

Bull Run  
Mountains  
Conservancy

Education . Research . Stewardship

Annual Report  
FY 2009

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## *From the President*

Dear Friends of the Bull Run Mountains:

BRMC has completed 15 years of service to the Bull Run Mountains southern 800 acre natural area.

It has been our pleasure to have opened this tract for public enjoyment, educational camps, programs and internships for children and adults, scientific surveys, and to provide stewardship of the trail system.

Over these years, BRMC members and friends have supported our varied activities with their individual contributions of skills, enthusiasm, and time. Numerous foundations have also supported the overall mission of BRMC in the Bull Run Mountains.

The past year saw the conclusion and finalization of BRMC's eight year effort to preserve Silver Lake "camp-ground" as an open space amenity for Western Prince William County.

Twelve years ago, following the defeat of the proposed Disney theme park for the Silver Lake site and surrounding properties, new found sentiment proposed the protection of the remaining acres in the western Rural Crescent of Prince William County. Competing with this vision was a housing development planned around Silver Lake.

BRMC was able to galvanize the community to request their Board of Supervisors to consider a Passive Recreation, open space zoning use instead of a heavily developed housing use. Ultimately, Toll Brother's development corporation donated the Silver Lake site. Now Prince William County Board of Supervisors and Prince William citizens will determine, through political and community process, exactly what will be built and exactly how the site will be enjoyed. BRMC is hoping that this outcome will be to preserve the site in its simplicity for years to come. To me, Silver Lake is a symbol of the celebration of the simple ordinary, not unlike what Walden Pond was to Henry Thoreau many years ago, and what the Bull Run Mountains were to my parents, Stephen and Audrey Currier, and to Alice Mills fifty years ago.

Under a new and different arrangement with VOF, BRMC enters a new decade of service to the Bull Run Mountains.

VOF has identified the renovation of the existing trails as a priority which will be undertaken to ultimately create a sustainable trail system.

VOF has identified the trespassing and misuse of the white rock outcropping to the west as a priority that requires a workable policy to prevent such acts.

VOF has identified its interest in continuing to conceptualize the Grayson Mill-to-Mill hiking trail from Aldie Gap to Thoroughfare Gap.

BRMC, it's Board of Directors, Executive Director, professional and volunteer staff, and you—our membership and friends, look forward to continuing our relationship to the Bull Run Mountains within the Virginia Outdoors Foundation ownership and the Department of Natural Heritage/DCR guidelines for a state natural area.

Together, with various perspectives and with the benefit of much history, our organization's collective efforts will, hopefully, protect and conserve and enjoy the Bull Run Mountains in this generation and for all the generations ahead of us.

Best wishes to our mutual interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea B. Currier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line at the end.

Andrea B. Currier



## *From the Executive Director*

Dear Members,

In honor of Harry Leach, BRMC formed the Harry Leach Outreach Fund in 2009. Harry has been the Treasurer for BRMC for over 10 years. During his association with the Conservancy, he has done just about anything and everything to help the organization. The purpose of the Fund is to continue Harry's outreach efforts. In the first phase of the project we were able to obtain a digital camera, a digital video camera, a computer, and related software. BRMC staff and volunteers will use the equipment to design DVDs that highlight our many education programs. The DVDs will also be available to program participants as a take-home memory of their experience. We have also been able to enhance our printing capabilities to meet the increasing demand for maps, waivers, use guidelines, and other materials the public needs to enjoy the Bull Run Mountains.

Our Youth Outdoors Program had its most successful year to date. The Program provided a yearlong series of nature camps including Herpetology Camp, Nature Days, Pre-School Camp, Summer Nature Camp, and Winter Nature Camp. In 2009, we created a Youth Outdoors Scholarship Fund to further our education program's reach and encourage children to spend time in the field, learning about and enjoying history and nature. In all, we raised over \$11,000 in 12 months to seed our Youth Outdoors Scholarship Fund. Based on this success, we are offering 18 Scholarship opportunities for children to participate in our nature camp programs in 2010.

In addition, BRMC was able to offer a Chesapeake Watershed Workshop thanks to funding from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund. Youth ages 13-18 participated in two workshops focused on the conservation of the rivers and streams that flow into the Chesapeake Bay. The workshops provided students with a hands-on look at headwater and major tributary habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and an overview of the most pressing watershed issues within our region.

Our volunteer program remains exceptionally strong with BRMC volunteers on track to spend over 3,000 hours this year assisting our education program, research, and stewardship. We currently have 7 active student interns, between 13-17 years of age, all of whom spend time weekly or monthly aiding our programs and performing maintenance duties. Thanks to our volunteers, we are successfully managing steady increases in visitation. We estimate that 9,000 people will visit our preserve this year.

Thanks to you, our members, we maintained a membership renewal rate of better than 70 percent. Through our members, we were able to obtain over \$15,000 in matching grants last year. This was extremely important to meet our fundraising needs through difficult economic times.

As we look forward to our next decade of service in the mountains, we are confident that together we can meet the challenges of the future.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Kieffer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael J. Kieffer



## *Programs*

Bull Run Mountains Conservancy continues to offer a wide variety of nature programs to our members and the general public that encourage outdoor education. Our 2009 public programs included:

*Hike With a Naturalist*  
*Tea of the Month Club*  
*Annual Fundraising Event*  
*Volunteer Christmas Party*  
*New Year's Day Hike*  
*Dyke Marsh Bird Walk*  
*Amphibians of Spring*  
*Woodcock Watch*  
*Worm Bin Composting Workshop*  
*Mountain Moonlight Walk*  
*Halloween Safari*  
*Old Home Sites*  
*Toddlin' Along the Bull Run Mountains*

In addition to public programs, Bull Run Mountains Conservancy offered five outdoor camps for youth. Our time spent with children in these camps conducting research and stewardship vests youth in conservation and outdoor recreation. During the 2009 fiscal year we conducted the following camps:

*Winter Nature Camp*  
*Nature Days*  
*Herpetology Camp*  
*Pre-School Nature Camp*  
*Summer Nature Camp*

Supported by the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, Bull Run Mountains Conservancy offered a new hands-on program for high school students:

*Chesapeake Watershed Workshop*

## *Thank You*

Bull Run Mountains Conservancy would like to say thank you to all of our volunteers and interns. We could not do it without their support! Our volunteers and interns are involved in every aspect of the conservancy from clearing trails to preparing mailings to updating the database. We especially would like to thank our weekly volunteers: ***Jessie Barringer, Chris Braun, Denice Dressel, Michele Failla, and Leonard Berman.***

We would like to thank our 2009 Student Interns: ***James Bonaffini, Nicholas Bonaffini, JoAnna Dressel, Catherine Lamb, Audrey Ramsey, Daniel Richard, Anna Ritter, and Jillian Swinford.***

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## *Harry Leach Outreach Fund, Established 2009*

In honor of Harry Leach, Bull Run Mountains Conservancy established the Harry Leach Outreach Fund. Harry has been the Treasurer for BRMC for over 10 years. During his association with the Conservancy, he has done just about anything and everything to help the organization. The purpose of the Fund created in Harry's name is to continue his outreach efforts.



President Andrea Currier honors long-time volunteer Harry Leach by announcing the formation of the Harry Leach Outreach Fund at the BRMC Annual Fundraiser.

## Contributors

(Donations received between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009)

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Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund  
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Hillsdale Fund  
Prince Charitable Trust  
Sacharuna Foundation  
Wrinkle in Time

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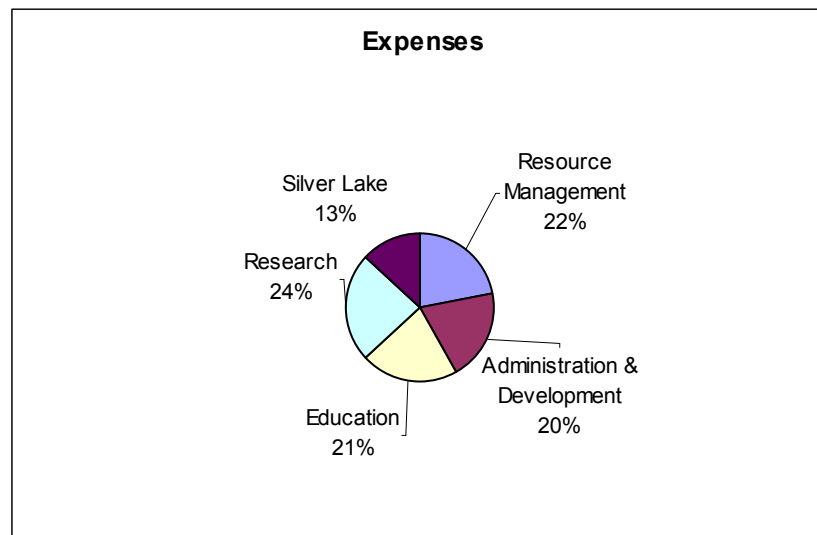
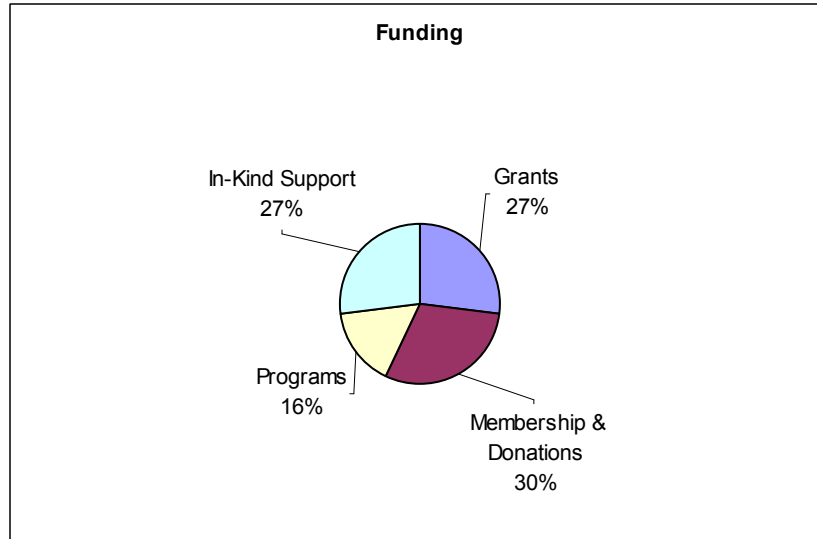
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# Financial Report



## *Annual Visitors*

On average, there are 9,000 people per year that visit our preserve to hear our lectures, attend our public programs, participate in school field trips, or simply to hike.

1,861 individuals out of those 9,000 visitors benefited directly from our programs in 2009.

Out of those 1,861 people there were:

- > 665 participants in our annual Halloween Safari Event
- > 566 participants in our regularly scheduled programs opened to the general public
- > 346 children from public and private schools, grades K-12
- > 95 people who attended Birthday Adventure programs
- > 189 people who attended scout-related events



2009 Pre-School Nature Camp