More Volunteer Efforts

A group of four volunteers working at computers set up at the Blacksburg office successfully prepared more than 250 easement monitoring reports in April and May of 2014. The volunteers, mostly college students, have devoted about 75 hours of their time to the task, comparing aerial photos of easement properties from 2011 and 2013 and marking any changes. The group has helped VOF quickly make use of the 2013 aerial photos released earlier this year by the Commonwealth, so that VOF stewardship staff can quickly respond to any potentially troublesome changes that we were previously unaware of.

Habitat Improvement on VOF easements

Many VOF easement landowners in the New River and Roanoke Valley regions of the Commonwealth have enrolled in federal programs to make habitat improvements on their properties for Quail, Golden-winged warbler and other wildlife. Biologists, funded by a federal-state partnership, have engaged many private landowners throughout the state, providing free assessments and helping sign folks up for incentive/reimbursement programs for habitat improvements. The habitat projects generally consist of tree removal in mature forest, to provide openings and different aged vegetation for wildlife. Native, warm season grasses are planted in the openings and a labor intensive regime of stewardship and maintenance is then needed to keep the areas clear of invasive species and to prevent conversion back into dense forest. The number of VOF easement landowners taking on these projects, and the dedication to wildlife it shows on their part, is impressive.

Bayville Amendment

At its April 2012 meeting, the VOF Board approved a proposed amendment of an existing easement co-held by VOF and DHR (Department of Historic Resources). This easement, known commonly as “Bayville,” was donated to VOF and DHR in 1982 in order to preserve approximately 305 acres of open-space, some archeological sites, and a historic manor house in the rapidly urbanizing City of Virginia Beach. In 2007, lightning struck the manor house and burned it to the ground. The language of the original deed of easement was ambiguous as to whether the landowners, Mr. and Mrs. Lester, could build a replacement dwelling in the event of casualty. The deed contained many other ambiguities, and VOF, DHR, and the five different landowners whose properties were subject to the easement recognized that amending the easement would help make the deed more comprehensible and enforceable. DHR also

recognized that the destruction of the manor house had eliminated most of DHR's reason for holding the easement and that amending the easement to appropriately lessen DHR's role as a co-holder was necessary.

The process of amending the easement was lengthy and challenging. Negotiating the amendment was complicated due to the fact that the Bayville easement was co-held by two state agencies and that the properties subject to the easement were owned by a total of five landowners (three of which were corporations or LLCs). Over nearly a seven-year period there were many meetings, many obstacles tackled, many stops and starts, yet everyone persevered and we managed to complete an amendment that addressed the identified problems and improved everyone's attitude about the easement generally.

Mr. Lester, the primary landowner involved in the amendment, e-mailed VOF and said the following about John Peters and Kerry Hutcherson, the VOF staff leads on the project:

"It is entirely to their credit and their willingness to dedicate time and effort to accommodate the landowners, while protecting the holders of the easement, that we were successful at the end of last year. Both John and Kerry were presented with any number of occasions to just give up, but they didn't.

Kindly let this serve as my personal thanks to VOF for providing the appropriate culture that encouraged John and Kerry to persevere. Their professional zeal to see this complex situation resolved to everyone's satisfaction deserves notice and some acclaim."