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## Virginia's Dominion Envirothon – 2017 Oral Presentation Problem

For more than 400 years, farming and forestry have played an integral role in Virginia's culture and economy. These industries have sustained the citizens of the Commonwealth by providing vital economic, environmental, and social benefits. According to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (2015), land devoted to farming and forestry once accounted for the majority of Virginia's nearly 27 million acres of land. By 1960, only 13.5 million acres of Virginia's approximately 25 million acres remained in farmland. In 2012, the total was 8.3 million acres, a loss of more than five million acres of Virginia farmland in 52 years. Statistics tell a similar story for Virginia's forests. In 2003, Virginia had 15.8 million acres of forestland which represents a decline of 180,600 acres since 1992.

Times have changed, but the need for farm and forestlands still exists. Virginia's farmers contribute greatly to the economy, culture, and environmental health of the Commonwealth. Hundreds of Virginia's farmers participate in practices that contribute to the improvement of the health of the Chesapeake Bay and the preservation of soil health and water quality throughout the Commonwealth.

The Jones family has owned and operated approximately 140 acres of land in Dinwiddie County, Virginia for four generations. The Jones' farm consists of crop land, pasture, and forest that has been maintained using conventional agricultural practices. The Farm is located within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Recent changes in the Jones' family have left them without resources to continue farming their land; however, the family takes great pride in their agricultural heritage and the community they have shared it with. The family wants to ensure the land remains in agricultural production for years to come. To ensure the land maintains their strong agricultural heritage and growing interest in conservation, the family will be interviewing potential tenants to determine which group will make the most appropriate use of their family land.

***Envirothon Challenge:*** Your team has been chosen as a potential tenant for the Jones Family Farm. In order to earn the 15 year lease, you must present a conservation management plan to convince three generations of the Jones family that you will maintain the stewardship and heritage of their farm. Your presentation to the Jones family should include:

1. A specific conservation management plan for the entire farm.
2. Environment: How will your plan best address soil and water conservation, considering the four environmental subject areas of Envirothon (soils, aquatics, forestry, and wildlife).
3. Economic: Justify how you will pay for your plan including annual rent and an estimate of the profitability of your proposed operation based on current market conditions.
4. Social impacts of your plan: Explain how you will include local community and partners in your plan.

*\*This prompt is based on a figurative scenario and is not meant to portray a specific property or family.*

Maps, references, and additional resources available at: <http://vaswcd.org/learning-objectivesoral-presentation>