



International Baccalaureate (IB) students from Richmond's Trinity Episcopal School explore wetlands ecology with Bob Siegfried, Senior Project Manager with Resource Environmental Solutions. The University of Richmond Natural Areas Stewardship program hosted the 2023 visit.



Careers In Conservation (CIC) *Expanding career awareness in the field of ecosystem restoration*

The Organization

Broad Water Innovations (BWI) is a 501c3 land trust formed in 2013, serving as conservation easement holder and long-term steward of wetland, stream, and species mitigation banks.

Broad Water acquires, holds, maintains, conserves, and protects land or land interests in perpetuity, providing and preserving outdoor recreation opportunities, natural open spaces, and biodiversity. Our work includes serving the public through recreation, charitable, and educational activities.

Broad Water promotes **public awareness** and **education** pertaining to environmental sustainability.

The Program

BWI is a leader in ecosystem restoration, land conservation, and long-term stewardship throughout Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Maryland. BWI educates young people about the diverse careers in conservation. Many young people are passionate about working in the environmental field, but lack a full understanding of the potential career paths and opportunities available to them as stewards of the natural world.

As of 2023, Conservation Careers, an online resource for job seekers, lists more than 33,000 conservation jobs with more than 15,000 job titles. Their list of “15 Key Conservation Jobs” includes communications and marketing, ecotourism, environmental economics, fundraising, policy, and advocacy, in addition to science and research.

“We estimate that the wetland and stream mitigation industry (annually) generates over 53,200 jobs and over \$9.6 billion in economic output.” Source: Assessing the Size and Growth of the U.S. Wetland and Stream Compensatory Mitigation Industry, September 2023

The BWI Careers in Conservation program connects young people in high school science classes with environmental professionals.

We recruit students showing interest and ability in natural resource conservation. BWI has a proven history of facilitating in-class discussions and site visits.

CIC offers three options for schools to consider:

Option 1) Single-day program, including classroom visit and field trip to an active environmental restoration site. CIC and your teachers develop a single-day workshop with conservation professionals. The in-class portion includes facilitated discussion of the mitigation process, such as calculating and offsetting impacts to wetlands, required permitting and agency oversight, and the role of conservation easements and long-term stewardship. The second half of the day includes a site visit to an ongoing wetlands restoration project.

Option 2) Two-day program. Students explore a proposed project impacting the natural environment. Students adopt stakeholder roles, such as project developers, environmental professionals, local government, and concerned citizens. A project overview leads into breakout groups examining stakeholder positions.



Facilitators for the Careers in Conservation program include, from left, Natural Areas Steward Cary Jamieson from the University of Richmond, Senior Project Manager Bob Siegfried from Resource Environmental Solutions, and BWI Executive Director Tee Clarkson.

Day Two begins with students presenting their group positions, followed by a consensus-building exercise. Students learn the roles of citizens, government, and industry in achieving an environmentally-beneficial outcome. Day Two concludes with a site visit to an active project.

Option 3) Weeklong institute. BWI and your teachers develop a five-day Careers in Conservation curriculum, exploring the wide range of environmental challenges facing urban and rural Virginia communities. Field trips to active restoration sites provide hands-on experience. Topics include land conservation and development needs, sea-level rise, invasive species, and water quality. We examine creative solutions communities are developing in response to those issues, and the career disciplines industry brings to the table.

Internships

BWI supports summer internships for high school and college students.

Scholarships

BWI offers \$2,500 college scholarships for students majoring in natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies.

Staff

Tee Clarkson, Executive Director

Tee is an enthusiastic outdoorsman and conservationist, Executive Director of Broad Water Innovations, and managing director of Atoka Conservation Exchange and First Earth 2030. For nearly 20 years, Tee has operated summer youth outdoor programs in Virginia, introducing thousands of children to the wonders of Virginia's wild places. Tee is on the board of Virginia Forever and American Climate Partners. A St. Christopher's School alumnae and a 1996 graduate of the University of Georgia, he lives in Richmond, Va., with his wife and two children.

Woodie Walker, Careers in Conservation Coordinator

Woodie has experience with local, state, and federal agencies, non-profits, and volunteer groups. He is a 2022 fellow of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute, and a board member of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation. He lives in Essex County, Va.



Additional CIC resource professionals include biologists, engineers, journalists, educators, financiers, and more.