

TOM DAVIS

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September 19, 2005

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
ATNN: Virginia Land Grant Conservation Foundation
203 Governors Street
Suite 326
Richmond, VA 23219

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my support of the grant application being submitted by the Prince William Conservation Alliance (PWCA) to be used for preservation efforts at Merrimac Farm.

Located adjacent to Quantico Marine Base, Merrimac Farm is a truly special place. Surrounded by the rapidly developing suburban landscape of Prince William County, this property if preserved has the potential to not only meet the Marine Corps goals of providing open space buffers between its facilities and residential development; but also support Northern Virginia's goals of providing passive recreation opportunities, preserving open space, and protecting water quality.

As you may be aware, the existence of Merrimac Farm and current preservation efforts were first brought to my attention several months ago by the PWCA. Since that time, my staff and I have been working very closely with the Marine Corps at the federal level. The Marine Corps has informed me that this area is a priority for them, and they plan to use some of the "OSD Readiness Environmental Preservation" funds in their FY 06 budget to that end.

To date, the House of Representatives has passed our version of the Military Construction budget, which includes ample funding for this endeavor. However, we are still waiting for the Senate to pass its version of the funding bill. Assuming the Senate funds the "OSD Readiness Environmental Preservation" account at a similar level, the Marine Corps should be able to proceed with their efforts in early FY 06.

Despite our efforts at the federal level, there is still much to be done at the local and state levels to make preservation of this important property possible. As such, I am pleased that the PWCA has taken the initiative to work directly with you. In working with them, I know you will find them to be knowledgeable, thorough and hardworking. In fact, as you may be aware one of the PWCA's top goals is the effective, sustainable stewardship of Prince William's valuable natural and cultural resources at heart. Merrimac Farm represents the best of both of these worlds; unparalleled natural beauty

and a valuable cultural resource for Northern Virginia families. I sincerely hope you will see fit to partner with us to make turn this important initiative a reality.

Thank you very much for your thoughtful consideration. Should you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "T".

Tom Davis
Member of Congress