

January 14, 1966

Nature
Preserve

A new nature center obviously faces real decisions relative to fiscal matters. In other parts of the country, funds for nature centers for the first one or two years have come from non-tax sources. Usually, after a center has been in operation and has demonstrated its value to the community, certain government agencies will allot funds to pay for services rendered. A recent study³ of the income for a number of operating centers indicates the following sources of funds, ranked in decreasing order:

1. Grants from municipal and county funds.
2. Support from Junior League, women's clubs, social and service organizations.
3. Contributions and memberships of individuals.
4. Allocations from school funds. In many communities the schools assume part of the operating budget after a center has been open for a year or more. This is done by allocating as much as 50 cents per enrolled pupil annually to operation of the center as part of the school system's science budget.
5. Contributions from local industries and chambers of commerce.
6. Miscellaneous
7. Grants by local foundations.

Nothing short of a well-organized fund-raising campaign would be adequate to permit an institution to take advantage of the above-mentioned sources of revenue. The above sources have proven most effective in other states for securing funds to develop and operate a nature center. The possibility of obtaining state funds might also be explored if the proposed Virginia Commission of Outdoor Recreation is created by the 1966 General Assembly.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The preceding report indicates the two extremes which might be followed in developing a use-management plan for the College Woods. The first plan, a "Natural Area," involves a minimum of development and retains the area in a particularly desirable condition for biological studies by students and faculty of the College. In addition, it would continue to afford recreational opportunities to the limited number of people who avail themselves of the opportunity.

The second plan, a nature center, involves the development of facilities which would make possible a significant conservation and natural history education program for both the community and the state.

It is not essential that either plan in its most extreme form be developed. It is quite possible that some development, by creation of nature and hiking trails and the establishment of natural plantings would promote more utilization of the area by persons other than students enrolled in biology courses. It could, however, by more extensive improvement along these lines be made more attractive to tourists, youth groups, and others.

It appears that the educational potential of the area is one of its most significant features. Any management plan, therefore, should be one which recognizes and utilizes this potential.

It would be contemplated that any management plan would be most carefully conceived. It would not be intended that the College Woods become a municipal park or a public recreation area. The greatest value inherent in the College Woods is its natural condition and any management plan which modified or destroyed this value would not be in the best interest of the College. It is also recognized that any such plan must consider the possible utilization of certain of the woodlands in the future by the College for facilities as may be needed by the College for housing and/or classrooms.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board of Visitors authorize the President and the Committee to explore the various possibilities which exist for management of the College Woods within the general framework mentioned above. Further, this group should investigate the various sources of financial aid which might be available to support different plans of management. A management plan should then be completed which is realistic in view of fiscal limitations, yet which makes possible the realization of the maximum potential of the area.

1, 2, 3 Information furnished by the Nature Centers Division, National Audubon Society.

Dr. Shield: There is no
caution to the Adminis-
in locating the new bui-

Mr. Robertson: Does it
of a new development?

President Paschall: The
landscape architect, Mr.
Mr. Jones, our archi-
It is a matter on which
nately, it seems that
structed.

While waiting for Mr.
action by the Board.
Virginia Associated
Shannon of the Univer-
voted on January 7
currence and approval

It is understood that
augmentation for the
and did not anticipate

We feel that the in-
particularly the re-
respective Board ap-
will be modified to

Mr. Goodrich mov-
Research Center.

Rector: I would li-

President Paschall
Committee discuss
research activities
feel that its progr-
at that time.

Rector: I note the
viously discussed

Mr. English: I feel
Leclere, Special
time limit, but it

Considerable dis-
resolve, and who

Mr. Harper: I feel
termination of the

After further dis-
the same with Mr.
for final approval

In this connecti-
prior to Charter
pending before

The Board recess-
matics and draw-
on the same.