21 February 2016

Dear VMN Steering Committee, Executive Committee, and Chapter Advisor representatives from VDGIF,

Thank you for your support of the Virginia Master Naturalist program in 2016! With your support, we continued to grow our program and make positive impacts for the Commonwealth’s natural resources. Your monetary contribution supports two part-time staff members, Tiffany Brown and Terri Keffert, who are vital for program and volunteer coordination. It also supports volunteer recognition items and other program supplies, program communications tools, staff travel to teach and meet with volunteers, training events, and other important functions of the statewide program. Your in-kind contribution of staff time for training volunteers, leading projects, advising chapters, and serving on our committees is also a critical part of our program.

In 2016, VMN volunteers reported 38,030 hours of service on projects pertaining to your agency, which is a 37% increase over 2015. Included in these hours of service are 6,100 hours of service directly with DGIF projects, such as WildlifeMapping and Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail adoption. Also included are thousands of hours on wildlife surveys with the 2nd Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas, other partners such as the National Audubon Society and the Virginia Bluebird Society, and local BioBlitzes. They also include many habitat restoration or demonstration projects, such as new pollinator habitats in Isle of Wight, Chesterfield, and Powhatan counties. These hours equate to $992,203 in service, using the value of a volunteer hour in Virginia for 2015 published by IndependentSector.org, the industry standard. (The 2016 value is not yet available, but is likely to be higher.) As you can see, you’ve made an excellent return on your investment in our program!

Below, I have included the program-wide 2016 statistics. These statistics reflect many more hours that were not directly with DGIF, but that align with your agency mission. For example, VMN volunteers volunteered nearly 1,000 hours on USFWS National Wildlife Refuges in 2016, and they spent 1,765 hours assisting local non-profit Earth Sangha with collecting native seeds and growing native plants for habitat restoration projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virginia Master Naturalist Program 2016 Statistics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New VMN volunteers graduated from basic training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active volunteers reporting service in 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuing Education hours completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service hours contributed: Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service hours contributed: Citizen Science</td>
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<td>Service hours contributed: Stewardship</td>
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<td>Service hours contributed: Administration &amp; Travel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total service hours contributed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monetary value of service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational contacts made</td>
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</table>
Again, I thank you for both your monetary and in-kind support. Please let me know if you have any questions about this report or our volunteer activities, if you would like me to provide you with any other materials, or if you would like to discuss additional opportunities for collaboration.

Thank you,

Michelle Prysby
Director, Virginia Master Naturalist program
Virginia Tech Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation
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434-872-4571

Virginia Master Naturalists participated in many BioBlitzes in 2016, oftentimes as co-organizers of the events. At the Hungry Mother State Park BioBlitz in April, the team discovered Mountain Redbelly Dace (a small fish) in a small tributary. Mountain Redbelly Dace are not native to the Holston River drainage and are competitors of the Tennessee Dace, which occur in Hungry Mother Creek above the reservoir. Plans are now being made to remove the Mountain Redbelly Dace from Hungry Mother State Park through a partnership with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Virginia Highlands Community College. There is a high possibility that without the BioBlitz, resource managers would not have known about the presence of the Mountain Redbelly Dace until it was too late.
Virginia Master Naturalist Statewide Report from 29 Chapters

2016 Annual Report Snapshot

2,921 Chapter Members

Each figure equals ~29 individuals.

Certified VMN  VMN Member  Trainee

1,743 active volunteers reporting service in 2016

382 new volunteers trained in 2016

Volunteer Service

145,996 Total Volunteer Hours

Valued at $3.8 Million!

Service Type

- Citizen Science
- Education
- Stewardship
- Admin & Travel

2016 Accomplishments

Assisting State Agencies
VMN volunteers expanded the capacity of state natural resource agencies through projects such as RareQuest, Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail adoption, stewardship at state parks, and water quality monitoring in local streams.

Engaging Youth Through Environmental Education
VMN volunteers connected youth with nature through afterschool programs, day camps, special events, and classroom programs, making 55,163 youth contacts.

Provided stewardship at 300+ sites

Contributed to 100+ citizen science studies of natural resources

Made 106,460 contacts through educational programs

Virginia Master Naturalist programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Ray McKinley, Administrator, 1600 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.