26 Oct 2024

**Proposal:**

**“Map Our Legacy” – Interactive GIS Project for rural Loudoun**

**Overview**: This digital initiative invites residents and visitors to explore an interactive mobile map that showcases western Loudoun’s scenic, agricultural, historical, and ecological assets and their stories. It would build on existing data gathered by the Loudoun Transmission Line Alliance compatible the county’s existing “Geohub” Esri system. Text, photos, video, narration and music could tell a story for any location.

The map would help visualize what’s at risk and the rich quality of our heritage. Residents would contribute by marking locations, sharing knowledge about places they value. Visitors could offer curated comments about what they discover. With the map as a mobile app, anyone could learn about unheralded points of interest at a local level – and contribute new ones

**Purpose**: Deepen public appreciation for rural Loudoun's landscapes, history, ecology, and businesses that depend on these characteristics. By enabling residents to map their own favorite spots, it would build a shared sense of investment in protecting this remarkable place.

**Activities**: Users can:

* "Mark Your Legacy": Add personal insights or memories at specific locations (e.g., a favorite farm, trail, or winery) and provide input on areas they believe should be prioritized for protection.
* "See What's at Stake": View layers showing land use changes, development trends, and protected areas, with educational pop-ups explaining how various sites contribute to Loudoun’s ecosystem and economy.
* Support Local: Each business on the map would include links to its website and details on its products, creating a virtual directory that emphasizes the connection between small businesses and preservation. A basis for an expanded “Brand Loudoun.”

This GIS map could serve as both an educational tool and a rallying point for stewardship efforts.

— Nate Epling & Jonathan Tourtellot