



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ALBEMARLE CONSERVATION EASEMENT AUTHORITY
March 12, 2026 (Thursday)**

The Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority met on March 12, 2026 at 4:45 pm.

Members present were:

David Emmitt
Jay Fennell, Chair
Rex Linville
Sharon Merrick
John Moore
Peter Taylor, Vice-chair

Members absent were:

Sherry Buttrick
Annie Izard
Hamilton Moses III

Staff members present were:

Andy Herrick, County Attorney
Scott Clark, Conservation Program Manager
Jennifer Tevendale, Deputy County Attorney
James Van Vranken, Planner

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Annual Officer Elections (Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary)
3. Adoption of Meeting Schedule
4. Remote Participation & Virtual Meeting Policy
5. Other Matters Not Listed on the Agenda
6. Approval of Minutes (November 13, 2025)
7. PRF201400004 Clifton Lake Utility Approval Request
8. Closed Meeting:

Closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia under Subsection 8 to consult with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters related to the interpretation of conservation easement language addressing permitted land uses, which requires the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

Closed meeting motion subject to change

9. Certify Closed Meeting
10. Annual Report 2025
11. New Business

12. Old Business
13. Adjournment

1. Call to Order

A quorum of six was present at 4:48pm when Mr. James Van Vranken called the meeting to order.

2. Annual Officer Elections (Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary)

Mr. John Moore moved and Mr. Rex Linville seconded to nominate Mr. Jay Fennell as Chair, Mr. Peter Taylor as Vice-chair, and Mr. Van Vranken as Secretary for 2026. The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

3. Adoption of Meeting Schedule

Mr. Taylor moved and Mr. Fennell seconded to adopt the regular meeting schedule for 2026 (Attachment A). The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

4. Remote Participation & Virtual Meeting Policy

Ms. Sharon Merrick moved and Mr. Moore seconded to re-adopt the Remote Participation & Virtual Meeting Policy for 2026 (Attachment B). The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

5. Other Matters Not Listed on the Agenda

No public comments were made.

6. Approval of Minutes (November 13, 2025)

Mr. Taylor moved and Ms. Merrick seconded to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2025 meeting. The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

7. PRF201400004 Clifton Lake Utility Approval Request

Mr. Van Vranken presented a compliance request from Dominion Energy for a new underground utility easement on the parcel known as Tax Map 79 Parcel 23 and subject to the PRF201400004 Clifton Lake conservation easement. The proposed utility line would serve only this property.

Mr. Linville moved and Mr. Moore seconded that the Authority find the proposed underground utility easement in the application ACEA-2026-02 not to be in conflict with the conservation easement, provided that the instrument recording said right-of-way stipulates that the easement corridor can only be used to serve the subject property. The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

8. Closed Meeting

Mr. Fennell moved and Mr. Moore seconded the Closed Meeting Motion, dated March 12, 2026, which can be found on Page 1 of Attachment C. The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

9. Certify Closed Meeting

Mr. Fennell moved and Mr. David Emmitt seconded the Closed Meeting Certification, dated March 12, 2026, which can be found on Page 2 of Attachment C. The motion passed by a vote of 6:0.

10. Annual Report 2025

Mr. Van Vranken presented a summary of the Authority's activities in 2025. The slides are

provided in Attachment D.

11. New Business

The Chair invited new business.

Mr. Taylor briefed the Authority on Dominion's wreck-rebuild project on the high-capacity transmission line running parallel to Gordonsville Road between Charlottesville and Gordonsville. The line crosses two parcels held under easement by the Authority: Strawberry Hill Farm and Lawson. Landowners are engaged in research to understand Dominion's existing utility easements.

12. Old Business

The Chair invited old business.

Mr. Van Vranken updated the Authority that the special exception for the homestay permit on Ragged Mountain, which was discussed at the Authority's previous meeting, was approved by the Board at its meeting on March 4.

13. Adjournment

The Authority adjourned the meeting at 7:18pm.

Attachments:

Attachment A – 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule

Attachment B – Remote Participation & Virtual Meeting Policy

Attachment C – Closed Meeting Motion and Certification

Attachment D – Annual Report 2025



**ALBEMARLE CONSERVATION
EASEMENT AUTHORITY**

NOTICE OF 2026 REGULAR MEETINGS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE the Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority will meet at 4:45 p.m. in Room 235 (unless otherwise noted) of the Albemarle County Office Building, located at 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia, on the following dates.

You are invited to attend each meeting in person or online. Agenda materials and a link to live broadcasts may be found online on the County Calendar at:

<https://www.albemarle.org/community/quick-links/county-calendar>

~~January 8, 2026~~

~~February 12, 2026~~

March 12, 2026

April 9, 2026 (Room 241)

May 14, 2026 (Room 241)

June 11, 2026

July 9, 2026

August 13, 2026

September 10, 2026

October 8, 2026

November 12, 2026

December 10, 2026

By:

Jay Fennell
Chair

Approved and adopted March 12, 2026

Posted: March 13, 2026

By: James Van Vranken, Planner



**ALBEMARLE COUNTY
CONSERVATION EASEMENT AUTHORITY**

**REMOTE ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION & ALL VIRTUAL
MEETING POLICY**

1. Applicability of Policy.

A. Purposes. Pursuant to *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3708.3, this policy:

- a. describes the circumstances under which remote participation and/or an all-virtual public meeting will be allowed and the process the Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority (hereinafter “ACEA”) will use for making requests to use remote participation, approving or denying such requests, and creating a record of such requests; and
- b. fixes the number of times remote participation for personal matters or all-virtual public meetings can be used per calendar year, not to exceed the limitations set forth in *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3708.3(B)(4) and (C)(9).

B. Application. This policy will be applied strictly and uniformly, without exception, to the entire ACEA Board of Directors without regard to the identity of any director requesting remote participation and without regard to the matters that will be considered or voted on at the meeting.

2. Remote Electronic Participation for Individual Directors. Except as provided elsewhere in this policy, individual directors may use remote participation instead of attending a public meeting in person only pursuant to and in compliance with *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3708.3(B). Future amendments to the statutory provisions related to participation in public meetings by remote electronic means are hereby incorporated *mutatis mutandis* without requiring formal action by this Authority, unless otherwise required by Virginia law.

A. Situations Permitting Individual Director’s Remote Participation. An individual director of this Authority may use remote participation instead of attending a public meeting in person only if the director can participate without endangering person or property (i.e., while driving) and notifies the Chair before the meeting that

- i. the director has a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the director’s physical attendance;
- ii. a medical condition of a director or of a director’s family member requires the director to provide care that prevents the director’s physical attendance;
- iii. the director’s principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location identified in the notice for such meeting; or
- iv. the director is unable to attend due to a personal matter, such as a family event or business commitment, and identifies with specificity the nature

of the personal matter.

- B. Limitation on Remote Participation Due to Personal Matters.** No director may use remote participation due to personal matters more than two meetings per calendar year or 25 percent of the ACEA's meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater. There is no limit to the number of times a director may participate remotely for any other authorized purpose under this policy or the All-Virtual Meeting policy.
- C. When Chair Requests to Participate Electronically.** If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting and seeks to participate through electronic communication means from a remote location, the Chair must notify the Vice-Chair or other presiding officer and should notify the Secretary before the meeting.
- D. Quorum Must Be Physically Assembled; Approval of Director's Remote Participation; Disapproval.** A quorum of the ACEA must be physically assembled at the location included in the meeting notice. The ACEA directors present must approve the remote participation by majority vote. The decision must be based solely on the criteria in Section A above without regard to the director's identity or matters that will be considered or voted on during the meeting. If the ACEA approves a director's participation through electronic communication, the Secretary must record in the minutes the remote location from which the director participated. However, the remote location need not be open to the public and may be identified in the minutes by a general description. If the ACEA approves a director's remote participation, the minutes must identify the subsection of Section A under which the director participated. If participation is approved for a Personal Matter, the minutes must identify the specific nature of the personal matter cited by the director. If the ACEA disapproves a director's remote participation because such participation would violate this policy, such disapproval must be recorded in the minutes with specificity.
- E. Audibility of Absent Director.** The Chair, designee, or other presiding officer shall arrange for the voice of the remote director to be heard by all persons in attendance at the meeting location. If, for any reason, the voice of the absent director cannot reasonably be heard, the meeting may continue without the participation of the absent director.
- F. Remote Participation Not an Absence.** A director's remote participation, if approved, is not considered an absence.
- G. Independent Verification.** The reason for a director's remote participation and consideration of approval thereof is not subject to independent verification.
- H. Remote Participation in Closed Session.** A director participating remotely in a closed session must do so under circumstances that assure the privacy and confidentiality of the closed session.

3. **All-Virtual Public Meetings.** Except as provided in Paragraph 4 below, the ACEA may hold all-virtual public meetings only pursuant to and in compliance with *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3708.3(C), which requirements are incorporated herein by reference. Future amendments to the statutory provisions related to the holding of all-virtual public meetings pursuant to this policy are hereby incorporated *mutatis mutandis* without requiring formal action by the ACEA, unless otherwise required by Virginia law.

A. Limitation on All-Virtual Public Meetings. The ACEA may not convene an all-virtual public meeting (i) more than two times per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater, or (ii) consecutively with another all-virtual public meeting.

B. Reasons for All-Virtual Public Meetings. The ACEA may only convene an all-virtual public meeting for Special Meetings of the ACEA or under emergency or dire circumstances, such as extreme weather, not occurring under a state or locally declared state of emergency or disaster or when a continuity of government ordinance is in effect.

C. Procedures for Conducting All-Virtual Public Meetings. The ACEA may only conduct an all-virtual public meeting if it complies with the following:

- a. the meeting notice required by *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3707 includes a statement that the method by which the meeting will be held will not be changed unless the ACEA provides a new meeting in accordance with *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3707;
- b. public access to the all-virtual public meeting is provided by way of electronic communication means;
- c. the electronic communications means used allows the public to hear all directors participating in the all-virtual public meeting, and, when audio-visual technology is available, to see the directors as well;
- d. when audio-visual technology is available, a director shall, for purposes of a quorum, be considered absent from any portion of the meeting during which visual communication with the director is voluntarily disconnected or otherwise fails or during which audio communication involuntarily fails;
- e. a phone number or other live contact information is provided to alert the ACEA if its audio or video transmission fails, the ACEA monitors such designated means of communication during the meeting, and the ACEA recesses the meeting until public access is restored if the transmission fails for the public;
- f. a copy of the proposed agenda and all agenda packets and, unless exempt, all material furnished to the ACEA directors for a meeting is made available to the public in electronic format at the same time that such materials are provided to the ACEA directors;
- g. the public is afforded the opportunity to comment through electronic means, including by way of written comments, at those public meetings when public comment is customarily received;
- h. no more than two ACEA directors are together in any one remote location unless that remote location is open to and physically accessible by the public;
- i. if a closed session occurs during an all-virtual public meeting, the directors participate under circumstances that assure the privacy and confidentiality of the session;

- j. if a closed session occurs during an all-virtual public meeting, the ACEA resumes transmission to the public before the ACEA votes to certify the closed meeting;
- k. the ACEA does not convene an all-virtual public meeting (i) more than twice per calendar year or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded to the next whole number, whichever is greater, or (ii) consecutively with another all-virtual public meeting; and
- l. minutes of all-virtual public meetings held by electronic communication must be taken according to law and must include the fact that the meeting was held by electronic communication means and must describe the type of electronic communication means used to hold the meeting. If a director's participation from a remote location is disapproved because such participation would violate the remote participation policy, such disapproval must be recorded in the minutes with specificity.

4. During a Declared Emergency or When a Continuity of Government Ordinance is in Effect. The ACEA may meet by electronic communication means without a quorum physically assembled at one location when a state of emergency is declared pursuant to *Virginia Code* § 44-146.17 or a local emergency is declared pursuant to *Virginia Code* § 44-246.21, subject to the provisions and requirements of *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3708.2. The ACEA also may meet by electronic communication means when an ordinance adopted pursuant to *Virginia Code* § 15.2-1413 to ensure the continuity of County government is in effect.

5. Annual Adoption. Before this Authority allows any director to use remote participation or conducts an all-virtual public meeting under this policy, the ACEA must at least annually readopt these rules or adopt an amended version thereof, by recorded vote at a public meeting.

(*Virginia Code* § 2.2-3708.2 and § 2.2-3708.3)

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(Adopted October 13, 2022)

(Amended and Readopted July 11, 2024)

(Readopted March 12, 2026).



Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority

12 March 2026

CLOSED MEETING MOTION

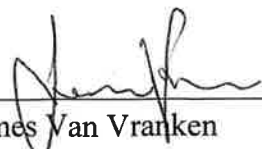
I move that the Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority convene a closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia:

- under subsection (8) to consult with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters related to the interpretation of conservation easement language addressing permitted land uses, which requires the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

Roll Call Vote:

	Yes	No
Dir. Fennell	☒	☐
Dir. Taylor	☒	☐
Dir. Buttrick	☐	☐
Dir. Emmitt	☒	☐
Dir. Izard	☐	☐
Dir. Linville	☒	☐
Dir. Merrick	☒	☐
Dir. Moore	☒	☐
Dir. Moses	☐	☐

I, James Van Vranken, Secretary, certify the roll call vote tally that occurred on 3/12, 2026.



 James Van Vranken
 Secretary

3/12/26

 Date

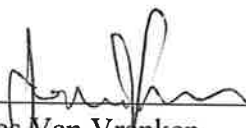
CLOSED MEETING CERTIFICATION

I move that the Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority certify by a recorded vote that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

	Yes	No
Dir. Fennell	☒	☐
Dir. Taylor	☒	☐
Dir. Buttrick	☐	☐
Dir. Emmitt	☒	☐
Dir. Izard	☐	☐
Dir. Linville	☒	☐
Dir. Merrick	☒	☐
Dir. Moore	☒	☐
Dir. Moses	☐	☐

I, James Van Vranken, Secretary, certify the roll call vote tally that occurred on 3/12, 2026.

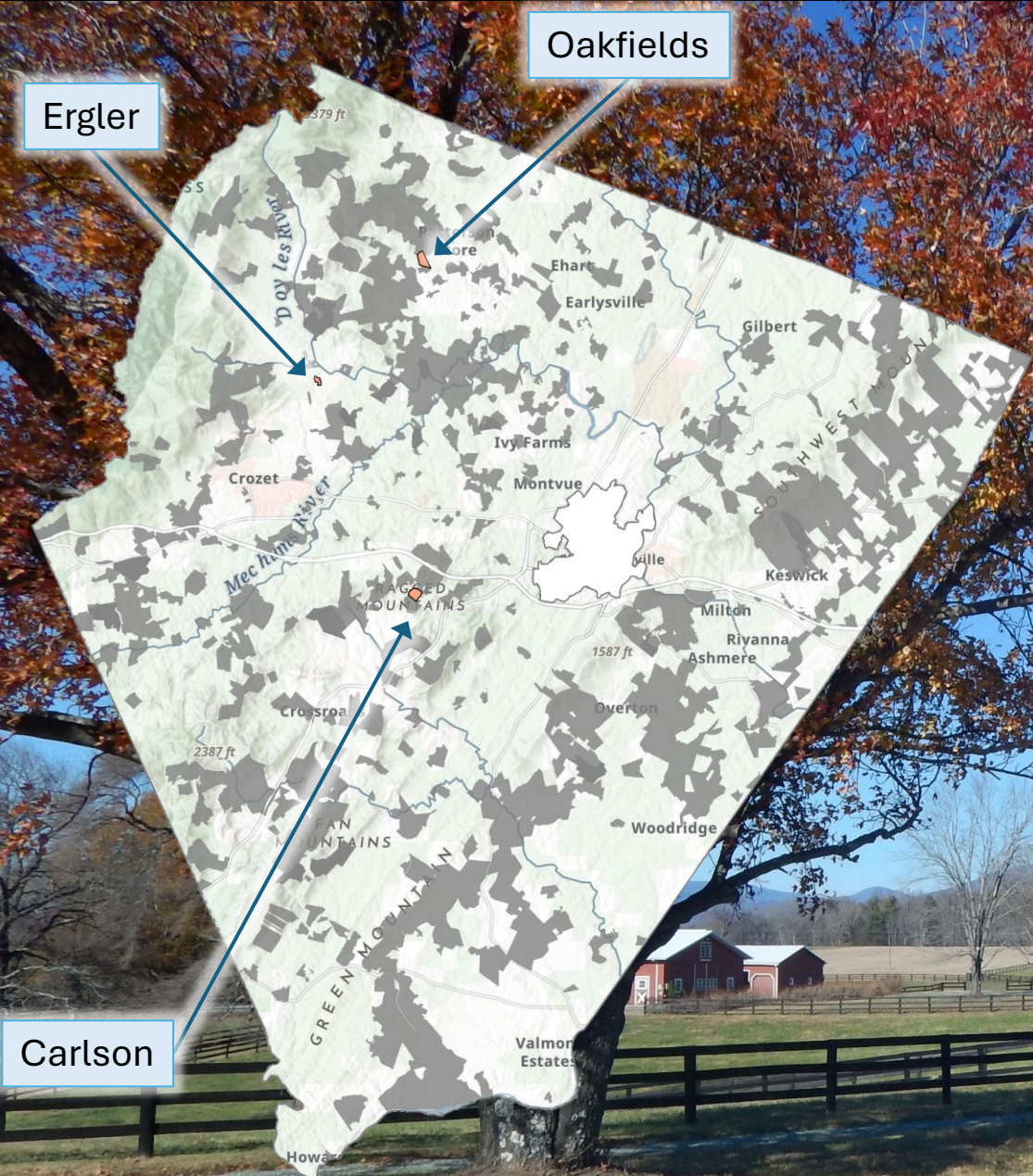


 James Van Vranken
 Secretary

3/12/26

 Date

Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority

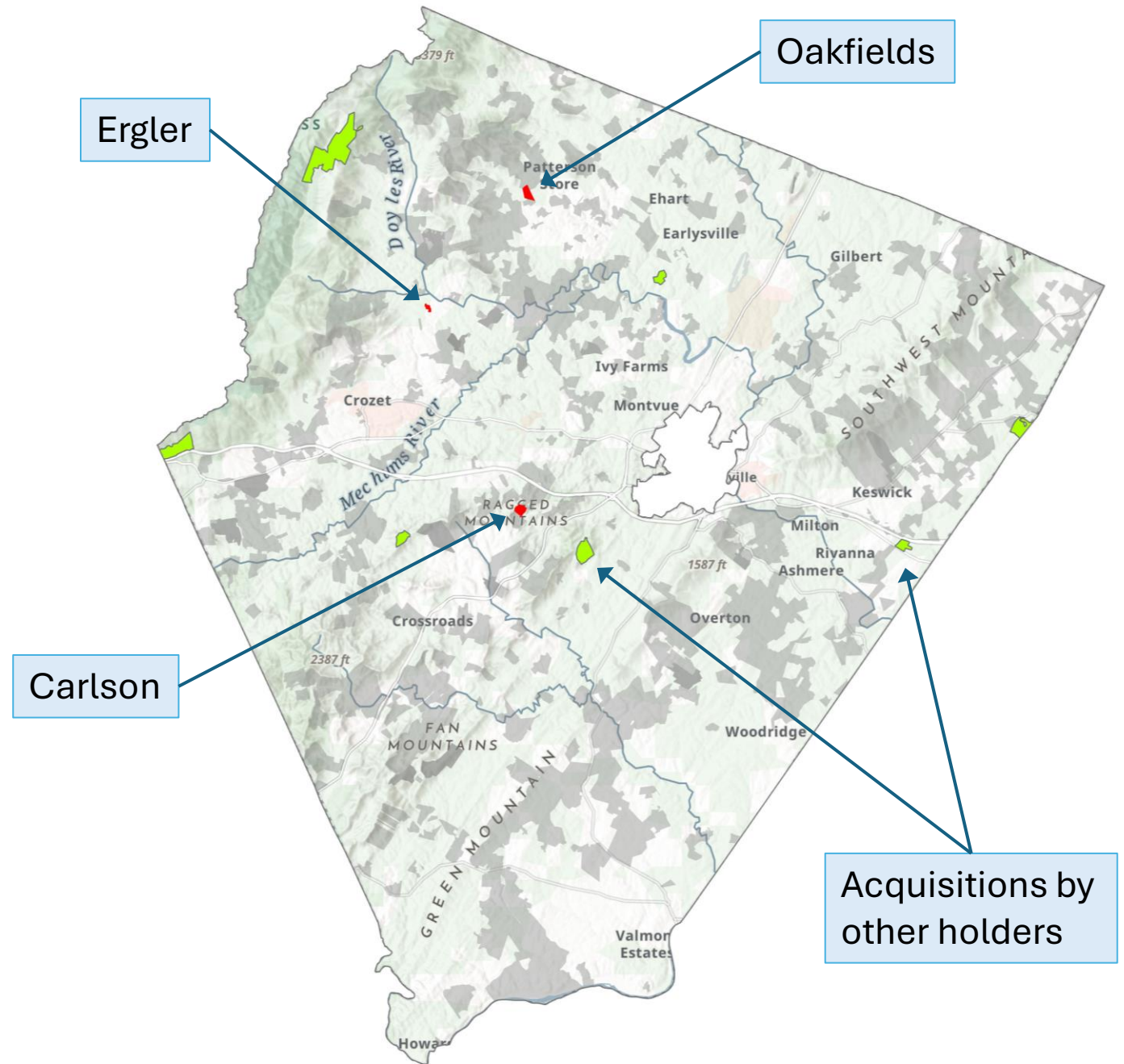


2025 Donated Conservation Easements							
	Resources Protected						
Property	Water Quality	Ag/ Forestry Resources	Mountains & Scenic	Forests & Habitat	Historic Districts	Acres	RA Dwellings Prevented
Carlson	✓		✓	✓		84.8	0
Ergler	✓	✓	✓			28.0	7
Oakfields	✓	✓				87.4	15
Totals						200.2	22

All ACEA & County-held Easements (1992-2025)		
	Properties	Acres
ACEA Donated Easements	128	19,234
ACE (Purchase of Development Rights) Easements	52	9,624
Rural Preservation Developments	33	2,907
	213	31,764

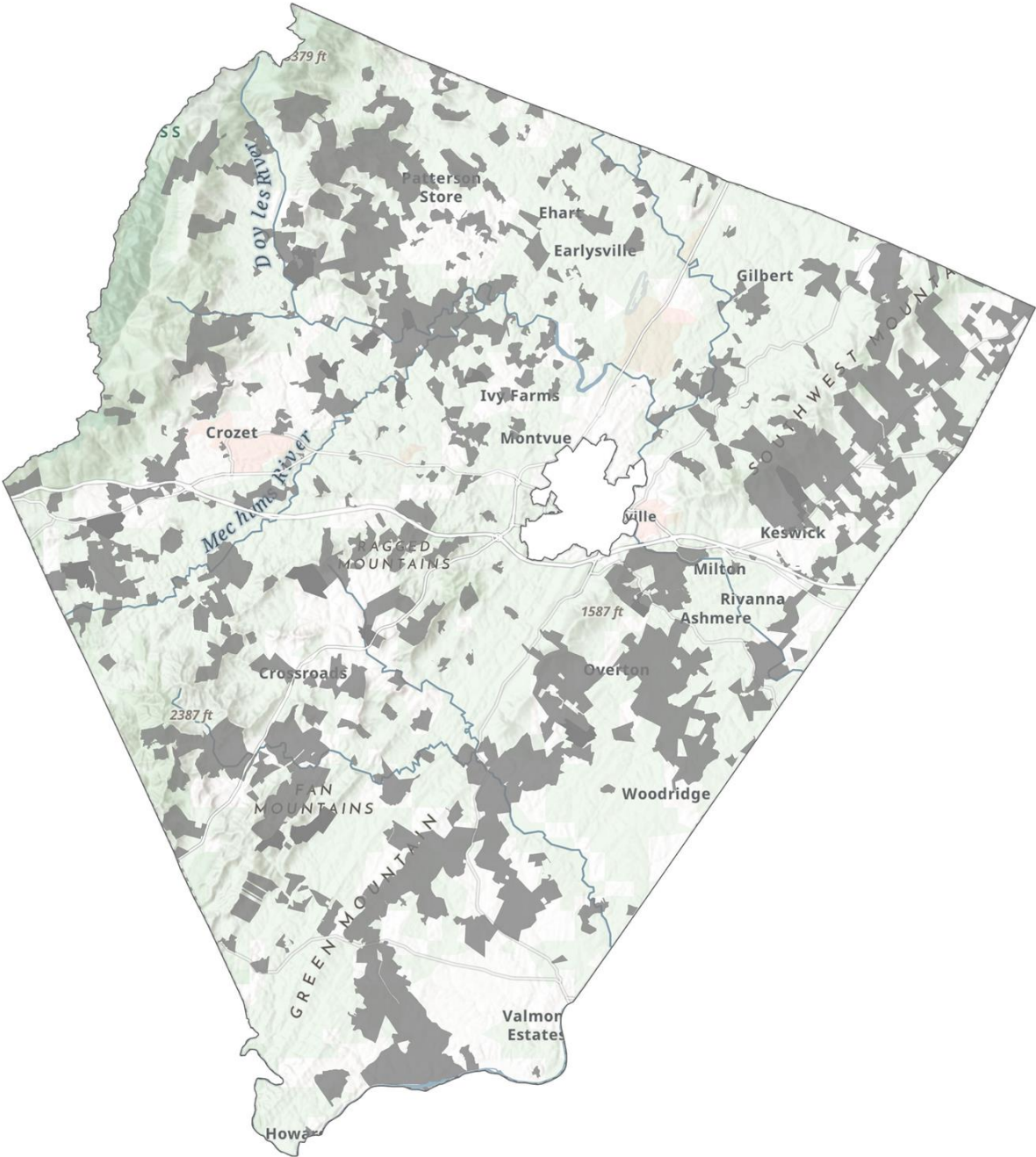
Acquisition

- 10 applications
- Oakfields (87), Carlson (85), and Ergler (28) recorded
- McCormick-Ray approved and drafted, backed out
- Other holders: 7 easements/amendments, 1,548 acres recorded in 2025



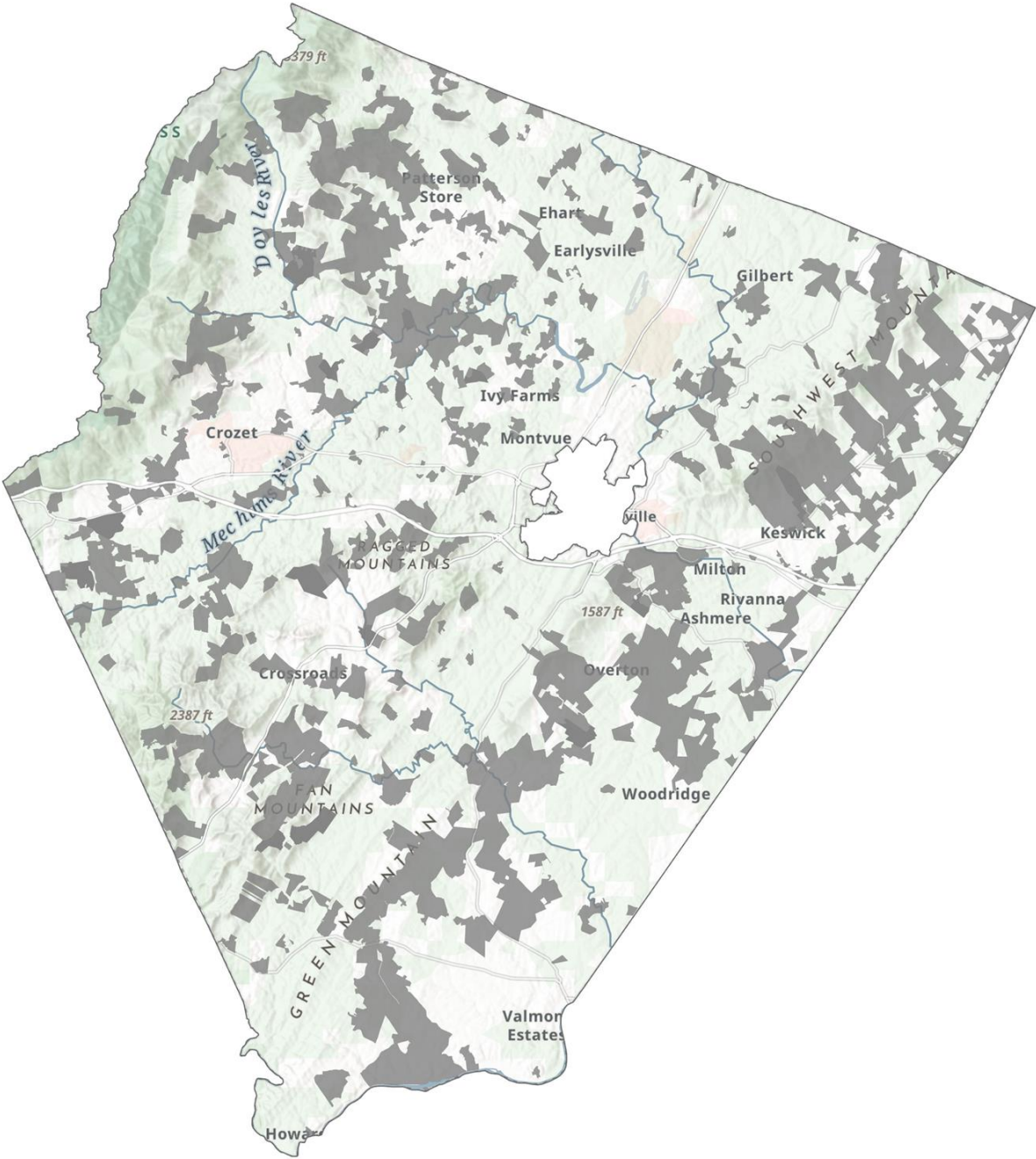
Totals

Holder	Count	Acreage
Virginia Outdoors Foundation	326	69,083
ACEA	213	31,764
The Nature Conservancy	27	6,574
Dept. of Forestry	12	3,068
Dept. of Historic Resources	11	776
TJSWCD	10	137
Land Trust of Virginia	9	1,960
Piedmont Environmental Council	7	1,242
Dept. of Conservation & Recreation	2	171
Old Dominion Land Conservancy	1	187
Ever Green Team	1	720
Total	619	115,683



ACEA Totals

Type	Count	Acreage
Donations	128	19,234
ACE Easements	52	9,624
Rural Preservation Developments	33	2,907
Total	213	31,764





Stewardship

- 66 easements monitored
- 5 approval requests
- 9 violations investigated

Time Series of Conservation Easements Recorded by ACEA

