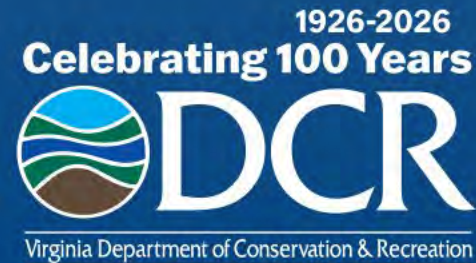


Virginia Land Conservation Foundation FY26 Grant Round Workshop

June 24, 2026



VLCF Grant Workshop Agenda

1:30 PM Overview & Statewide Priority Scoring Criteria

Damian Martin and Gina DiCicco, Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, and Becky Gwynn, Dept. Wildlife Resources

Grant Categories and Interagency Task Force Members

1:45 PM Farmland Preservation

Genny Harris, Dept. of Forestry

2:00 PM Forest Preservation

Amanda Scheps, Dept. of Forestry

2:15 PM Historic Area Preservation

Karri Richardson, Dept. of Historic Resources

2:30 PM Natural Areas Preservation

Rob Evans, Division of Natural Heritage, DCR

2:45 PM Open Spaces and Parks

Kristal McKelvey and Kellie Seaton, Planning & Recreation Resources Division, DCR

3:00 PM Questions from the audience

VLCF Program Information

- The FY27 grant round has a projected record \$17.2M available for land conservation grants
\$12M budget + \$750K interest + \$4.4M in returned grants
- **Five categories of funding:**
 - ~\$2.71M for Farmland Preservation
 - ~\$2.55M for Forestland Preservation
 - ~\$2.55M for Historic Resources Preservation
 - ~\$4.55M for Natural Area Preservation
 - ~\$4.85M for Open Spaces & Parks



Program Information

- Who can apply?
 - State & local governmental bodies, Virginia Indian Tribes, and qualified nonprofits (“holder” VA Cons. Easement Act).
- Match Requirement:
 - Applicants can seek up to 50% of the purchase price + due diligence costs, unless a state agency or Virginia Indian Tribe (100%).
 - Eligible expenses are listed in Appendix A of the grant manual.
 - A list of additional potential grant sources: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/federal-state-grants>

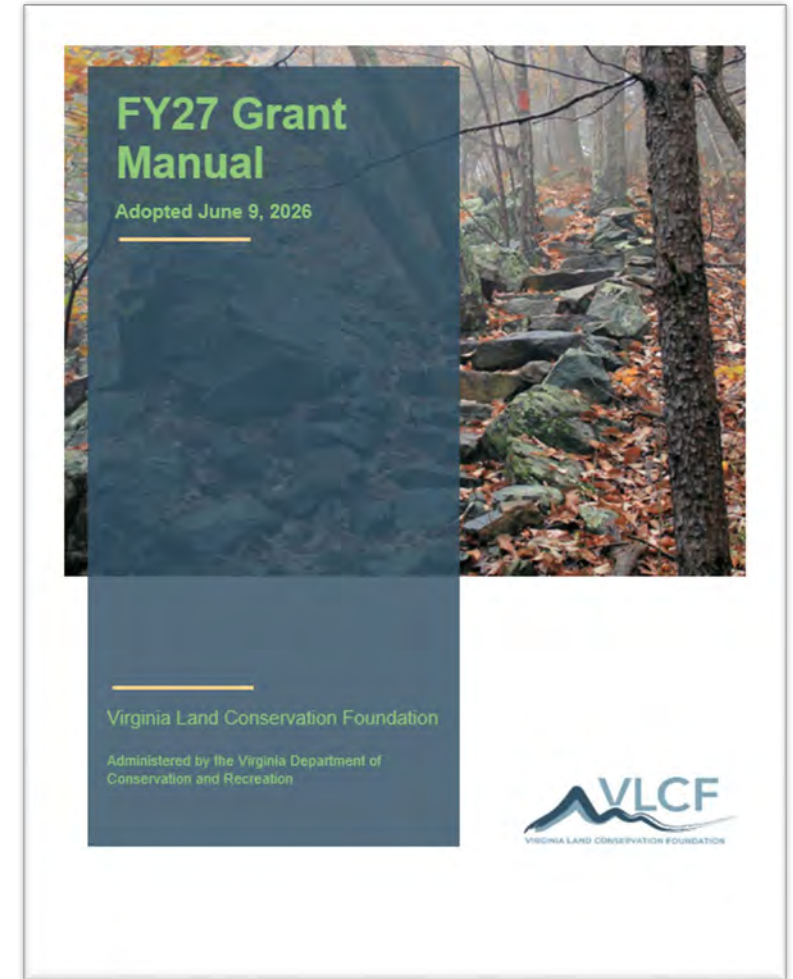


General Program Requirements

- Project must protect a specific site, with the boundaries clearly identified in the application.
- Projects by nonprofits must have an open-space easement held by a public body.
- Project should be completed within two years; a one-year extension may be granted.
- Grant payments made as a reimbursement at closing, or afterwards; land must be conserved prior to grant payment.

More About the Program

- All program information is in the Grant Manual, including links to helpful websites and databases.
- Note the important information in the Appendices:
 - A. Required application information, eligible expenses, and required due diligence documents
 - B. Scoring sheets for the five categories and the Statewide Priority Scoring
 - Category: 100 points; Statewide Priority Scoring: 90 points
 - C. Example match letter if 100% of funds are not yet identified
 - D. Required resource protections for all projects



Online Application: WebGrants

- Register for an account and fill out your application:
<https://vadcr.webgrantscloud.com/index.do>
- Follow application directions, attach requested files and adhere to page limitations, then submit your application
- See VLCF webpage for instructions and guides:
<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/vlcf>
- Contact us and the experts listed in each category with questions!

Grant Application and Scoring

- Choose a secondary category if appropriate
- Contact agency staff to make sure the project is eligible
- Include information about how the project supports the second category
- *May be critical to receive funding if none is available in the primary category!*
- **Be sure to address all criteria!**

Interagency Taskforce:

- Dept. of Ag. & Consumer Services
- Dept. of Forestry
- Dept. of Historic Resources
- Dept. of Conservation & Rec.
 - Natural Heritage
 - Planning & Rec. Resources
- Dept. of Wildlife Resources
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Applications are **due by 5 p.m. on August 21, 2026**

Grant Application and Scoring

Score your application! Be sure all pertinent info is included in your application to get maximum points.

All resource protections stated in the application must be included in the project's final deed language.

E.g., promised 100-foot forested riparian buffers get extra points and must be protected in perpetuity.



Statewide Priority Scoring

1. **Public Access** - Does the project provide public access?
2. **VOP Identified Need** – Is the project a regional featured project in the *Virginia Outdoors Plan*? Does it address recreation or resource conservation topic identified in the VOP or a local comprehensive plan?



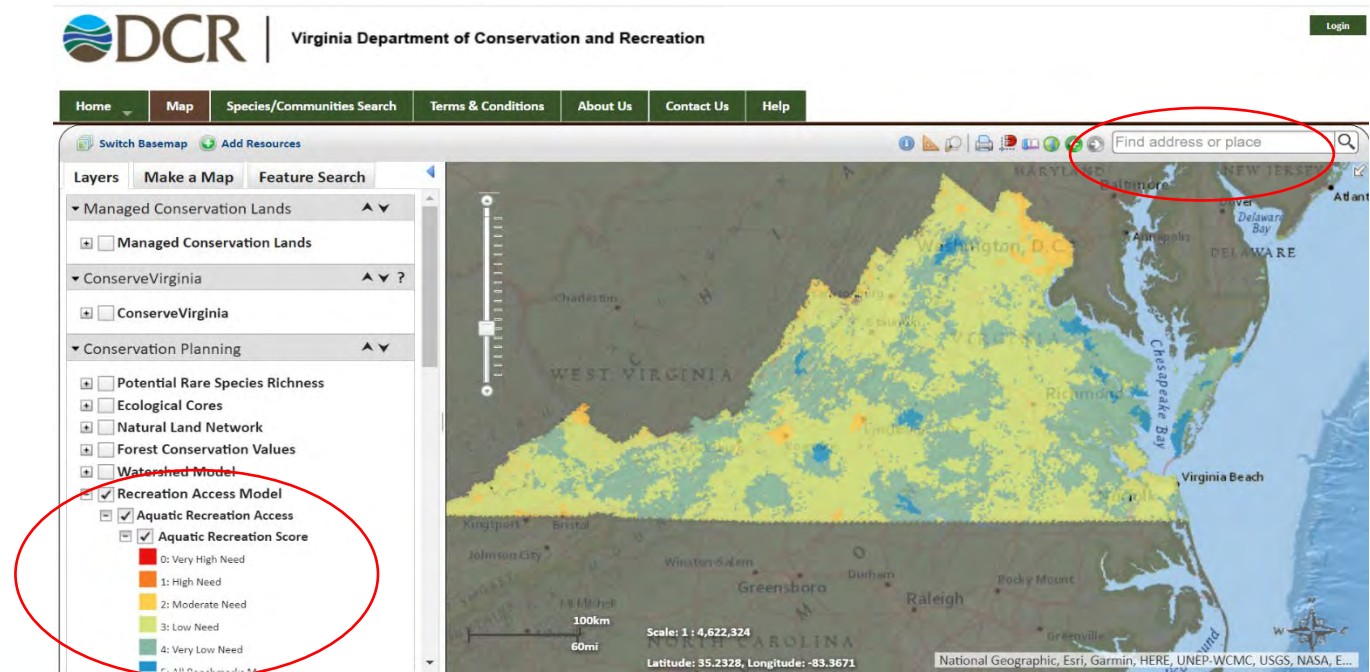
Find the VOP at:
www.dcr.virginia.gov/vop

Statewide Priority Scoring

3. **Virginia Nature Based Recreation Access Model Identified Need** - For parcels that will provide public access, does the project demonstrate a need for land or water access based on the Nature Based Recreation Access Model?

Find the Rec Access Model at:

<https://vanhde.org/>



Statewide Priority Scoring

4. Protection of Cultural Resources - Is there a local cultural resource on the property that will be protected by this project?

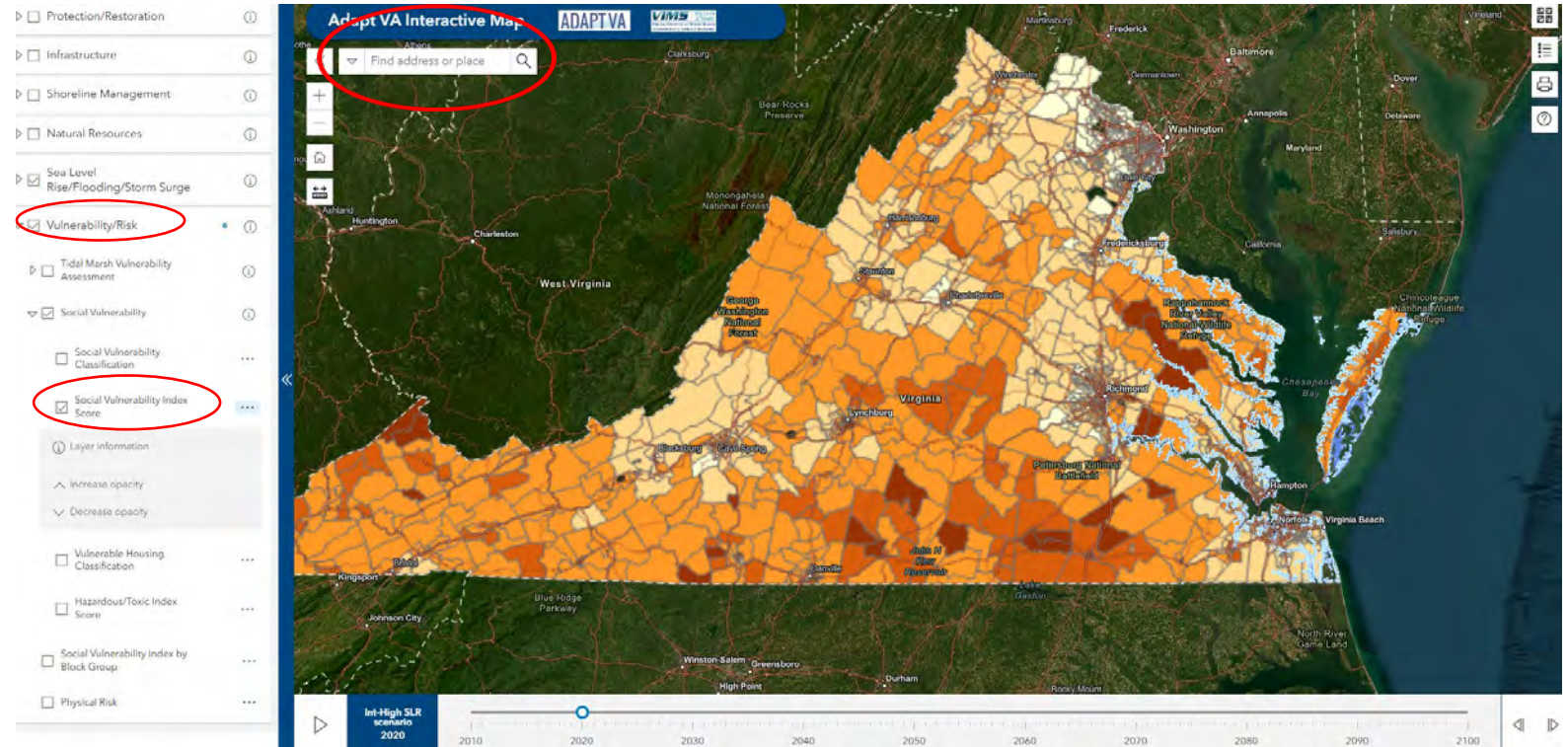
- Examples: remnants of prior settlements or burial sites of enslaved or indigenous people, former segregated schoolhouses, sites of early racial integration, or historic roadbeds.
- Provide photos and documentation. Tell us about the cultural importance of the site and how it will be protected.
- Provide educational opportunities open to the public.
- Provide draft language to be used in the deed to protect the resources.



Statewide Priority Scoring

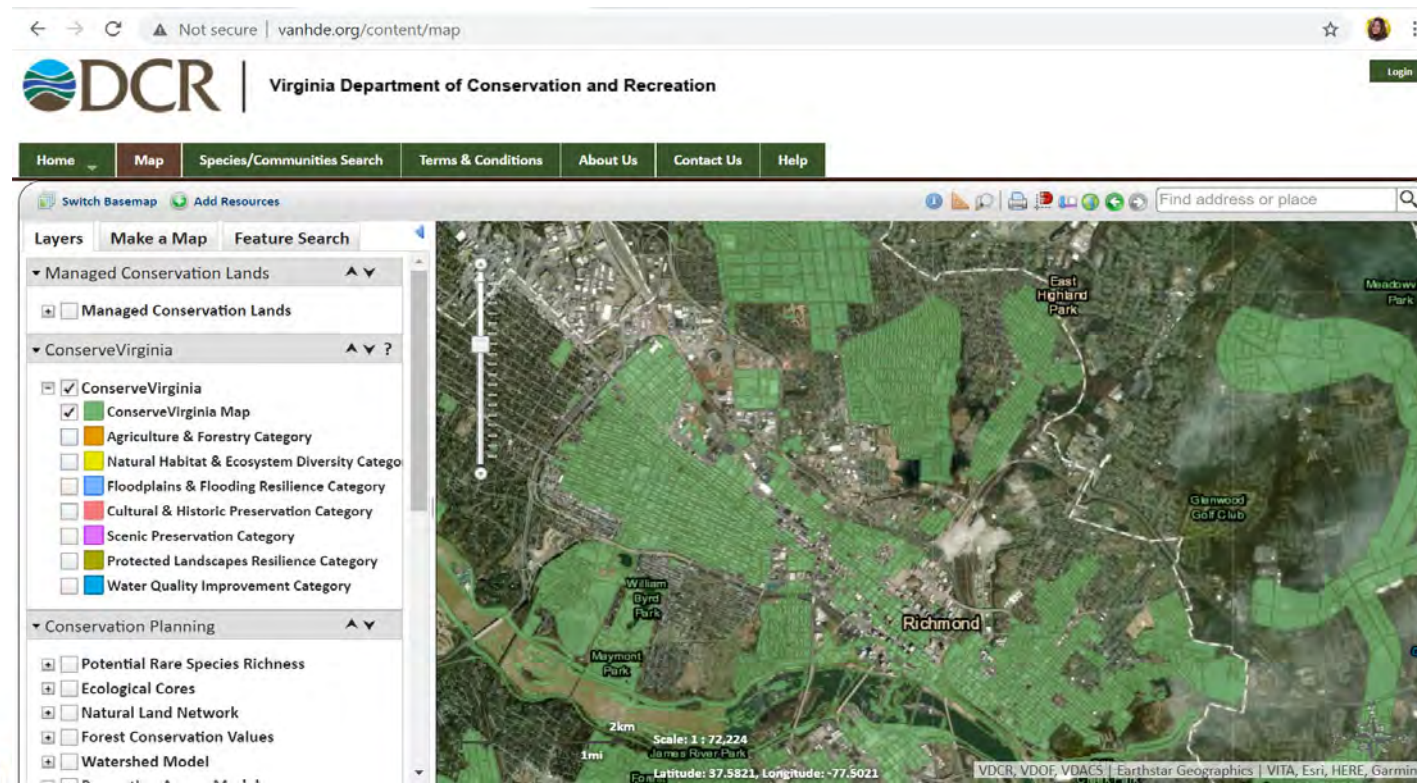
5. Underserved Communities – Does the project benefit an underserved or socially vulnerable community?

VIMS Social Vulnerability Index:
https://cmap22.vims.edu/AdaptVA/AdaptVA_viewer.html



Statewide Priority Scoring

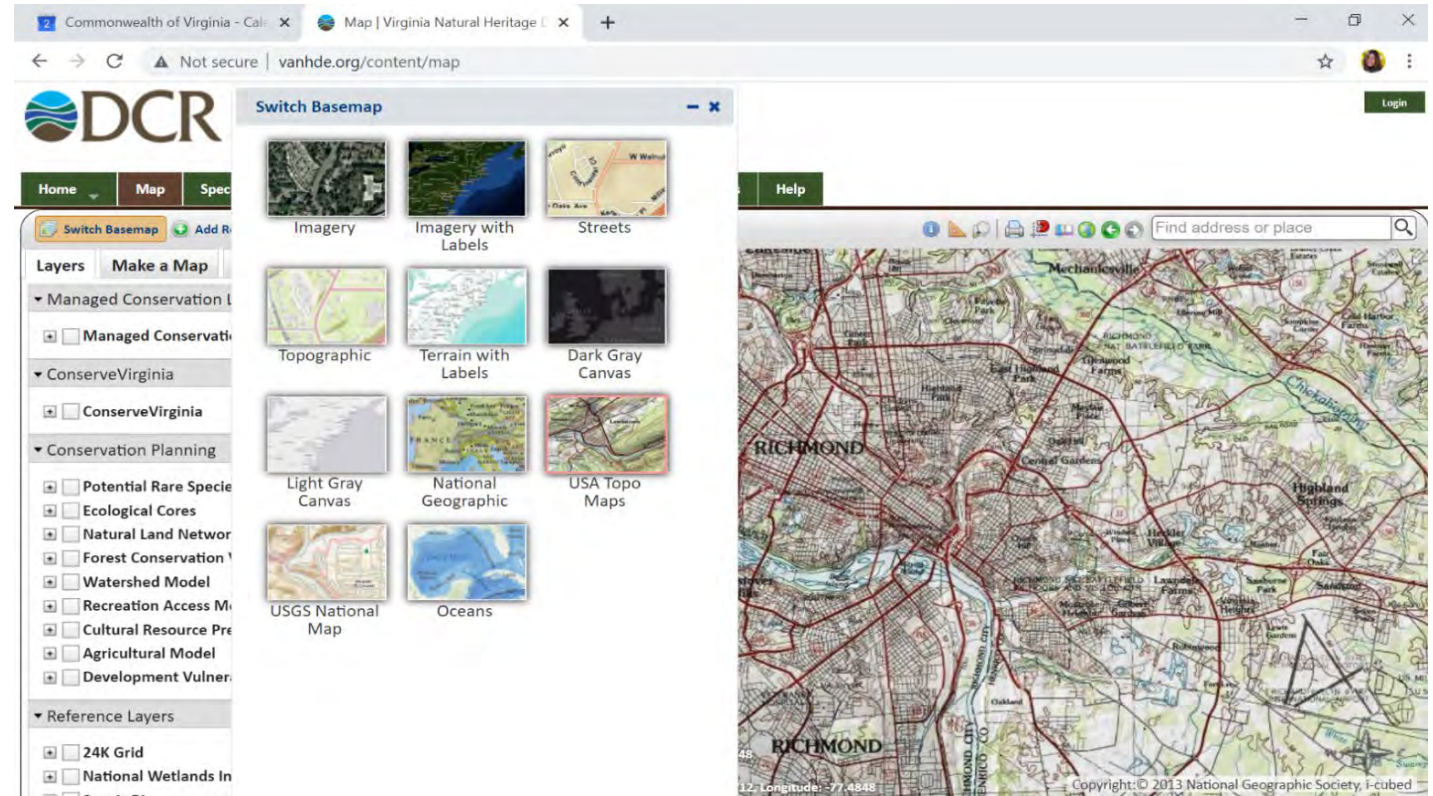
6. Additional ConserveVirginia Values – Does the project protect additional ConserveVirginia values in perpetuity?



Find
ConserveVirginia at:
<https://vanhde.org/>

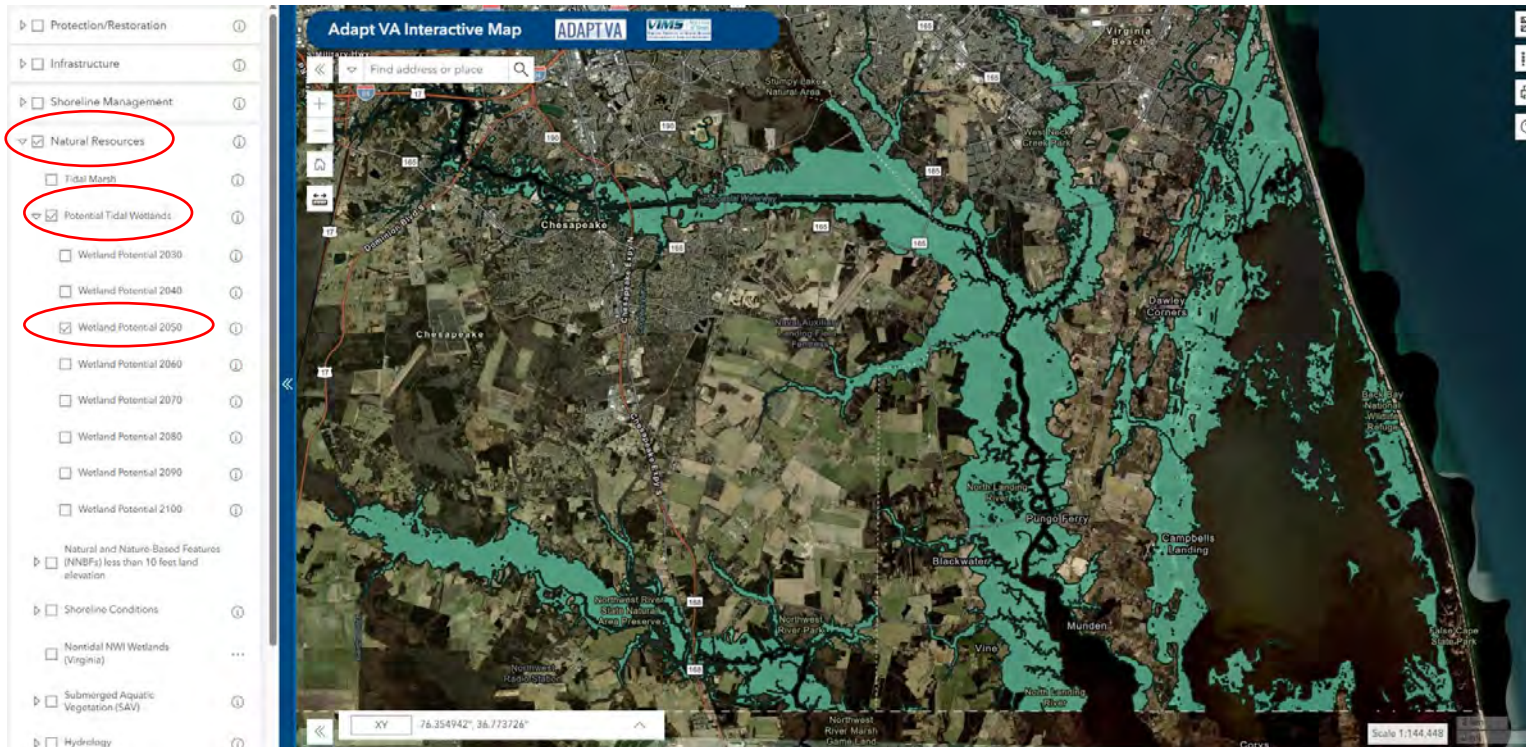
Statewide Priority Scoring

7. **Water Quality**
Benefit – Does the project protect water quality beyond the minimum 35'-wide permanent vegetated riparian buffer on perennial streams, rivers, shorelines, and waterbodies with perennial outflow?



Find USA Topo maps at: <https://vanhde.org/>

Statewide Priority Scoring



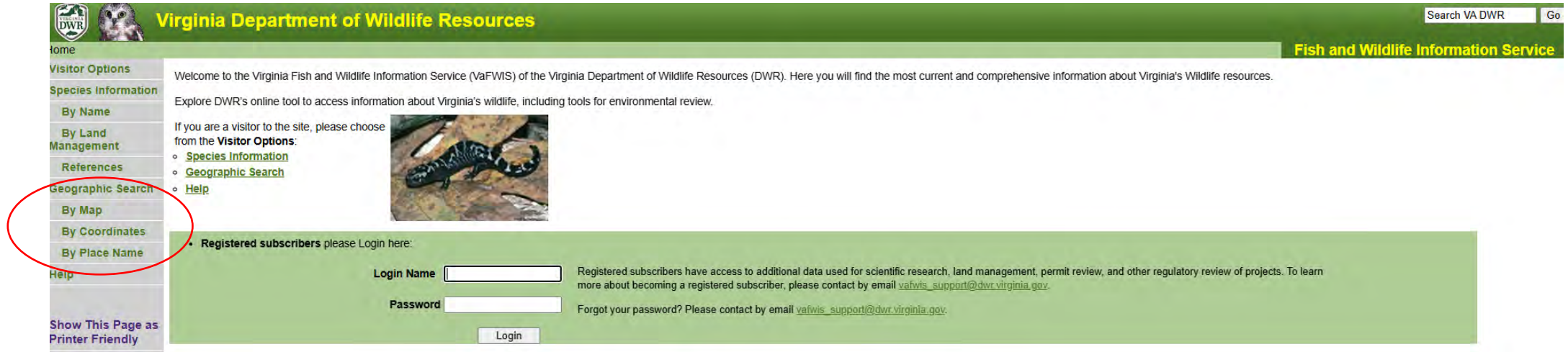
7. **Water Quality Benefit** – Does the project protect intersect the Wetland Potential 2050 layer of the AdaptVA interactive map and prohibit impervious surfaces in those areas?

Find AdaptVA at:

https://cmap22.vims.edu/AdaptVA/AdaptVA_viewer.html

Statewide Priority Scoring

8. Fish and Wildlife Values – Does the project benefit wildlife, habitat, and human/wildlife interaction?



The screenshot shows the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) website. The header includes the DWR logo and the text "Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources". A search bar is located in the top right corner. The sidebar on the left contains the following links: Home, Visitor Options, Species Information, By Name, By Land Management, References, Geographic Search (circled in red), By Map, By Coordinates, By Place Name, and Help. The main content area features a welcome message and a login section for registered subscribers. The login section includes fields for Login Name and Password, and a Login button. A message below the login fields states: "Registered subscribers have access to additional data used for scientific research, land management, permit review, and other regulatory review of projects. To learn more about becoming a registered subscriber, please contact by email vafwis_support@dwr.virginia.gov. Forgot your password? Please contact by email vafwis_support@dwr.virginia.gov."

<https://services.dwr.virginia.gov/fwis/>

Questions: Becky Gwynn, Deputy Director
VA Dept. of Wildlife Resources

Becky.Gwynn@dwr.virginia.gov

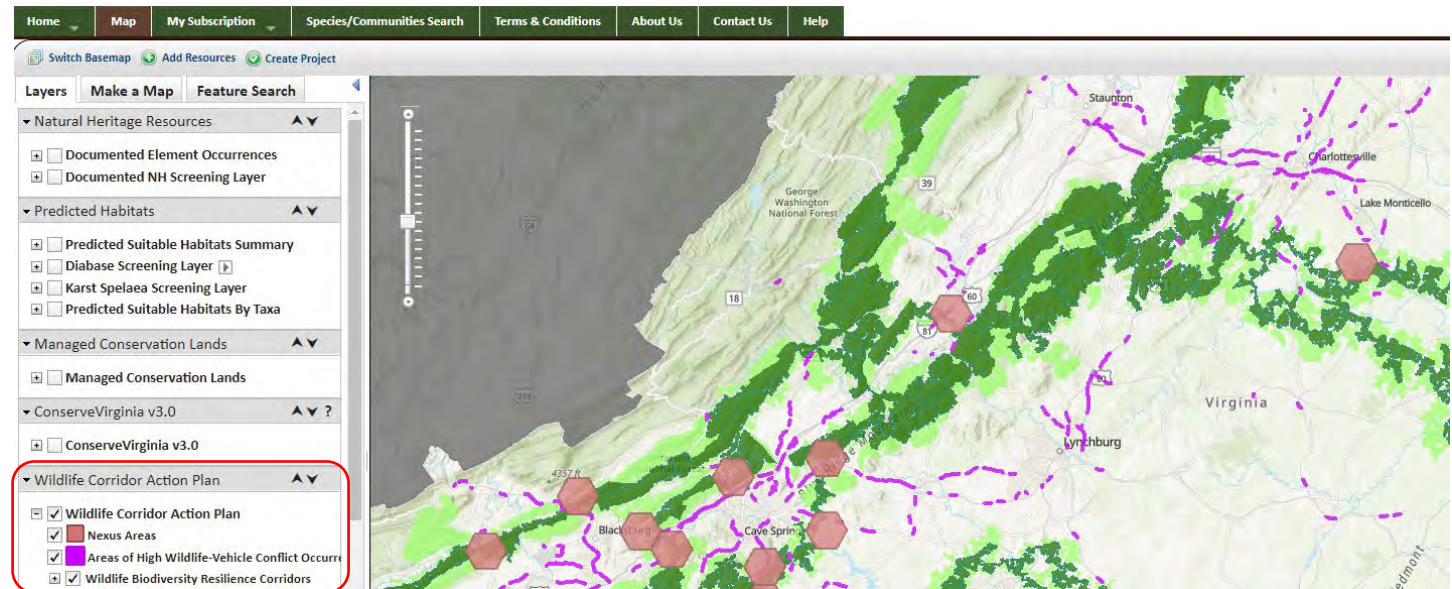
(804) 593-2043

Statewide Priority Scoring

- 9. Protection of Identified Wildlife Corridors** – Does the project fall within an area designated as a wildlife corridor buffer or actual corridor in the Virginia Wildlife Corridor Action Plan? To receive points, the deed must include language to maintain the integrity of the corridor or corridor buffer.

Learn more about the 2023 plan:
<https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/corridors/>

Wildlife corridors and their buffers are mapped and found on the Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer: www.vanhde.org.





Statewide Priority Scoring

10. Can the applicant provide a title commitment insuring the applicant's interest in the property?
11. Is the applicant up-to-date on all required semi-annual progress reports for their previously awarded grants?

VLCF Grant Manual & Application:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/vlcf>

<https://vadcr.webgrantscloud.com/index.do>

Questions?

suzan.bulbulkaya@dcr.virginia.gov
(804) 371-5218

damian.martin@dcr.virginia.gov
(804) 971-0257

gina.dicicco@dcr.virginia.gov
(804) 837-1819





Farmland Preservation Category

VLCF Grants Workshop FY27

Genny Harris
Working Lands Conservation Specialist
Virginia Department of Forestry
June 24, 2026

Appendix B – VLCF Category Scoring Sheets and Statewide Priority Scoring

I. Farmland Preservation Category

	Score
Category I: Land Evaluation (35 points) A. Soil Productivity (20 points) Calculate the percentage of project land in each soils class. Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of these three categories × 20 (e.g., 30% prime, 20% unique and 10% important = 0.60×20, which equals 12 points.) More information on these soil classes can be found in § 10.1-1119.7 of the Code of Virginia. 1. Value the soils classified as "Prime farmland" 2. Value the soils classified "Unique farmland" 3. Value the soils classified as "Important farmland" 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. • Larger by 25% or more = 15 • Larger by 0% - 24% = 10 • Smaller by 1% - 24% = 7 • Smaller by 25% or more = 5	
Category II: Land Use (45 points) A. Current use and status of the land (7 points) • Is the land currently being farmed? 7, if yes. B. Proximity to conserved lands (8 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? • Parcel adjoins other preserved lands = 8 • Parcel is within one-quarter mile but not adjoining other preserved lands = 6 • Parcel is within one-half mile but further than one-quarter mile of other preserved lands = 3 C. Development vulnerability (15 points) What is the vulnerability rank for this parcel as determined by the ConservationVision Development Vulnerability model (www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconv/vulnerability)? Calculate the percentage of project land in Vulnerability Classes II, III, and IV. Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of these three categories × 15 (e.g. 30% Class II, 20% Class III and 10% Class IV = $0.6 \times 15 = 9$ points) D. Conservation Plan/Best Management Practices (BMPs) (7 points) Does the farm have a documented conservation plan for applicable best management practices, or a Nutrient Management Plan for all nutrient applications to cropland, hayland, or pastureland? • The applicant has a documented conservation plan (developed by local Soil and Water Conservation District staff, NRCS, or similar) AND/OR a Nutrient Management Plan (prepared by a DCR certified planner) that outlines the implementation of BMPs = 4 • Provides evidence of plan implementation = 3	



Farmland Preservation Criteria

Criteria	Possible Points
Category I: Land Evaluation (35 points)	
A. Soil Productivity	20
B. Parcel Size	15
Category II: Land Use (45 points)	
A. Current Use and Status of the Land	7
B. Proximity to Conserved Lands	8
C. Development Vulnerability	15
D. Conservation Plan/Best Management Practices	7
E. Local Farmland Policy	8
Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points)	
Ag and Forestry Category	20
Total	100



Example Application

- 450 -acre farm property in Accomack
 - 30% prime, 20% unique soils
 - Larger than average size of farm in county by 40%
- Actively managed
- Adjoins another open space easement
- 10% of property in Class II, 20% in Class III Development Vulnerability
- Applicant has a conservation plan developed by NRCS and implements BMPs
- The property is zoned A1, participates in use value taxation, and is in an agricultural and forestal district



Category I: Land Evaluation

- **A. Soil Productivity**
 - Use NRCS Web Soil Survey
 - Calculate percentage of land in each soil class supporting agricultural uses (Prime, Unique, Important)
 - Points awarded based on combined percentages

Example property score:

- $30\% \text{ prime} + 20\% \text{ unique} = 0.3 + 0.2 = 0.5$
- $0.5 \times 20 = \mathbf{10 \text{ points}}$



Web Soil Survey AOI

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Contact Us | Subscribe | Archived Soil Surveys | Soil Survey Status | Glossary | Preferences | Link | Logout | Help

Area of Interest (AOI) | Soil Map | **Soil Data Explorer** | Download Soils Data | Shopping Cart (Free)

View Soil Information By Use: All Uses | Printable Version | Add to Shopping Cart

Intro to Soils | **Suitabilities and Limitations for Use** | Soil Properties and Qualities | Ecological Site Assessment | Soil Reports

Search

Map Legend

Layer Properties Menu

- ☒ Area of Interest (AOI)
- ☒ Area of Interest (AOI)
- ☒ Location Marker
- ☒ Soils
 - ☐ Soil Survey Areas
 - ☐ Soil Map Unit Polygons
 - ☐ Soil Map Unit Lines
 - ☐ Soil Map Unit Points
- ☒ Soil Rating Polygons
 - ☐ Not prime farmland
 - ☐ All areas are prime farmland
 - ☐ Prime farmland if drained
 - ☐ Prime farmland if protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
 - ☐ Prime farmland if irrigated
 - ☐ Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
 - ☐ Prime farmland if irrigated and drained
 - ☐ Prime farmland if irrigated and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
 - ☐ Prime farmland if subsoiled, completely removing the root inhibiting soil layer
 - ☐ Prime farmland if irrigated

Map — Farmland Classification

Scale: (not to scale)

Identify

Layer	Attribute Name	Attribute Value
Location	Latitude, Longitude	37.74211°, -78.38180°
Area of Interest (AOI)	Area (acres in this part)	185,798
	AoiID	2372065
Soil Rating Polygons	Soil Ratings Value	All areas are prime farmland

Category I: Land Evaluation

- **B. Parcel Size**

- Use Latest US Census of Agriculture (2022)

Calculation:

- 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

Table 8. Farms, Land in Farms, Value of Land and Buildings, and Land Use: 2022 and 2017

[For meaning of abbreviations and symbols, see introductory text.]

Item	Virginia	Accomack	Albemarle
FARMS AND LAND IN FARMS			
Farms number, 2022	38,995	254	866
..... 2017	43,225	239	913
Land in farms acres, 2022	7,309,687	81,233	167,583
..... 2017	7,797,979	76,761	182,781
Average size of farm acres, 2022	187	320	194
..... 2017	180	321	200

Example property score:

- Parcel is 450 acres, average size of a farm in Accomack is 320 acres, property is larger by more than 25% = 15 points

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/Virginia/st51_2_008_008.pdf



Category II: Land Use

- **A. Current Use and Status**

- What is the current use* and status of the land?

Calculation:

- Is the land currently being farmed? If yes, 7 points

Example property score:

- Property is currently in active agricultural management. 7 points.

*This criteria does include historic use or planned future use!



Category II: Land Use

- **B. Proximity to Conserved Lands**
- Use NHDE
- To what degree is the land adjacent to or in close proximity to other preserved lands?

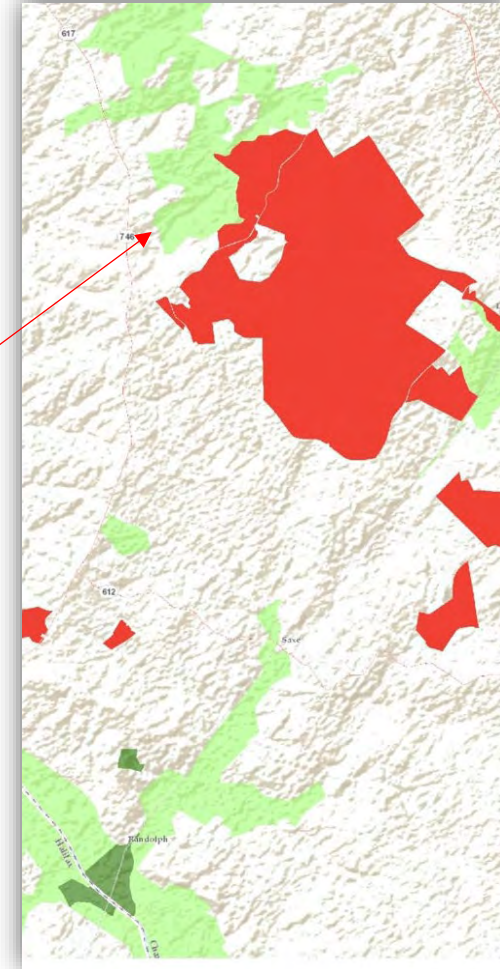
Calculation:

- Parcel adjoins other preserved lands = 8 points
- Parcel is within one-quarter mile but not adjoining preserved lands = 6 points
- Parcel is within one half mile but further than one quarter mile of other preserved lands = 3 points

Example property score:

- Parcel adjoins an open space easement= 8 points

Adjoins parcel

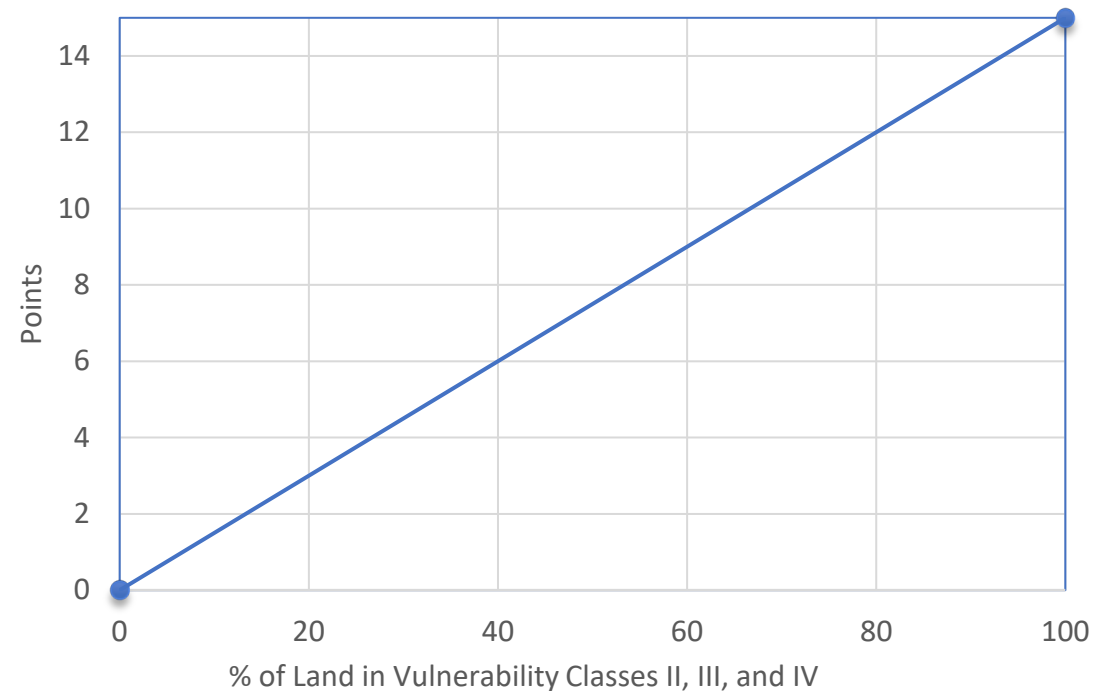


Category II: Land Use

- **C. Development Vulnerability**
- What is the development vulnerability rank for this parcel?
- Calculate the percentage of project land in Classes II, III, and IV.
- Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of the three categories * 15

Example property score:

- 10% Class II, 20% Class III, and 0% in Class IV=
 $(0.1+0.2+0)= 0.3$
- $0.3 \times 15 = \mathbf{4.5 \text{ points}}$



Development Vulnerability on the NHDE Explorer



Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

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Layers Make a Map Feature Search

Conservation Planning

- ☐ Buffers for Freshwater Mussel Habitat
- ☐ Potential Freshwater Mussel Richness
- ☐ Potential Rare Species Richness
- ☐ Ecological Cores
- ☐ Natural Land Network
- ☐ Forest Conservation Values
- ☐ Watershed Impact Model
- ☐ Nature-based Recreation Access Model
- ☐ Cultural Resource Preservation Index
- ☐ Agricultural Model
- ☒ Development Vulnerability Model

- Undevelopable (-1)
- Class I (0 - 5: Least Vulnerable)
- Class II (6 - 10)
- Class III (11 - 25)
- Class IV (26 - 50)
- Class V (51 - 100: Most Vulnerable)
- Already Developed (101)

<https://vanhde.org/content/map>

Conservation Planning Group

Calculate combined percentage of property in Classes II, III, and IV



Category II: Land Use

- **D. Conservation Plan/BMPs**
- Does the farm have a documented conservation plan for applicable best management practices, or
- A nutrient management plan for all applications to crop, hay, or pastureland?
- 4 points for having a documented plan* that outlines the implementation
- 3 points for evidence of implementation

*Please provide copies!

Example property score:

- Property has a conservation plan developed by NRCS, and has implemented applicable BMPs as evidenced by cost-share participation = **7 points**

NRCS TUCSON SERVICE CENTER
3241 N ROMERO RD
TUCSON, AZ 85705-5223
(520) 292-2599

KRISTEN I
DISTRICT CONSERVATION

Conservation Plan

TUCSON PLANT MATERIALS CENTER
3241 N ROMERO RD
TUCSON, AZ 85705

Access Road

An access road will be upgraded for dust control as part of a conservation management system to reduce dust along the main road on the west side of fields 1 and 3 and along the road between fields 1 and 3. An ABC gravel treatment will be applied. The access road will be installed according to NRCS provided specifications. With proper operation and maintenance, the expected lifespan of this practice is 10 years.

Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
1	710 ft	11	2009	560 ft	12/1/2009
3	11 ft	11	2009	385 ft	12/1/2009
Total:	721 ft			945 ft	

Conservation Crop Rotation

Conservation Crop Rotation will be applied as part of this Conservation Plan to improve soil quality. The length of the cropping rotation is on average five years. The cropping sequence will be perennial warm season grasses followed by cool and warm season cover crop species. Practice lifespan is 1 year.

Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
1	3.4 ac	9	2008	3.4 ac	3/1/2011
2	2 ac	9	2008	2 ac	3/1/2011
3	3 ac	9	2008	3 ac	3/1/2011
4	5 ac	9	2008	5 ac	3/1/2011
5	3.5 ac	9	2008	3.5 ac	3/1/2011
6	3 ac	9	2008	3 ac	3/1/2011
7	2 ac	9	2008	2 ac	3/1/2011
8	2 ac	9	2008	2 ac	3/1/2011
9	11 ac	9	2008	11 ac	3/1/2011
Total:	34.9 ac			34.9 ac	

Category II: Land Use

- **E. Local Farmland Policy**
- Is the project supported by local farmland protection policies?
 - Ag zoning = 2 points
 - Agricultural and Forestal District = 2 points
 - Use Value Taxation = 2 points
 - Purchase of Development Rights Project = 2 points

Example property score:

- Property is zoned A1, participates in Use Value Taxation, and is part of an Agricultural and Forestal District = 6 points

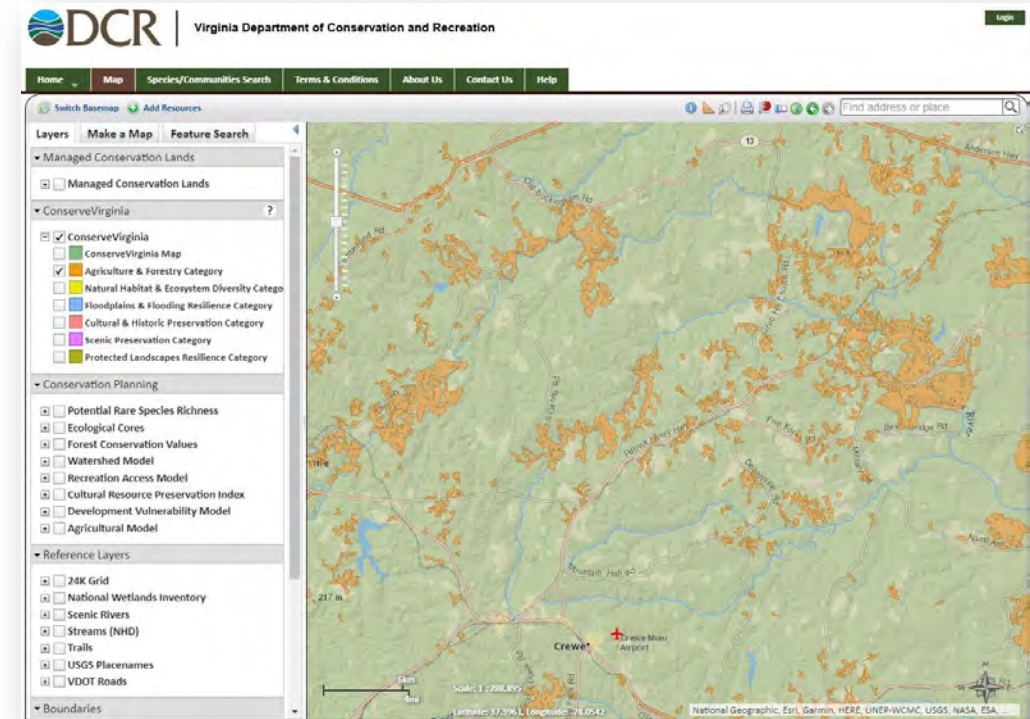


Category III: ConserveVirginia

- Proportion of the property that is in ConserveVA's Agriculture & Forestry Category * 20

Example property score:

■ $0.63 * 20 = 12.6$



Example Results Summary

Criteria	Score	Possible Points
Category I: Land Evaluation (35 points)		
A. Soil Productivity	10	20
B. Parcel Size	15	15
Category II: Land Use (45 points)		
A. Current Use and Status of the Land	7	7
B. Proximity to Conserved Lands	8	8
C. Development Vulnerability	4.5	15
D. Conservation Plan/Best Management Practices	7	7
E. Local Farmland Policy	6	8
Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points)		
Ag and Forestry Category	12.6	20
Total	70.1	100



Suggestions

- Competitive category, but many opportunities to demonstrate project value
- Run the scoring sheet and provide evidence in your application for the scoring
- The more materials/documentation included, the better!
- Complete application-respond to all criteria and questions





Questions?

Genny Harris

Working Lands Conservation Specialist

genette.harris@DOF.Virginia.gov

(434) 282-4823



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
FORESTRY

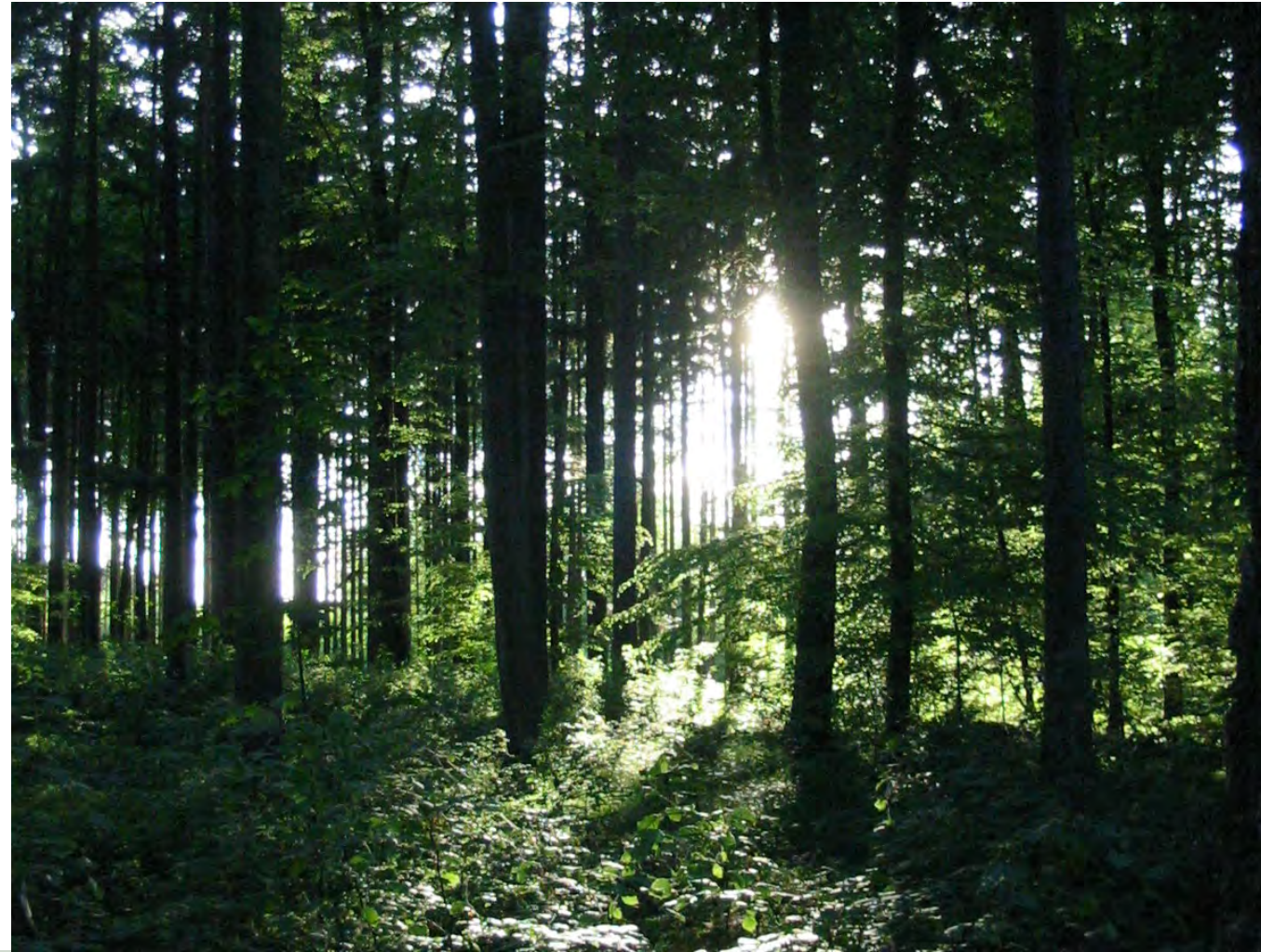
www.DOF.Virginia.gov



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
FORESTRY

Forestland Preservation Category Scoring

Virginia Land Conservation
Foundation Grant FY27



Amanda Scheps
Working Lands Preservation Program Manager
Virginia Department of Forestry
June 2026

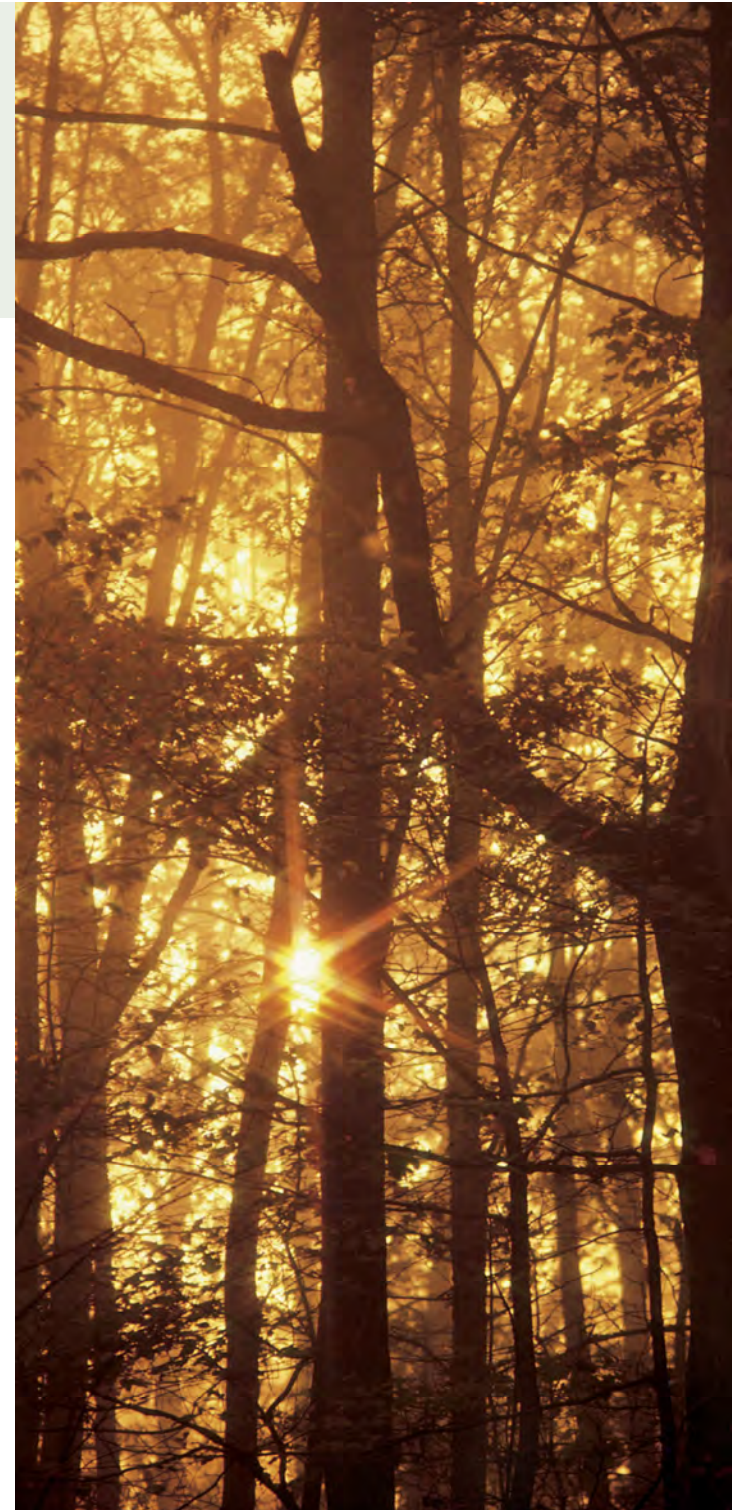
FORESTLAND PRESERVATION CRITERIA

Criteria	Possible Points
1. Property acreage	10
2. Acres of forest	20
3. Acres that are very high Forest Conservation Value (FCV)	15
4. Development Vulnerability (percentage of acreage in Classes II, III, and IV)	10
5. Adjacency to conserved lands	10
6. Management of Multiple Resources	5
7. Preservation of forested acreage	10
8. Percent within ConserveVA's Ag & Forestry Category	20
Total	100



Example Application

- 1) 400-acre property
- 2) 350 acres are forested
- 3) 300 acres with very high Forest Conservation Value (FCV)
- 4) 20% of property in Class III, 10% in Class IV Development Vulnerability
- 5) 0.5 miles to a Wildlife Management Area
- 6) Forest Stewardship Management Plan & demonstrated implementation
- 7) Applicant willing to preserve 300 acres of forest cover
- 8) 63% of acreage in ConserveVirginia





1. Property Acreage (10 points)

Score:

- 0 – 499 acres = $\text{Property Acreage} \div 500 \times 8$ points
- 500 – 749 acres = 8 points
- 750 – 999 acres = 9 points
- >1,000 acres = 10 points

Example property score:

$$400/500 \times 8 = \mathbf{6.4 \text{ points}}$$

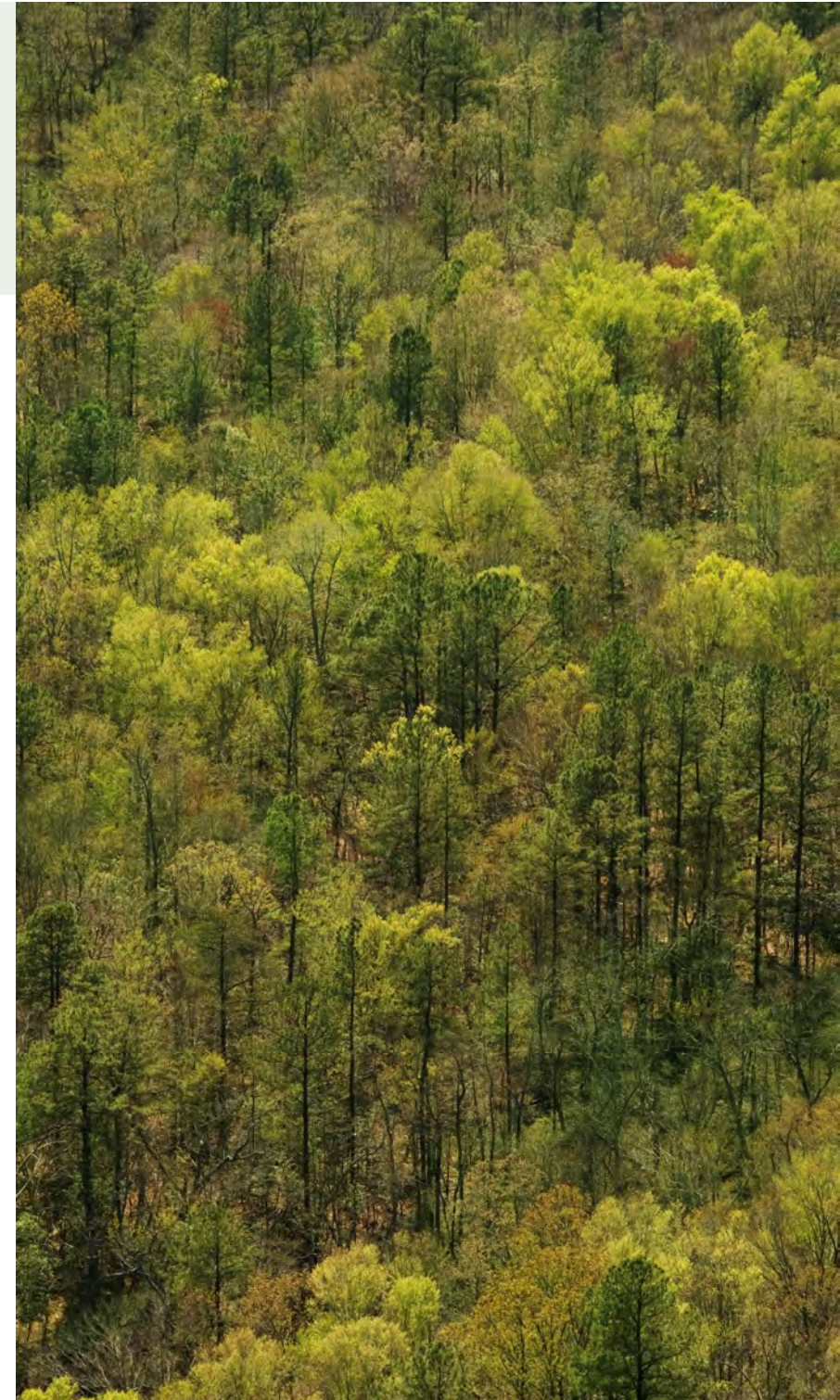
2. Acres of Forest (20 points)

Score:

- 0 – 499 acres = Forested Acreage ÷ 500 × 18 points
- 500 – 749 acres = 18 points
- 750 – 999 acres = 19 points
- >1,000 acres = 20 points

Example property score:

$$350/500 \times 18 = \mathbf{12.6 \text{ points}}$$



3. Acres with very high Forest Conservation Value (FCV)

Legend

5: Outstanding

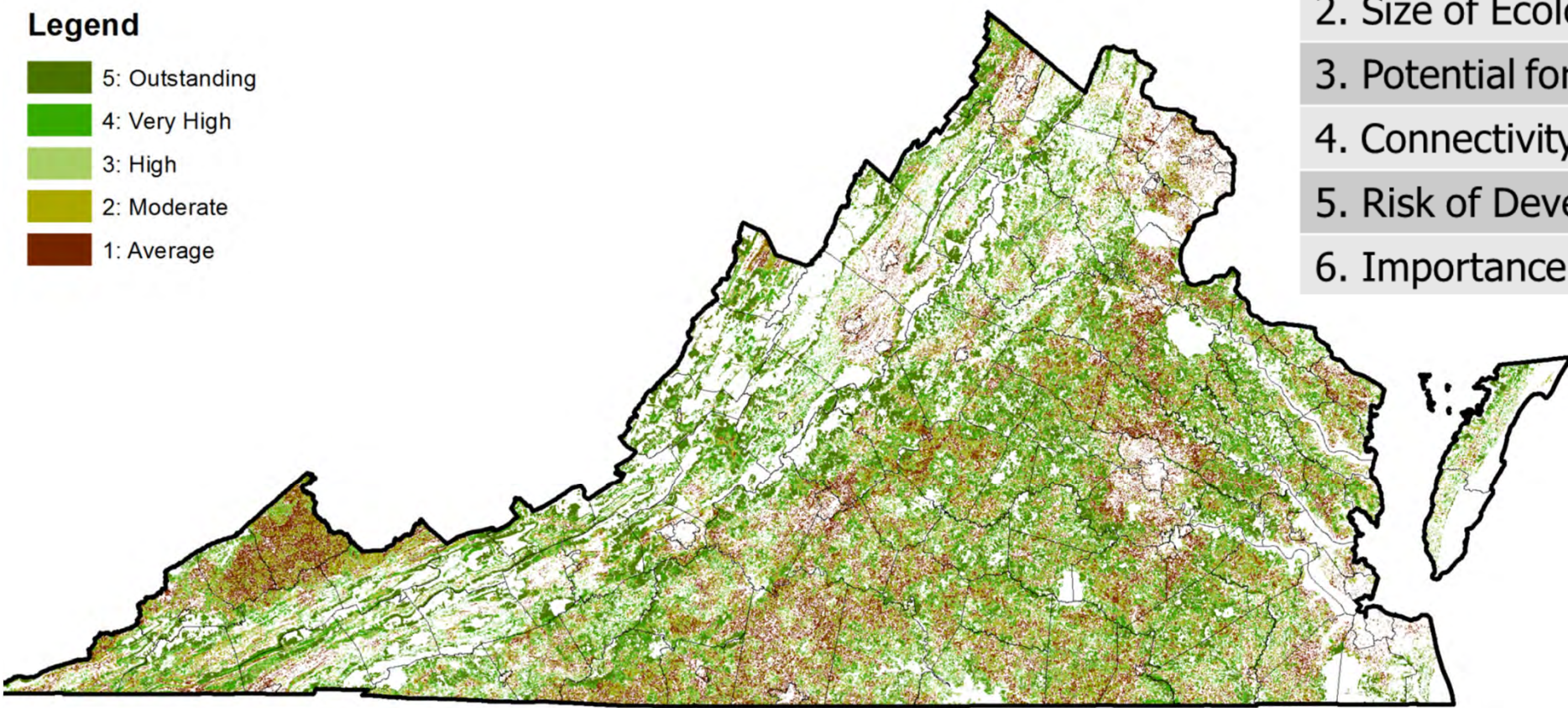
4: Very High

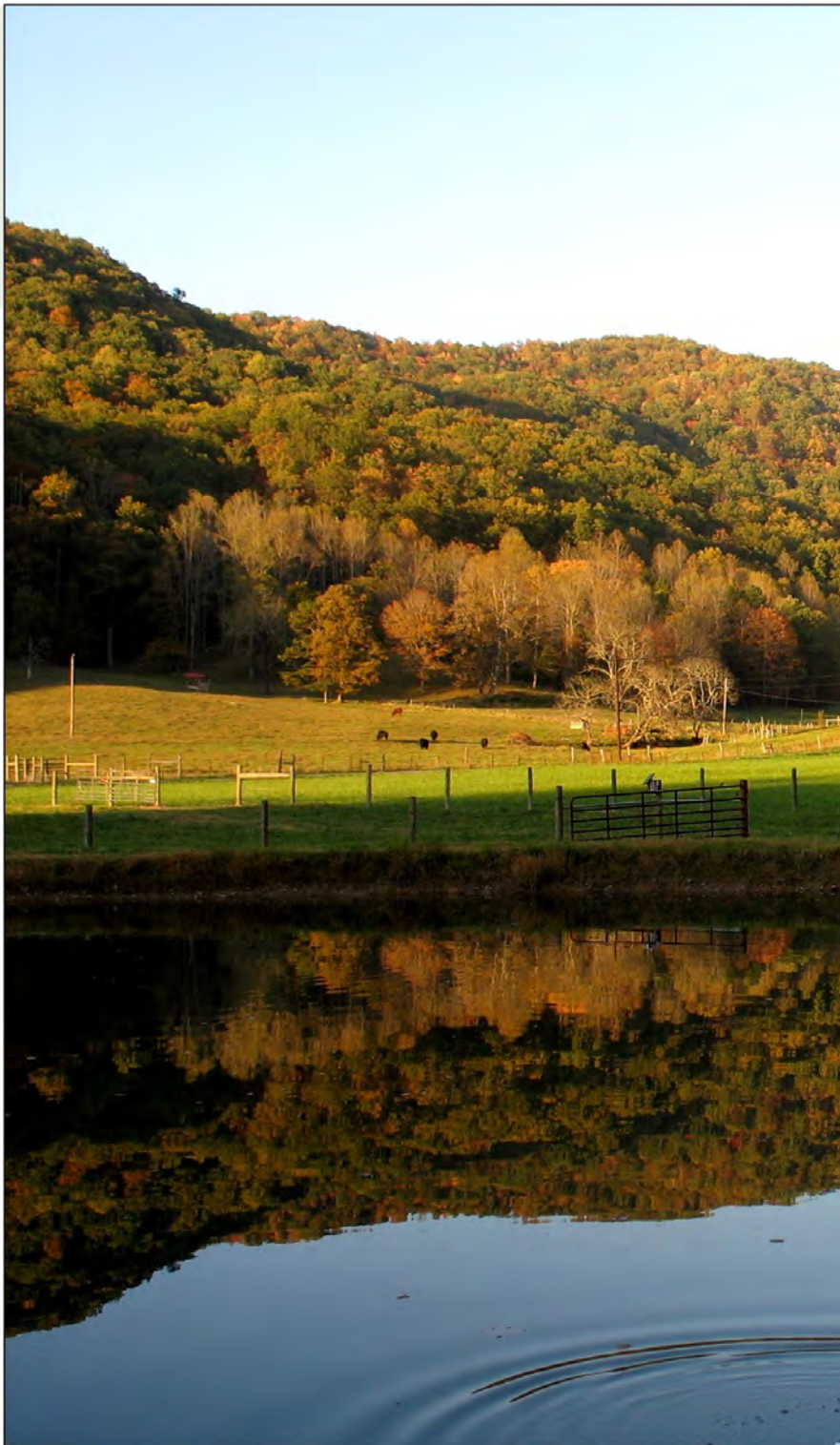
3: High

2: Moderate

1: Average

Criteria
1. Importance for Water Quality
2. Size of Ecological Core
3. Potential for Timber Products Production
4. Connectivity to Existing Cons. Areas
5. Risk of Development
6. Importance for Diminished Tree & Comms





3. Acres that are very high FCV (15 points)

Score:

- 0 – 499 acres = High FCV acreage $\div$ 500 $\times$ 13 points
- 500 – 749 acres = 13 points
- 750 – 999 = 14 points
- >1,000 acres = 15 points

Example property score:

$$300/500 \times 13 = \mathbf{7.8 \text{ points}}$$

FCV on the NHDE Explorer

 Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

<https://vanhde.org/content/map> Log in

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- Managed Conservation Lands
 - Managed Conservation Lands
- ConserveVirginia v3.0
 - ConserveVirginia v3.0
 - Conservation Planning
 - Potential Rare Species Richness
 - Ecological Cores
 - Natural Land Network
 - ☒ Forest Conservation Values
 - 5: Outstanding
 - 4: Very High
 - 3: High
 - 2: Moderate
 - 1: Average
- Watershed Impact Model
- Nature-based Recreation Access Model
- Cultural Resource Preservation Index
- Agricultural Model
- Development Vulnerability Model

Reference Layers

- 24K Grid
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Scenic Rivers
- VDE Sinkholes
- Streams (NHD)
- Trails
- USGS Placenames
- VDOT Roads

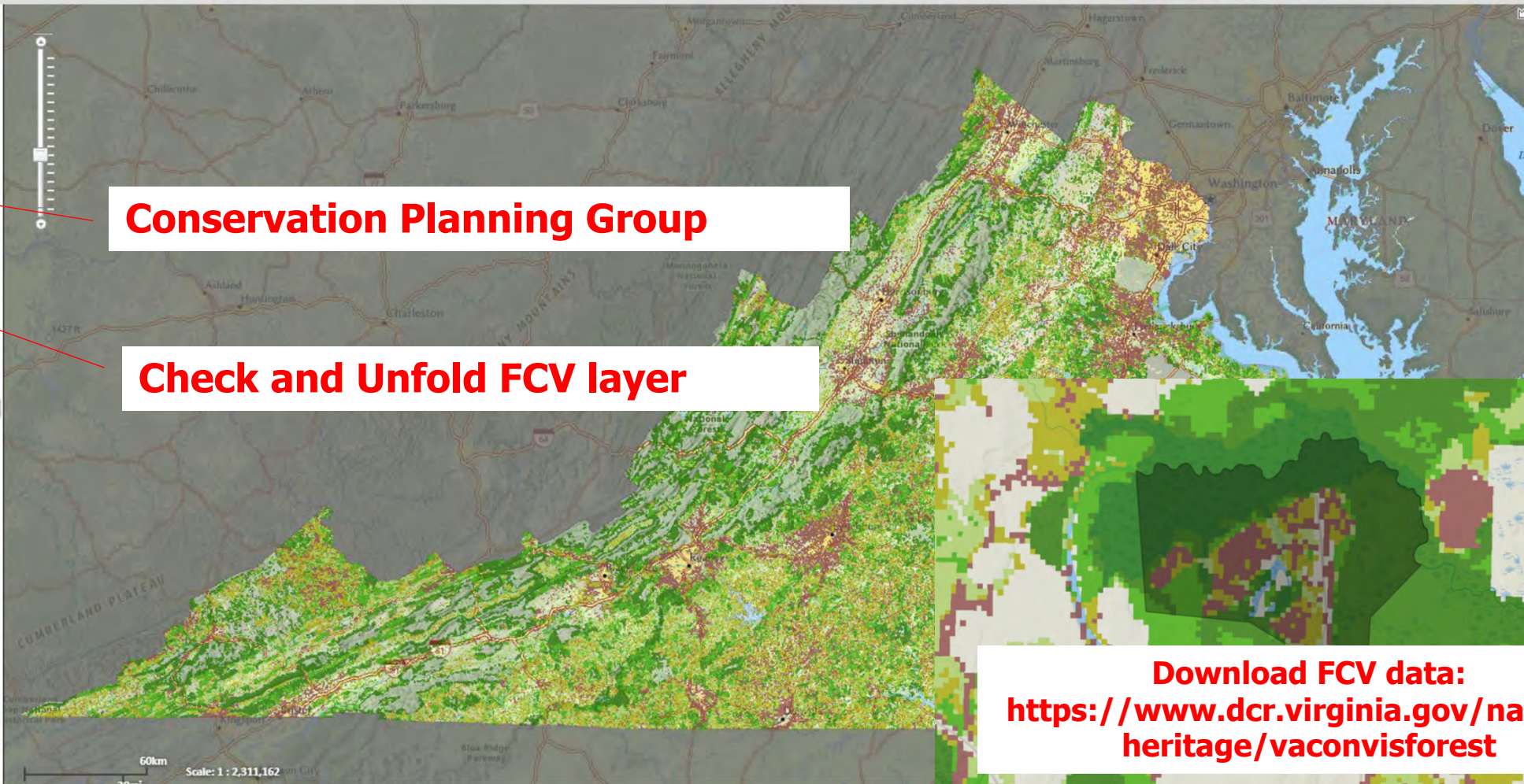
Boundaries

- Counties

Conservation Planning Group

Check and Unfold FCV layer

Download FCV data:
<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisforest>



4. Development Vulnerability

(10 points)

- What is the development vulnerability rank for this parcel?
- Calculate the percentage of project land in Classes II, III, and IV.
- Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of the three categories * 10

Example property score:

20% Class III and 10% Class IV = $0.3 \times 10 = \mathbf{3 \text{ points}}$



Development Vulnerability on the NHDE Explorer



Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Home Map Species/Communities Search Terms & Conditions About Us Contact Us Help

Switch Basemap Add Resources

Layers Make a Map Feature Search

Conservation Planning

- ☐ Buffers for Freshwater Mussel Habitat
- ☐ Potential Freshwater Mussel Richness
- ☐ Potential Rare Species Richness
- ☐ Ecological Cores
- ☐ Natural Land Network
- ☐ Forest Conservation Values
- ☐ Watershed Impact Model
- ☐ Nature-based Recreation Access Model
- ☐ Cultural Resource Preservation Index
- ☐ Agricultural Model
- ☒ Development Vulnerability Model

- Undevelopable (-1)
- Class I (0 - 5: Least Vulnerable)
- Class II (6 - 10)
- Class III (11 - 25)
- Class IV (26 - 50)
- Class V (51 - 100: Most Vulnerable)
- Already Developed (101)

<https://vanhde.org/content/map>

Conservation Planning Group

Calculate combined percentage of Classes II, III, and IV





5. Adjacency to Conserved Lands (10 points)

- If >5 miles = 0 points
- If < 5 miles, points = $5 - \text{miles away}$

Example property score:

$5 - 0.5 \text{ miles} = \mathbf{4.5 \text{ points}}$

6. Management of Multiple Resources (5 points)

- Existing plan (10 years old or newer) & implemented = 5 points
- Plan exists, no implementation = 3 points
- No plan = 0 points

Example property score:

Recent plan being implemented = **5 points**



7. Forest Cover Preservation

(10 points)

- How much forest land does the landowner commit to conserving?
- Proportion of Forest Cover that will be preserved * 10
- Forest Cover that does not currently have trees on it (e.g., harvested) but will be replanted or regenerated counts as preserved Forest Cover

Example property score:

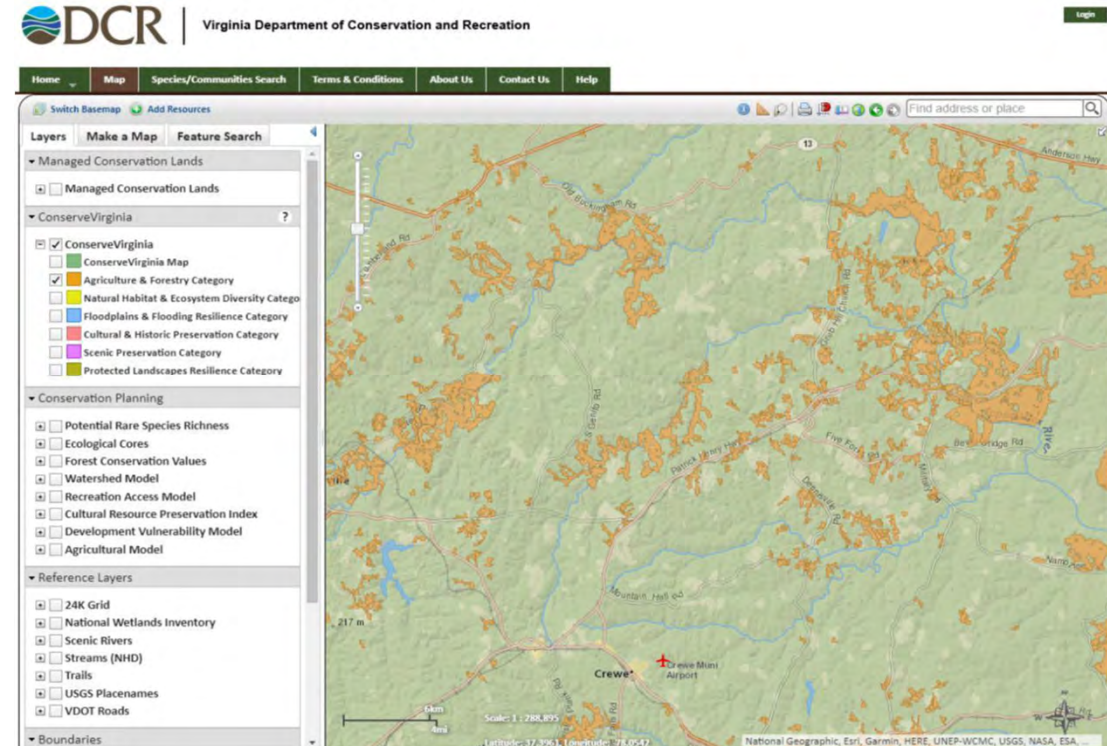
■ $(300/400) \times 10 = \mathbf{7.5 \text{ points}}$



8. ConserveVirginia (20 points)

Proportion of the property in ConserveVA's
Agriculture & Forestry Category * 20

Example property score:
 $0.63 * 20 = 12.6$ points



Example Results Summary

Criteria	Score	Possible Points
1. Property acreage	6.4	10
2. Acres of forest	12.6	20
3. Acres that are very high Forest Conservation Value (FCV)	7.8	15
4. Development Vulnerability (% of acreage in Classes II, III, and IV)	3.0	10
5. Adjacency to conserved lands	4.5	10
6. Forest management plan	5.0	5
7. Preservation of forested acreage	7.5	10
8. Percent within ConserveVA's Ag & Forestry Category	12.6	20
Total	59.4	100



Take Aways & Suggestions

- Run the scoring sheet and provide evidence in your application for the scoring
- If something in the data layers looks wrong, let us know and demonstrate it (e.g. provide a map of GPS'ed streams)
- Highly competitive category
- Secondary category eligibility





Questions?

Amanda Scheps

Program Manager

Office of Working Lands Preservation

Amanda.Scheps@DOF.Virginia.gov

434.987.7102



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
FORESTRY

www.DOF.Virginia.gov



VLCF

Historic Area Preservation Category

June 24, 2026



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Strong Grant Applications

Strong grant applications protect or preserve one or more historic resources that are:

- Listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR); or
- Determined by DHR to be eligible for listing on the VLR within the last five (5) years; or
- Located on a Civil War, American Revolutionary War, or War of 1812 battlefield

AND

- Retain a high degree of historic integrity; and
- Relate to Virginia's culturally diverse history; and/ or
- Have special significance related to a community's history; and
- Included in the Conserve Virginia Cultural and Historic Preservation Layer



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #1: Historic Significance

The Resource or Property is listed or eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR):

- The Property is individually listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) (25 points); or
- The Property is a contributing resource to an historic district listed on the VLR (25 points); or
- The Property has been determined eligible for listing on the VLR by DHR staff within the past five years (20 points).

HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #1: Historic Significance

The Property is a Civil War, Revolutionary War, or War of 1812 Battlefield (25 points).

Evaluation of Battlefields:

The battlefield must be identified with a priority rating in one of the following reports administered by the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program:

- *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* (1983, as amended)
- *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States* (2007, as amended)





HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #1: Historic Significance

The Property retains a high degree of historic integrity (5 points).

Historic Integrity:

The ability of a property to convey its historic significance through attributes such as location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Maximum Score for Criterion # 1,
Historic Significance is 30 points.



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #2: Underrepresented Communities and Resources

(Maximum Score 10 points)

The Property contains documented resources representing Virginia's culturally diverse history, such as places associated with:

- People of Color (ca. 1619 to Civil War)
- Reconstruction Era (1861 to 1898)
- Civil Rights Movement
- African American
- Native American
- LGBTQ+
- Asian American
- Latino
- Hispanic
- Women's History

(5 points)

AND/ OR

The Property has special community significance related to its history, as explained in the application.

(5 points)

HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #3: Threat

(Maximum Score 10 points)

- The Property is currently or recently on the market for sale, in an estate being settled, threatened by development OR in imminent danger of demolition (10 points); or
- Recently on the market for sale, vacant/ unoccupied OR significantly deteriorated and in need of immediate preservation (5 points)
- If no documentation of threat is submitted with the application, the applicant will receive zero points.



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #4: Use and Treatment of Historic Resources and Property

(Maximum Score 10 points)

Plans for future use(s) of the property are appropriate and consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection (5 points).

Plans for treatment, alteration, and maintenance of historic resources on the property are appropriate and consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection (5 points).

No documentation of plans for uses of property or treatment of historic resources (0 points).

Please Note:

- *Any related reports and plans for the property may be submitted with the application.*
- *All proposals and/or project plans must be consistent with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #5: Historic Resource Protection

(Maximum Score 10 points)

The proposed easement terms and restrictions provide comprehensive protection for historic resources AND are *specifically* consistent with the DHR's easement template (10 points)

OR

Proposed easement terms and protections for historic resources are acceptable AND generally consistent with DHR's easement template (5 points).

Please note:

- All applicants must attach a list or a summary of proposed restrictions to be included with the easement.
- DHR encourages applicants to obtain a copy of DHR's easement template before applying for the VLCF grant.

BATTLEFIELD EASEMENT TEMPLATE--NONPROFIT

This sample deed is provided to assist landowners and their attorneys in preparing deeds of easement to be conveyed to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources (VBHR). As each property contains unique Preservation and Conservation Values, the easement language will be tailored to each individual property and the resources to be protected. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) staff may recommend additional provisions appropriate to the individual property and its resources. Landowners should discuss present and future land management practices with staff before preparation of the deed of easement.

Many federal and/or state grant funds have been or will be awarded or transferred to the Grantor for the full or partial purchase of the property in the sample or of this easement, additional restrictions and legal obligations may apply. Please contact the relevant federal and/or state agency responsible for the applicable grant fund for more information.

Neither the VBHR nor the VDHR can provide legal or tax advice; grantors are strongly advised to obtain the counsel of independent attorneys and/or tax advisors. This template is designed for nonprofit grantors and does not meet federal or state requirements for a federal deduction or state tax credits as a charitable contribution of an interest in real property.

*Regardless of the nature of the transaction, this deed of easement is perpetual and runs with the land in perpetuity.
[September 20, 2018; revised February 8, 2019]*

NOTE TO TITLE EXAMINERS: This perpetual easement contains restrictions on permitted uses and activities on the property described below, which run with the land and are applicable to the property in perpetuity.

PREPARED BY:

[If prepared by other than VDHR, provide name, organization, address:]

[If by an attorney, Name and VSB No.]

Prepared under the supervision of

The Office of the Attorney General of Virginia

When recorded, please return to:

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

2801 Kensington Avenue

Richmond, VA 23221

Title Insurance: [Name of insurer or None]

[As applicable] Tax Map/GPIN/Parcel Number:

Exempted from recordation taxes
under the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended,
§§ 58.1-811(A)(3) and 58.1-811(D)
and from Circuit Court Clerk's Fees under § 17.1-266

DEED OF GIFT OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND OPEN-SPACE EASEMENT

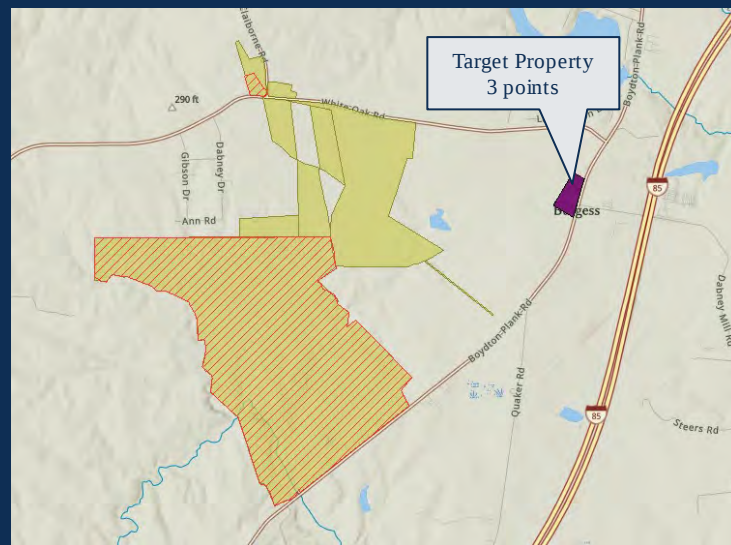
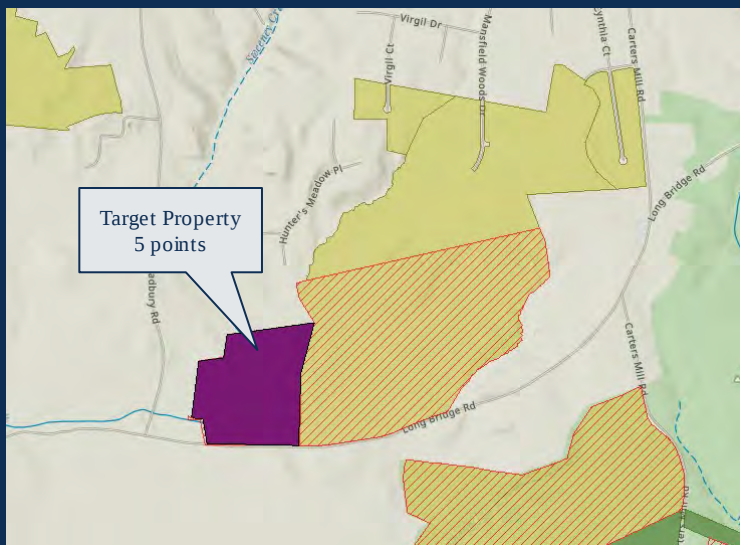
[PROPERTY NAME]

Battlefield

County

VDHR EASEMENT FILE NO. _____ ep

THIS DEED OF GIFT OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND OPEN-SPACE EASEMENT
("Deed of Easement") is made this ____ day of _____, 202_, by [Grantor name/title],
[if nonperson, describe legal status (corporation, nonprofit, etc.)] ("Grantor"), and the
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, BOARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES ("Grantee") (the



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #6: Adjacency to Conserved Lands

(Maximum Score 5 points)

- Adjacent to existing conserved land (5 points)
- In viewshed or in close physical proximity to, significant historic resources and/ or existing conserved lands (3 points)
- Not in viewshed of, or in close proximity to, significant historic resources and/ or existing conserved land, but represents a unique cultural resource within a geographical area (1 point)



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Criterion #7: Furthers Public Interests

(Maximum Score 5 points)

The project includes *specific* plans for programs that promote research (5 points).

The project includes *general* plans for programs to be developed that would promote research, education, community outreach or heritage tourism (3 points).



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

VLCF Grant Requirements for the Historic Area Preservation Category

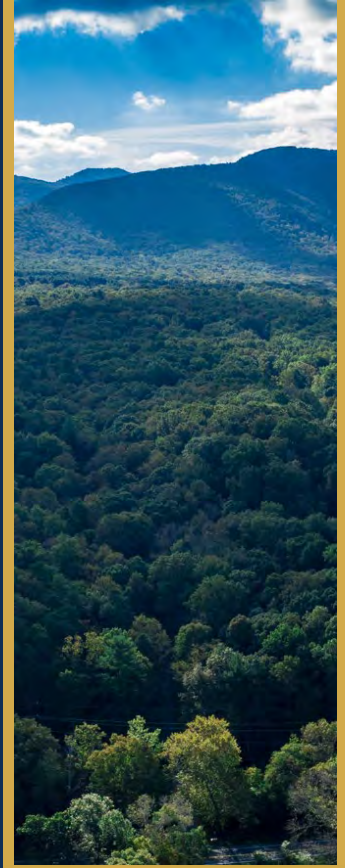
- Property owners must offer to convey a perpetual historic preservation and open-space easement on the property to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources (VBHR).
 - A separate DHR Easement Application is required but may be submitted after the VLCF grant awards are announced.
 - DHR's Easement Application requires a number of supporting documents including:
 - ✓ Title search to 1940
 - ✓ Title Insurance Policy for VBHR's easement interest
 - ✓ Recent (within 1 year) boundary survey
 - ✓ These expenses may be included in your VLCF grant budget.
- The VBHR will determine whether to accept the easement offer based on established criteria and policies governing DHR's Easement Program.
- Easement properties are required to be open for public access a minimum of two (2) days per year.



HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

Application Tips

- Don't wait until the last minute to start your application.
- Ask questions early and often.
- Request DHR's letter stating we will consider holding an easement on your property early in the application process so we can confirm that your property is eligible.
- Request a copy of DHR's easement template and carefully review it before starting the VLCF application.
 - Make sure the property owner understands the easement terms.
- If the property and/ or its historic resources are threatened in any way, document it in the application.



Thank You.

CONTACT INFO

Karri Richardson
Easement Program Specialist
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221
804.482.6094
karri.richardson@dhr.virginia.gov

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Virginia Department of Historic Resources:
www.dhr.virginia.gov

Register Listings:
www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers

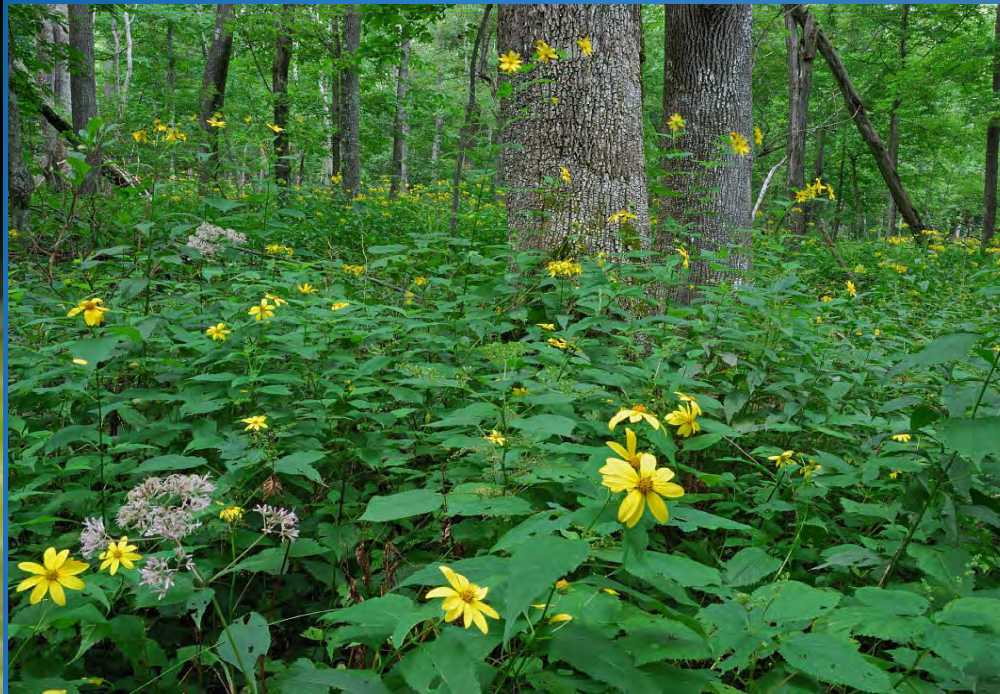
DHR Easement Program Information:
www.dhr.virginia.gov/programs/easements



Funk Tract, VLCF Grant Award, Warren County, photo courtesy of Jack Owens, SVBF

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Division of Natural Heritage



Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Division of Natural Heritage

Virginia Natural Area Preserves Act (1989)

The Department shall... “preserve the natural diversity of the biological resources of the Commonwealth” (Code of Virginia 10.1-211).

“Maintain a natural heritage data bank of inventory data and other relevant information for ecologically significant sites supporting natural heritage resources” (Code of Virginia 10.1-212).

“select and nominate areas containing natural heritage resources for registration, acquisition, and dedication of natural areas and natural area preserves” (Code of Virginia 10.1-211).

“purchase, lease or otherwise acquire.....lands suitable for natural area preserves” (Code of Virginia 10.1-210),



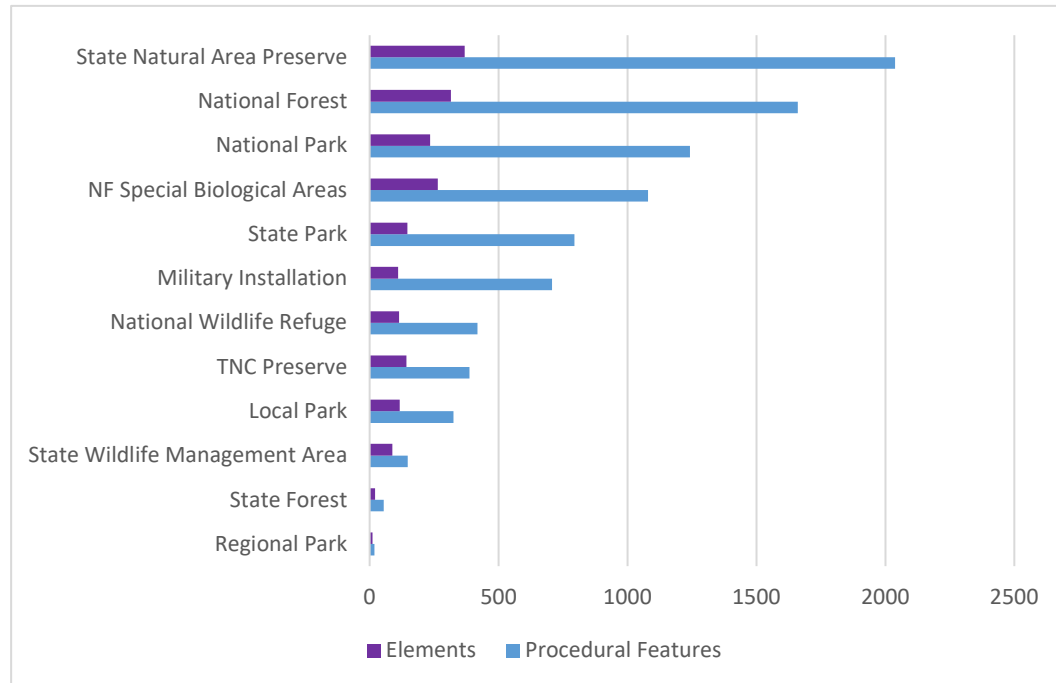
Commonwealth Conservation Vision

- All species and natural communities native to the Commonwealth will be effectively & **efficiently** conserved on a **network** of protected lands.
- These lands will be **formally** protected and appropriately **stewarded** for the preservation & maintenance of their **core biodiversity** assets,
- This resulting network includes enough individual sites to achieve **comprehensive** representation of these biodiversity elements and support their specific **management needs**
- permanently dedicated **Natural Area Preserves** will serve as the **backbone** of this network, but **certain** lands of other willing agencies, organizations, & individuals will also be necessary to complete the comprehensive network.
- Individual protected sites are of a **sufficient size** and **spatial distribution** to meet **minimum** conservation **goals**
- **Connectivity** and corridors between these protected sites is sufficient to **maintain** and achieve **viable populations**, to allow for long-term movements of conservation targets

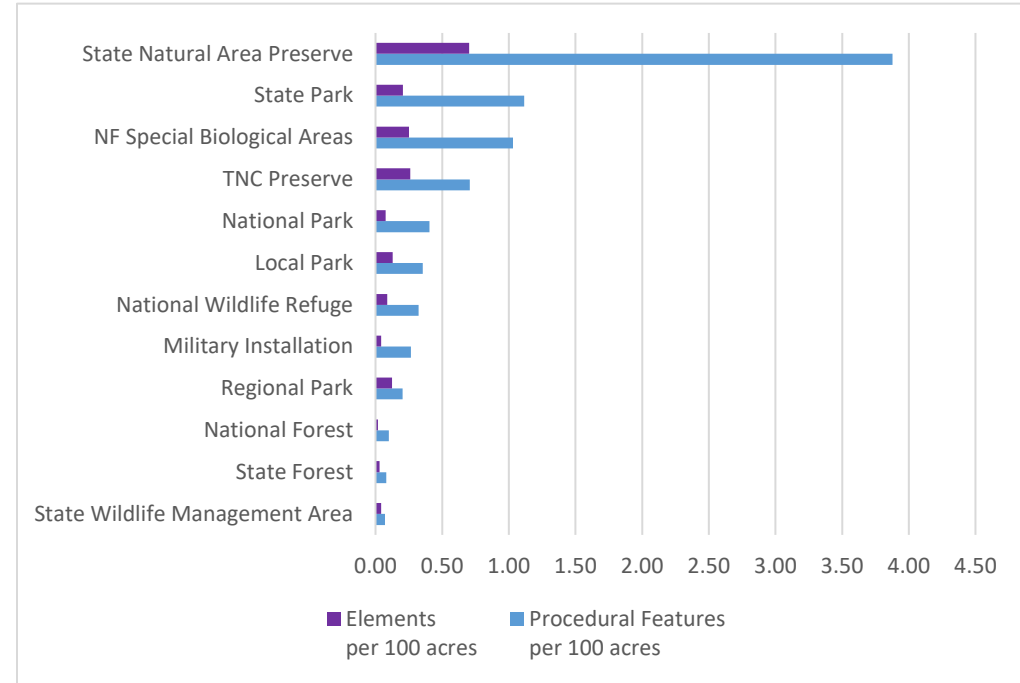
[illegible]

Protection Results

Natural Area Preserves & other conserved lands



Total # Rare Elements w/in
management category



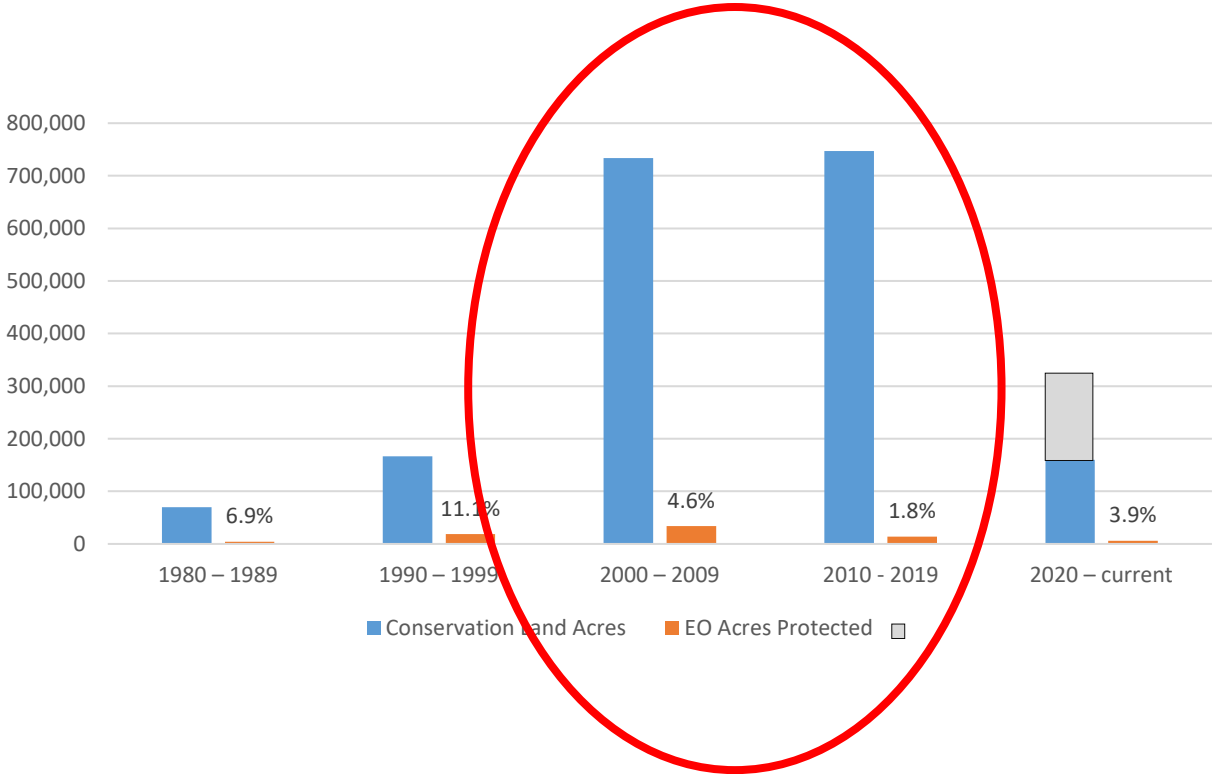
Rare Elements per 100
acres under management

Overarching Goal: Better Prioritize Parcels for Protection

	# NAP dedicated	# Parcels Acquired	EO Protected
1990 – 1999	28	50	337
2000 – 2009	32	87	463
2010 - 2019	4	51	198
2020 – current	4	43	133

> 2010, ~ 13% of NAPs and ~ 30% of NHR were protected

Opportunistic protection may not result in ideal conservation outcomes



Era of conservation prosperity

FY27 Grant Manual

Adopted June 9, 2026

Virginia Land Conservation
Foundation

Administered by the Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation

VLCF Eligibility Requirements (Natural Area Preservation)

Each project must:

- qualify for “dedication” (natural heritage resource must be present) ¹
- contribute significantly to natural heritage resource protection ²
- include sufficient evaluation by DCR-DNH staff (including site visit)
- be supported by receptive landowners ³
- include a recommendation from DCR Natural Heritage ⁴

¹ per Va. Code § 10.1- 213

² contact DNH and consult NHDE

³ commitment to dedication process & long-term mgt

⁴ see Va. Code § 10.1- 1022.1

FY27 Grant Manual

Adopted June 9, 2026

Virginia Land Conservation
Foundation

Administered by the Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation

Natural Area Scoring Criteria

Biodiversity Significance (35 pts)

Land Protection Priority, Parcel significance, Global ranking

Ecological Integrity (20 pts)

Regional Landscape & local parcel integrity, connectivity

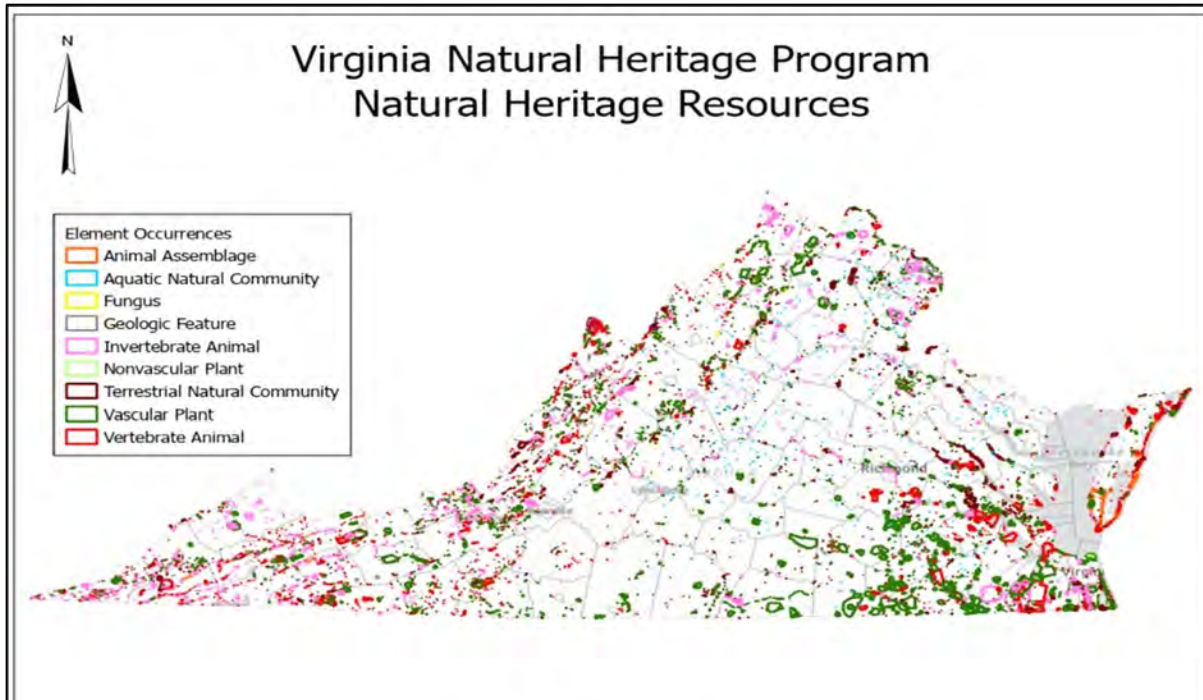
Mgt Needs/Likelihood of Success (25 pts)

Management needs & applicant capacity, DNH site visit/owner discussions, development threats

ConserveVirginia (20 pts)

% of the project is included in “Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity Category”

Minimum qualification = Presence of Natural Heritage Resources



Elements Tracked:

Natural communities: 479

Plant species: 768

Animal species: 867

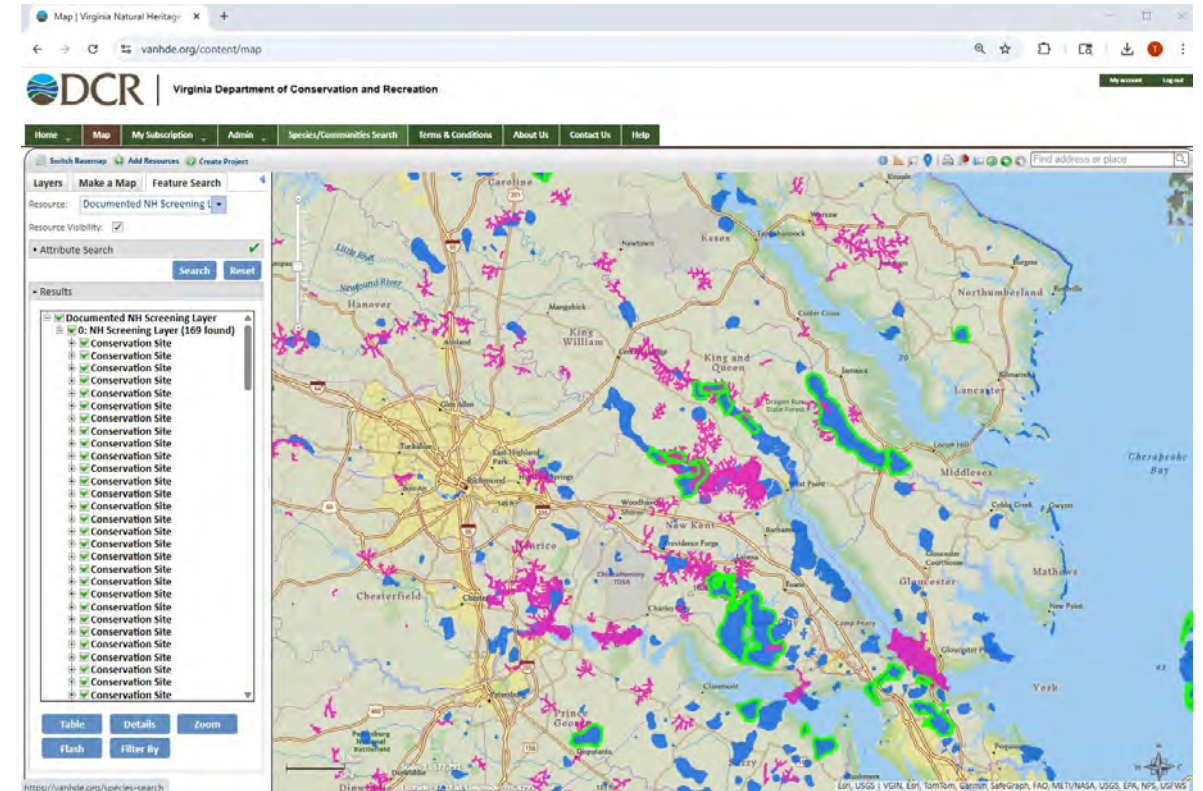
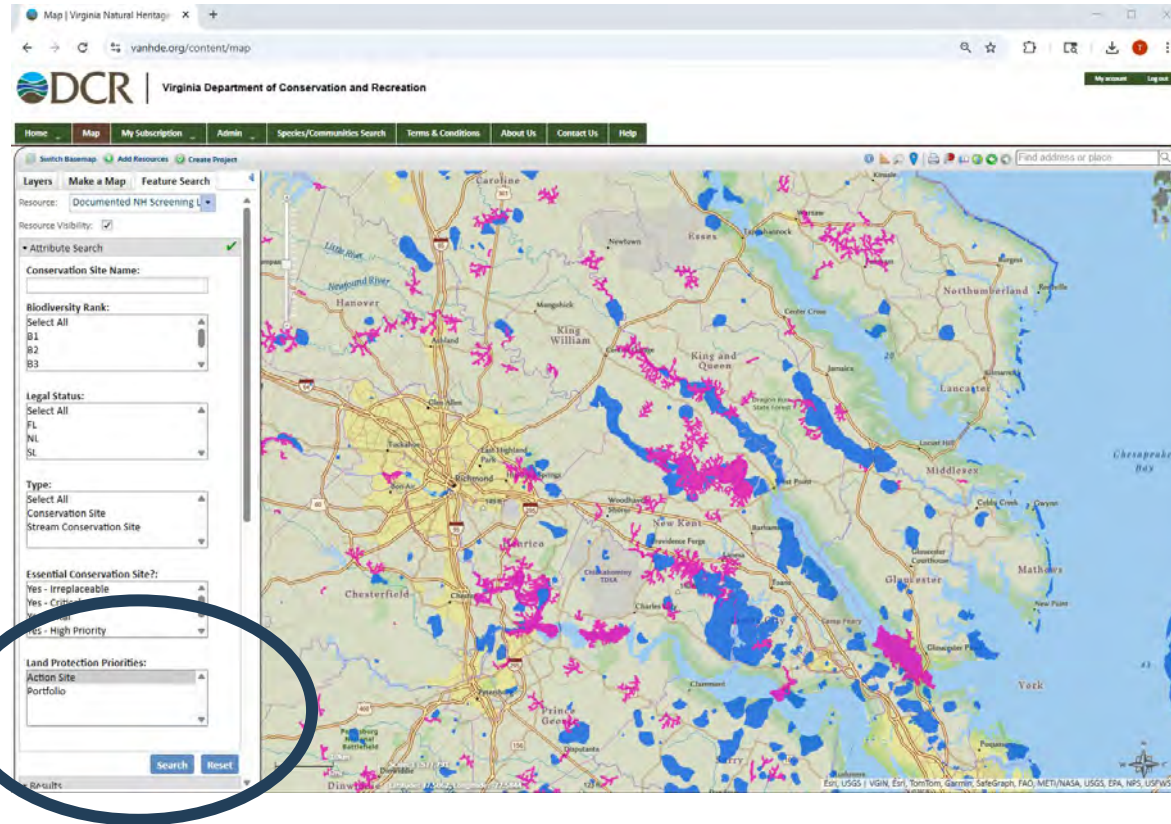
Significant Geologic & Caves: 391

Total mapped locations (occurrences):
10,953

(data current as of 03/31/2026)



Does the project include a Land Protection Priority?



Ecological Integrity - Parcel Example

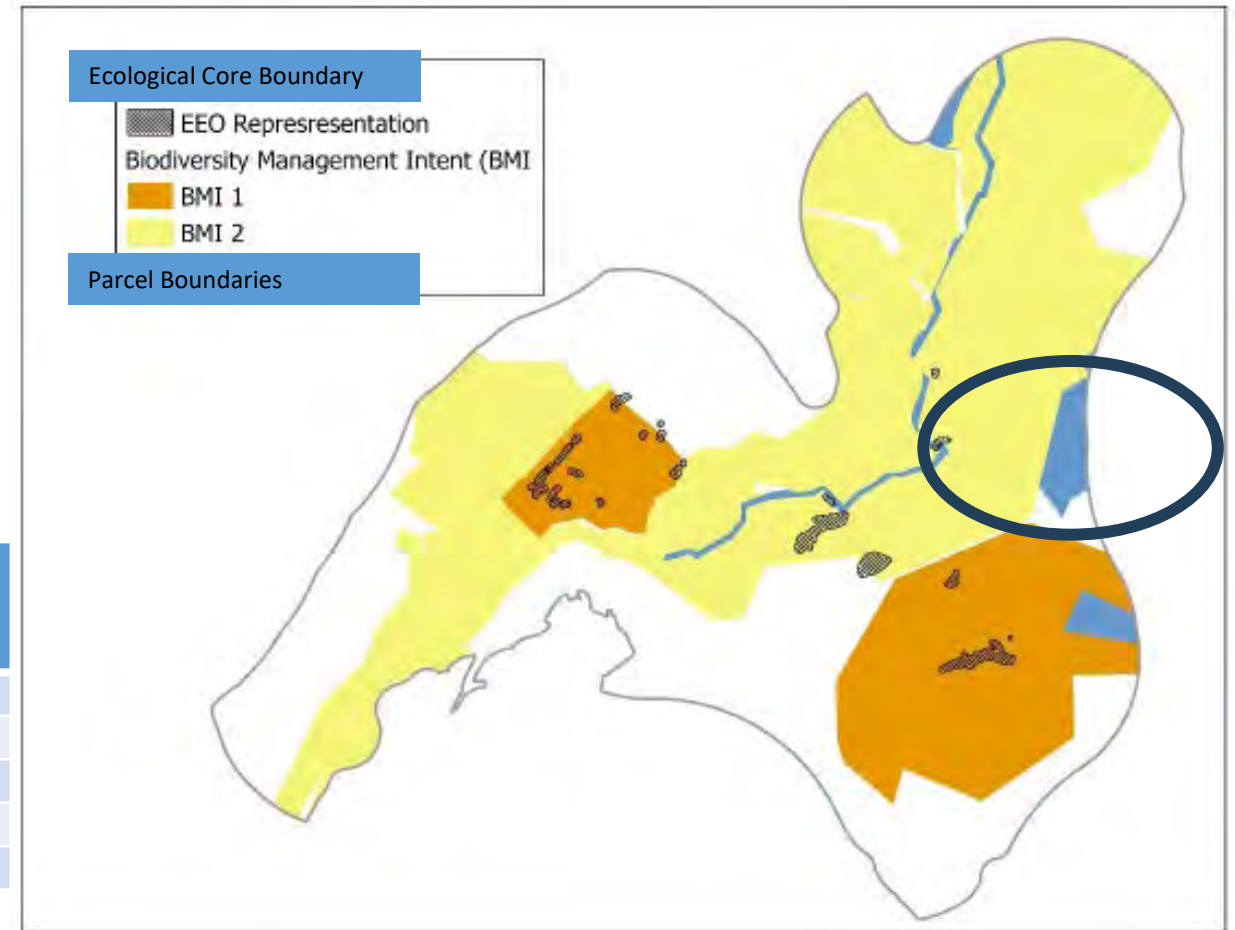
Mapped Ecological Cores: (see NHDE)

- Ranked C1-C5 (biggest to smallest)

Connectivity/Biodiversity Management Intent:

- Ranked 1-5 (highest biodiversity mgt - to least or none)
- (see example)(data recently added to NHDE)

BMI Rank Assignment	Summary	Example	Statewide Acres	EOs present
1	Specifically Managed for Biodiversity	NAP	574,581	7,730
2	Partially managed for Biodiversity	WMA	1,978,738	6,253
3	Managed for General Natural Resource Conservation	SP	671,086	5,506
4	Generic Open Space Conservation	VOF	1,270,680	4,591
5	No Conservation Management	Local Park	201,009	4,342



Landowner's Management Capability & Commitment

- All preserves require stewardship to maintain their integrity
- All areas have previous disturbance and/or ongoing threats

Applications should describe restoration needs & threats and provide a detailed plan to address them

- demonstrate understanding & commitment to needed stewardship activities related to maintaining natural heritage resources on the property



Site visit & Landowner Contact

NHP staff **MUST** have timely opportunity to visit the tract:

- Determine/confirm presence and quality of resources
- Evaluate mgt needs & assess threats
- Discuss conservation measures required & implications of natural area dedication with landowner



Deed of Dedication

all property must be dedicated as a natural area preserve...” (see Va. Code § 10.1- 1022.1 D)

- Recorded on deed, Allocation is perpetual
- No impairment or disturbance/uses inconsistent with heritage resource protection & management;
- Incompatible uses prohibited (see Natural Area Preserve Management Guidelines adopted June 30, 2023)
- Compatible uses allowed (see Natural Area Preserve Management Guidelines)

Signed management plan required (before dedication & funds transfer)

DCR-DNH recommendation
Letter of support is critical
contact us early!



VLCF Natural Areas & Biodiversity Conservation



Contact:

Rob Evans @ (919) 748-0225

Tyler Meader @ (804) 240-0820

Open Space and Parks Category



Open Space and Parks Category

Applications for permanent protection of **public recreational or open space park lands** will be evaluated based on the following scoring criteria:

1. Provides **public access to state waters** offering recreational potential such as:

- Boating
- Fishing
- Beach/Bank Swimming
- Viewing

Max 10 points cumulative



2. Provides **public access** for **Land-Based Recreation**:

- New opportunities or expands existing park systems:
 - Natural Areas (passive recreation – parking, trails, observation)
 - Developed Parks (play, camping, aquatic facilities, outdoor sports)
 - Trails – hiking, cycling and/or horseback riding

Max 10 points



Virginia Outdoors Plan 2024 – Virginia's 12th statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan

- <https://vop-vdcr.hub.arcgis.com>
- VA's official Outdoor Recreation and Land Conservation plan
- ESRI web-based platform
- Includes Regional priorities



3. VOP Outdoor Recreation Priorities

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vop>

Addresses a need identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan (specify the VOP section # and pertinent quote as applicable)

Scoring is additive:

- Access to historic areas
- Opportunities to view wildlife
- Access to and conservation of significant habitats or natural communities
- Dark sky conservation
- Plans for recreational support amenities (draft, conceptual, or master plan)
- Will provide priority amenities (restroom, parking, drinking water, ADA etc.



**Max:
10 points cumulative**



4. Project Location and Recreational Expansion

- Creates a new outdoor recreational opportunity or
- Expands existing parks and/or public conservation areas with a focus on recreational interests.
- Linkage between two or more areas/parks or land along an existing recreational trail
- Conserves land that does not expand recreation **types**

Max 10 points

5. Scenic Resources

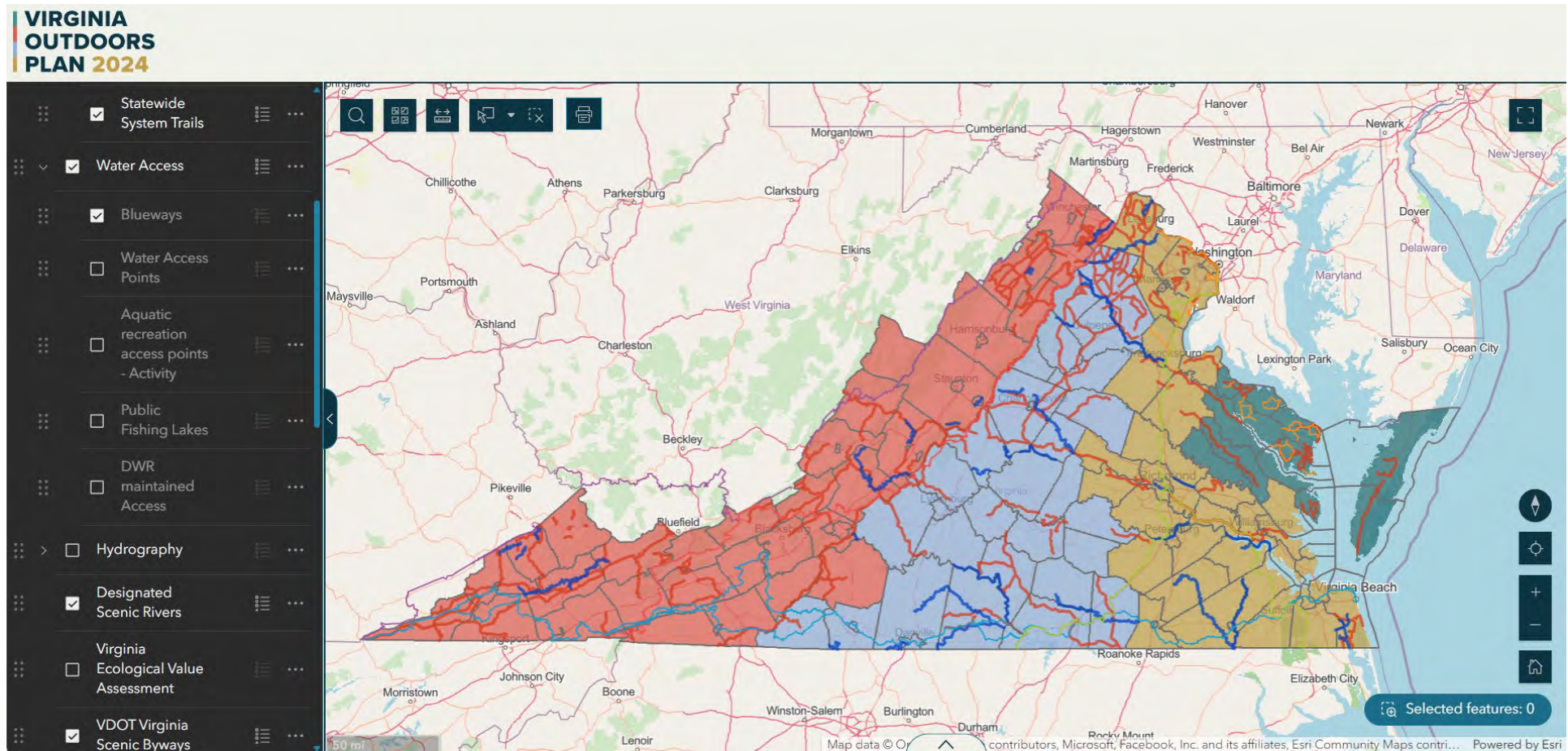
- Protects scenic viewsheds or land important to the protection of designated **scenic resources**:
- Federally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers
- American Heritage Rivers
- Virginia's Scenic Rivers
- Scenic Roads and Virginia Byways
- Statewide connecting trails,
- Greenways or blueways

Max: 10 points



**See VOP
Mapper
(next slide)**

VOP Mapper - <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vopmapper>



6. Aligns with local or regional plans

- for parks, open space, and recreational facilities
- contributes to protection of an identified conservation corridor
 - Specifically mentioned by location and purpose
 - Fulfills a need in a local/regional plan
 - General reference or general goal

(Name and page number of plan must be cited)

Max 15 points

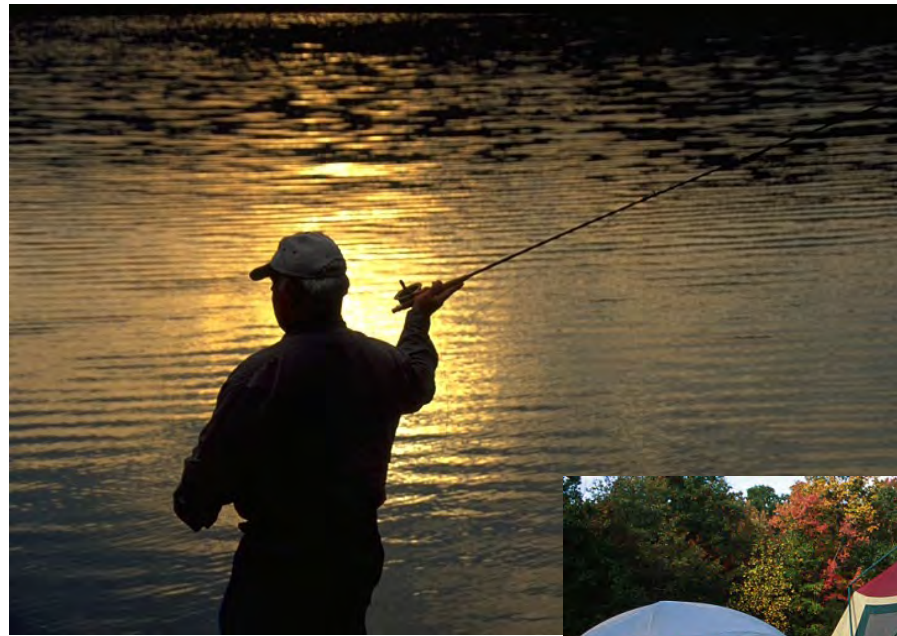


7. Public Access

Availability of land for public access and ways to access site

- Number of days
- Fees (none or fee-free options)
- Ways to safely access – vehicle, bicycle, boat/paddle, pedestrian etc

Max:
10 points



8. Recreation Need

I. Land-based (10 pts) Identified Need:

A. DCR Nature-Based Recreation Access Model

OR

B. ParkServe Park Need

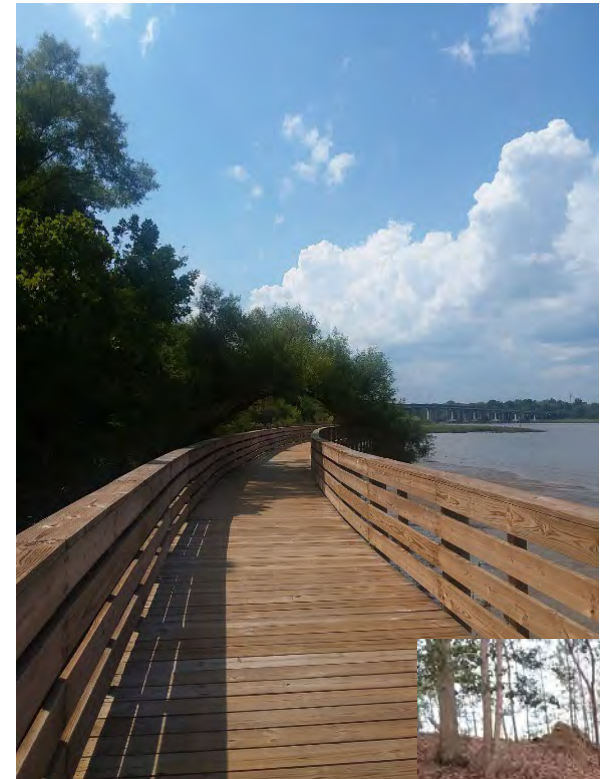
*Score will be the higher of the two if data is available on both models for the project location

II. Water-based (5 pts) Identified Need:

A. DCR Nature-Based Recreation Access Model

*can provide other supporting evidence, please cite source

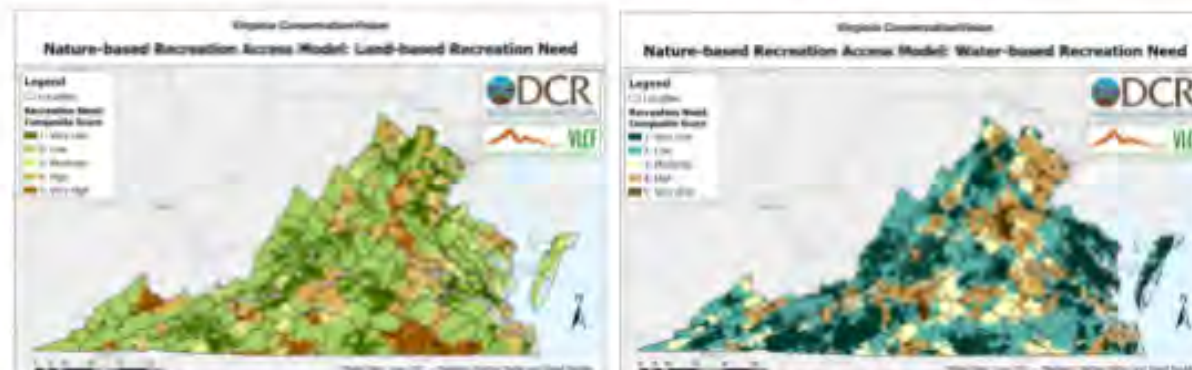
Max: 15 points total – IAT/VLCF staff will verify scores with models



[ConservationVision](#) | [Agriculture](#) | [Cultural Resources](#) | [Development Vulnerability](#) | [Forest Conservation](#) | [Natural Landscapes](#) | [Potential Rare Species Richness](#) | [Recreation Access](#) | [Watersheds](#)

Nature-based Recreation Access Model (2021 version)

Model last updated 6/2021.



Details

A technical report is in progress and will be available on this page soon. Additional model information materials include:

- A [slide deck](#) (PDF) giving an overview of the model
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- A recording of an informational [webinar](#) held on April 27, 2021

Online Mapping

An interactive web map is available [here](#). The composite score layers will soon also be available on Natural Heritage Data Explorer.



A collection of spatial layers output from a model of outdoor, nature-based recreation opportunities and needs in Virginia

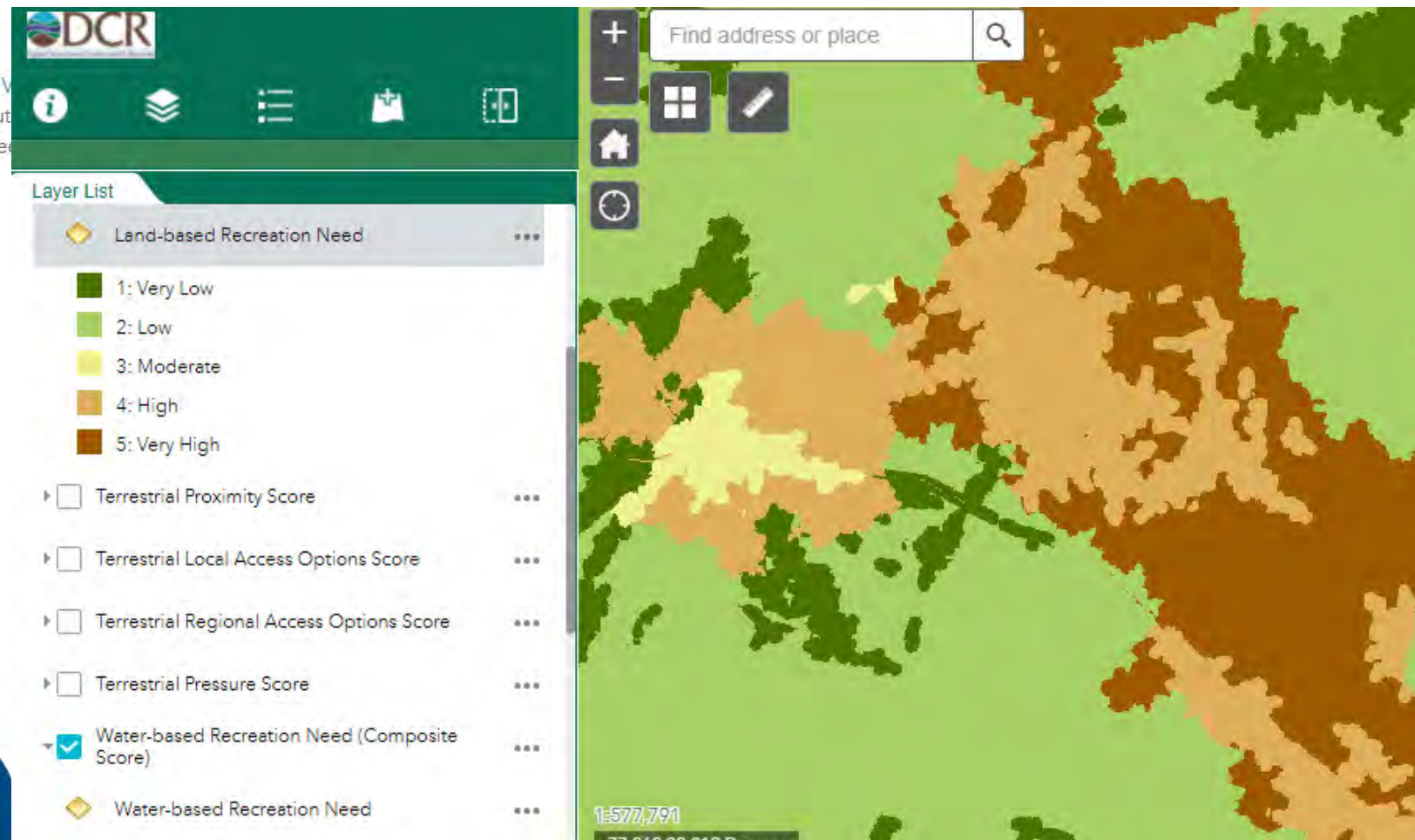
Web Mapping Application by [krhazler](#)

Created: May 7, 2021 Updated: Jun 15, 2021 View Count: 300

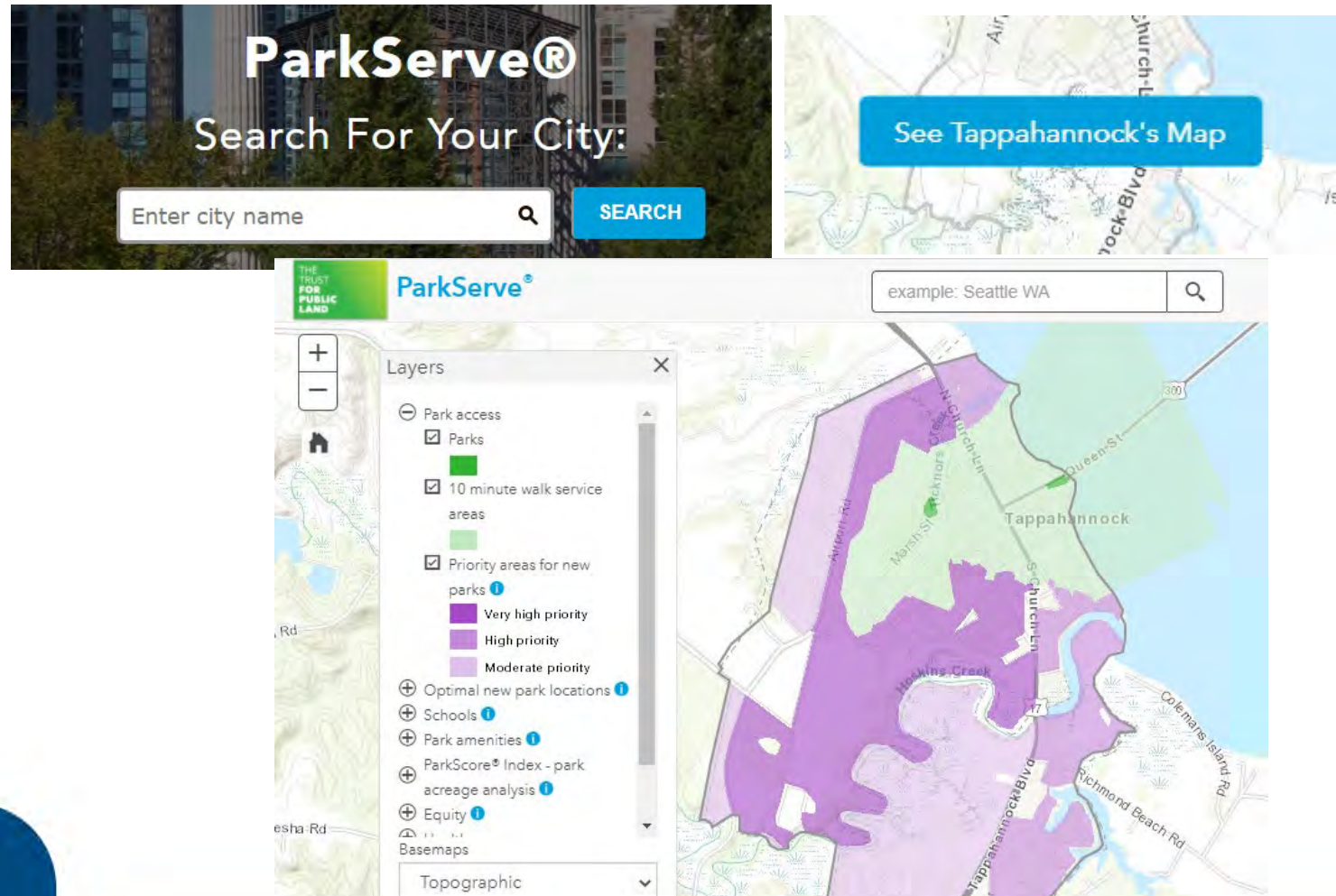
[View Application](#)

Description

The purpose of the V...
opportunities for out...
opportunities are ne...



I. Land-Based.... Nature-Based **OR** ParkServe Park Need
<https://www.tpl.org/parkserve>



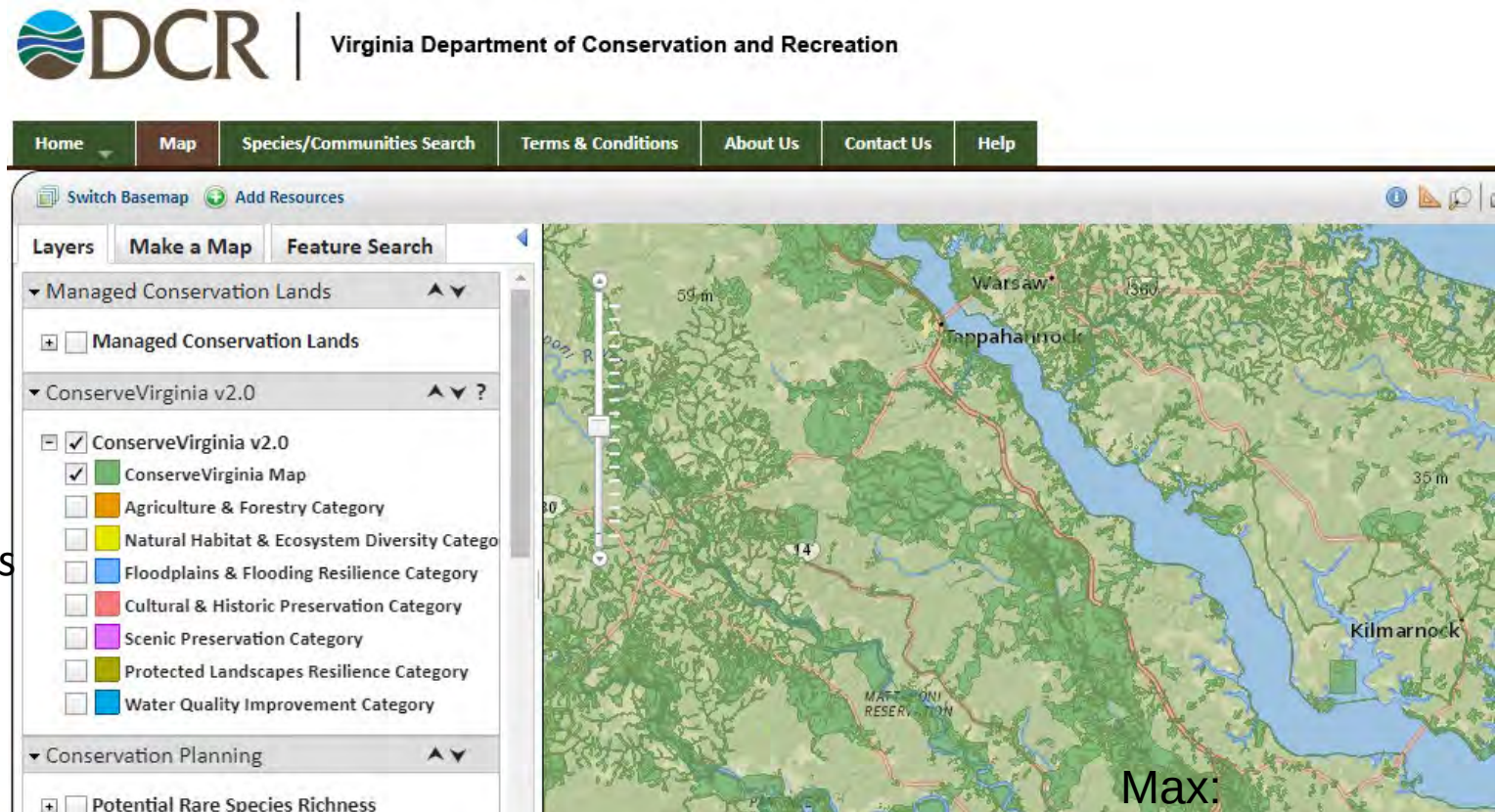
9. ConserveVirginia

Natural Heritage Data Explorer
<https://vanhde.org/content/map>

- Property is in **any** category of ConserveVirginia **and** open to the public on a **daily basis**; percent of parcel intersecting the layer.

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; $0.60 \times 10 = 6$ points)

Max 10 points (0 points if the property is not open 365 days)



Max:
10 points

Federal Recreation Grants – PRR Division

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/grants> Email RecreationGrants@DCR.Virginia.gov

- **Land & Water Conservation Fund:**

- National Park Service – 50/50 Match Reimbursement
- Properties must be for **Public Outdoor Recreation** in Perpetuity
- Can match VLCF public park acquisitions under special conditions
- 2026 grant round open June 30th– applications due August 28th
 - Outdoor Recreation Legacy Program (ORLP) for Urban and Tribal projects pre-application grant round tentative mid July-September
 - Readiness and Recreation Initiative (RARI) for Sentinel Landscape projects
 - can pair with REPI – dates TBD

- **Recreational Trails Program:**

- Federal Highways Administration– 80/20 Match Reimbursement
- Trail and trail amenity construction projects, including PE

2026 grant round closed May 6th – next grant round to be held

Spring 2027