

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE DEPARTMENT
OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA LAND
CONSERVATION FOUNDATION**

Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023)

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
December 2023**

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Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
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December 26, 2023

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia
Members of the Virginia General Assembly

Dear Governor Youngkin and General Assembly Members:

We are pleased to provide you with this report, which has been prepared on behalf of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (Foundation or VLCF) Board of Trustees by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The Department of Conservation and Recreation serves as staff to VLCF. The report is presented in accordance with § 10.1-1018.1 of the Code of Virginia, instructing the Chairman of the Board of VLCF to annually submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and report of the interim activity and work of the Board.

The Foundation, in concert with its federal, tribal, state, local, and private conservation partners, has continued to make significant annual progress towards the Commonwealth's land conservation goals since it was first funded in the 1999 General Assembly Session. As of June 30, 2023, a total of \$102.6 million has been appropriated to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund (Fund). The Foundation has leveraged this state funding to protect more than 215,337 acres across Virginia. This includes 103,001 acres from direct VLCF grants and an estimated 112,336 additional acres protected with the VLCF funds required to be transferred to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. A small percentage of the accrued interest in the Fund has helped DCR develop the Commonwealth's most comprehensive conserved lands database and other mapping tools. The database helps to track progress towards the goals and, together with other mapping tools, offers a means for better-informed decision-making by the VLCF trustees.

Virginia should be proud of the conservation projects achieved through grants awarded from VLCF. The projects enabled by VLCF grants have a positive impact across the Commonwealth, protecting priority lands under the statewide ConserveVirginia initiative, including working farms and forests; natural, cultural, and historical resources; and parks and other lands for recreational purposes. Additionally, lands that protect water quality in nearby streams and rivers, lands that provide habitat for threatened and endangered species, fish and wildlife, and natural areas and open space have been conserved.

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***State Parks • Soil and Water Conservation • Outdoor Recreation Planning
Natural Heritage • Dam Safety and Floodplain Management • Land Conservation***

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation program provides several notable features:

- The Foundation's funds often have been leveraged to achieve a match greater than the 50 percent match required by state law for entities other than state agencies and tribes.
- The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation is strategic in the awarding of grants. The competitive process, incorporation of ConserveVirginia into the scoring criteria, and interagency team approach used by the Foundation to score and award grant funding help to ensure that the best lands are conserved and
- The grant scoring criteria provide an emphasis on projects requiring enhanced riparian buffers and those that provide public access to conserved lands. These efforts protect water quality and help to address the public's growing desire for publicly available lands across the commonwealth's diverse landscapes and populations.

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation has contributed to the Commonwealth's conservation efforts through its grant program responsibilities. As additional funds become available, we are confident that the Foundation will remain a responsible steward and partner through which Virginia will excel in its conservation efforts.

Respectfully submitted,



Travis Voyles
Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, and
Chair of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation



Matthew Wells
Director, Department of Conservation and
Recreation and Executive Secretary of the
Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Attachment

cc: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees
Michael Maul, Director of Planning and Budget
Kendra Brown Shifflett, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, Senate Finance Committee
Anne E. Oman, Staff Director, House Appropriations Committee

PREFACE

This report has been prepared in accordance with and fulfills the requirements of § 10.1-1018.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, which instructs the Chairman of the Board of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and report of the interim activity and work of the Board on or before December 15 of each year. The document shall report on the status of VLCF and its Fund, including, but not limited to (i) land conservation targeting tools developed for the Foundation; (ii) descriptions of projects that received funding; (iii) a description of the geographic distribution of land protected as provided in § 10.1-1021.1; (iv) expenditures from, interest earned by, and financial obligations of the Fund; and (v) progress made toward recognized state and regional land conservation goals.

The following pages provide a status report for grants awarded by VCLF and an update on related land conservation activities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (Foundation or VLCF) serves an important land conservation mission in the Commonwealth. It leverages state funds through matching grants and partnerships to protect working farms and forests, historic lands, cultural resources, open space and parks, and natural areas. The Foundation's distinctive features include a cross-cutting grant review process to maximize conservation values of funded projects, an inter-agency staff review team that involves expertise from multiple state agencies, and a final review by a diverse Board of Trustees whose membership includes appointees from the Governor, Speaker of the House of Delegates, and the Senate of Virginia.

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Since the last annual report of the Foundation was produced in 2022, the Foundation has held one grant round. The FY2023 grant round received \$16,000,000 in the state budget, with \$4,000,000 allocated to the Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund. Unspent and released funds from previous grant rounds totaled \$2,927,440 and were added to the FY23 round, for a total of \$14,927,440 in available grant funds. The Foundation received 45 proposals requesting approximately \$20 million. The Board met on November 14, 2022, to award funding to 40 projects that propose to protect 13,955 acres. Details of these projects are provided starting on page 2.

Information regarding projects from past grant rounds and their funding amounts can be found in Appendix A of this report. Additional data reflecting the geographic distribution of these recent grant awards and all prior projects can be found in Appendix B.

Since FY2000 total funds appropriated to the Foundation exceed \$102.6 million (Table 1) and have resulted in the protection of 215,337 acres. To date, \$78.4 million has been allocated to VLCF's matching grant program. Additionally, more than \$24.1 million has been allocated to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) for the Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund in accordance with Virginia Code § 10.1-1020(C)(1). Moneys from this Fund are used to aid localities acquiring open-space easements or landowners conveying open-space easements with the costs associated with the conveyance of the easements.

Since first receiving funding in FY2000, the Foundation has held 18 grant rounds. During those grant rounds, VLCF received 500 applications requesting more than \$190 million in state funding, which was more than twice the available amount (Table 2). It is worth noting that in many cases, the total project cost far exceeds the amount requested. To date, VLCF has awarded funding to 327 of the 500 grant applications and awarded more than \$87.4 million to land conservation projects to protect more than 103,000 acres, at an average cost to the Foundation of \$849 per acre.

Table 1: VLCF Funding General Summary in Dollars

Fiscal Year	Source of Funding	Amount Available/ Appropriation	Amount to VOF	Amount to VLCF Grants	Amount Paid Out or Allocated to Grant Round	Grant Award Date
FY2000	Appropriation Act (CH 935 –1999)	1,750,000	0	1,750,000	1,303,399.00	12/1/1999
FY2001	Appropriation Act (CH 1073 – 2000) Specific Civil War Battlefields	3,400,000	0	3,400,000	3,382,004.92	
FY2001	Appropriation Act (CH 1073 – 2000)	6,200,000	1,550,000	4,650,000	3,730,783.00	1/4/2001
FY2004	Vehicle Registration (CH 1042 – 2003)	1,463,275	365,819	1,097,456		
FY2005	Appropriation Act (CH4 – 2004)	2,500,000	625,000	1,875,000	2,629,822.67	6/7/2005
FY2005	Unallocated Interest	56,982	14,246	42,736		
FY2005	Appropriation Act (CH 951 –2005)	10,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000		
FY2005	Vehicle Registration (CH 951 – 2005)	381,061	95,265	285,796	9,015,182.92	12/1/2005
FY2006	Appropriation Act (CH 951 –2005)	2,500,000	625,000	1,875,000		
FY2006	Unallocated Interest	188,960	47,240	141,720		
FY2006	Vehicle Registration (CH 2 – 2006)	783,563	195,890	587,673	See next page	6/13/2007
FY2007	Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2006)	2,500,000	625,000	1,875,000		

Fiscal Year	Source of Funding	Amount Available/ Appropriation	Amount to VOF	Amount to VLCF Grants	Amount Paid Out or Allocated to Grant Round	Grant Award Date
FY2007	Appropriation Act (CH 847 – 2007)	500,000	125,000	375,000	5,447,399.00	6/13/2007
FY2007	Unallocated Interest	300,000	75,000	225,000		
FY2008	Appropriation Act (CH 847 – 2007)	3,000,000	750,000	2,250,000		
FY2007	Vehicle Registration (CH 3 –2006)	663,269	165,817	497,452	4,036,136.00	1/7/2009
FY2008	Vehicle Registration (CH 847 –2007)	397,880	99,468	298,412		
FY2009	Appropriation Act (CH 879 – 2008)	2,000,000	500,000	1,500,000		
FY2010	Appropriation Act (CH 872 –2010)	2,000,000	500,000	1,500,000		
FY2010	Vehicle Registration (CH 781 –2009)	4,666	1,166	3,500	2,106,149.00	9/13/2011
FY2011	Appropriation Act (CH 874 –2010)	500,000	125,000	375,000		
FY2012	Appropriation Act (CH 874 –2010)	500,000	125,000	375,000		
FY2012	Appropriation Act (CH 890 –2011)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000		
FY2013	Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2012)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000	1,024,471.00	12/6/2012
FY2014	Appropriation Act (CH 806 –2013)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000		

Fiscal Year	Source of Funding	Amount Available/ Appropriation	Amount to VOF	Amount to VLCF Grants	Amount Paid Out or Allocated to Grant Round	Grant Award Date
FY2015	Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2014)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000	1,542,239.00	1/6/2015
FY2016	Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2014)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000		
FY2016	Appropriation Act (CH 665 –2015)	3,000,000	750,000	2,250,000	1,958,244.00	10/27/2015
FY2017	Appropriation Act (CH 780 –2016)	8,000,000	2,000,000	6,000,000	4,679,903.00	9/14/2016
FY2018	Appropriation Act (CH 836 –2017)	4,500,000	900,000	3,600,000	3,244,922.00	9/19/2017
FY2020	Appropriation Act (CH 854 –2019)	4,500,000	1,125,000	3,375,000	3,446,666	11/22/2019
FY2021	Appropriation Act (CH 1289-2020)				<i>2,442,500</i>	<i>2/5/2021</i>
FY2021 Round II	Appropriation Act (CH 56 -2020)	10,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000	3,435,482	6/10/2021
FY2022	Appropriation Act (CH 552-2021)	10,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000	6,776,222	10/27/2021
FY2023	Appropriation Act (CH 2 –2022)	16,000,000	4,000,000	12,000,000	<i>\$14,927,440</i>	11/14/2022
TOTALS		\$102,589,656	\$24,134,911	\$78,454,745	<i>\$75,128,965.79</i>	

NOTE: Italicized numbers are estimated, as one or more projects have not been closed out.

NOTE: Unexpended portions from several grant rounds were reverted to the General Fund.

NOTE: Unexpended portions from withdrawn projects or projects that closed at a lesser amount than authorized were reprogrammed to subsequent grant rounds unless reverted to the General Fund.

Table 2: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Grant Award Summary

Grant Award Date	# of Applic. Received	Amount requested from VLCF	# Projects Awarded	Amount Awarded by VLCF	# of Projects Closed	Total Amount Expended	Total Acres Preserved	Easement Amount Expended	Acres by Easement
12/1/1999	20	\$5,800,000	12	\$1,688,842	9	\$1,303,399	1,136.87	\$384,600	532
Projects Specified in Appropriations Act		\$3,400,000	4	\$3,400,000	4	\$3,382,005	1,257.00	0	0
1/4/2001	41	\$11,200,000	19	\$3,919,695	18	\$3,730,783	2,764.55	\$1,164,666	1,218.15
6/7/2005	23	\$6,011,695	12	\$3,027,665	11	\$2,629,823	6,552.80	\$1,080,729	3,441.00
12/1/2005	52	\$30,850,220	22	\$9,717,411	20	\$9,015,183	6,931.02	\$1,401,200	2,271.46
6/13/2007	31	\$24,847,590	15	\$6,217,843	13	\$5,447,399	10,543.31	\$2,257,114	2,598.80
1/7/2009	22	\$5,404,839	16	\$4,310,945	15	\$4,036,136	12,040.52	\$978,518	2,080.00
9/13/2011	27	\$5,933,991	17	\$2,404,408	15	\$2,106,149	2,283.63	\$880,708	1,379.57
12/6/2012	15	\$2,775,121	12	\$1,569,250	9	\$1,024,471	1,400.43	\$644,250	1,237.21
1/6/2015	23	\$3,955,725	15	\$1,781,081	14	\$1,542,239	5,461.38	\$485,496	1,771.91
10/27/2015	18	\$3,890,884	14	\$2,250,000	11	\$1,958,244	1,820.36	\$1,083,645	1,469.91
9/14/2016	36	\$11,450,556	23	\$6,423,011	17	\$4,679,903	4,750.45	\$2,429,893	4,453.92
9/19/2017	29	\$7,438,001	23	\$4,238,800	19	\$3,244,922	4,027.77	\$1,882,259	3,398.64
11/19/2019	34	\$15,140,144	19	\$5,859,684	14	\$3,446,666	13,928.29	\$2,038,509	927.86
2/5/2021	15	\$10,498,371	12	\$3,406,250	4	\$2,442,500	3,491.28	\$1,406,625	1,162.93
6/10/2021	35	\$11,367,545	22	\$4,835,000	4	\$3,435,482	4,199.89	\$1,796,250	2,299.41
10/27/2021	34	\$10,532,985	30	\$7,500,000	8	\$6,776,222	6,582.93	\$5,626,425	6,239.32
11/14/2022	45	\$20,035,453.00	40	\$14,927,440	3	\$14,927,440	13,847.72	\$10,185,406	6,729.00
TOTAL	500	\$190,533,120	327	\$87,477,325	208	\$75,128,966	103,020.20	\$35,726,293	43,211.09

NOTE: Italicized numbers represent estimated totals as one or more projects have not been closed out.

The Foundation met its charge to develop a strategic plan for the expenditure of moneys received from the Fund. The strategic plan governing fiscal expenditures has been incorporated into successive VLCF grant manuals beginning in 1999 and is updated regularly. The Board approved the most recent revisions to the grant manual at the July 12, 2022, meeting to establish the FY2023 grant round. The grant scoring criteria are outlined in Appendix C.

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation serves as a coordinating mechanism for bringing together several state agencies' land conservation efforts and priorities. The Foundation is one of the key tools that Virginia utilizes to attain its land conservation targets. A coordinating multi-agency task force consisting of the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the State Forester, the Director of the Department of Historic Resources, the Director of the Department of Wildlife Resources, and the Executive Director of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, or their designees, provide the VLCF Board with assistance on such matters as grant criteria, grant priorities, and grant selection. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation serves as the lead staff for the Foundation.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Office of Land Conservation serves as a statewide central contact, repository, and clearinghouse for land conservation in Virginia. During VLCF grant rounds, this office serves as an important source of information for potential grant applicants and acts as the grant manager for projects funded.

The Office's website (<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/>) includes a wide variety of land conservation materials and contact information to assist landowners, conservation organizations, and managers with their conservation planning. In addition, the website provides a link to the state's comprehensive statewide conserved lands resource mapping tool, Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE), developed by DCR's Division of Natural Heritage. This important and useful land conservation-planning tool, which is updated regularly, is accessible at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/nhdeinfo>.

FOUNDATION OVERVIEW AND ACTIVITIES IN FISCAL YEAR 2023

Board of Trustees Meetings

In Fiscal Year 2023, the VLCF Board of Trustees met three times to authorize grant rounds, consider applications, and address land preservation tax credit matters. Meetings of the Board during this time-period were as follows:

- July 12, 2022 - Board of Trustees Meeting: The Board voted to decline a bequest of three residential subdivision lots at Bryce Mountain in Shenandoah County because they do not further the mission of VLCF. The Board also received a presentation on the proposed FY23 grant round. The Board approved the fiscal plan and proposed timeline and recommended changes to the Grant Manual.
- November 14, 2022 – Board of Trustees Meeting: The Board received a presentation of the FY23 Grant Round applications received and awarded grants to projects as recommended by the interagency task force. The Board approved the disbursement of the Stewardship Fund payments. The Board also passed a motion to expend limited interest generated from the Fund to support staff assisting with grant management, tracking and stewardship.
- May 16, 2023 – Board of Trustees Meeting: The Board received a presentation on the upcoming FY24 Grant Round. This will be the first time that applications are required to be submitted electronically through an online application portal, WebGrants. Hard copies will be accepted if applicants lack the technology to manage the new process. The board approved the grant funding plan, the proposed schedule, and updates to the Grant Manual.

Interagency Task-Force Meetings

Grant applications for VLCF grant rounds are scored and ranked by an interagency task force comprised of representatives of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Forestry, Department of Wildlife Resources, Department of Historic Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, as required by Virginia Code § 10.1-1018(E).

In FY23, the task force met twice to review and rank grant applications received in the FY23 grant round and to develop grant-award recommendations for the Board.

Competitive Grant Awards (November 14, 2022, Grant Round)

Item 375 A.1. of Chapter 2 of the 2022 Virginia Acts of Assembly included, in the amount for Preservation of Open Space Lands, \$12,000,000 from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia. An additional \$2,927,440 was added to the available funding from withdrawn projects or unspent from projects that closed under budget, for a total of \$14,927,440 in available grant funds (Table 3). On July 12, 2022, the Board met and approved the grant round.

During the FY23 grant cycle, the Foundation received 45 applications requesting \$20,035,453 in grants. The project costs for all 45 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$65,840,538 and would protect 15,285 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on November 14, 2022, to consider these applications and approved \$14,927,440 in grant funds for 40 projects to protect 13,955 acres (Table 4). As of June 30, 2023, one project has been withdrawn, and three projects from this grant round have been successfully completed.

Summaries of the 40 projects awarded funding in the November 14, 2022, grant round are as follows:

FARMLANDS PRESERVATION CATEGORY

- Piedmont Environmental Council – Farmland Protection along Brook Run:** This project seeks to acquire a conservation easement to permanently protect the conservation values of a 698-acre farm along the Rapidan River. Located in Culpeper County, this farm intersects with the Floodplain and Flooding Resilience, Water Quality, and Cultural & Historic categories in ConserveVirginia. It will also buffer 3.5 miles of frontage along the Rapidan River, Brook Run, and other tributaries.

Total Project Cost	\$2,040,000
Match	NRCS-ALE, PEC, and landowner donation.
VLCF Grant Request	\$500,000
Grant Amount	\$500,000

- Piedmont Environmental Council – Farmland Protection West of Gordonsville:** This project seeks to acquire a conservation easement on a 360-acre farm in Orange County with 240 acres of pasture and 60 acres of forestland. It intersects with the Cultural & Historic, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, and Water Quality categories in ConserveVirginia. Further, it will buffer 3.2 miles of frontage on Hen and Bacon Creek and other tributaries in the Rappahannock watershed.

Total Project Cost	\$990,000
Match	NRCS ACEP-ALE, PEC, and landowner donation.
VLCF Grant Request	\$237,500
Grant Amount	\$237,500

- Piedmont Environmental Council – Thornridge Farm:** This project seeks to acquire a conservation easement on a 203-acre Century Farm in Rappahannock County. The farm contains farmland with High Values of Productivity, Versatility and Resilience, as well as over 70 acres of land categorized as Outstanding, Very High and High Forest Conservation Values by the VA Department of Forestry. In addition to Prime Farmland soils, this farm lies in the viewshed of Old Rag Mountain in the Shenandoah National Park

Total Project Cost	\$676,300
Match	Private Foundation, PEC, and landowner donation.
VLCF Grant Request	\$160,000
Grant Amount	\$160,000

- Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Harris Farm:** This project will fund the bargain-purchase of an easement on the WD Harris farm in Spotsylvania County at the headwaters of Lake Anna. The 327-acre farm is actively farmed in cropland and is within an Agricultural and Forestal District. In addition to its agricultural significance, the property protects 3/4 mile of Beverly Run, which drains immediately into the public lake.

Total Project Cost	\$1,035,000
Match	Landowner donation, Preservation Trust Fund
VLCF Grant Request	\$400,000
Grant Amount	\$400,000

5. **Downtown Greens, Inc – Downtown Greens Expansion Program:** This project will conserve 56 acres of open space adjacent to Braehead Farm, the last working farm in the City of Fredericksburg. The parcel shares a 1,200-foot boundary with the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, helping buffer both the farm and the park from encroaching industrial development. Its 30 acres of bottomland forest, wetland, and vernal pool habitat help generate clean water for the nearby lower Rappahannock River, a state scenic river. Its 23 acres of prime farmland will allow Downtown Greens to produce local food that enhances nutritional security for Fredericksburg’s underserved communities.

Total Project Cost	\$1,267,800
Match	Private donations, Preservation Trust Fund, landowner donation.
VLCF Grant Request	\$400,000
Grant Amount	\$400,000

FOREST PRESERVATION CATEGORY

1. **Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe - Conservation of Ancestral Lands – Upper Mattaponi Tribe’s Return to the River:** This project seeks the acquisition and future restoration of 866 acres in King William County. Most of the property is ranked as having Outstanding or Very High Forest Conservation Value. There are over 2.25 miles of frontage on the Mattaponi River, which will allow the Tribe to enhance culturally significant fish, wildlife, and plant communities through habitat restoration.

Total Project Cost	\$3,610,000
Match	Tribe, landowner donation, NOAA grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$310,000
Grant Amount	\$310,000

2. **Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia – Return of the Rappahannock Tribe to the River (Phase II):** This project will help facilitate the presence of the Tribe to their ancestral lands through the acquisition of 703 acres. This property contains the northern coastal mesic hardwood forest community with mature stands of hardwood in the headwaters of Garland Creek and Mud Hold Swamp. The forest supports breeding of bald eagles, songbirds and other native wildlife species. This tract will connect two previously non-contiguous tracts of land owned by the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Total Project Cost	\$4,769,912
Match	Private foundation, private donation, America the Beautiful Grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$500,000
Grant Amount	\$500,000

3. **The Conservation Fund- Nottoway River Recreation and Wildlife Conservation Area II:** In partnership with the Department of Wildlife Resources, this project will assist in the acquisition of 1,597 acres in Sussex County, which will provide public access to the Nottoway River and protect land for hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife watching. The property contains 2.5 miles of frontage on the Nottoway River, a designated Virginia Scenic River, and 2.5 miles of Black Branch Swamp. There are more than 620 acres of forested wetlands and bottomland hardwoods. Restoration will include planting native longleaf pine and hardwoods to better support water quality and habitat for endangered species, such as the federally threatened Red-cockaded woodpecker. The property is in three categories of ConserveVirginia and received a previous VLCF grant in FY21 Round 2.

Total Project Cost	\$6,400,000
Match	Cash, landowner donation, Pittman – Robertson funding, Enviva Foundation.
VLCF Grant Request	\$450,000
Grant Amount	\$450,000

4. **Virginia Outdoor Foundation - Pierces Lowgrounds, Meherrin River Conservation Easement II:** Pierces Lowgrounds consists of 2,860 acres of multigenerational family-owned and operated forest and farmland along the Meherrin River in Greensville County. The property contains high conservation value forest with bottomlands, buffers, and sloughs in and along the river. The farm has 450 acres of Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. A VOF open-space easement will protect the sensitive bottomlands, buffers, and wildlife habitat along on the Meherrin River and ensure that future generations may continue to own and manage its forests in perpetuity. The property is within four categories of ConserveVirginia: Agriculture & Forestry, Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity, Floodplains & Flooding Resilience, and Water Quality Improvement. This project received a VLCF grant in FY22.

Total Project Cost	\$6,400,000
Match	Cash, landowner donation, Pittman–Robertson funding, Enviva Fdn.
VLCF Grant Request	\$400,000
Grant Amount	\$300,000

5. **Virginia Department of Forestry -Taylors Mill Farm:** This project will purchase a conservation easement on 1,145 acres in Greensville County with 860 acres of forest, the majority of which is ranked as High Conservation Value Forest. The tract has 6.8 miles of frontage on perennial creeks and intermittent streams, including Fountain Creek. 56% of the property is in wetlands and 25% of the property is currently in tillable crop land.

Total Project Cost	\$1,192,500
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$450,000
Grant Amount	\$450,000

6. **The Conservation Fund – Roanoke River Working Forest II:** In partnership with the Virginia Department of Forestry, this project will purchase an open-space easement on 1,347 acres of working forestland adjacent to the newly created State Forest in Charlotte County. These efforts will contribute to a larger protected landscape, increasing habitat connectivity and resilience and supporting a sustainable timber supply for one of the Commonwealth’s largest industries. The project is within three layers of ConserveVirginia: Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, and Scenic.

Total Project Cost	\$1,590,000
Match	Forest Legacy Grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$395,000
Grant Amount	\$395,000

7. **Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) - Securing Conservation Corridors in the Green Sea:** DWR seeks to acquire and conserve 244 acres in the rapidly developing City of Chesapeake to build a corridor of conservation lands bridging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and the Cavalier Wildlife Management Area. In partnership with Ducks Unlimited, this project will protect five layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity, Scenic Preservation, and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$1,124,875
Match	USFWS Pittman - Robertson Wildlife Restoration Grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$281,219
Grant Amount	\$281,219

8. **Virginia Department of Forestry – Three Creek Capron Phase II -** This grant will pay for due diligence expenses for this project, which was awarded funds in FY21 Round 2. The project secures an open-space easement over Three Creek – Capron to permanently protect riparian forest habitat and ensure continued use of upland acreage for commercial timber management. The 376-acre tract is fully forested with 1.8 miles of stream frontage on Three Creek, the largest blackwater tributary of the Nottoway River. Over 70 percent of the tract falls in a C3 (high) Ecological Core and is in the Forestry layer of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$436,054
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$36,054
Grant Amount	\$36,054

9. **Meadowview Biological Station – Carolina Diamonds, Oak Barrens at Barrel Springs II:** This grant provides additional funding for a previously awarded FY22 project. The Meadowview Biological Research Station will acquire and protect 96 acres of a globally rare gravel bog and surrounding oak barren uplands in Caroline County. This property contains the northernmost native purple pitcher plant population in Virginia and one state-threatened plant. The existing conservation easement co-held by Caroline County on the preserve would be expanded to include the new acreage. This project intersects the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity and Floodplains & Flooding Resilience layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$800,400
Match	Cash, land donation, VOF Grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$131,935
Grant Amount	\$131,935

10. **Virginia Department of Forestry – Hornet Swamp:** DOF will purchase a conservation easement on 615 acres in Southampton and Sussex counties. The property is a family owned and operated farm with 526 acres in forest and the balance in agriculture. A conservation easement will protect sensitive bottomlands, buffers on the Hornet Swamp and ensure that future generations may continue to own and manage its forests in

perpetuity. The property intersects the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity and Water Quality layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$775,000
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$400,000
Grant Amount	\$400,000

- 11. Clarke County – Newfound Farm:** This grant will fund the purchase of a conservation easement on 59 acres in Clarke County. The property is primarily forested in oak and hickory. The forestlands, which encompass 95% of the property, will be preserved. Forested riparian buffers of 100 feet in width along over half a mile of Opequon Creek will help protect water quality and habitat for wildlife.

Total Project Cost	\$254,750
Match	Landowner donation, Clarke County, and VDACS grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$125,000
Grant Amount	\$100,150

HISTORIC RESOURCES CATEGORY

- 1. Capital Region Land Conservancy – Haskins Farm at New Market Heights:** CRLC seeks to purchase 50 acres in Henrico County adjacent to 219 acres owned by Henrico County that is within the National Park Service’s legislative boundary. Preservation Virginia noted that New Market Heights Battlefield is one of the most threatened historic sites in Virginia. A historic preservation and open-space easement held by the Va. Board of Historic Resources will protect the property’s 650 linear feet of the “New Market Line” earthworks that the US Colored Troops seized in their victory for which 14 Medal of Honors were awarded. Acquisition of this property would enable a larger area of conserved lands to be connected for future interpretation with NPS and other partners. The property intersects three layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic, Scenic Preservation, and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$1,349,000
Match	Va. Battlefield Protection Fund, American Battlefield Protection Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$600,000
Grant Amount	\$600,000

- 2. Capital Region Land Conservancy – 5270 New Market Road:** This grant funds the acquisition of 40 acres at Willis Church and New Market Roads. The property has significant road frontage along scenic Route 5 and is immediately adjacent to land owned by the National Park Service. This is a very visible intersection that would preserve the approaches to the Richmond National Battlefield Park, immediately adjacent to the property. It would also allow for an important interpretation of the fighting that occurred on June 30 and July 1, 1862, when Major General Holmes arrived to cut off the Union Army’s approach to Richmond. The property intersects four layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Scenic Preservation, and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$1,201,500
Match	Va. Battlefield Protection Fund, American Battlefield Protection Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$588,250
Grant Amount	\$588,250

3. **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF) – Edwards Tract at Port Republic:** This grant provides additional funding to complete a project funded by VLCF in two prior grant years. SVBF received a FY21 Round II grant of \$29,550, and a FY22 grant of \$158,679. This property is part of the “The Coaling,” made famous by the role this commanding landscape feature played during the Battle of Port Republic during the Civil War. SVBF will first acquire, then place an easement held by the VA DHR on the property, which intersects three layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic, Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity, and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$1,662,571
Match	Va. Battlefield Protection Fund, Am. Battlefield Protection Program, SVBF
VLCF Grant Request	\$172,058
Grant Amount	\$172,058

4. **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation – Shiflett Tract at Piedmont Battlefield:** This grant helps to fund the purchase of an easement on 141 acres in Augusta County. The property makes up the heart of the Battle of Piedmont, which led to the fall of Staunton and the burning of the Virginia Military Institute. This project marks the first opportunity to preserve a large tract of battlefield land in Augusta County and at the Piedmont Battlefield. Currently, the site is used as a farm for crops and cattle grazing as it has been since the Civil War. The property intersects four layers of ConserveVirginia: Agriculture, Forestry, Cultural & Historic, and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$906,866
Match	Va. Battlefield Protection Fund, American Battlefield Protection Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$253,433
Grant Amount	\$253,433

5. **American Battlefield Trust - Amelia & Associates LLC Tract at Boydton Plank Road Battlefield:** This grant will fund the protection of 12 acres in Dinwiddie County via fee acquisition and the recordation of a conservation easement to be held by the Va. Board of Historic Resources. The tract is located entirely within the Core and Study Areas of the Boydton Plank Road Battlefield and is also within the Core Area of the White Oak Road Battlefield. The project intersects two layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic, and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$277,908
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program, cash
VLCF Grant Request	\$121,982
Grant Amount	\$121,982

6. **Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation – Woodworth Cottage:** The Foundation seeks to acquire a 0.261-acre lot with a 3,468 square foot building constructed between 1865 and 1867 in Shenandoah County. The property was owned by Jessie Hainning Rupert, a teacher who taught white children in the building during the day in what was called the “Cottage Institute” and African American students at night in what was called the “Woodworth Cottage.” The Foundation will use the first floor as a museum and exhibition on the role of

women and African Americans during the Civil War and Reconstruction. An easement will be held by VA DHR. The property intersects the Cultural & Historic layer of Conserve Virginia.

Total Project Cost	\$270,000
Match	SVBF
VLCF Grant Request	\$135,000
Grant Amount	\$135,000

7. **Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation – French Tract at Fisher’s Hill Battlefield:** The 146-acre French Tract, in Shenandoah County near Strasburg, is entirely within the core and study area of the Fisher’s Hill Battlefield. Fishers Hill, including land that is part of this project, was used as a Confederate defensive position multiple times throughout the Civil War. The property is currently used for agricultural purposes and is also heavily forested. The South Fork of Tumbling Run passes through the property, stretching over 4,000 feet. SVBF purchased the property and intends to protect it with an easement hold by VA DHR. The property lies within the Cultural & Historic and Water Quality layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$1,648,517
Match	Va. Battlefield Protection Fund, American Battlefield Protection Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$474,258.50
Grant Amount	\$474,258

8. **American Battlefield Trust – Mauller Tract at 2nd Manassas Battlefield:** This grant funds the protection of the 3.11-acre Mauller Tract in Manassas (Prince William County) via fee acquisition and the recordation of a conservation easement to be held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The property is located entirely within the Core Area of the Second Manassas Battlefield and is improved with a small single-family residence and two outbuildings. Pending the conservation easement recordation and DHR requirements, the Trust will restore the tract to a natural state by demolishing the existing structures (if required by DHR) and offer periodic tours. The property intersects with the Cultural & Historic layer of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$270,000
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program, private donations
VLCF Grant Request	\$253,439
Grant Amount	\$253,439

9. **American Battlefield Trust – Carter Tract at Seven Pines Battlefield:** This grant funds the protection of the 12 acres in Henrico County via fee acquisition and the recordation of a conservation easement to be held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The Carter Tract is located entirely within the Core Area of the Seven Pines Battlefield. It is improved with a single-family residence that was present at the time of the battle, a lofted barn, and several small outbuildings. The property intersects two layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic and Water Quality.

Total Project Cost	\$431,191
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program, private donations
VLCF Grant Request	\$183,745
Grant Amount	\$183,745

10. American Battlefield Trust – Proctor Tract at Cedar Mountain Battlefield: This grant funds the protection of 7 acres in Culpeper County via fee acquisition and the recordation of a conservation easement to be held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The Proctor Tract is located entirely within the Core Area of the Cedar Mountain Battlefield. Following acquisition, the Trust intends the steward the tract and transfer the property to the Commonwealth (DCR) for inclusion in the Culpeper Battlefields State Park. The property intersects two layers of ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic and Scenic Preservation.

Total Project Cost	\$848,138
Match	American Battlefield Preservation Program, private donations
VLCF Grant Request	\$420,469
Grant Amount	\$217,835

NATURAL AREAS CATEGORY

1. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve Addition – Accokeek Creek Bottomlands II: The grant funds the fee-simple purchase of three key parcel additions to Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve in Stafford County. Most of the property includes forested wetlands and riparian areas along Accokeek Creek providing habitat for numerous species of greatest conservation need. One of the subject parcels supports the state-endangered and federally threatened Small Whorled Pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*). The property intersects four layers of ConserveVirginia: Protected Landscapes Resilience, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Floodplains, and Scenic Preservation.

Total Project Cost	\$390,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$390,000
Grant Amount	\$390,000

2. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Brock’s Gap Natural Area Preserve: This grant funds the acquisition of 244 acres along the North Fork of the Shenandoah River in Rockingham County. This project is located in an essential conservation site and features Virginia’s largest and best example of globally rare Northern White Cedar Forest, as well as a population of state-threatened Wood Turtles. The site lies along the North Mountain fault a major geologic boundary defining the edge of the Shenandoah Valley; and displays one of the best fault outcrops in the Valley. The tracts intersect four categories of Conserve Virginia. Although the Cultural and Historic layer is not one of these, a pitched battle took place here on October 6, 1864, between General George Custer’s cavalry division and that of Confederate General Thomas Rosser, known as the Battle of Brock’s Gap. The property will be protected in perpetuity through the establishment of a new Natural Area Preserve.

Total Project Cost	\$670,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$670,000
Grant Amount	\$670,000

3. Department of Conservation and Recreation - Mill Creek Springs Natural Area Preserve Expansion: This grant provides funding for the fee-simple purchase of a 318-acre addition to Mill Creek Springs Natural Area Preserve in Montgomery County. This tract enhances DCR’s ability to protect additional natural heritage resources and key ecological buffers for the existing Preserve and prevent incompatible development activities

that could result from an imminent sale. The property supports karst topography, including sinkholes, cave entrances, and sinking streams that are linked to the significant cave and karst-related resources in the Preserve. The parcel also supports one of Virginia’s best examples of the Appalachian Sugar Maple - Chinquapin Oak Dry Calcareous Forest and intersects with four layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$1,285,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$1,285,000
Grant Amount	\$665,140

4. **Department of Conservation and Recreation – Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve – Battlefield Addition Tract:** This grant will fund the purchase of approximately 100 acres that adjoin Deep Run Ponds NAP in Rockingham County. The property overlaps the core area of the Port Republic Civil War Battlefield and supports two globally rare natural communities and four rare plant species – two of which are state and federally listed as threatened or endangered. Although partially protected by a conservation easement, fee-simple acquisition of this acreage will substantially improve long-term protections by removing a currently allowable building footprint, expanding wetland buffers around hydrologically sensitive wetlands, restricting incompatible forest management practices, and creating substantial opportunities for ecological restoration. The property intersects with three layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$453,800
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$453,800
Grant Amount	\$453,800

5. **Department of Conservation and Recreation – Ellett Escarpment Natural Area Preserve:** This grant will fund the establishment of the Ellett Escarpment Natural Area Preserve in Montgomery County. This new Preserve will protect the most at-risk cave-adapted species in Virginia. The Ellett Valley Millipede (*Pseudotremia cavernarum*) is found in only three locations worldwide, all in Virginia. These 33 acres include mature, mostly deciduous, calcareous forests immediately surrounding the cave entrance and intersect with two layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$293,500
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$293,500
Grant Amount	\$293,500

6. **Department of Conservation and Recreation – Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition:** This grant provides funding for the acquisition of approximately 56 acres adjoining Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve in Floyd County. The tract intersects two categories of Conserve Virginia and includes forested wetlands and riparian areas along Camp Branch as well as habitat for numerous species of greatest conservation need and significant natural heritage resources. The property shares a long boundary with the Preserve and creates a contiguous connected stream corridor, important for listed endangered species.

Total Project Cost	\$356,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$365,000
Grant Amount	\$365,000

7. **Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve Addition – Eastern Overlook:** This grant will fund the fee-simple purchase of 10 acres as an addition to Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve in Prince William County. The parcel adjoins the preserve’s existing boundary. Situated atop the easternmost ridge of the Bull Run Mountains, this tract enhances VOF and DCR’s protection of key visual and ecological buffers overlooking the heavily developed Piedmont towards Washington, DC. Along with protecting critical habitat and wetlands, this parcel will prevent incompatible development on a fragile ecosystem under heavy development threat. It intersects with two layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$525,000
Match	VOF
VLCF Grant Request	\$500,000
Grant Amount	\$500,000

OPEN SPACES AND PARKS CATEGORY

1. **Capital Region Land Conservancy - Mayo Island:** This grant will help fund the purchase of the 14.5-acre privately owned Mayo Island located in the James River in Richmond, Virginia. Since the 1980s, the City of Richmond has sought to acquire this property for a park. The property falls within three layers of ConserveVirginia. Combined funding between the Community Flood Preparedness Fund, VLCF and the State Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund will allow the most important component of the Richmond Riverfront Plan to be completed and leverage a significant investment into the outdoor recreation economy in downtown Richmond.

Total Project Cost	\$11,882,000
Match	Community Flood Preparedness Fund, private donations
VLCF Grant Request	\$2,000,000
Grant Amount	\$1,500,000

2. **Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation – Red Hill:** This grant will help fund the purchase of a conservation easement held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation on 596 acres at Red Hill located in Campbell County. Red Hill, the home of Patrick Henry, the first Governor of Virginia, is open to the public year-round, is the site of an annual US Naturalization ceremony held on May 29th, the birthday of Patrick Henry, a public July 4th celebration providing fireworks to the community, includes high-value prime farmland, hardwood forests, and an enslaved cemetery containing 147 identified graves. Red Hill includes numerous structures that are typical of what would have been present at the time of Patrick Henry’s life. The property fronts on the state scenic Staunton River and lies within two layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$1,245,500
Match	Landowner donations, Preservation Trust Fund
VLCF Grant Request	\$644,970
Grant Amount	\$602,830

3. **City of Danville Parks and Recreation- Memorial Drive Recreation Area:** This funding will assist with the purchase of 6.87 acres in Danville to repurpose and develop a Memorial Drive Recreation Area. This will include unique amenities open for year-round public access and scenic views. The site contains an 1816

waterpower canal that will be repurposed for a recreation amenity for rafters and kayakers as well as a training facility for professional swift water rescue teams. On the northern edge of the property is a covered 925-foot-long pedestrian bridge that spans the Dan River built in 1920. This bridge will serve as a connector to the city's trail system on the south side of Virginia's Scenic Dan River to the north side trail system (a statewide connecting trail). The project intersects with two layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$3,029,050
Match	City of Danville, Danville Regional Foundation
VLCF Grant Request	\$1,500,000
Grant Amount	\$500,000

4. **The Nature Conservancy – Gent Branch Elk Conservation Area:** This grant will help fund the fee simple purchase of approximately 179 acres in Buchanan County, Virginia. Securing this property will provide protection for important elk habitat and provide public access for elk viewing and elk hunting. This acquisition opportunity is located about one mile from the DWR elk release site. Approximately forty percent of the known Virginia elk population can be found in this area. Lying within two layers of ConserveVirginia, the land also provides habitat for a variety of other wildlife species, offers wildlife-related recreational opportunities, and features remarkable scenic vistas. In addition, with the economic decline facing Buchanan County and much of the coalfields region, this potential acquisition serves to support the local, growing ecotourism industry.

Total Project Cost	\$143,835
Match	TNC, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
VLCF Grant Request	\$71,937
Grant Amount	\$71,937

5. **Department of Wildlife Resources – Coles Point Boating Access:** This grant will help fund the purchase of 2.6 acres in Westmoreland County for future development of a public boat ramp and two hand-launch sites to Branson Cove and the Potomac River, a public ADA-accessible fishing pier, and gravel parking area. The acquisition will provide new access to the Potomac River Water Trail, Potomac River Long-Distance Water Trail, and Westmoreland County Water Trail, addressing both county and regional priorities for additional public water access. The site will also be included on the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, providing access to public and private sites for wildlife viewing. The property lies within the Water Quality layer of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$1,032,025
Match	LWCF, funds from sale of hunting and fishing licenses
VLCF Grant Request	\$532,025
Grant Amount	\$532,025

6. **New River Soil and Water Conservation District – New River Hill Park:** This grant will help fund the purchase of 82 acres in Grayson County. The property borders the New River, an American Heritage River. There are approximately 4,840 feet of streams and springs on the property. The project falls within two layers of ConserveVirginia. The project will protect approximately 1700’ from ridgetop development and protects the viewsheds of both a Scenic River and the New River Blueway. The proposed New River Hill Park will

provide a natural area for public use and passive recreation, hiking, biking, environmental education, enjoyment of diverse wildlife, fishing, and water activities.

Total Project Cost	\$312,700
Match	None
VLCF Grant Request	\$156,350
Grant Amount	\$156,350

7. **City of Charlottesville – Moores Creek Land Acquisition:** This project seeks to acquire 8.6 acres for a public park with daily access. The property is across Moore’s Creek from Azalea Park and will retain the scenic view of the natural area and help to complete the greenbelt around the city. The property is currently leased as community garden, and the city will continue that use on this property or an adjacent parcel that is city owned. Some use options requested by the community include a bicycle pump track, trail and bridges, and possible use for urban agriculture farm/garden. Moores Creek is also a candidate for stream restoration, improved public fishing and swimming access, wildlife viewing, and re-forestation. The project lies within three layers of ConserveVirginia.

Total Project Cost	\$368,300
Match	Land Water Conservation Fund
VLCF Grant Request	\$175,000
Grant Amount	\$175,000

Table 3: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for the November 14, 2022, Grant Round

FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY23 Budget Bill Chapter 2, Item 375 A.1. (\$16,000,000)	Carryover Funding from Past Grant Rounds	TOTAL Available for Grant Round
I. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$4,000,000		
II. VLCF Grant Program			
(i) Farmland Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000
(ii) Forest Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$400,000	\$2,800,000
(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$600,000	\$3,000,000
(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$2,400,000	\$937,440	\$3,337,440
(v) Open Space and Parks	\$2,400,000	\$990,000	\$3,390,000
TOTAL	\$16,000,000	\$2,927,440	\$14,927,440
Summary of Additional Unspent Grant Funds			
Forestland Preservation	\$400,000	<u>Withdrawn</u> FY20RII, Dept. Wildlife Resources, E. Shore Forest Conservation Initiative II \$400,000 .	
Historic Area Preservation	\$600,000	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY20 Patrick Henry Mem. Foundation, Red Hill \$600,000 .	
Natural Area Protection	\$937,440	<u>Unexpended Remainder:</u> FY20 DCR-DNH, Bush Mill Stream NAP Addition \$4,544 ; FY20 DCR-DNH, Gateway to Cape Charles NAP \$63,347 . <u>Withdrawn:</u> FY20 Suffolk Parks and Rec., Blackwater R. Park & South Quay NAP Addition \$400,000 ; FY21RII DCR-DNH Pickett's Harbor Maritime Forest \$255,549 ; FY21RII DCR-DNH The Cedars NAP Northeast Addition \$164,000 ; FY22 DCR-DNH, The Cedars NAP Powell River Addition \$50,000 .	
Open Spaces and Parks	\$990,000	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY20 DCR-State Parks, Wilderness Rd. Connectivity Prop. \$500,000 ; FY21 NOVA Parks, River Farm \$150,000 ; FY21RII VOF, The Green at the Science Museum of VA \$90,000 ; FY22 VOF, The Green at the Science Museum of VA \$250,000 .	

Table 4: Competitive Grant Awards (November 14, 2022, Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
Farmland Preservation							
1	Farmland Protection along Brook Run*	7	\$500,000	698.00	Open	\$500,000	698.00
2	Farmland Protection West of Gordonsville*	7	\$237,500	360.44	Open	\$237,500	360.44
3	Harris Farm*	7	\$400,000	327.00	Open	\$400,000	327.00
4	Protection of Thornridge Farm*	10	\$160,000	203.32	Open	\$160,000	203.32
5	Downtown Greens Expansion Project*	1	\$400,000	56.00	Open	\$400,000	56.00
Forest Land Conservation							
6	The Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe's Return to the River	1	\$310,000	866.00	Open	\$310,000	866.00
7	The Rappahannock Tribe's Return to the River, Phase II	1	\$500,000	703.09	Open	\$500,000	703.09
8	Nottoway River Wildlife and Recreation Area II	4	\$450,000	1597.00	Open	\$450,000	1597.00
9	Pierces Lowgrounds, Meherrin River Conservation Easement II*	4	\$300,000	2860.00	Open	\$300,000	2860.00
10	Taylor's Mill Farm*	4	\$450,000	1145.00	Open	\$450,000	1145.00
11	Roanoke River Working Forest II*	5	\$395,000	1347.00	Open	\$395,000	1347.00
12	Securing Conservation Corridors in the "Green Sea"	2	\$281,219	244.00	Open	\$281,219	244.00
13	Three Creek Capron Phase II*	4	\$36,054	376.00	3/29/2023	\$36,054	376.00
14	Caroline Diamonds - The Oak Barrens at Barrel Springs II**	1	\$131,935	96.00	Open	\$131,935	96.00
15	Hornet Swamp*	4	\$400,000	615.00	Open	\$400,000	615.00
16	Newfound Farm*	6	\$100,150	59.00	Open	\$100,150	59.00
17	New River Hill Park (See OSP category below)	9	\$148,142	See below	Open	\$148,142	See below
Historic Area Preservation							
18	Haskins Farm at New Market Heights**	4	\$600,000	50.00	Open	\$600,000	50.00
19	5270 New Market Road**	4	\$588,250	40.00	Open	\$588,250	40.00

20	Shiflett Tract at Piedmont Battlefield*	6	\$253,433	141.39	<i>Open</i>	\$253,433	141.39
21	Edwards Tract at Port Republic Battlefield*	6	\$172,058	See FY21R2	4/13/2023	\$172,058	See FY21R2
22	Amelia & Associates LLC Tract at Boydtown Plank Road Battlefield**	4	\$121,982	11.72	<i>Open</i>	\$121,982	11.72
23	Woodworth Cottage**	6	\$135,000	0.26	<i>Open</i>	\$135,000	0.26
24	French Tract at Fisher's Hill Battlefield*	6	\$474,258	146.09	<i>Open</i>	\$474,258	146.09
25	Mauler Tract at Second Manassas Battlefield**	10	\$253,439	3.11	<i>Open</i>	\$253,439	3.11
26	Carter Tract at Seven Pines Battlefield**	4	\$183,745	11.78	<i>Open</i>	\$183,745	11.78
27	Proctor Tract at Cedar Mountain Battlefield**	7	\$217,835	7.36	<i>Open</i>	\$217,835	7.36
Natural Area Protection							
28	Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Addition – Accokeek Bottomlands II	1	\$390,000	222.00	<i>Open</i>	\$390,000	222.00
29	Brocks Gap Natural Area Preserve	6	\$670,000	244.00	<i>Open</i>	\$670,000	244.00
30	Mill Creek Springs Natural Area Preserve Expansion	9	\$665,140	318.00	<i>Open</i>	\$665,140	318.00
31	Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve – Battlefield Addition Tract	6	\$453,800	110.00	<i>Open</i>	\$453,800	110.00
32	Ellett Escarpment Natural Area Preserve	9	\$293,500	33.46	<i>Open</i>	\$293,500	33.46
33	Bull Run Mountains NAP Addition - Eastern Overlook**	10	\$500,000	10.13	5/1/2023	\$500,000	10.13
34	Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition	9	\$365,000	56.00	<i>Open</i>	\$365,000	56.00
Open Spaces and Parks							
35	Mayo Island**	4	\$1,500,000	14.50	<i>Open</i>	\$1,500,000	14.50
36	Red Hill*	5	\$602,830	596.00	<i>Open</i>	\$602,830	596.00
37	Memorial Drive Recreation Area**	5	\$500,000	6.87	<i>Open</i>	\$500,000	6.87
38	Gent Branch – Elk Conservation Area	9	\$71,937	179.00	<i>Open</i>	\$71,937	179.00
39	Coles Point Boating Access	7	\$532,025	2.60	<i>Open</i>	\$532,025	2.60
	New River Hill Park (<i>see FOR category above</i>)	9	\$8,208	82.00	<i>Open</i>	\$8,208	82.00

40	Moores Creek Land Acquisition	5	\$175,000	8.60	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$175,000</i>	<i>8.60</i>
Totals			\$14,927,440	13,847.72		<i>\$14,927,440</i>	<i>13,847.72</i>

*Denotes acquisition by easement. ** Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality).

The New River Hill Park project received funding from two categories.

Note: *Italicized numbers represent expected payments and acreages based on the grant proposal.*

Restricted Funds Grant Rounds

Dominion Energy Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Project (November 1, 2017, and December 10, 2020)

On July 3, 2017, the Army Corps of Engineers issued a final permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was developed and executed by the Commonwealth of Virginia including the Department of Historic Resources acting as the State Historic Preservation Office, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation, and Virginia Electric and Power Company, doing business in Virginia as Dominion Energy Virginia to resolve adverse effects on historic properties due to the Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Project.

The VLCF Board was tasked with holding a grant round for \$12.5 million and awarded nine grants in 2017. In 2020, the Board approved a second grant round to award the remaining funding resulting from a withdrawn project and leftover grant funds, totaling \$1,145,829. This grant round was for the same historic preservation and land conservation purposes to mitigate impacts from the Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Transmission Line as the first grant round.

As of June 30, 2023, nine projects had been completed, permanently protecting over 1,735 acres and adding to the public's understanding of historical events through new interpretive materials. One remaining project is underway and has been granted an extension until December 31, 2024. In total, \$12,250,000 in grant funds have been distributed, with \$250,000 left to be distributed at the closure of this final project.

American Battlefield Trust – Atkins Tract: This grant will assist in the purchase and interpretation of the 39.45-acre Atkins Tract in Henrico County. The property is situated entirely in the Core Area of the Glendale Battlefield and partially in the Study Area of the Malvern Hill Battlefield, two battles that were part of the Peninsula Campaign. This tract is also located in the Gravel Hill Community, a historic African American community founded in 1777 by formerly enslaved persons who had been freed.

Please refer to the 2022 Annual Report for descriptions of the nine successfully completed projects.

STATUS OF LAND CONSERVATION IN VIRGINIA

Land Conservation Status Summary

The Conservation Lands Database reports that as of June 30, 2023, a total of 4,283,874 acres across Virginia have been preserved by federal, state, and local governments and private conservation organizations (Table 5). This data indicates that about 16.95 percent of the Commonwealth’s total land is permanently protected. In Virginia’s portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, a total of 2,999,163 acres of land, or about 21.68 percent, has been protected. (Approximately 60 percent of Virginia geographically lies within the Bay watershed.)

Table 5: Land Preservation Statistics in Virginia (through June 30, 2023)

Group Holding the Property or the Easement	Acres of Land Preserved Statewide	Percentage Preserved by Holder	Acres of Land Preserved in Virginia’s Portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed	Percentage Preserved by Holder	Acres of Land Preserved in Virginia’s Non-Bay Portion	Percentage Preserved by Holder
Federal	2,353,946	55.72%	1,683,388	56.13%	670,558	52.20%
State	1,434,538	33.53%	981,647	32.73%	452,891	35.25%
Local	158,787	3.74%	139,871	4.66%	18,916	1.47%
Private/Non-profit	336,602	7.01%	194,256	6.48%	142,346	11.08%
Total Protected	4,283,874	100.00%	2,999,163	100.00%	1,284,711	100.00%
Total Acreage of Land in VA*	25,270,000		13,831,890		11,438,110	
Percent Protected	16.95%		21.68%		11.23%	
* Total Acreage of land does not include the acreage of rivers or other water bodies that cannot be legally owned or permanently conserved.						

Since tracking of conserved lands began in 2000, the amount of land protected each year, whether through conservation easements or fee simple acquisitions, has varied greatly (Table 6). There was a high of 107,017 acres conserved in FY2010 and a low of 26,483 acres in FY2022. In total, since 2000, approximately 1,289,212 acres have been preserved overall, with a yearly average of 56,053 acres. Sixty-seven percent of the preserved acres over that period are within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Table 6: Current Annual Protection Trends as of June 30, 2023

Fiscal Year	Statewide Acreage	Bay Acreage	Non-Bay Acreage
2001	43,463.72	29,855.67	13,608.05
2002	50,536.81	36,567.11	13,969.70
2003	48,369.96	39,714.31	8,655.65
2004	39,680.24	30,790.04	8,890.20
2005	69,559.79	44,184.72	25,375.07
2006	70,798.22	55,622.16	15,176.06
2007	97,984.66	73,312.31	24,672.35
2008	94,252.32	60,675.43	33,576.89
2009	90,388.85	62,222.70	28,166.15
2010	107,017.18	80,122.57	26,894.61
2011	34,289.15	21,881.23	12,407.92
2012	56,144.62	36,536.18	19,608.44
2013	45,510.56	25,508.41	20,002.15
2014	75,463.18	44,873.68	30,589.50
2015	37,314.56	22,523.29	14,791.27
2016	33,618.49	23,063.90	10,554.59
2017	41,210.89	24,389.91	16,820.98
2018	54,123.17	35,424.90	18,698.27
2019	40,951.83	30,007.42	10,944.41
2020	58,706.16	26,424.63	32,281.53
2021	37,421.39	23,403.57	14,017.82
2022	26,483.08	10,257.15	16,225.93
2023	35,923.82	24,415.85	11,507.97
Total	1,289,212.65	861,777.14	427,435.51
Average annual acreage protected	56,052.72	37,468.57	18,584.15

Land Preservation Tax Credit Responsibilities

Beginning January 1, 2007, the Department of Conservation and Recreation became responsible for verifying the conservation value of donated land or conservation easements that result in land preservation tax-credit applications for \$1 million or more. The Department's recommendations are forwarded to the Department of Taxation. Annual reports summarizing the conservation value of all tax credits claimed from 2009 through 2022 are published separately from this report and are available online at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/lp-taxcredit>.

Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Since 2001, the VLCF has allocated more than \$20 million to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (Table 7). Pursuant to the funding formula provided in § 10.1-1020 (C)(1) of the *Code of Virginia*, the VLCF transfers 25 percent of its appropriation to VOF, unless otherwise provided in the state budget. These monies are transferred to the Open Space Land Preservation Trust Fund to assist with the purchase of farm and forestland easements held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. The projects involve the partial purchase of development rights and the reimbursement of costs of the easement donations (legal, appraisal, etc.). Funds are periodically further leveraged with grants from the VLCF and other deposits to the Open Space Land Preservation Trust Fund.

As of June 30, 2023, a total of \$24,134,911 has been appropriated from VLCF to the Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund. Of this amount, \$18,170,367 has been spent in part on 540 conservation easements protecting 112,336 acres. The VLCF funds were leveraged to secure private, local, and federal funds totaling over \$7.8 million towards the easements noted. An additional 65 easements protecting 12,926 acres were completed using funds from the Commonwealth of Virginia (but not received through VLCF) and funding from other sources. The remaining balance of the transferred funds has been committed to 67 projects that will protect an additional 4,911 acres.

Table 7: VLCF Funding Allocated to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Fiscal Year	Source	Amount Allocated to VOF
FY2001	Appropriation Act	\$1,550,000
FY2004	Vehicle Registration	\$365,819
FY2005	Appropriation Act	\$625,000
FY2005	Interest	\$14,246
FY2005	Appropriation Act	\$2,500,000
FY2005	Vehicle Registration	\$95,265
FY2006	Appropriation Act	\$625,000
FY2006	Interest	\$47,240
FY2006	Vehicle Registration	\$195,890
FY2007	Appropriation Act	\$625,000
FY2007	Vehicle Registration	\$165,817
FY2008	Appropriation Act	\$125,000
FY2008	Interest	\$75,000
FY2008	Appropriation Act	\$750,000
FY2008	Vehicle Registration	\$99,468
FY2009	Vehicle Registration	\$1,166
FY2009	Appropriation Act	\$500,000
FY2010	Appropriation Act	\$500,000
FY2011	Appropriation Act	\$125,000
FY2012	Appropriation Act	\$125,000
FY2012	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2013	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2014	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2015	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2016	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2016	Appropriation Act	\$750,000
FY2017	Appropriation Act	\$2,000,000
FY2018	Appropriation Act	\$900,000
FY2019		\$0
FY2020	Appropriation Act	\$1,125,000
FY2021	Appropriation Act	\$2,500,000
FY2022	Appropriation Act	\$2,500,000
FY2023	Appropriation Act	\$4,000,000
TOTAL		\$24,134,911

CONSERVATION PLAN AND TOOL DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive Plan Development

Subsection 1 of § 10.1-1021 of the *Code of Virginia* directs the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to prepare a comprehensive plan “that recognizes and seeks to implement all of the purposes for which the Foundation is created.” In the process of developing this comprehensive plan, the Code of Virginia directs the Foundation to:

- i. Develop a strategic plan for the expenditure of unrestricted moneys.
- ii. Develop and maintain an inventory of those properties in which the Commonwealth holds a legal interest “for the protection or preservation of ecological, cultural or historical resources, lands for recreational purposes, state forest lands, and lands for threatened or endangered species, fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, agricultural and forestal lands and open space;” and
- iii. Develop and maintain a needs assessment for future land conservation projects considering the reports and information listed in Subsection 1c. Subsection 1c specifies that “[i]n developing the needs assessment, the Board of Trustees shall consider among others the properties identified in the following: (i) Virginia Outdoors Plan, (ii) Virginia Natural Heritage Plan, (iii) Virginia Institute of Marine Science Inventory, (iv) Virginia Joint Venture Board of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and (v) Virginia Board of Historic Resources Inventory. In addition, the Board shall consider any information submitted by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on farmland preservation priorities and any information submitted by the Department of Forestry on forest land initiatives and inventories.” The Department of Wildlife Resources’ Wildlife Action Plan also serves as a resource to the Foundation in identifying lands in need of protection.

ConserveVirginia

Virginia’s land conservation investments are essential to making the Commonwealth a wonderful place to live and visit. Land and water conservation protects the places we love, supports a high quality of life, and fosters economic growth and prosperity. The Commonwealth is dedicated to ensuring the highest conservation outcomes from state funds spent on protecting land, and ConserveVirginia, Virginia’s land conservation strategy, is a key tool in guiding these investments. This strategy includes spatial data representing only the highest statewide priorities on unprotected lands that were provided by 15 state and federal agencies and conservation organizations.

The 2021 General Assembly supported the establishment of ConserveVirginia in the Code of Virginia (§ 10.1-104.6:1). DCR is now charged with developing this GIS-based land conservation strategy; updating and maintaining mapping tools; making those tools available to the conservation community; and supporting the integration of ConserveVirginia into conservation prioritizations and grant programs, while collaborating with the conservation community and consulting with the Chief Resilience Officer and Special Assistant for Coastal Adaptation and Protection.

ConserveVirginia identifies approximately 7.8 million acres of priority lands for conservation. The ConserveVirginia Map is the synthesis of 24 mapped data inputs, divided into seven categories, each representing a different overarching conservation value: Agriculture and Forestry; Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity; Floodplains and Flooding Resilience; Cultural and Historic Preservation; Scenic Preservation; Protected Landscapes Resilience, and Water Quality Improvement. Identified lands can cross multiple categories.

ConserveVirginia is envisioned to guide land conservation in Virginia for the next generation. Data must be updated every two years. The most recent update, version 3.0 added almost one million new acres due to refined priorities provided by partners. Lands that were conserved since the release of version 2.0 were removed because they were successfully protected. This strategy charts a dynamic new path for data driven prioritized land conservation and a method by which to set both conservation and funding needs and to monitor progress.

Outdoor recreation opportunities and needs, including access for underserved communities, are critical components of the strategy and are addressed across the categories via DCR's Nature-based Recreation Model (discussed later, herein). In 2016, the Trust for Public Land reported that outdoor recreation generates \$13.6 billion in consumer spending and \$923 million in state and local tax revenues in Virginia. Identifying land conservation opportunities to expand upon recreational opportunities on land and water is a key consideration for conservation efforts across all ConserveVirginia categories. The Virginia ConservationVision Nature-based Recreation Access Model is used to assess public access values of land conservation projects and to place emphasis on providing outdoor recreation opportunities in areas where there is currently greatest need.

Three broad approaches have been implemented to help advance ConserveVirginia since its inception:

1. Engagement of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and other state grant programs to place emphasis on funding projects identified in the strategy.
2. Focus of land conservation funds and efforts by state agencies on these priority lands.
3. Expansion of existing and creation of new funding sources and tools to advance protection of these priority lands.

Through ConserveVirginia, Virginia is leading targeted, value-based land conservation to ensure the greatest conservation outcomes and prosperity for future generations across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Although their names are similar, ConserveVirginia should not be confused with Virginia ConservationVision, described below. Simply put, ConserveVirginia is a summary of only top priorities of seven categories on unprotected lands, whereas Virginia ConservationVision is Virginia's land conservation atlas that includes full ranges of value priorities represented by eight models, regardless of the conservation status of lands.

The Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)

The Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) is the Commonwealth's official outdoor recreation and land conservation plan. The VOP serves as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for compliance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) federal assistance program provided by the National Park Service in accordance with the LWCF Act of 1965. The plan has been expanded to substantially meet the requirements of the Foundation's comprehensive plan. The VOP is prepared by DCR and updated every five years. The VOP is the state's official plan for the protection and conservation of Virginia's important natural, outdoor recreational, and open space resources. The plan is based on an inventory of publicly held park and open space land, including local, state, and federal outdoor recreational lands, and an assessment of Virginia's outdoor recreational needs. This inventory of existing lands and facilities, and unmet needs serves as a basis for the Foundation's needs assessment, as required under § 10.1-1021 of the *Code of Virginia*.

The current Virginia Outdoors Plan identifies and expands on the Foundation's key land conservation needs and protection strategies and continues to serve as a sound foundation for future land conservation activities within the Commonwealth. The plan's chapter on land conservation covers the benefits of land conservation, tools for achieving land conservation, and recommendations for types of land that should be protected.

Projects that protect the Commonwealth's natural, scenic, open space, and cultural resources are identified as part of the VOP regional outreach. In addition to an assessment of existing statewide outdoor recreational resources and conserved lands, the VOP also provides recommendations for regional featured projects. As part of the development of the VOP, DCR hosts annual meetings in collaboration with each of Virginia's 21 planning districts. These meetings are the foundation for DCR's assessment of outdoor recreation and land conservation implementation progress. Regional accomplishments are identified, and the needs and priorities for outdoor recreation and land conservation are assessed by engaging government agencies, localities, regional planning districts, and outdoor recreation and land conservation stakeholders.

As per the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan must be updated every five years. This includes an up-to-date comprehensive public survey as well as input from all Regions of the Commonwealth and partner agencies. The Department's Planning and Recreation Resources Division staff are actively working on planning and coordination for the 2023 VOP with the anticipated completion expected in 2024. The GIS based production will allow users a new and improved hands-on approach to recreation. It will summarize the most recent results of the Virginia Outdoors Survey and provide planning districts and localities best practices in grant management and applications.

Further, the Land and Water Conservation Fund program continues to fund the acquisition of park properties. The LWCF Program is a 50-50 match reimbursement grant program with annual apportionments to the state to distribute to eligible recipients upon a grant round process. VLWCF funding

can be a match source for these projects as well. The Department’s LWCF and VLCF staff continue to coordinate to assist partners in their funding needs as appropriate.

Virginia’s Natural Heritage Plan

The Virginia Natural Area Preserves Act (Virginia Code § 10.1-209 *et seq.*) charges the Department of Conservation and Recreation with establishing and maintaining the state’s Natural Heritage Program (NHP) and developing a Natural Heritage Plan (NHPlan) to guide the preservation of Virginia’s natural heritage resources: habitat for rare plants and animals; significant natural communities and significant geologic features (e.g., caves and other karst features). Land conservation planning is a key component of the NHPlan and vital to the effective conservation of the state’s natural heritage. The NHPlan, entitled “*Virginia’s Precious Heritage: A Report on the Status of Virginia’s Natural Communities, Plants and Animals, and a Plan for Preserving Virginia’s Natural Heritage Resources*”, is available on DCR’s website (http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/documents/NHPc_Web.pdf). The data and conservation planning tools that comprise the NHPlan are continually expanded and enhanced, and updates to natural heritage resources data are updated quarterly for external sharing and partner use.

A revision of the NHPlan is under development for completion in 2024. The revised plan will lay out DCR’s approach to identifying those places that are most important for preserving Virginia’s natural heritage resources. The NHPlan is developed from a foundation of the most comprehensive and up-to-date biodiversity data available in the Commonwealth. The revised NH Plan will more effectively identify the highest priority natural heritage resources to conserve, where data and information will be tailored to partners’ (e.g., partner agencies, non-profits, land trusts) land conservation targets, missions, and territories (i.e., where they work in the Commonwealth).

For over 37 years, DCR has worked to convert its detailed scientific data and information into easily interpreted and versatile map-based tools to use and share to inform conservation decisions. Field data on natural heritage resources are used to develop maps of conservation sites. Conservation sites are mapped boundaries that encompass one or more natural heritage resources and the surrounding habitat or buffer necessary to permanently protect those resources. Each conservation site includes detailed information on the location, viability, threats, and conservation status of the resources they contain. DCR has developed and maintains mapped boundaries for 2,411 conservation sites around the state, totaling more than 3,381,000 acres of terrestrial, stream- and karst-associated lands.

Mapped Conservation Sites are central to the NHPlan, and relied upon by a variety of local, state, and federal governmental agencies with conservation and natural resources management objectives. These and other DCR data are also shared with conservation partners via the Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE), for conservation planning and project review efforts. The NHDE, accessible at <https://vanhde.org/>, is an efficient tool utilized by 200 government agencies, conservation organizations, universities, and private companies. Moreover, to date, this tool has been replicated in a dozen other states based on the model of environmental review efficiency that has been set in Virginia. DCR staff strive to

keep natural heritage resources data up-to-date and reflective of current conditions for internal uses, and these data are updated for partners on a quarterly basis.

In addition to Conservation Sites, two additional statewide datasets are included in the Natural Heritage Plan and partner-shared datasets to help inform conservation prioritization efforts of DCR, and our conservation partners. These GIS-based datasets identify the Natural Area Preserve Resiliency Areas and Conservation Sites of greatest conservation urgency.

The Natural Area Preserve Resiliency Areas are key lands surrounding the Natural Area Preserves (NAPs), where the Program works to: (i) focus land protection efforts and land management activities; (ii) concentrate on partnerships with existing landowners and land managers of those resiliency lands; and (iii) tailor information sharing based on resources in those resiliency areas. Focusing acquisition efforts, partnership, and management of lands in resiliency areas will help to ensure the protection of the rare species and natural communities protected on NAPs in light of climate change and other landscape scale disturbances; enable development of public access opportunities that do not jeopardize rare species and habitats; and help to assure that management of natural heritage resources on the NAP System (e.g. access for use of prescribed fire and invasive species control) can be carried out with better success and efficiency.

Conservation Sites for rare plant and animal species habitats that are of greatest conservation urgency will also be ranked/prioritized with multiple levels of “essential” status for internal and partner uses. These sites are analyzed by the rarity of those resources; the quality and viability of the specific occurrences of those species and communities; and the threats to those occurrences based on surrounding landscape and land use patterns. This analysis identifies the very most important sites that need protection and management – those that are essential to the preservation of the rarest and most threatened species and natural communities in Virginia. Availability of this dataset enables conservation efforts to be focused on the most essential areas for the conservation of natural heritage resources and allows opportunities to be swiftly recognized when they arise in relation to natural heritage resources of the most urgent conservation need.

These aspects of the NHP data, information and the NHplan are integral to the Foundation’s planning efforts and important components of the Virginia Outdoors Plan. DCR’s land conservation planning tools – the VOP and the NHPlan – play an important role in land conservation planning by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and Virginia’s land conservation community.

Another key component of the NHPlan and data provided to partners and the public, is the DCR-maintained inventory of all conserved lands in Virginia. The Department’s Conservation Lands Database addresses the requirements of § 10.1-1021(1)(b) of the *Code of Virginia*, which directs VLCF to develop an inventory of those properties in which the Commonwealth holds a legal interest “for the protection or preservation of ecological, cultural or historical resources, lands for recreational purposes, state forest

lands, and lands for threatened or endangered species, fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, agricultural and forestal lands and open space.” The Conservation Lands Database includes local, state, and national parks, university lands, as well as privately held protected lands and conservation easements with parcel-level boundaries and attributes. These lands are mapped to the parcel level for a comprehensive spatial dataset of lands that serve conservation, recreation, and open-space purposes. The database is refined for accuracy daily. Parcel information related to management intent, legal protection status, dates of initial conservation action, and boundary refinements are available to the conservation community. New parcels are constantly incorporated into the Conservation Lands Database, through regular data sharing between DCR and other state agencies, localities, land trusts, and other conservation organizations.

The Conservation Lands Database is available to the public through DCR’s Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE) website at <https://vanhde.org/>. This mapping website allows users to view, query, and explore conservation lands data in the context of several base layers (i.e., aerial photography, hydrologic data, jurisdictional boundaries, etc.) and alongside other maps of natural and cultural resource features (Virginia ConservationVision). Information on the Conservation Lands Database is available at <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/clinfo> where GIS shapefiles can be downloaded for use in any GIS. The Conservation Lands Database is used by the Chesapeake Bay Program to establish and track progress on land conservation related goals for the 2025 Watershed Agreement.

Virginia Natural Heritage maintains collaborative roles with partners to integrate the Virginia Conservation Lands Database into the USGS’ PAD-US (Protected Areas Dataset for the United States) and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities’ NCED (National Conservation Easements Database), two national efforts to map protected lands. The PAD-US manages national public lands data, while the NCED concentrates on private conservation easements. Virginia Natural Heritage is considered the state’s data aggregator for both efforts.

DCR’s Natural Heritage Program also maintains Virginia ConservationVision, a set of eight statewide, publicly available GIS models for conservation planning. Each map quantifies the relative importance of ecological, cultural, recreational, forested, agricultural, and watershed values throughout the Commonwealth, as well as relative vulnerability to development. The Foundation provided funding for the development of these conservation tools, available at the Virginia ConservationVision page (<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvision>) and on the NHDE website. These models have been used by many state and local governments, Planning District Commissions, and conservation organizations, to provide explicit, quantitative guidance in the development of green infrastructure plans, strategic conservation plans, comprehensive plan revisions, and various other land use and conservation prioritization decisions.

The following is a brief description of the available GIS models that make up Virginia ConservationVision:

1. Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment

The Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment is a landscape-scale, geospatial analysis for identifying, prioritizing, and connecting natural lands. The VaNLA uses land cover data to identify natural habitats called Ecological Cores, which are large patches of natural land with at least 100 continuous acres of interior cover. Interior cover begins 100 meters inward from edges caused by fragmenting features, such as roads or utility corridors, and the edge zones are added to the interior areas to create Ecological Cores. Smaller features called Habitat Fragments, with 10 to 99 acres of continuous interior cover, are included because they support other VaNLA features and because they are important in localities with few large patches of natural land. The predominant cover in Ecological Cores statewide is forest, but marshes, beaches, and dunes are significant components where they are abundant and meet minimum size requirements. Ecological Cores are ranked by integrity, from C1-Outstanding to C5-General Ecological Integrity, to reflect the wide range of important benefits and ecosystem services they provide, including biodiversity conservation, wildlife habitat, aesthetic values, recreational opportunities, and protections for air and water quality. Ecological Cores are connected by Landscape Corridors to create a statewide network of the highest priority lands, known as the Natural Lands Network, and are aggregated along with contiguous natural cover into larger planning units called Natural Landscape Blocks. A set of special Landscape Corridors connecting a great diversity of environments were selected and expanded for potential conservation as Resilience Corridors to maintain connectivity to allow species movement between elevations, between latitudes, and inland from the ocean. These Resilience Corridors were integrated with Ecological Cores ranked C1, and other partner datasets to develop the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity category of *ConserveVirginia*. Resilience Corridors formed the basis of the Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors that were developed for the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan, described below.

2. Cultural Resources Preservation Index

The Cultural Resources Preservation Index, developed by the Department of Historic Resources (DHR), displays the likelihood of a given location having conservation value when considering known and evaluated cultural heritage resources. The dataset includes unprotected National Historic Landmarks; lands listed on, contributing to, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the Virginia Landmarks Register; and sites or properties without formal evaluations of eligibility that are recommended to have the potential for eligibility. The index is ranked from 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest) and shows the highest priority occurring within broad hexagons to obscure locations of sensitive resources. The index can be used to prioritize lands for protection of significant cultural resources. The DHR developed a highest priority Cultural & Historic Resources dataset for integration *ConserveVirginia*.

3. Nature-Based Recreational Model

The purpose of the Nature-based Recreation Access Model is to quantify the availability of opportunities for nature-based recreation on Virginia's public lands and waters, and to identify areas where more opportunities are needed. DCR developed two sets of metrics to evaluate land- and water-based recreation needs. The land-based model uses travel times to, and the numbers and sizes of, protected lands with public access, and the recreation pressures on those lands based on local

population sizes. The water-based model uses travel times to, and the number of, water access points, and the number of water-based activities offered at those points, as well as the recreation pressures on those points based on local population sizes. The Nature-Based Recreation Access Model is part of ConserveVirginia in that it is, used to assess the potential public access values of all lands proposed for protection via the VLCF Grant Program.

4. Forest Conservation Value (FCV) Model

The Forest Conservation Value (FCV) Model is a tool designed by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) to strategically identify the highest priority forestland for conservation in Virginia. The intent is to maximize the efficiency of limited resources by focusing conservation efforts on the highest quality, most productive and most vulnerable forestland statewide. The FCV model evaluates components for forested blocks, management potential, connectivity to other conserved lands, watershed integrity, and the threat of conversion to prioritize the highest-value forestlands for conservation. The model ranks all forestland in Virginia from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) FCV. The highest priority forestlands identified in the FCV provided the forest component data input to the Agriculture & Forestry category of the ConserveVirginia.

5. Agricultural Model

The Agricultural Model quantifies the relative suitability of lands for agricultural activity. The model output is a spatial dataset with agricultural value ranging from 0 (unsuitable) to 100 (optimal). Agricultural value is assessed primarily based on three measures of soil suitability from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The model also accounts for current land cover and travel time to markets in the final valuation. Staff at NRCS and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) were consulted during development of the model. The model can be viewed as a web map on the NHDE and in ArcGIS Online, and the dataset is available for download from the Virginia ConservationVision website. For ConserveVirginia version 3.0, the agricultural data input to the Agriculture & Forestry category was developed by the American Farmland Trust from its *Farms Under Threat: State of the States* project (version 2.0) database.

6. Watershed Model

The purpose of the Watershed Impact Model is to help establish geographic priorities for conservation, restoration, or implementation of best management practices, where the goal is to maintain or improve water quality and aquatic ecological integrity. It is intended as a geospatial screening tool for assessing where activities on the land have the greatest impact on water quality. The model relies on multiple data sources representing conditions that drive the terrestrial influence on aquatic systems, including precipitation, geology, soils, topography, and hydrology. Although land cover also exerts a key influence on hydrologic flow and pollutant loads reaching streams, it is not used to calculate potential impact. Instead, potential impact is calculated under a "worst case scenario" assumption of barren land. By leaving land cover out of the equation, the calculation of potential impact is robust in the face of land cover changes that can happen over very short time scales.

7. Development Vulnerability Model

The Development Vulnerability Model quantifies the risk of conversion from greenspace (natural, rural, or other open space lands) to urbanized or other built-up land uses. The model output is a raster dataset in which the relative vulnerability of lands ranges from 0 (least vulnerable) to 100 (most vulnerable). Vulnerability values are not probabilities but should be interpreted as a relative measure of development potential. Conservation lands on which biodiversity preservation is believed to be the primary goal are considered undevelopable and are coded with the value -1, while areas in which development has already occurred are coded 101.

8. Potential Rare Species Richness

The Potential Rare Species Richness data layer represents the relative number of Virginia's threatened, endangered, and rare plant and animal species likely to occur across the Commonwealth, by summarizing predictions of suitable habitat within three-mile diameter hexagons. The layer is derived from the collection of current Predicted Suitable Habitat (PSH) maps; each individual PSH map indicates where suitable habitat for a particular species is expected to exist. These maps are developed and maintained by the Natural Heritage Program to assist in the protection and inventory of rare species in Virginia.

Virginia ConservationVision products are available to the public through the NHDE website, where they can be compared to each other, reference layers, conserved lands, and ConserveVirginia. They are also available for use in desktop GIS, with access information provided at the bottom of each model's page linked to the Virginia ConservationVision page.

Along with ConserveVirginia, the Conservation Sites Database and the Conservation Lands Database, Virginia ConservationVision is utilized to assess grant proposals to the Foundation for funding consideration. These maps prioritize pertinent conservation values and are used in scoring potential lands in all VLCF interest areas, alongside other criteria. Furthermore, other state agencies and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation rely on specific Virginia ConservationVision maps to screen potential conservation easement lands.

The Natural Heritage Plan and the assemblage of conservation information and tools developed by DCR's Natural Heritage Program greatly assist VLCF with strategic planning. These tools will continue to be developed, updated, and refined to enable objective evaluations of VLCF proposals in multiple grant categories; planning of future natural area conservation needs; and fulfillment of information requests from land planners and managers at the local, state, and federal levels.

Virginia's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan

Virginia is one of the first states in the eastern U.S. to create a Wildlife Corridor Action Plan (WCAP). This plan places a clear emphasis on protecting vital habitat corridors for reducing wildlife-vehicle conflicts and promoting biodiversity conservation. Wildlife-vehicle conflicts can occur when wildlife

traverse roads seeking to food, water, shelter, mating, and dispersal. This leads to potential driver safety risks and deadly impacts on wildlife populations. More than 60,000 known wildlife-vehicle conflicts occur annually in Virginia, costing the Commonwealth and its citizens approximately \$533 million each year.

To create the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan, a collaborative leadership team was established comprised of members from multiple state agencies involved with wildlife habitats and road infrastructure. The plan goals are to identify corridors comprised of high-quality habitats for priority species and ecosystem health; identify areas of high risk for wildlife-vehicle conflicts; identify priority areas for wildlife crash countermeasures to promote habitat connectivity and to improve road safety; and to provide a publicly available website to host the plan and its relevant data.

High-priority wildlife corridors were identified by leveraging and enhancing data from the ConserveVirginia and the Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment conservation planning tools, as well as other data sources, to develop Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors. Areas of high wildlife-vehicle conflict rates were estimated using an analysis based on two databases compiled using police-reported collisions. An analysis of the corridor and wildlife-conflict products was conducted to identify 26 Wildlife Crossing Nexus Areas as state priority areas potentially requiring wildlife crash countermeasures. These nexus areas are both located within Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors and experience the highest rates of wildlife-vehicle conflict across the state. Virginia now has established a strong basis to strategically direct state resources for the mutually compatible benefits of protecting wildlife corridors and promoting driver safety. The WCAP is available here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/corridors/>. As this important tool continues to be developed, updated, and refined it may enable evaluations of VLCF proposals across multiple grant categories to achieve multiple significant statewide objectives.

Strategic Plan Development

Subdivision (1)(a) of § 10.1-1021 of the *Code of Virginia* directs the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to “[d]evelop a strategic plan for the expenditure of unrestricted moneys received from the Fund.” The current strategic plan is embodied in the grant program guidelines approved by the VLCF Board most recently on July 12, 2022. This document clearly addresses how the funding will be expended through grants and delineates what categories the funding is to be used for, who is eligible, what the match requirements are, and what evaluation criteria are to be used to evaluate the applications. The plan may be found at: www.dcr.virginia.gov/virginia_land_conservation_foundation/.

Revised grant criteria guided the review of applications received during the recent grant round that was considered by the Board. As in the past, all the technical information collected from these grant applicants was evaluated by an interagency task force.

The interagency task force is comprised of representatives of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Forestry, the Department of Historic Resources, the Department of Wildlife Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors

Foundation. Through this rigorous multi-agency review and scoring process, only those proposals that best serve the purposes of the Foundation and that make the best fiscal sense are recommended to the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees.

The Foundation continues to use and develop state-of-the-art land conservation information systems and decision support tools. Conservation Lands and Conservation Sites Databases, and ConserveVirginia assist the Foundation in ranking and selecting priority land preservation projects and the Foundation continues to seek ways to leverage these tools more effectively.

Looking Forward: Estimate of Funds Needed to Achieve Foundation Goals

Recent changes to the reporting requirements of the Foundation in § 10.1-1018.1 of the Code of Virginia require an estimate of the funds needed to achieve goals established by the Board for (a) natural area protection, (b) open spaces and parks, (c) farmland preservation, (d) forest land preservation, (e) historical and cultural sites, (f) meeting the needs of under-resourced communities, and (g) any other goal determined by the Board. Because the funding categories are set in § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia, we look to the funding requested in each grant round over the past few years. Table 8 illustrates how the total funding available for grant rounds held in fiscal years 21, 21 Round II, 22, and 23 is only slightly more than half of the amount of funding requested for projects across all categories.

If the amount of requested funding may be considered need, then, on average nearly twice the amount of money available in a typical year is needed to meet the need. However, this number is dependent on the amount of funding available. As potential applicants may or may not apply for grant funding based upon how much funds are available. Total project costs often exceed the available grant funding by more than four times.

Table 8: Funds needed to achieve need for funding by category

Category	FY21		FY21 Round 2		FY22		FY23		% Available Funding
	Requested	Available	Requested	Available	Requested	Available	Requested	Available	
Farms and Forest	\$1,837,050	\$843,750							46%
Farmland	N/A	N/A	\$1,486,550	\$825,000	\$2,557,300	\$1,500,000	\$1,297,500	\$2,400,000	88%
Forest Land	N/A	N/A	\$1,556,940	\$825,000	\$1,764,200	\$1,500,000	\$3,486,473	\$2,800,000	75%
Historic Preservation	\$2,092,427	\$843,750	\$1,195,450	\$825,000	\$2,624,071	\$1,500,000	\$4,035,368	\$3,000,000	68%
Natural Areas	\$860,000	\$843,750	\$3,234,250	\$1,325,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$6,240,800	\$3,337,440	56%
Open Spaces & Parks	\$5,708,894	\$843,750	\$3,894,345	\$1,035,000	\$2,087,414	\$1,500,000	\$5,862,062	\$3,390,000	50%
Totals	\$10,498,371	\$3,375,000	\$11,367,535	\$4,835,000	\$10,532,985	\$7,500,000	\$20,922,203	\$14,927,440	57%

APPENDIX A: PAST VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION GRANT ROUNDS

Appendix A includes updated information on recent grant rounds with remaining open grants.

Detailed information on past grant rounds starting in 1999 can be found in prior biennial VLCF reports, available at <http://lis.virginia.gov/lis.htm>.

Competitive Grant Awards FY20 (November 22, 2019, Grant Round)

Item 363 A.1. of Chapter 854 of the 2019 Virginia Acts of Assembly included, in the amount for Preservation of Open Space Lands, \$4,500,000 from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020, Code of Virginia, which was available for the FY20 grant round. An additional \$2,515,934 from previous years' funded projects that had been withdrawn, or from projects that were accomplished under budget, was added to the available funding for a total of \$5,890,934 (Table 9).

During the FY20 grant cycle, the Foundation received 34 applications requesting \$15,140,144 in grants. The project costs for all 34 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$51,838,128 and would protect 18,177 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on November 22, 2019, to consider these applications and approved \$5,890,934 in grant funds for 19 projects to protect 17,575 acres (Table 4). As of the date of this report, five projects have been withdrawn, and the remaining fourteen projects have been successfully completed. Money from withdrawn projects and projects that came in under budget totals \$2,367,891.47 available for future grant rounds.

Table 9: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for November 22, 2019, Grant Round

FUNDING CATEGORIES		FY20 Budget Bill Chapter 854, Item 363 Appropriation of \$4,500,000	Carryover Funding from Past Grants	TOTAL
1.	VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25%)	\$1,125,000	N/A	\$1,125,000
2.	Grant Program (75%)			
(i)	Farmland and Forest Preservation	\$843,750	\$170,412	\$1,014,162
(ii)	Historic Area Preservation	\$843,750	\$200,000	\$1,043,750
(iii)	Natural Area Protection	\$843,750	\$1,285,638	\$2,129,388
(iv)	Open Space and Parks	\$843,750	\$859,884	1,703,634
TOTAL GRANT FUNDS		\$3,375,000	\$2,515,934	\$5,890,934
Summary of Returned Funds				
Forest Land Preservation	\$170,412	Withdrawn: FY17 Wingfield Cosby Acq. for \$170,412		
Historic Area Preservation	\$200,000	Withdrawn: FY15 Stoner-Keller Mill Farm for \$200,000		
Natural Area Protection	\$1,285,638	Unexpended: FY15 Lee Co. Cave Isopod Habitat for \$38,842; FY16 The Cedars NAP Add. for \$72,101. FY17 Buffalo Mountain NAP Add. for \$1,765; FY17 Deep Run NAP Add. for \$174,000; FY18 Antioch Pines NAP Add. for \$66,448; FY18 Magothy Bay NAP Add. for \$12,666 Withdrawn: FY16 Flatwoods at Piney Grove for \$69,655; FY17 Redrock Mtn. NAP Add. for \$151,200; FY17 North Landing River Sawgrass Marsh for \$150,000; FY18 Mt. Joy Ponds NAP Add. for \$316,400; FY18 Blackwater Scenic River for \$57,761; FY18 Difficult Creek NAP Add. for \$174,200.		
Open Space and Parks	\$859,884	Unexpended: FY17 Pigg River for \$209,331; FY18 Riverview Walk Park for \$19,453. Withdrawn: FY16 Aspen Grove Farm for \$62,500; FY17 Charley Close Land Acq. for \$82,600; FY17 Cypress Locks Park for \$165,000; FY18 Catherine Grey Preserve for \$321,000.		

Table 10: Competitive Grant Awards (November 22, 2019, Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
	Farmlands & Forest Preservation						
1	Farmland at Crossroads of Old Fredericksburg*	7	\$300,000	348.21	Withdrawn	0	0
2	Smithfield Farm*	10	\$121,875	215.5	Jan 22	121,875.00	195.23
3	Stanley Land and Lumber	5	\$300,000	4,944.00	Dec 21	300,000.00	5,004.76
4	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative	2	\$292,287	8,654.00	May 23	292,287.00	7912.11
	Historic Area Preservation						
5	Red Hill*	5	\$600,000	596	Withdrawn	0	0
6	Cedar Run Tract at Cedar Mountain Battlefield**	7	\$412,500	86.47	Aug 21	412,500.00	86.46
	Natural Area Protection						
7	Crow's Nest Southern Boundary Addition – NVCT**	1	\$256,000	110.53	Feb 20	256,000.00	113.68
8	Piney Grove Vernal Pools	4	\$367,000	465	Sep 21	367,000.00	446.96
9	Bush Mill Stream NAP Addition ***	1	\$130,500	39	Sept 21	125,955.95	41.1
10	Crow's Nest NAP Additions – DCR ***	1	\$186,000	1.6	Dec 22	140,874.90	1.2944
11	Cypress Bridge Swamp NAP Addition	4	\$52,000	18	Jul 23	52,000.00	17.44
12	Bluebell Tract*	7	\$500,000	1,410.00	Withdrawn	0	0
13	Blackwater River Park and South Quay NAP	4	\$400,000	338	Withdrawn	0	0
14	Gateway to Cape Charles Public Access ***	2	\$237,888	16	Sept 20	174,540.58	20.71
	Open Spaces & Parks						
15	Dock Street**	4	\$500,000	5.21	May 23	500,000.00	4.33
16	McThenia*	6	\$180,000	39.07	Nov 20	180,000.00	39.07
17	Wilderness Road State Park Connectivity Property	9	\$500,000	241.8	Withdrawn	0	0
18	Pohick Bay Regional Park Inholding Acquisition	8	\$322,500	3.05	Oct 20	322,500.00	3.02
19	Camp Kum-Ba-Yah*	6	\$201,134	44	Feb 22	201,134.00	42.13
	Totals		\$5,859,684	17,575.44		\$3,446,666.35	13,928.29

*Denotes acquisition by easement ** Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity.

Note: *Italicized numbers represent expected payments and acreages based on the grant proposal.*

Competitive Grant Awards FY21 Round I (February 5, 2021, Grant Round)

Item 374 A.1. of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly included, in the amount for Preservation of Open Space Lands, \$10,000,000 from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia. Due to the uncertainty of the budget due to the pandemic, \$4,500,000 was available for the first FY21 grant round. An additional \$31,250 that was unallocated from FY20 historic category was added to the available funding for a total of \$3,406,250 in grant funds (Table 3). On September 22, 2020, the Board met and approved the grant round.

During the first FY21 grant cycle, the Foundation received 30 applications requesting \$10,498,371 in grants. The project costs for all 30 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$55,049,487 and would protect 15,876 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on February 5, 2021, to consider these applications and approved \$3,406,250 in grant funds for 12 projects to protect 12,261 acres (Table 4). As of the date of this report, four projects from this grant round have been successfully completed and two have been withdrawn. Withdrawn funds will be included in future grant rounds in the same category from which they were originally awarded.

Table 11: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for February 5, 2021, Grant Round

	FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY21 Budget Bill Chapter 1289, Item 374 A.1.	FY20 Remainder	TOTAL
1.	VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25%)	\$1,125,000		\$1,125,000
2.	Grant Program			
	(i) Farmland and Forest Preservation	\$843,750		\$843,750
	(ii) Historic Area Preservation	\$843,750	\$31,250	\$875,000
	(iii) Natural Area Protection	\$843,750		\$843,750
	(iv) Open Spaces and Parks	\$843,750		\$843,750
	TOTAL	\$4,500,000	\$31,250	\$4,531,250

Item 374 of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly

A.1. Included in the amounts for Preservation of Open Space Lands is ~~\$10,000,000~~ \$4,500,000* the first year and \$10,000,000 the second year from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, § 10.1-1020, Code of Virginia. No less than 50 percent of the appropriations remaining after the transfer to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust fund has been satisfied are to be used for grants for fee simple acquisitions with public access or acquisitions of easements with public access. This appropriation shall be deemed sufficient to meet the provisions of § 2.2-1509.4, Code of Virginia. [Grant Funds]

2. Included in the amounts for Preservation of Open Space Lands is \$1,500,000 the first year and \$1,500,000 the second year from non-general funds to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund to be distributed by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation pursuant to the provisions of § 58.1-513, Code of Virginia. [Stewardship Funds]

*Due to budget uncertainties at that time, we assumed a budget of \$4,500,000 for FY21 as appropriated in FY20.

Table 12: Competitive Grant Awards (February 5, 2021, Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
	Farmlands Preservation						
1.	Farmland Protection along the Blue Ridge Turnpike*	5	\$315,000	450.58	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$315,000.00</i>	<i>450.58</i>
2.	Farmland Protection along the Robinson River*	5	\$106,875	592.18	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$106,875.00</i>	<i>592.18</i>
	Forestlands						
3.	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative	2	\$421,875	<i>See FY20</i>	May-23	\$421,875.00	<i>See FY20</i>
	Historic Area Preservation						
4.	Brill **	6	\$411,807	72.00	June-22	\$411,807.00	73.82
5.	Stoner-Keller*	6	\$242,170	120.27	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$242,170.00</i>	<i>120.27</i>
6.	James Jackson Tract at the Wilderness Battlefield**	7	\$221,023	36.17	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$221,023.00</i>	<i>36.17</i>
	Natural Area Protection						
7.	Southside Va. Conservation & Recreation Complex (Phase I) *****	5	\$843,750	2,010.00	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$240,000.00</i>	<i>2010.00</i>
	Open Spaces & Parks						
8.	<i>Appomattox River Trail - Critical Petersburg Gap Connection**</i>	4	<i>\$28,943</i>	<i>7.90</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$28,943.00</i>	<i>7.90</i>
9.	Blackwater Conservation Acquisition	4	\$375,000	203.00	Oct-22	\$375,000.00	200.36
10.	Rappahannock River Park	7	\$210,000	46.53	Withdrawn	0	0
11.	River Farm	8	\$150,000	24.71	Withdrawn	0	0
12.	Camp Kum Ba Yah Inc. II*	6	\$79,807	<i>See FY20</i>	Mar-22	\$79,807.00	<i>See FY20</i>
	Totals		\$3,406,250	3,563.34		<i>\$2,442,500.00</i>	<i>3,491.28</i>
*Denotes acquisition by easement ** Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity. Note: <i>Italicized numbers represent expected payments and acreages based on the grant proposal.</i>							

Competitive Grant Awards FY21 Round II (June 10, 2021, Grant Round)

During the FY21 Round II grant cycle, the Foundation received 35 applications requesting \$11,367,545 in grants. The project costs for all 35 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$56,064,352 and would protect 9,153.71 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on June 10, 2021, to consider these applications and approved \$4,835,000 in grant funds for 22 projects to protect 6,138.11 acres (Table 14). As of the date of this report, nine projects from this grant round have been successfully completed.

Table 13: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for June 10, 2021, Grant Round (FY21 Round II)

FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY21 Budget Bill Chapter 56, Item 374 A.1. *	Unspent Grant Reallocated on Feb. 5, 2021	Withdrawn Grant to be Reallocated	TOTAL
1. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$1,375,000			\$1,375,000
2. Grant Program				
(i) Farmland Preservation	\$825,000			\$825,000
(ii) Forest Preservation	\$825,000			\$825,000
(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$825,000			\$825,000
(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$825,000	\$500,000		\$1,325,000
(v) Open Space and Parks	\$825,000		\$210,000	\$1,035,000
TOTAL	\$5,500,000	\$500,000	\$210,000	\$6,210,000
<i>Summary of Additional Unspent Grant Funds</i>				
Natural Area Protection	\$500,000	Withdrawn: FY20 Bluebell Tract		
Open Space and Parks	\$210,000	Withdrawn: FY21 Culpeper County Rappahannock River Park		

Item 374 of Chapter 56 of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly Special Session I

A.1. Included in the amounts for Preservation of Open Space Lands is \$10,000,000 the first year and \$10,000,000 the second year from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, § 10.1-1020, Code of Virginia. No less than 50 percent of the appropriations remaining after the transfer to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust fund has been satisfied are to be used for grants for fee simple acquisitions with public access or acquisitions of easements with public access. This appropriation shall be deemed sufficient to meet the provisions of § 2.2-1509.4, Code of Virginia. [Grant Funds]

*Due to budget uncertainties, we assumed a budget of \$4,500,000 for FY21 as appropriated in FY20. Because the final total amount is \$10,000,000, this grant round will award the remaining \$5,500,000 and includes separate Farmland and Forest funding categories as per § 10.1-1020 (D).

Table 14: Competitive Grant Awards (June 10, 2021, Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
	Farmlands Preservation						
1	Forkland Dairy*	5	\$500,000	906.00	8/22/2022	\$500,000.00	904.39
2	Protected Farmland along the Rappahannock River*	7	\$208,000	732.45	Withdrawn	0	0
3	Kevin Jones Farm*	1	\$46,250	70.00	<i>Open</i>	\$46,250.00	70.00
4	Morse Brothers Farm*	5	\$70,750	106.00	Withdrawn	0	0
	Forest Land Protection						
5	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative II	2	\$400,000	749.00	Withdrawn	0	0
6	Three Creek Capron*	4	\$200,000	376.00	4/23/2023	\$200,000.00	381.64
7	Round Hill Swamp at Doles Farm*	4	\$225,000	705.37	1/23/2023	\$225,000.00	706.82
	Historic Area Preservation						
8	Drexel-Morrell Center**	7	\$228,450	56.48	2/23/2023	\$228,450.00	56.40
9	Rollins Tract at Bristoe Station Battlefield**	7	\$285,000	22.35	<i>Open</i>	\$285,000.00	22.35
10	Fussell's Mill Tracts at Second Deep Bottom Battlefield**	4	\$282,000	52.01	<i>Open</i>	\$282,000.00	52.01
11	Edwards**	6	\$29,550	107.35	4/22/2023	\$29,550.00	107.35
	Natural Area Protection						
12	Pickett's Harbor Maritime Forest & Migratory Bird Habitat Protection	2	\$255,549	4.50	Withdrawn	0	0
13	Pickett's Harbor Natural Area Preserve - Lake Allure Woods*	2	\$142,298	44.00	Withdrawn	0	0
14	Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Addition – Accokeek Bottomlands	1	\$450,000	52.30	6/23/2023	\$381,078.85	58.81
15	The Cedars Natural Area Preserve - Kinzer Hollow Cave	9	\$204,000	76.70	<i>Open</i>	\$204,000.00	76.70
16	The Cedars Natural Area Preserve - Northeast Addition	9	\$164,000	62.90	Withdrawn	0	0
17	Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve - Northeast Addition	9	\$109,153	77.00	7/22/2022	\$109,153.00	78.15
	Open Spaces & Parks						
18	Blackwater Conservation Acquisition	4	\$168,500	See FY21	8/22/2022	\$168,500.00	See FY21
19	Hoskins Creek Waterfront Land Acquisition in Tappahannock	1	\$200,000	6.91	<i>Open</i>	\$200,000.00	6.91

20	South Garden International LLC Public Access Land Expansion	1	\$312,000	125.59	4/23/2023	\$312,000.00	98.79
21	Nottoway River Wildlife and Recreation Area	4	\$264,500	1,597.00	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$264,500.00</i>	<i>1,597.00</i>
22	The Green at the Science Museum of Virginia	4	\$90,000	5.20	Withdrawn	0	0
Totals			\$4,835,000	5,935.11		\$3,435,481.85	4,199.89

*Denotes acquisition by easement ** Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity. Note: *Italicized numbers represent expected payments and acreages based on the grant proposal.*

Competitive Grant Awards FY22 (October 27, 2021, Grant Round)

Item 374 of Chapter 552 of the 2021 Virginia Acts of Assembly included, in the amount for Preservation of Open Space Lands, \$10,000,000 from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia (Table 15). On June 10, 2021, the Board met and approved the FY22 grant round.

During the FY22 grant cycle, the Foundation received 34 applications requesting \$10,532,985 in grants. The project costs for all 34 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$58,915,997 and would protect 8,345.76 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on October 27, 2021, to consider these applications and approved \$7,500,000 in grant funds for 30 projects to protect 8,022 acres (Table 16). As of the date of this report, three projects have been successfully completed.

Table 15: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for October 27, 2021, Grant Round

FUNDING CATEGORIES		FY22 Budget Bill Chapter 552, Item 374 A.1.
I.	VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$2,500,000
II.	Grant Program	
	(i) Farmland Preservation	\$1,500,000
	(ii) Forest Preservation	\$1,500,000
	(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$1,500,000
	(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$1,500,000
	(v) Open Space and Parks	\$1,500,000
TOTAL		\$10,000,000

Item 374 of Chapter 552 of the 2021 Virginia Acts of Assembly

A.1. Included in the amounts for Preservation of Open Space Lands is \$10,000,000 the first year and \$10,000,000 the second year from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, § 10.1-1020, Code of Virginia. No less than 50 percent of the appropriations remaining after the transfer to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust fund has been satisfied are to be used for grants for fee simple acquisitions with public access or acquisitions of easements with public access. This appropriation shall be deemed sufficient to meet the provisions of § 2.2-1509.4, Code of Virginia.

Table 16: Competitive Grant Awards (October 27, 2021, Grant Round)

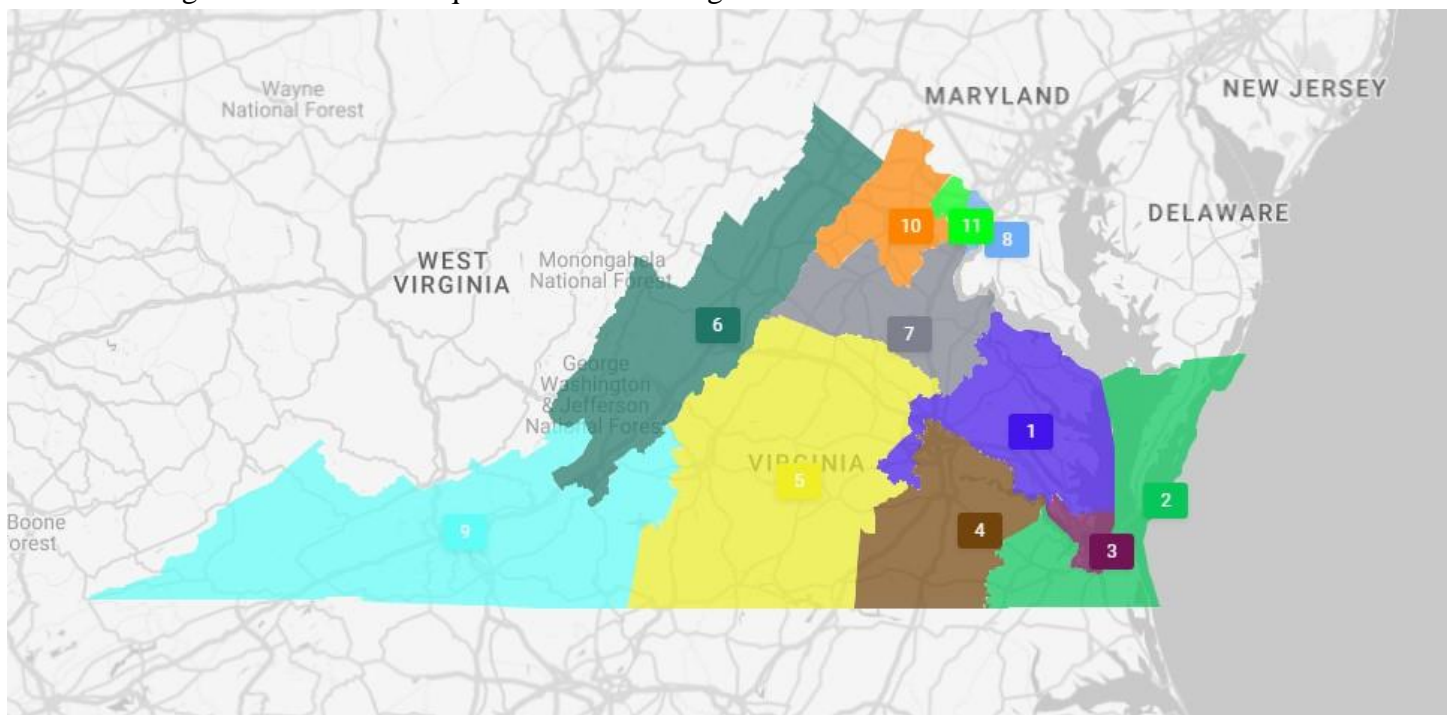
	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
	Farmlands Preservation						
1	Forkland Dairy*	5	\$500,000	See FY21R2	3/22/2022	\$500,000.00	See FY21R2
2	Thomas Neck Family Farm*	1	\$879,750	840.60	4/22/2023	\$879,750.00	840.00
3	Kevin Jones Farm (Phase II) *	1	\$120,250	70.00	<i>Open</i>	\$120,250.00	70.00
	Forest Protection						
4	Pierces Lowgrounds - Meherrin River*	4	\$350,000	2,860.00	<i>Open</i>	\$350,000.00	2,860.00
5	Roanoke River Working Forest*	5	\$464,000	932.00	<i>Open</i>	\$464,000.00	932.00
6	Over the River and Point Beach*	4	\$225,000	321.64	<i>Open</i>	\$225,000.00	324.90
7	Poplar Hollow*	6	\$300,000	611.00	<i>Open</i>	\$300,000.00	611.00
8	Caroline Diamonds - The Oak Barrens **	1	\$161,000	96.00	<i>Open</i>	\$161,000.00	96.00
	Historic Area Preservation						
9	Siegen Forest*	7	\$647,370	170.00	<i>Open</i>	\$647,370.00	170.00
10	Campbell's Bridge Mills**	4	\$375,000	5.00	<i>Open</i>	\$375,000.00	5.00
11	CCTSC Restoration Project*	5	\$69,075	8.95	Withdrawn	0	0
12	Pegram's Battery Tract at Cedar Mountain**	7	\$249,876	44.75	<i>Open</i>	\$249,876.00	44.75
13	Edwards**	6	\$158,679	See FY21R2	4/22/2023	\$158,679.00	See FY21R2
	Natural Area Protection						
14	Difficult Creek South Addition	5	\$30,000	2.16	<i>Open</i>	\$30,000.00	2.16
15	Pedlar Hills Glades Natural Area Preserve Addition	9	\$515,000	156.00	<i>Open</i>	\$515,000.00	156.00
16	Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve Land Donation	6	\$20,000	1.00	<i>Open</i>	\$20,000.00	1.05
17	Dendron Swamp Natural Area Preserve Addition	4	\$300,000	102.00	Withdrawn	0	0
18	Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve – Northeast Addition	9	\$236,847	See FY21R2	7/22/2022	\$182,144.00	See FY21R2
19	Chestnut Creek Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition	9	\$165,000	11.00	<i>Open</i>	\$165,000.00	11.00
20	Difficult Creek North Addition – Life Estate	5	\$50,153	1.39	6/23/2023	\$50,153.00	1.47
21	The Cedars Natural Area Preserve Powell River Addition	9	\$50,000	205.00	Withdrawn	0	0
22	Pinnacle State Natural Area Expansion - Weaver Creek**	9	\$133,000	92.00	<i>Open</i>	\$133,000.00	121.46

Open Spaces & Parks							
23	Copper Creek Initiative	9	\$100,000	8.00	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$100,000.00</i>	<i>8.00</i>
24	Camp Kum-Ba-Yah*	6	\$250,000	See FY20	2/22/2022	\$250,000.00	See FY20
25	Eleanor Park Conservation Easement*	1	\$387,416	1.90	1/9/2023	\$387,416.00	1.81
26	The Green at the Science Museum of Virginia	4	\$250,000	5.20	Withdrawn	0	0
27	Brander Street**	4	\$150,000	6.29	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$150,000.00</i>	<i>4.47</i>
28	Basic Park - Natural Area	6	\$87,500	44.20	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$87,500.00</i>	<i>44.20</i>
29	Brush Mountain Park - Edison Property Expansion**	9	\$210,000	207.00	9/22/2022	\$210,000.00	204.66
30	Ballenger Creek Nature Preserve*	5	\$65,084	73.00	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$65,084.00</i>	<i>73.00</i>
Totals			\$7,500,000	6,876.08	<i>1/8/1900</i>	<i>\$6,776,222.00</i>	<i>6,582.93</i>
<p>*Denotes acquisition by easement ** Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality) Four projects received grant awards in a previous grant round. Note: <i>Italicized numbers represent expected payments and acreages based on the grant proposal.</i></p>							

APPENDIX B: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation works diligently to support projects across the breadth of Virginia. The following supporting data illustrates the number of grants awarded within Virginia's eleven Congressional Districts at the time of each VLCF grant round. The district boundaries have been realigned over the years, so the cumulative totals provided in Tables 17 and 18 are not wholly representative of today's Congressional Districts. The map below reflects Virginia's 2021 Congressional boundaries.

Since 1999, the greatest concentration of grants awarded to date has come in the 4th Congressional District (Table 17), which runs from the North Carolina border up I-95 to north of Richmond. The greatest amount of grant funds also has been expended in the 4th Congressional District (Table 18). This may reflect the rapid growth and loss of open space and historic resources in this area of Virginia. Funds for projects have been awarded in all Districts. The Foundation has been successful in assisting with the conservation of an array of outstanding resources and habitats through easements and acquisitions across Virginia.



Map source: <https://www.virginiaredistricting.org/legdistricting/comments/plan/547/1>

Table 17: Geographical Distribution of Foundation Grant Awards and Completed Projects (By Project)

District	12/1999 thru 9/2016	11/2017 Awarded	11/2019 Awarded	02/21 Awarded	06/21 Awarded	10/21 Awarded	11/22 Awarded	Total Awarded
1 st	38	2	3	0	4	4	5	56
2 nd	10	2	2	1	3	0	1	19
3 rd	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	9
4 th	25	3	4	2	6	6	10	56
5 th	14	1	2	3	2	6	4	32
6 th	21	5	2	3	1	5	7	44
7 th	13	1	3	2	3	2	5	29
8 th	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	5
9 th	27	3	1	0	3	7	5	46
10 th	24	2	1	0	0	0	3	30
11 th	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	181	23	19	12	22	30	40	327

District	12/2019 thru 9/2016	Sep-17 Completed To Date	11/2019 Completed to Date	02/2021 Completed to Date	06/2021 Completed to Date	10/2021 Completed to Date	11/2022 Completed to Date	Total Completed
1 st	33	2	4	1	0	2	0	42
2 nd	7	1	1	0	2	0	0	11
3 rd	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	8
4 th	21	3	3	1	0	0	1	29
5 th	12	0	1	0	0	2	0	15
6 th	16	4	2	2	2	3	1	30
7 th	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	13
8 th	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
9 th	23	3	0	0	0	2	0	28
10 th	24	2	1	0	0	0	1	28
11 th	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	155	19	14	4	4	9	3	208

Table 18: Geographical Distribution of Foundation Competitive Grant Awards (By Funding in Dollars)

Cong. District	12/1999 thru 09/2016 Awards	09/2017 Award	11/2019 Award	02/21 Award	06/21 Award	10/21 Award	11/22 Award	Total Awarded
1 st	8,272,777	385,005	572,500	0	1,008,250	1,548,416	1,731,935	13,518,883
2 nd	4,881,525	719,400	530,175	421,875	797,847	0	281,219	7,632,041
3 rd	1,555,125	523,161	0	0	0	0	0	2,078,286
4 th	6,120,105	366,482	1,319,000	403,943	1,230,000	1,650,000	4,630,031	15,719,561
5 th	2,132,386	174,200	900,000	1,265,625	570,750	1,178,312	1,672,830	7,894,103
6 th	4,354,080	967,222	381,134	733,784	29,550	816,179	2,258,699	9,540,648
7 th	2,883,812	82,159	1,212,500	431,023	721,450	897,246	1,887,360	8,115,550
8 th	1,150,000	400,000	322,500	150,000	0	0	0	2,022,500
9 th	6,191,290	223,480	500,000	0	477,153	1,409,847	1,551,927	10,353,697
10 th	8,340,779	397,691	121,875	0	0	0	913,439	9,773,784
11 th	828,273	0	0	0	0	0	0	828,273
TOTAL	46,710,152	4,238,800	5,859,684	3,406,250	4,835,000	7,500,000	14,927,440	87,477,326

APPENDIX C: GRANT CRITERIA

Prior to each grant round, the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation reviews the grant evaluation criteria that are utilized to evaluate grant applications and revises them as necessary. An inter-agency task force comprised of representatives of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Forestry, Department of Wildlife Resources, Department of Historic Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation work together to develop the recommended document.

The FY 2023 scoring criteria total 172 points. One hundred points are allocated to each of the five funding categories that the applicant chooses (Farmland Preservation, Forest Land Preservation, Historic Area Preservation, Natural Area Protection, or Open Spaces and Parks). The scoring criteria for each category are developed by the corresponding subject matter experts from state agencies, represented by the inter-agency task force. An additional 72 points are allocated amongst nine common criteria (Virginia Outdoors Plan Identified Need; Recreation Access Model Identified Need; Water Quality Benefit; Protection of Cultural Resources; Additional ConserveVirginia Values; Fish and Wildlife Values, Public Access; Underserved Communities; and Ratio of Match to Total Project Cost). Table 19 shows the possible points to be awarded in total.

The scoring criteria details for each of the categories outlined in Table 19 are provided in the pages that follow from the 2023 VLCF Grant Manual. The criteria adopted by the Foundation help to ensure that land conservation funding will be expended wisely to protect properties with substantial resource value for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Table 19: VLCF - Grant Application Scoring Sheet and Criteria

Primary Category	Statutory Category scoring	VOP Identified Need	Recreation Access Model Identified Need	Water Quality Benefit	Protection of Cultural Resources	Additional Conserve Virginia Values	Wildlife Values	Public Access	Underserved Communities	Ratio of Match	Total Score
	Max. 100 points	Max. 3 points	Max. 3 points	Max. 11 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 12 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 3 points	Max. 172 points
Farmlands Preservation											
Forestland Preservation											
Historic Area Preservation											
Natural Area Protection											
Open Spaces & Parks											

Appendix 1 - Farmland Preservation Category

Criterion	Score
<p>Category I: Land Evaluation (40 points)</p> <p>A. Soil Productivity (25 points) Calculate the percentage of project land in each soils class. Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of these three categories x 25 (e.g., 30% prime, 20% unique and 10% important = 0.60 x 25, which equals 15 points.) More information on these soil classes can be found in § 3.2-205 of the Code of Virginia.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Value the soils classified as “Prime farmland” 2. Value the soils classified “Unique farmland” 3. Value the soils classified as “Important farmland” <p>B. Parcel Size (15 points) Using data from the most recent Census of Agriculture, score the size of the farm as it compares to the average sized farm in the locality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger by 25% or more = 15 points • Larger by 0% - 24% = 10 points • Smaller by 1% - 24% = 7 points • Smaller by 25% or more = 5 points 	
<p>Category II: Land Use (40 points)</p> <p>A. Current use and status of the land (8 points)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is the land currently being farmed? 4 points, if yes. 2) Is this a Century Farm? 4 points, if yes. <p>B. Proximity to conserved lands (10 points) To what degree is the land adjacent to or in close proximity to other preserved lands, either in agriculture production or non-active in farming?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcel adjoins other preserved lands = 10 points • Parcel is within one-quarter mile but not adjoining other preserved lands = 7 points • Parcel is within one-half mile but further than one-quarter mile of other preserved lands = 5 points <p>C. Development vulnerability (8 points) What is the vulnerability rank for this parcel as determined by the ConservationVision Development Vulnerability model (https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvulnerable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each ranking from Class II to Class V is awarded 2 points (e.g., a property in Class IV = 6 points) <p>D. Best Management Practices (BMPs) (10 points) Is a farm management plan that specifies BMPs or voluntary BMPs (e.g., stream fencing, buffers, conservation tillage, cover crops, animal waste management, etc.) being utilized as part of the normal operation of this farm? Does the property have either/both a conservation plan or a Nutrient Management Plan for all nutrient applications made to cropland, hayland, and/or pastureland?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has implemented applicable BMPs to protect water quality, either voluntarily or through a state or federal conservation program = 4 points • Applicant has a conservation plan developed by local conservation staff (Soil & Water Conservation District or Natural Resources Conservation Service) = 3 points • Applicant has a Nutrient Management Plan prepared by a DCR certified nutrient management planner = 3 points <p>E. Local farmland policy (4 points) Is the project supported by local farmland protection policies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One point each for: comprehensive plan; agricultural zoning; agricultural and forestal districts; and use value taxation. 	

F. Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points)

Is the project included in ConserveVirginia? (<https://vanhde.org/content/map>)

- Multiply the percent of the property included within the Agriculture and Forestry Category layer by 20 to calculate points. (e.g., 60% of the property is in the Ag and Forestry category; $.60 \times 20 = 12$ points)

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 2 - Forest Land Preservation Category

Criterion	Score
<p>1) Property Acreage (10 points) Is the size of the tract adequate to protect and allow for management of forestal resources? Larger blocks of land under single ownership remain more manageable and functional over time. To calculate points for projects up to 999 acres, divide acreage by 1,000, then multiply by 8. For parcels larger than 999 acres, see points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0-999 acres = Property Acreage / 1000 * 8 points 1000-4,999 = 8 points 5000-9999 = 9 points ≥10,000 acres = 10 points 	
<p>2) Acres of Forest (20 points) How many acres of the property are currently forested or devoted to forestal use? To be considered forested or devoted to forestal use, acreage must meet the State Land Evaluation and Advisory Council (SLEAC) technical standards for classification of real estate devoted to forestal use. See the grant manual for more detail on which land can qualify as “devoted to forestal use.” For up to 999-acre projects, divide the acreage by 1,000, then multiply by 18 to calculate points. For parcels larger than 999 acres, see points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0-999 acres = Forested Acreage / 1000 * 18 points 1,000-4,999 = 18 points 5,000-9,999 = 19 points ≥10,000 acres = 20 points 	
<p>3) Acres of high forest conservation value (FCV 4 and 5) (15 points) Score is based upon VDOF’s analysis and Forest Conservation Values map that ranks relative conservation value of forestland based on water quality, site productivity, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, intactness, and threat to conversion attributes. Find the map here: https://vanhde.org/content/map. To calculate points for projects up to 999 acres, divide High FCV acreage by 1,000, then multiply by 13. For larger parcels, see below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0-999 acres = High FCV acreage / 1000 * 13 points 1,000-4,999 = 13 points 5,000-9999 = 14 points >10,000 acres = 15 points 	
<p>4) Water Quality (15 points) Streamside forests provide considerable water quality, filtration, nutrient retention, and flood attenuation to downstream users. Scored based on the total linear feet of intermittent or perennial streams or rivers (as identified on the USGS 7.5” quad) or wetland or impoundment shoreline that is on or bordering the property. To calculate points, divide total length of streams or shorelines (measured in feet) by 1,000.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0 -15,000 feet = feet / 1,000 points ≥15,000 feet = 15 points 	
<p>5) Adjacency to Conserved Lands (5 points) Is the property located adjacent to, or within five miles of, already conserved lands held in perpetuity? To calculate points, subtract the distance from already conserved land in miles from 5. Greater than 5 miles receives 0 points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: Within 5 miles = 5 – (miles away from conserved lands) 	
<p>6) Management of Multiple Resources (5 points) Does the landowner manage the property according to a forest stewardship management plan (or equivalent) prepared by a professional forester and follow plan recommendations to achieve the forest management goals?</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner has an existing management plan, and with demonstrated plan implementation = 5 points Owner has management plan but no demonstrated plan implementation = 3 points 	
<p>7) Preservation of Forested Acreage (10 points)</p> <p>Landowner is willing to preserve a proportion of the property in a forested condition in perpetuity. Land that is not currently forested but that the landowner will afforest and maintain as forest in perpetuity counts. To calculate points, multiply percent forested by 10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: Percent of property that the landowner is willing to retain as forest * 10 	
<p>8) ConserveVirginia (20 points)</p> <p>Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within the Agriculture and Forestry Category by 20. (e.g., 60% of the property is in the Ag and Forestry category; 0.60 x 20 = 12 points) 	

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 3 - Historic Area Preservation Category

Criterion	Score	Notes
<p>1) Historic Significance (30 points)</p> <p><u>Historic Resource/Property is:</u> Individually listed on VLR or is a contributing resource in a listed historic district = 25, or Determined by DHR to be eligible for listing on VLR = 20, or Civil War, Revolutionary War, or War of 1812 site or battlefield designated as Priority I, II, III, or IV in the Battlefield Reports (see p. 8 of Grant manual) = 25 -AND- <u>Integrity:</u> Resources that retain a high degree of historic integrity = 5</p>		
<p>2) Underrepresented Communities & Resources (10 points)</p> <p>Property contains documented resources representing Virginia’s culturally diverse history, such as places or sites associated with people of color (circa 1619-Civil War), the Reconstruction Era (1861-1898), the Civil Rights Movement, LGBTQ, African American, Asian-American, Latino, Hispanic, Native American and women’s history = 5</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Property or area has special community significance related to its history, as explained in application, regardless of formal documentation = 5</p>		
<p>3) Threat (10 points)</p> <p>Currently on the market for sale, in an estate being settled, threatened by development, or in imminent danger of demolition = 10</p> <p>Recently on the market for sale or sold within the prior calendar year, resource is vacant/unoccupied, or resource is significantly deteriorated and in need of immediate preservation = 5</p> <p>No documentation of threat = 0</p>		
<p>4) Use & Treatment of Historic Resources & Property (10 points)</p> <p>Plans for future use(s) (e.g., interpretation as a historic site, subdivision, timber harvest) of the property are appropriate and consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection = 5, and</p> <p>Plans for treatment, alteration, and maintenance of historic resources on the property are appropriate and consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection = 5</p> <p>No documentation of plans for uses of property or treatment of historic resources = 0</p>		
<p>5) Historic Resource Protection (10 points)</p> <p>Proposed easement terms and restrictions provide comprehensive protection for historic resources and are specifically consistent with VBHR easement template = 10</p> <p>Proposed easement terms and protections for historic resources are acceptable, and generally consistent with VBHR easement template = 5</p> <p>No list of easement terms provided = 0</p>		

<p>6) Adjacency to Conserved Land (5 points)</p> <p>Adjacent to existing conserved land = 5</p> <p>In viewshed of, or in close physical proximity to significant historic resources, and/or existing conserved land = 3</p> <p>Not in viewshed of, or in close physical proximity to significant historic resources or conserved land, but represents a unique cultural resource within the geographical area = 1</p>		
<p>7) Further Public Interests (5 points)</p> <p>Project includes specific plans for programs that promote research, education, community outreach, or heritage tourism = 5</p> <p>Project includes general plans for programs to be developed that would promote research, education, community outreach, or heritage tourism = 3</p> <p>Project contains no plans that would further public interests = 0</p>		
<p>8) ConserveVirginia (20 points)</p> <p>Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <p>To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within the Cultural and Historic Preservation Category by 20. (e.g., 60% of the property is in the Cultural and Historic Preservation category; $0.60 \times 20 = 12$ points)</p>		

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 4 - Natural Areas Category

Criterion	Score
<p>I. <u>Biodiversity Significance</u> (35 points)</p> <p>1. Will the proposed project protect one or more of Virginia’s highest quality examples of a natural heritage resource? (Parcel overlaid on conservation sites layer) (20 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within Essential Conservation Site = 20 points; • Located within conservation site = 10 points; <p>2. Parcel Significance: What is the number of natural heritage elements present on the subject parcel, or associated with it? (10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 point per viable, extant EO; • 2 points per essential EO; • 0.5 point per viable, extant EO outside parcel but within conservation site that also overlaps the proposed parcel for protection <p>3. Does the project have global significance? (Biodiversity rank of conservation site) Proportion of parcel area (acres) within conservation sites, weighted by B-rank. (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1 = 5 points x proportion within conservation site; • B2 = 4 x proportion within conservation site; • B3 = 3 x proportion within conservation site; • B4 = 2 x proportion within conservation site; • B5 = 1 x proportion within conservation site 	
<p>II. <u>Ecological Integrity</u> (20 points)</p> <p>1. Regional Landscape Integrity: What percentage of parcel area (acres) is within one or more ecological cores, weighted by Ecological Integrity rank (i.e., C-rank)? (10 points) (points may add up to more, but 10 points is the max)</p> <p>Parcel is located in a Core ranked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1=10 points x proportion within ecological core; • C2=8 x proportion within ecological core; • C3=6 x proportion within ecological core; • C4=3 x proportion within ecological core; • C5=1 x proportion within ecological core; AND <p>Is any portion of the parcel within the Natural Land Network?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcel intersects with the Natural Land Network (1 point) <p>2. Local/Parcel Integrity: How much of the parcel is in natural vegetation? (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcel supports natural community/natural vegetation: 75% or more of parcel area = 5 points, 50-74% = 4 points, 25-49% = 3 points, 1-25% = 2 points <p>3. Connectivity with Conserved Lands: Is the parcel adjacent to other conserved lands with Biodiversity Management Intent (BMI)? (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjoins BMI 1 = 5 points; • Adjoins BMI 2 = 4 points; • Adjoins BMI 3 = 3 points; • Adjoins BMI 4 or 5 = 2 points; • Land not adjacent to conserved land = 0 points 	

<p>III. <u>Management Needs, Likelihood of Success, and Threat</u> (25 points)</p> <p>1. Management Needs: What is the intensity of current and future management actions needed to successfully maintain/restore natural heritage resources? (10 points) Parcel conditions require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimal natural heritage resources management = 10 points; • moderate management = 6 points; • intensive management/restoration = 3 points <p>2. Management Capacity: Does the applicant have proven experience and capacity in terms of staff resources and expertise to address management needs? (8 points) Application provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thorough description of both experience and staff capacity = 8 points; • a cursory description = 4 points; • not mentioned = 0 points <p>3. Site visit & Owner contact: NHP Staff have had timely opportunity to visit tract and discuss with landowner necessary conservation measures and implications of natural area preserve dedication. (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit & discussion = 5 points; • Site visit only = 3 points; • Discussion only = 2 points <p>4. Threat: Is there high development threat for the project area? (2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tract threat is ranked Class IV or Class V in the Conservation Vision Development Vulnerability Model = 2 points; ranked Class III = 1 point; otherwise = 0 points. Or Tract is on the market or in estate for settlement = 2 points. 	
<p>IV. <u>ConserveVirginia</u> (20 points)</p> <p>Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity Category by 20. (e.g., 60% of the property is in the category; 0.60 x 20 = 12 points) 	

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 5 - Open Space and Parks Category

Criterion	Score
<p>1) Public Access to State Waters (10 points) Does the project acquire land or an easement that provides increased public access to state waters offering recreational potential?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public access to state waters that provides boating, fishing, <u>and</u> beach/bank swimming opportunities = 10 • Public access that provides <u>two</u> of those recreational opportunities = 8 • Public access that provides <u>one</u> of those recreational opportunities = 5 • Public access that provides opportunities to view water resources while recreating = 2 	
<p>2) Project Location (10 points) Does the project conserve and create a new outdoor recreational opportunity? Or is it located adjacent to an existing park, protected conservation area, or other recreational resources that expands and protects public conservation or recreational interests?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserves new stand-alone facility that is critically needed to provide or support recreational activities = 10 • Conserves an in-holding or addition that is critical to the recreational use of an existing site = 5 	
<p>3) Scenic Resources Protection (10 points) Does the project protect scenic viewsheds or land important to the protection of any federally designated Wild and Scenic River or American Heritage River in or adjacent to Virginia, Virginia's Scenic Rivers, designated Scenic Roads, and Virginia Byways, statewide connecting trails, or identified greenways or blueways?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserves land adjacent to, or in direct viewshed of one of the listed resources = 10 • Conserves land adjacent to, or in direct viewshed of, a potential resource or a proposed statewide connecting trail identified in VOP = 7 • Conserves land adjacent to, or in direct viewshed of, a recreational trail = 5 	
<p>4) Alignment with Local or Regional Plans (15 points) Does the project support local or regional plans for parks, open space, and recreational facilities, or contribute to the protection of a documented conservation corridor? Include the name and page # of plan cited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the project/acquisition is specifically mentioned by location AND purpose/features in a local or regional plan = 15 • If project purpose is mentioned in a local or regional plan or other documents or fulfills a specific need in a local or regional plan = 10 • If area of project has a general reference in local or regional plan or project meets a general goal identified in a plan = 5 	
<p>5) Virginia Outdoors Plan Need (10 points) Does the project address a need identified in the <i>Virginia Outdoors Plan</i>? Applicant must specify VOP page #. Add all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project provides public access to natural areas = 3 • Project provides public access to a developed park = 2 • Project provides trails for hiking or walking OR access to water trails = 2 • Project provides public access to historic areas = 1 • Project provides bicycle or equestrian trails = 1 • Project provides other need identified in VOP = 1 	
<p>6) Public Utilization (10 points) Availability of land for public use may include, but is not limited to, hunting, fishing, hiking, or wildlife watching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open for public utilization between 241 and 365 days per year = 10 • Open between 181 and 240 days per year = 5 • Between 121 and 180 days per year = 3 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 61 and 120 days per year = 2 • Between 1 and 60 days per year = 1 			
<p>7) Benefit Underserved Community (15 points) Does the project provide a recreational resource to an underserved population? Use the VIMS Social Vulnerability Index (https://cmap2.vims.edu/SocialVulnerability/SocioVul_SS.html) to determine if the project benefits an underserved community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High Social Vulnerability = 15 • High Social Vulnerability = 10 • Moderate Social Vulnerability =5 • Low or Very Low Social Vulnerability =0 <p><i>Applicant must provide a reference source if not using the VIMS Social Vulnerability Index.</i></p>			
<p>8) Recreation Need (10 points) I. Land-based Recreation Need (Maximum score: 7) Will the property provide land-based recreation and is it located in an area of land-based recreation need as identified by either the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model (2021) (https://vanhde.org/content/map) or the Trust for Public Land’s ParkServe Model? [https://www.tpl.org/parkserve] (score will be higher of the two if data is available on both models)</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><i>A. DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • Low: 1 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 3 points </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><i>B. ParkServe Park Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 3 points </td> </tr> </table> <p>II. Water-based Recreation Need (Maximum Score: 3) Will the property provide water-based recreation and is it located in an area of water-based recreation need as identified by the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model (2021)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 3 • High: 2 • Moderate: 1 • Low or very low need but other supporting evidence provided, such as new type of water recreation for area or documented overcrowding at existing nearby sites: 1 	<p><i>A. DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • Low: 1 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 3 points 	<p><i>B. ParkServe Park Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 3 points 	
<p><i>A. DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • Low: 1 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 3 points 	<p><i>B. ParkServe Park Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 3 points 		
<p>9) ConserveVirginia (10 points) Is the property included in any category of ConserveVirginia and providing daily outdoor recreation access? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within any category of ConserveVirginia and providing daily access by 10. (e.g., 60% of the property is in the category; 0.60 x 10 = 6 points) 			

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 6 - Additional Scoring Criteria

1. Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) Identified Need

Degree to which a project satisfies resource conservation needs as identified in the *Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)* or in a local comprehensive plan.

Maximum 3 points

- Meets a resource conservation need identified in the VOP **and** in a local comprehensive plan = 3 points
- Meets a resource conservation need identified in the VOP **or** in a local comprehensive plan = 2 points
- Not identified in VOP or in a local comprehensive plan = 0 points

2. Virginia Recreation Access Model Identified Need

If the project includes public access AND there is at least a moderate need for recreation access identified in the Recreation Access Model, based on the terrestrial or aquatic layers, then up to 3 points may be awarded.

Maximum 3 points

- Demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial **and** aquatic recreational access = 3 points
- Demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial **or** aquatic recreational access = 2 points
- No demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial or aquatic recreational access = 0 points

3. Water Quality Benefit

Extent to which the project will protect water quality beyond the required 35'-wide vegetated buffers on perennial streams, rivers, shorelines, and waterbodies with perennial outflow.

Maximum 11 points

- 4 points if the buffer is forested (at least 50% forest canopy) and protected as such in perpetuity, PLUS.
- Up to 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer = 2 points
- 1 point for every 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer, up to 3 points, OR
- Up to 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer = 3 points
- 1 point for every 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer, up to 4 points

4. Protection of Cultural Resources

Is there a local cultural resource on the property that will be protected by this project? Examples include remnants of prior settlements or burial sites of enslaved or indigenous people, former segregated schoolhouses, sites of early racial integration, historic roadbed or railbed systems, etc.

Maximum 10 points.

- Provide photographs and other documents to authenticate the resource = 8 points
- Provide educational opportunities for the public, signage, trails, etc. = 2 points

5. Additional ConserveVirginia Values

Does the application include information to support additional ConserveVirginia values? If the project includes conservation values other than the primary application category, then two points may be awarded for each additional identified category if the applicant demonstrates that the property is located within another ConserveVirginia category, and the project also protects those respective resources in perpetuity.

Maximum 12 points

ConserveVirginia Categories:

- Agriculture & Forestry = 2 points
- Cultural & Historic Preservation = 2 points
- Floodplains & Flooding Resilience = 2 points
- Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity = 2 points
- Protected Landscapes Resilience = 2 points
- Scenic Preservation = 2 points
- Water Quality Improvement – 2 points

6. Fish and Wildlife Values

Degree to which the application includes information that benefits wildlife, habitat, and human/wildlife interaction.

Maximum 10 points

- Identify wildlife presence = 1 point; if DGIF Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species is present = additional 3 points
- Protect wildlife habitat = 1 point; if DGIF Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species habitat is protected = additional 4 points
- Public access to view, hunt, or fish wildlife = 1 point

7. Public Access

Degree to which the project has public or visual access.

Maximum 10 points

- Full Public Access (50% of the year or more) = 10 points
- Limited Public Access (less than 50% of the year) = 5 points
- Visual Access = 2 points
- No Access = 0 points

8. Underserved Communities

Degree to which the community where the project is located is underserved/socially vulnerable.

Maximum 10 points

- Very high social vulnerability = 10
- High social vulnerability = 8
- Moderate Social Vulnerability = 5
- Low or Very Low Social Vulnerability = 0

9. Ratio of Match to Total Project Cost

If providing 60 percent or more match, to get points provide an appraisal or pre-appraisal with your application.

Maximum 3 points

- Eighty percent or more of total project cost = 3 points
- Sixty percent or more of total project cost = 2 points
- Fifty percent of total project cost = 0 points

Total Maximum Score for Additional Scoring Criteria: 72 points