



**VALLEY
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

Promoting land use that sustains the farms, forests, open spaces, and cultural heritage of the Shenandoah Valley region

Resolution to Protect the Natural Bridge of Virginia

Whereas the Natural Bridge of Virginia was formed by the forces of nature; and

Whereas the Bridge was owned by President Thomas Jefferson from 1774 until his death on July 4th, 1826; and

Whereas the Bridge was purchased by President Jefferson in 1774 for the purpose of protecting the Bridge and with the desire to make it forever publically viewable; and

Whereas President Jefferson's purchase of the Bridge was the first example in American history of private action to protect a natural landscape; and

Whereas the Bridge is a National Historic Landmark and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places; and

Whereas tourists have come from around the world to admire Jefferson's 'sublime' Natural Bridge from the 1700s to the present day; and

Whereas the growing popularity of the Bridge as a destination for tourists and travelers provides significant economic opportunity to the region and the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

Whereas the Bridge and its surrounding forest lands hosts extraordinary geological and karst features that contribute to a bucolic landscape and supports a diversity of species, including rare karst-associated species catalogued by the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage; and

Whereas the Bridge and its surrounding properties are currently being marketed for public auction in separate parcels; and

Whereas the Valley Conservation Council (VCC) recognizes the importance of protecting the Bridge and lands around it that contribute to its natural setting; and

Whereas VCC supports keeping the Natural Bridge of Virginia fully accessible for future generations; and

Whereas the most desirable method to assure perpetual protection and public access is for the Bridge to be publically owned or controlled;

Therefore, in recognition of the need to protect and preserve the historic and natural character of the National Bridge of Virginia, the Board of the Valley Conservation Council resolves to support efforts to ensure that this natural wonder is protected and remains accessible to the public in the future.

Thomas J. Lockhart, Chairman

Date