

REPORT OF THE STATE TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**CURRENT AND FUTURE PLANS FOR A
STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF ATTRACTIVE,
SUSTAINABLE AND ENDURING TRAILS
ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH**

**TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, CHESAPEAKE AND NATURAL RESOURCES;
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES;
AND THE VIRGINIA DELEGATE TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY
COMMISSION**



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
OCTOBER 2019**

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PREFACE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of § 10.1-204.1 of the Code of Virginia established by the 2015 Virginia Acts of Assembly (House Bill 1542; Delegate Lingamfelter). Enactment Section A of § 10.1-204.1 stipulates “that the Committee shall be appointed by the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation and shall be composed of a representative from the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. National Park Service; the Virginia Director of the Chesapeake Bay Commission; and nonlegislative citizen members, including representatives from the Virginia Outdoors Plan Technical Advisory Committee and the Recreational Trails Advisory Committee and other individuals with technical expertise in trail creation, construction, maintenance, use, and management.”

The Advisory Committee shall examine and provide recommendations regarding:

- options to close the gaps in a statewide system of trails as described in § 10.1-204;
- creative public and private funding strategies and partnerships to leverage resources to fund the development of trails;
- integrated approaches to promote and market trail values and benefits;
- the development of specialty trails, including concepts related to old-growth forest trails across the Commonwealth;
- strategies to encourage and create linkages between communities and open space;
- strategies to foster communication and networking among trail stakeholders;
- strategies to increase tourism and commercial activities associated with a State trail system;
- strategies to enhance the involvement of organizations that promote outdoor youth activities, including the Boy Scouts of the U.S.A. and Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and the 4-H program of the Virginia Cooperative Extension; and
- other practices, standards, statutes, and guidelines that the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation determines may enhance the effectiveness of trail planning across the Commonwealth, including methods for receiving input regarding potential trail impacts upon owners of underlying or neighboring properties.

The following pages present the findings and recommendations of the State Trails Advisory Committee that was assembled in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

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INTRODUCTION

The State Trails Advisory Committee (STAC) met three times over Fiscal Year 2018-19. This report conveys the highlights from these committee meetings and outlines important issues discussed beyond those defined in the legislative mandate, including the establishment of a statewide advocacy group named the Virginia Trails Alliance.

Timeline of the Trails Movement in the U.S. and Virginia:

With STAC input, a timeline of the trails movement was developed to capture institutional memory and provide an easy reference for trail professionals [Appendix A].

PROGRESS REPORT

Meeting Date: November 1-2, 2018¹

Location: Twin Lakes State Park

The primary focus of the meeting was a *Strategic Doing Retreat* facilitated by the Institute for Environmental Negotiation. This meeting resulted in a significant outcome with the formation of the Virginia Trails Alliance (Alliance). This Alliance will advocate for quality trail systems that benefit all citizens and visitors to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The founding organizations of the Alliance include:

- Appalachian Trail Conservancy
- Chesapeake Bay Commission
- City of Richmond VA Parks and Recreation
- East Coast Greenway Alliance
- Expedition Outfitters
- Great Eastern Trail Association
- International Mountain Bike Association
- James River Association
- NOVA Parks
- Richmond Cycling Corp
- Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission
- Southwest Regional Recreation Authority (SRRA) -Spearhead Trails
- The Nature Conservancy
- Virginia Bicycling Federation
- Virginia Capital Trail Foundation
- Virginia Horse Council
- Virginia Interactive
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF)
- Virginia Recreation and Park Society

Consensus was reached regarding initiatives that could be explored, and possibly achieved, through advocacy efforts with the Governor's office:

¹ State Trails Advisory Committee, November 1-2, 2018 Strategic Doing Retreat – Meeting Minutes
https://www.townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\49\28381\Minutes_DCR_28381_v3.pdf

1. Executive Order
2. Mechanism (e.g. Outdoor Recreation Office)
3. Funding for Trails

Other work items included the development of several lists that included:

- A list of what members would be most proud of achieving ten (10) years in the future;
- A list of best opportunities to pursue with existing resources;
- A list of tasks to achieve within thirty (30) days assigned to specific individuals; and
- A list of potential coalition partners.

The first Virginia Trails Alliance meeting was held on the evening of November 1st. The following day, Alliance members reported back to the STAC on their discussion and determined a meeting schedule for the following year. Additional tasks were assigned and feedback was provided on the strategic doing process.

Meeting Date: April 9, 2019²

Location: Downtown Richmond Hilton Hotel

The STAC meeting was held in conjunction with the Virginia Land Conservation and Greenways Conference that was held in Richmond. Approximately 200 people attended the conference and participated in field trips highlighting the trail system and riverfront in downtown Richmond. The conference hosted numerous keynote speakers: A food systems panel; the Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources, Matthew J. Strickler; the Chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service, Matthew J. Lohr; and an evening celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and the Land Preservation Tax Credit Program.

The following is a summary of the STAC meeting held during the conference, fifty-two (52) attending:

Virginia Trails Alliance

The Alliance passed bylaws and elected officers. A letter of support for trails funding was sent to Governor Northam on November 30, 2018 [Appendix B]. In conjunction to the letter, some Alliance members also met with Virginia Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources, Joshua Saks to convey the same message in an effort to secure trail funding.

Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Program

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) began applying counters to Virginia trails in 2012 and currently, has four (4) portable counters for loan. In over thirty (30) locations, 1.9 million trail users have been counted so far.

James River Heritage Trail

Members were invited to indicate their preference among four planning scenarios for the James River Heritage Trail. While there was still considerable interest in a watershed-level scenario as a concept, most felt the feasible approach would be to focus on the implementation of a pilot project in the Middle James.

Benchmarking

A guest speaker representing Quality Bicycle Products in Minnesota shared a presentation on Minnesota's "ecosystem" for bicycling and recreational trails. System components include retailers, tour operators and event promoters, public land and trail managers and the communities that benefit. An economic impact

² State Trails Advisory Committee, April 9, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

https://www.townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=Meeting\49\29148\Minutes_DCR_29148_v1.pdf

study released in 2017 reported \$778 million in economic activity due to Minnesota’s bicycle industry, to include \$209 million in labor income and 5,529 jobs. Events generate another \$14.3 million of economic activity (\$6.3 million in labor). About 90 million bicycle trips are made annually in this northern state, and the trails total approximately 3000 miles, not including an additional 1300 miles of linear state parks. Most communities and suburbs have 10-foot-wide trails running parallel to streets, roads and highways.

Virginia Capital Trail

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is studying the possibility of a transfer of management from VDOT to DCR along the Virginia Capital Trail. The study will focus on infrastructure and maintenance needs, in consideration of the current DCR backlog of \$226 million in state parks project needs.

Statewide Trails Communication Plan

The committee worked in small groups to address questions regarding communication goals derived from cumulative STAC meeting notes.

Meeting Date: August 21, 2019³

Location: Albemarle County Office Building

The STAC meeting was held in Albemarle County and featured updates from state trail representatives on the progress made along each state trail. DCR staff provided updates of the Virginia Capital Trail Study, ConserveVA, the Outdoor Recreation Office, the James River Heritage Trail and the Communications Plan.

Virginia Trails Alliance

Mr. Downs of the Virginia Trails Alliance reported their concern that the legislation for the STAC would expire in 2021. The Alliance is a group of outdoor focused organizations, government representatives, and enthusiasts who will advocate on behalf of trails. Alliance members are addressing statewide priorities and previously advocated for the development of the Office of Outdoor Recreation in Virginia. Alliance members also advocated for the return of the Governor’s Conference on Trails and full funding for the DCR Division of Planning and Recreation Resources [Appendix B].

River Management Society Training Symposium

In May 2020, DCR and the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) will partner with the River Management Society (RMS) to host a national symposium in Richmond commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Virginia's Scenic Rivers Program. DCR staff provided copies of the call for proposals which are due by September 9, 2019. The objectives of the symposium, titled “From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals”, are to share current and cutting-edge research, connect river managers across geographic regions, spark interdisciplinary conversations and sharpen skills. One program theme centers on the relationship of trails to river management, resource protection, recreational use and public support.

Law Enforcement/Trail Maintenance Panel

Virginia state park managers and a police officer from Charlottesville responded to questions regarding law enforcement incidences along trails. This discussion evolved into a discussion on trail maintenance needs and costs. Appendix C was prepared by High Bridge Trail State Park Manager, Daniel Jordan, to capture some of the discussion on this topic.

³ State Trails Advisory Committee, August 21, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

https://www.townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\49\28381\Minutes_DCR_28381_v3.pdf

Gator Aluminum Bridges

A vendor from GatorBridges.com (CMI Brands) provided information on aluminum bridges for trail applications. One example of an aluminum bridge can be carried into remote sites in pieces for greater convenience. The vendor also explained that their engineers can also design a bike/pedestrian bridge that can be cantilevered onto existing bridge structures.

Funding for Statewide Trails

Virginia Forever is working on a five-year plan to address funding for statewide trails. Funding is being proposed for state parks and natural area preserves. The hope is to develop a statewide source of funding.

Rails to Trails Conservancy Initiatives

Staff from the Rails to Trails Conservancy discussed the importance and qualities of a connected trail network. They are working with Congress to ensure that the new transportation bill will support funding for trail networks.

Future STAC Meetings and Conferences

There is interest in partnering with Virginia Tourism and the Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services for a 2021 conference highlighting agritourism and outdoor recreation/trails. The East Coast Greenway Alliance has Richmond on their radar for a Southeastern Summit in 2022 or 2023 respectively.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK AND DCR RESPONSE

In response to the first Virginia Trails Alliance letter and a prioritized list of Virginia Outdoor Plan recommendations from the April 2018 STAC meeting, a biennial budget request was submitted for DCR's Planning and Recreation Resources Division for FY 2021-22. The budget request included funding support for an additional planner to assist with trail needs (ongoing), funding to restore the Governor's Conference on Greenways (ongoing, at \$50K/ year), and one-time funding of \$15K for an Economic Impact study of the benefits of trails to communities (priority 2).

At the August 2019 STAC meeting, committee members were asked what messages they would like this report to carry to the General Assembly when session convenes. Members expressed two main concerns (1) reauthorization of the State Trails Advisory Committee to continue to meet beyond the sunset date of January, 2021 and (2) a dedicated funding source for trail maintenance (priority 1).

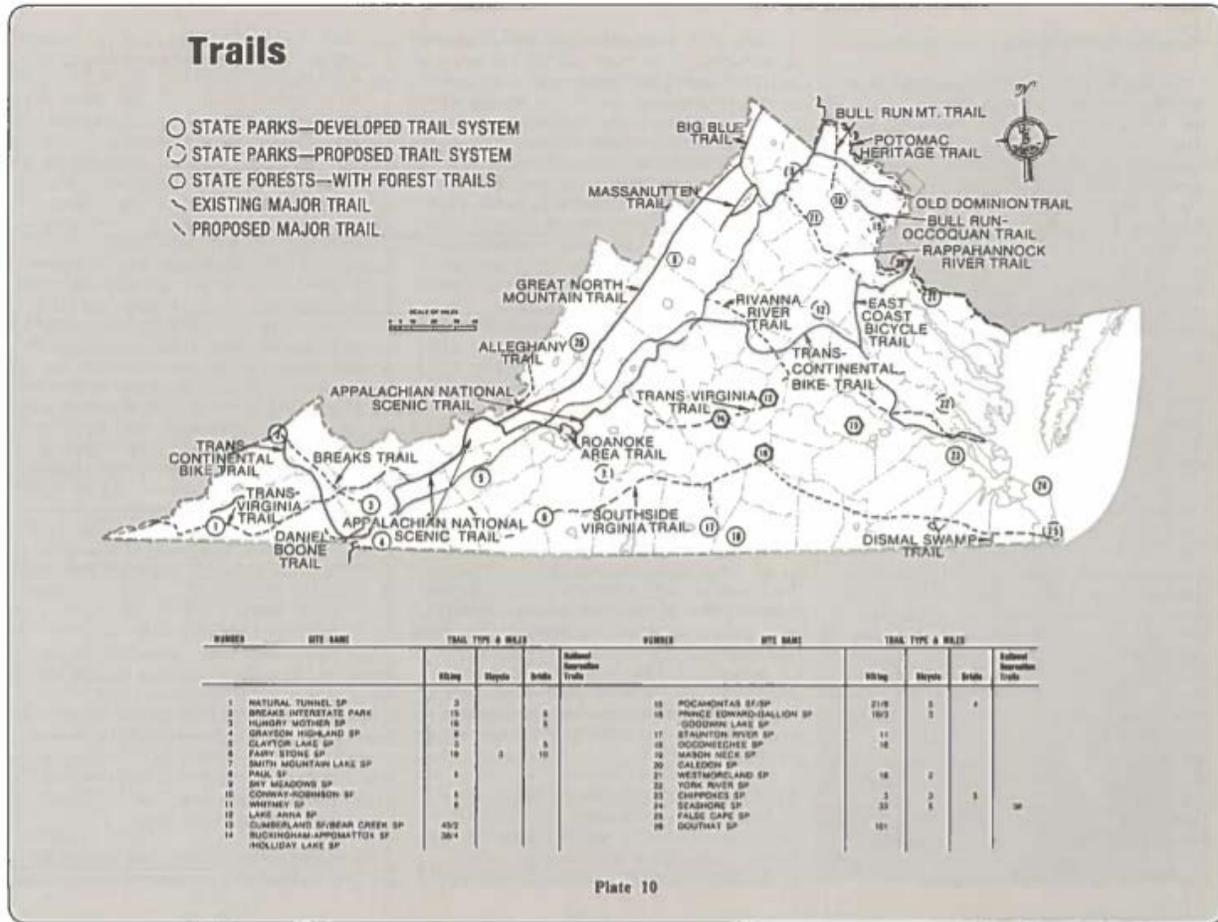
CONCLUSION

The State Trails Advisory Committee has been meeting since August of 2015. A major accomplishment this year of this group has been the formation of an advocacy group, the Virginia Trails Alliance, to lobby for trail resources. State investment in the growing trail network would be an important next step in the timeline of the trails movement.

Timeline for the Trails Movement in the U.S. and Virginia

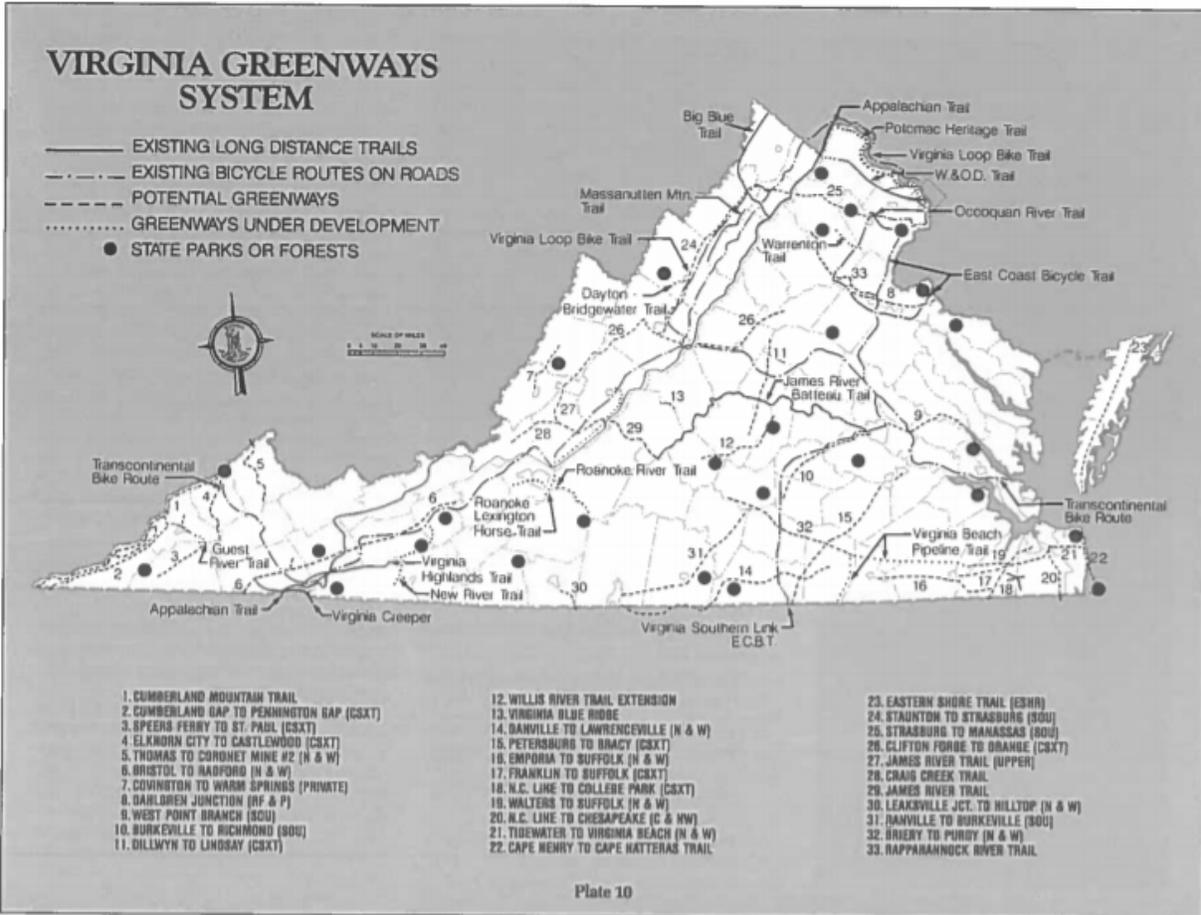
1921	Proposal for an Appalachian Trail, by Benton McKaye
1925	McKaye and supporters organize the Appalachian Trail Conference and present specific plans for the trail
1936	Virginia opens six state parks
1937	The Appalachian Trail footpath is complete from Georgia to Maine
1948	The first thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail
1950	Virginia passes the Recreational Use Statute, providing immunity for landowners who open their lands for recreational use
1951	The A.T. opens again from Maine to Georgia
1959	The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is founded
1960	The Natural Area system is created
1964	The Land and Water Conservation Fund is signed into law
1966	The General Assembly authorizes the Commission of Outdoor Recreation, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, the Open Space Land Act, the Scenic Highway and VA Byway program and the Recreational Access grant program
1968	The National Trails System Act is signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson and the Appalachian and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails are established
1968	Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)—Requires that facilities designed, constructed, altered, or leased with certain federal funds be accessible to persons with disabilities
1969	The Great Eastern Trail is proposed
1969	The Virginia Trail Association is formed
1971	Tax law allows for special assessments for agricultural, horticultural or open space real estate
1971	The first National Recreation Trails are designated
1971-72	Virginia's Statewide System of Trails is codified
1973-76	The TransAmerica Trail (Bikecentennial) becomes U.S. Bike Route 76
1977	The Virginia Creeper Trail corridor is acquired and the tracks come up
1973	The Federal Highway Act has provisions for bikeway fundin
1973	The Back Country Horsemen of America is founde
1976	American Hiking Society is founde
1977	A bond is issued for Virginia State Park
1978	The first four National Historic Trails are established
1978	The Nature Conservancy takes ownership of the Chessie Trail, followed by VMI foundation the following yea
1978	AASHTO establishes the U.S. Bike Route Syste

Existing and proposed trails identified in the 1979 Virginia Outdoors Plan



1982	U.S. Bike Route 1 is established
1983	The Commission on Outdoor Recreation moves under DCR
1983	Railbanking is added to the National Trails System Act
1984	The Appalachian Trail Conference takes over management of the trail corridor from the National Park Service
1986	The Rails to Trails Conservancy is formed
1987	The first four miles of New River Trail open
1988	The International Mountain Biking Association is founded
1988	The Washington and Old Dominion Trail is completed to Purcellvill
1988	The VA Greenways Advisory Commission is created by House Joint Resolution #177 and publishes their report the following year
1988	American Trails is founded

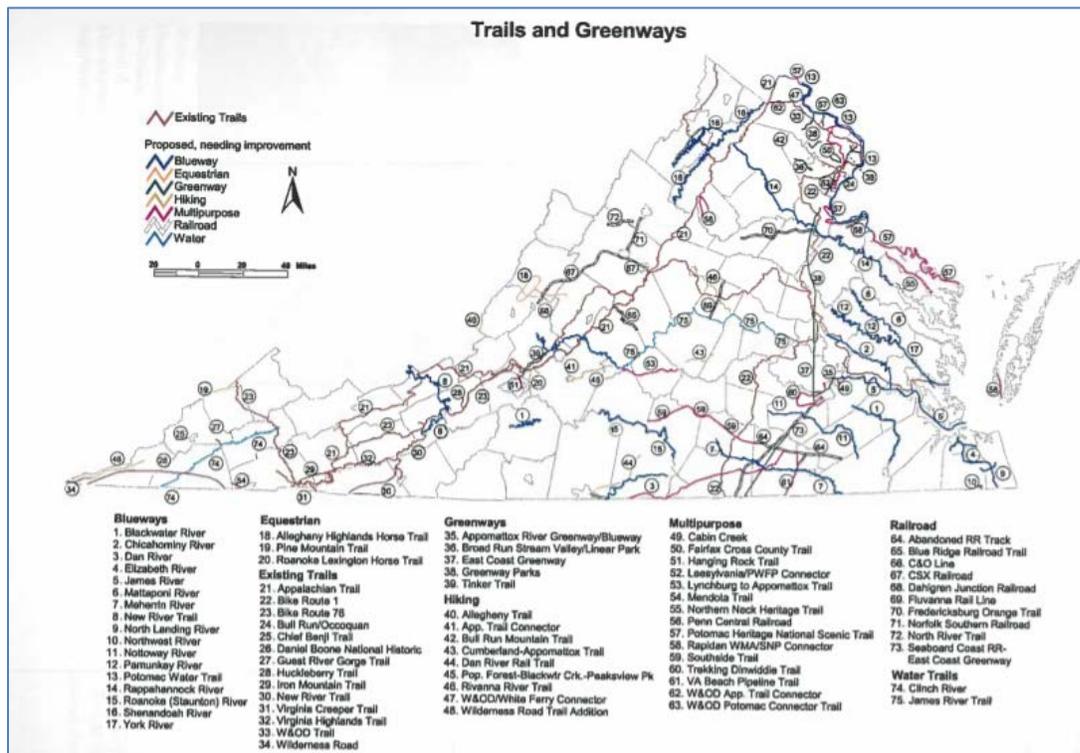
Existing and proposed trails identified in the 1989 Virginia Outdoors Plan



1990	National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council is formed
1991	U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) 1991 ADA Standards for Accessible Design - Contains accessibility scoping and technical requirements implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. DOJ adopted ADAAG as its standard for ADA Title III new construction and alterations.
1991	East Coast Greenway Alliance is formed
1991-1996	The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) provides funding for trail projects
1992	Another bond is issued for VA State Parks
1993	The Federal Highway Trust Fund distributes money to states for trail projects through the Recreational Trails Program
1997	Partnership for the National Trails System is founded
1997	The first statewide trail summit is held at Natural Bridge
1997	The Roanoke Valley Greenways Commission and Pathfinders for Greenways is established
1998	The full New River Trail State Park is opened to the public
1998-2002	The Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21 st Century (Tea-21) provides funding for trail projects

1999	The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and the Land Preservation Tax Credit Program are established
1999	The first Governors Conference for greenways and trails is held in Roanoke
2000	The next Governors Conference is held in VA Beach
2000	The Greenways and Trails Toolbox is published
2001	The Mid-Atlantic Greenways Conference is held in Arlington
2002	ADA Accessibility Guidelines—amended to include guidelines for recreation facilities
2002	Another bond is issued for VA State Parks

Existing and proposed trails identified in the 2002 Virginia Outdoors Plan



2004	VDOT recognizes bicycling and walking as fundamental travel modes in their Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations
2005	The next Governors Conference is held in Richmond
2005	The VA Trails Association merges with BikeWalk VA
2005	West Piedmont Trails Symposium in Danville
2005	The Appalachian Trail Conference changes to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy with new emphasis on preservation of natural and cultural resources
2005-2009	SAFETEA-LU provides funding for trail projects

2006	The FSTAG and FSORAG became the National Forest System's legal standard for all applicable facilities to comply with Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards, updated in 2013
2006	U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) ADA Standards for Transportation Facilities—contains accessibility scoping and technical requirements implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
2006	Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference in Roanoke
2006	Southern Virginia Roundtable on Trailbuilding
2007	The Virginia Outdoors Plan identifies six statewide trails
2007	BikeWalk conferences in Williamsburg and Lynchburg
2007	Southeastern Virginia Trails Symposium in Franklin City
2008	House Bill 2088 requires Report 404: Rails with Trails/Pedestrian Crossing Project Initiation, Coordination and Review, published the following year
2008	2008-High Bridge Trail State Park opens to the public
2008	The General Assembly creates Spearhead Trails through the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority
2008	The next Governors Conference is held in Richmond
2008	VA Tech completes the first digital inventory of Virginia Trails based on data supplied by local and regional governments and recommends a part time position to manage trail data
2009	DCR's Greenways and Trails E-newsletter is launched with quarterly issues
2010	Updated ADA regulations, Title II and III, and more updated transportation regulations impact trail projects
2011	The Greenways and Trails Toolbox is updated to reflect updated regulations and best practices for trail development and maintenance
2011	Department of Justice Rules took effect, specifying the "other power-driven mobility devices" (OPDMD) that could be used on trails, encouraging the assessment of trail networks
2012	The VA Trails Association is dropped from Bike VA
2012	ADA trails workshop in Fairfax
2012	The draft James River Heritage Trail concept plan is published
2012-2014	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century (Map-21) provides funding for trail projects
2013	Spearhead opens their first trail in Southwest Virginia
2013	Accessibility Workshop for Trails and Outdoor Developed Area in Roanoke
2013	Universal Design for Water Access workshop in Smithfield
2013	VA Tourism releases their state tourism plan "Drive Tourism," which places new emphasis on the importance of outdoor recreation
2014	River Recreation Workshop in Clarksville

2014	U.S. Access Board ABA Accessibility Guidelines and U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard updated to include new provisions for Outdoor Developed Areas on Federal land. Outdoor developed areas include trails, picnic and camping areas, as well as beach access routes.
2014	The last major stretch of the Appalachian Trail is acquired and formally protected
2014	The first thru-hike of the Great Eastern Trail includes some road hikes
2015	The IMBA Trail Center at Pocahontas receives the bronze RideCenter designation
2015-2020	The FAST Act provides funding for trail projects
2015	2015-House Bill 1542 establishes the State Trails Advisory Committee
2015	The Beaches to Bluegrass master plan is published
2015	Spearhead Trails generates \$20 million for the economy
2015	The Virginia Capital Trail is completed
2017	The VA Mountain Bike Alliance is formed
2017	The State Trails Advisory Committee co-hosts the VA Land Conservation and Greenways Conference with VA's United Land Trusts (VAULT) in Williamsburg
2018	Virginia's Blue Ridge is awarded the IMBA Silver Level RideCenter designation
2018	VA state parks allow e-bikes on designated bike trails
2018	The Virginia Outdoors Plan identifies a system of state connecting trails in all planning districts, with a Sign Plan for State Trails as an appendix item
2018	The National Trails System's 50 th Anniversary is celebrated
2018	The State Trails Advisory Committee co-hosts the VA Land Conservation and Greenways Conference with VA's United Land Trusts (VAULT) in Roanoke
2019	The Virginia Trails Alliance is formed
2019	DRPT launches their Statewide Integrated Mobility initiative to help partner agencies navigate the rapidly changing landscape of shared mobility (for example, on-demand ride services, microtransit, technology-enabled shuttle services, carsharing, bikesharing, and scooters)
2019	The State Trails Advisory Committee co-hosts the VA Land Conservation and Greenways Conference with VA's United Land Trusts (VAULT) in Richmond
2019	Virginia establishes an Outdoor Recreation Office

APPENDIX B
Virginia Trails Alliance Letters



November 30, 2018

The Honorable Ralph Northam
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

RE: Lasting Support for Virginia's Trail System

Dear Governor Northam,

The trails community in Virginia is very supportive of your efforts to highlight the important natural resources of the Commonwealth by establishing your Conservation Cabinet and proposing more financial resources for natural resources. We welcome the opportunity to partner with you and your administration in these efforts.

The Virginia Trails Alliance is a new coalition of trail-focused organizations dedicated to promoting trails all over the Commonwealth. As you know, good trail systems drive strong economies, tourism, and improved quality of life. Trails connect people to the land and build environmental awareness, and they improve the health of our citizens. We have a number of suggestions that might help you further advance your conservation agenda:

State Trails Grant – Create a competitive state grant source to promote trail development across the Commonwealth. A grant program will bring together local and state partners to dream big and create amazing trail systems, leveraging local and federal funds (like Recreational Trails Program), with this new state grant source.

State Trails Conference – Host a state conference to focus on the development and promotion of trail systems in Virginia. We would be happy to partner with your administration in the creation of this conference. Such a conference can highlight and focus these efforts.

Additional State Staffing for Trails Coordination – Fund the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to fully support statewide trail coordination. Some of the trail planning is conducted through the Virginia Outdoors Plan. Additional staffing in this area will benefit trail projects all over the Commonwealth.

Signature Projects – There are trail systems in the planning and development stages in every region of the Commonwealth that could benefit from direct action and promotion by your administration. A few examples include the East Coast Greenway, which would be a trail connecting the eastern seaboard, running through Virginia along the north/south rail corridor, and the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail that would go from Virginia Beach to Cumberland Gap. These and other projects could be championed by you for rapid advancement.

Trails in Virginia are taking many forms. We have transportation trails like the W&OD Trail in Northern Virginia, and the popular Virginia Capital Trail from Richmond to Williamsburg. The Spearhead, and New River trail systems in Southwest Virginia are driving economic development. Trails like the Chesapeake's Captain John Smith National Historic Trail and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail show a national significance to Virginia's trails. Equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers and commuting cyclists are all looking for trails that work best for their preferred uses. In almost every survey about park and outdoor uses trails come up as the top priorities.

As an alliance of different trail-focused organizations, we stand ready to assist you and your administration in building a better Virginia by connecting our citizens with trails. We believe with the right mix of efforts that the expansion and development of trails in Virginia could be a central legacy of your Administration.

Sincerely,



Paul Gilbert
 pgilbert@nvrpa.org
 Executive Director of NOVA Parks
 On behalf of the Virginia Trails Alliance



Expedition
 Outfitters



Rockbridge Area
 Outdoor
 Partnership



Tidewater Trail
 Alliance



VIRGINIA
 HORSE COUNCIL

Woodstock Rails
 to Trails
 Exploratory
 Committee

August 7, 2019



Virginia's Pathways for Success
From the Virginia Trails Alliance

Re: Recommendations to Improve Virginia's Trail Systems

The Virginia Trails Alliance is a coalition of 36 trail-focused organizations from across the Commonwealth, speaking with one voice to identify gaps in Virginia's trail stewardship system and advocate for solutions. Good trail systems will drive strong economies and improve quality of life for all Virginians.

We applaud the recent announcement establishing an Office of Outdoor Recreation for the Commonwealth. With sufficient and sustainable funding, we believe that this office can be a significant asset to economies, public health and conservation projects in Virginia. Below, we provide the following suggestions to assist the Governor and the Legislature in supporting Virginia's vibrant system of Trails and offer our support and assistance when needed.

- **Necessary funding for DCR** – Currently, funding for the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Planning and Recreation Resources Division does not fully support the basic operational needs for the division or the diversity of trail work occurring in the Commonwealth. We support an annual budget increase of \$1.25 million for DCR's Planning division in order to fully implement this important work serving the public.
- **State Trails Grant** – Create a simple, competitive state grant source to promote trail development across the Commonwealth. A grant program will bring together local and state partners to dream big and create amazing trail systems, leveraging local and federal funds (like Recreational Trail Program funds) through a new state grant source.
- **State Trails Conference** – Reinstate the Governor's Conference on Trails and Greenways to focus on the development and promotion of trail systems in Virginia. We would be happy to partner with your administration in the creation of a conference to highlight and focus Trail development, management, and stewardship. (Note: Funding for the conference is included in the DCR budget figure above).
- **Signature Projects** – There are trail systems in the planning and development stages in every region of the Commonwealth that could benefit from direct action and promotion by your administration. A few examples include the East Coast Greenway running through Virginia along the north/south rail corridor, and the Dahlgren Railroad Heritage

rail-trail that could be added to the State Park System. These and other projects are shovel-ready and could be championed by you for rapid advancement.

Equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers, road bikers, off-road riders and commuting cyclists are all looking for high-quality experiences and opportunities to support their community's work protecting and developing trails. In fact, "70% of respondents to the 2017 Virginia Outdoors Demand Survey (VODS) believe that access to outdoor recreation is very important" (2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan).

As an alliance of different trail-focused organizations, we stand ready to assist you in building a better Virginia by connecting our citizens with trails.

Sincerely,



Andrew Downs
President, Virginia Trails Alliance
Senior Regional Director
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
adowns@appalachiantrail.org

Law Enforcement/Maintenance Panel Answers

**2019 State Trail Advisory Committee
Law Enforcement/Maintenance Panel**

Answers from High Bridge Trail SP

Law Enforcement

1. *Do you think it is important to have a law enforcement presence along our state trails, and if so-- why?*

- Having a LE presence is extremely important. LE in parks provides visitors with a safe environment for recreation.
- Active patrol (checking parking fees, vehicle stops, etc.) are shown to decrease other types of crime
- Park LE Personnel is ties to the community and it opens the door for better community partnerships with other first responders.
- Farmville/Prince Edward County has two colleges (Longwood and Hampden Sydney) which brings a lot of student traffic.
- We secure the parking lots near High Bridge every night.
- Types of Crime in Parks:
 - Drinking
 - Prostitution
 - Park Violations
 - Use of UTVs/4 Wheelers
 - Graffiti
 - Disorderly Conduct
 - Drug Activity
 - Sexual Activity
 - Fish/Game Violations
 - Boundary Issues
 - Drones/Unmanned Aircraft

2. *How does the partnership work between state conservation officers and local law enforcement?*

- DGIF now is State Park Dispatch
- This provides better communication with DGIF Officers
- Park goes through three counties and one town. We work with Farmville PD, Cumberland County SO, Prince Edward County SO, and soon Nottoway County SO.
- Work with Virginia State Police
- At times we will work with Federal LE Agencies depending on the case
- HBT worked on the VP Debate at Longwood in 2016 (Multiple Agencies)

3. *How many miles of trail do your rangers/police patrol daily? (A range is OK here)*

- HBT is 31.2 miles
- On average an officer will cover about 15 miles of trail a day.
- Most of the trail traffic runs from Farmville to Rice (9 miles)
- Two Officers live on the trail. (One on the east end and one of the west end)
- HBT is very accessible from RT 460 in Prince Edward County, Main Street and 3rd Street in Town, River Road in Cumberland County, and Pamplin Road in Pamplin.
- Also, maintenance is on the trail everyday during the week providing a presence and reporting any issues. And park interpreters are on the trail during the weekends to do the same.

**2019 State Trail Advisory Committee
Law Enforcement/Maintenance Panel**

Answers from High Bridge Trail SP

4. What patrol methods are utilized?

- Vehicle to move quickly along the trail and to check parking lots
- Foot patrol of Camp Paradise, High Bridge, and side trails.
- The park has two patrol bikes which will be used once the officers are certified. A minimum of two officers is required to have one on bike patrol. Currently Farmville PD patrols some of the sections in town on their bikes.

5. How do you enforce the use of electric bikes, electric scooters, etc.

- We have worked with the community to get the word out.
- Local rental store rents eBikes, but only class 1. They also help to push the proper narrative.

Maintenance

*1. Do you (or should you) resurface your trail on an annual basis as part of your maintenance plan?
What is the estimated annual cost?*

- Yes, this is very important to do on a regular basis
- We do all of the resurfacing in house.
- Typically will lay 300 tons of #10 modified limestone dust
- Tailgated, we will use a 7' blade to pull it towards the center of the trail, use harley rake or landplane to smooth, and then roll it. We have the harley rake and landplane. We borrow the roller from the Town of Farmville.
- Normally we do about 2.5-3 miles each year at a cost of \$5,000 for stone, \$5,000 for hauling, and approximately \$720/seasonal wages and one full time staff member. And we will run two park tractors about 30 hours each.
- Total Cost: \$11,500/year

2. What other recurring costs do you program into your maintenance budget?

- \$75,000 Wages
 - \$24,000 Services
 - \$40,000 Materials
 - \$6,000 Equipment
-
- \$145,000 Total out of \$210,384.00 or 68.92%

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3. *How does deferred maintenance impact the trail user?*

- Impacts overall visitor experience
- Safety Issues
- Affects maintenance and upkeep of other facilities

4. *What are your deferred maintenance costs? (a rough estimate OK here)*

● High Bridge	\$1,000,000
● Culverts	\$200,000
● Other Bridges	\$150,000
● Paving	\$1,000,000
● Trail Trimming	\$100,000
● Total	\$1,450,000

5. *What equipment have you discovered works well in maintaining trails?*

- 2-Tractors with Front End Loaders
- Trail Resurfacing: Roller, Landplane, Blade, Harley Rake
- Spray Rig
- Boom Mower for Trimming (may require additional tractor)
- Culvert Cleaning Machine
- Dump Truck (with a chip spreader)
- Mowers (Zero Turn, Bush Hog, Batwing, Sickle Bar)
- Trailers-10,000lb and 20,000lb
- Trucks-One for pulling trailers and smaller for small maintenance
- UTV
- Front Mounted Blower

6. *How do you maintain trail encroachment, bridges, and culverts?*

- Hand Trim
- Mechanical Trim
- Spray
- Clean Out Culverts (Needs a Culvert Machine)

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7. *How do you provide water, bathrooms, etc. along trails?*

- We utilize vault toilets (seven along the trail) and the Town of Farmville has put one regular bathroom in.
- We sell water and provide free dog water at the merchandise trailer
- LE Rangers travel with bottled water and hand out if someone is in need
- The Prince Edward Rescue Squad drives the trail in a UTV and hands out water on hot days.

8. *If vault toilets are used, what have you found to be best practices in maintaining them?*

- Typically a vault toilet can take 20,000 uses per side
- Pump as needed
- Add Water and stir toilet paper down
- We have tried enzymes, mineral oil, Blue Juice, and liquid dish soap. We are going to try lime in one of them.
- Make sure the stacks are in the sun or that you have power to run fans.
- Consider making vaults unisex to get better distribution on toilet paper.