



Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Land and Water Conservation Fund - State and Local Assistance Grant Program



2026 Application Manual

The following documents, available on the [DCR LWCF website at https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf](https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf) or at the links below, should be referenced along with this guide:

- [NPS LWCF Manual](#) (2026)
- [Virginia Outdoors Plan](#) (2024)
- Virginia's LWCF Open Project Selection Process (2024)
- DCR LWCF Preapplication Environmental Guidance (2026)
- DCR LWCF Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance (2026)
- DCR LWCF How To Reference the Virginia Outdoors Plan (2026)
- DCR LWCF Maps and Property Documents Guidance (2026)
- DCR LWCF Scoring Criteria 2026

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I. LWCF-SLA Grant Round Overview

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State and Local Assistance (SLA) Program is a 50%-50% matching reimbursement grant supporting the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas. Any site funded through LWCF must remain open, operated, and maintained for public outdoor recreation **in perpetuity**, and may not be converted to other uses without suitable replacement of equivalent parkland and approval by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

The National Park Service (NPS) administers LWCF in partnership with state lead agencies; in Virginia, this role is held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Division of Planning & Recreation Resources (PRR). Each federal fiscal year, LWCF funds are apportioned to states submitting eligible project proposals to NPS, in partnership and coordination with the project sponsor.

Eligible grant recipients (“project sponsors”) include local governments, state agencies, Virginia-recognized park authorities, and federally or state-recognized Indian Tribes. Private organizations and non-profit organizations are not eligible.

For the 2026 cycle, the minimum award is \$150,000; most awards will not exceed \$2.5 million, though applicants may indicate interest in larger awards if additional funds become available. An estimated \$11 million in funding is available in this grant round.

Preapplications are due electronically by **4:00PM on August 27, 2026**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

After selection, sponsors must provide required planning and compliance materials, including completion of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 (cultural & historical resources) review, before DCR submits projects to NPS for review and award authorization. If all documentation is approved, NPS Notices of Award for this grant round are anticipated by September 2027.

This manual summarizes the LWCF program in Virginia and supports applicants in preparing preapplications and eventually full application packages. Full program requirements are subject to the most recent NPS LWCF Manual.

Programmatic Changes for 2026

Applicants should review this manual in full. However, the list below highlights the most significant changes to Virginia’s LWCF program since the 2025 grant round. Each change is explained in greater detail in the relevant sections of this manual.

- Completion of most environmental compliance activities is no longer required prior to August 27th submission deadline. The application process is now split into two phases: phase I, due August 27th, is the preapplication phase. Phase II is the compliance phase which will be completed in the fall and winter after notice of preapplication selection.
- The value of other publicly-owned property not acquired for or already in recreation use

can now be used for match (LWCF protections will be added to both the subject and match properties). Consult with grant management staff if considering this option.

- New guidance documents have been created for referencing the Virginia Outdoors Plan and obtaining deed and property record information.
- Minor changes have been made to the application questions and scoring criteria.
- Attendance at virtual post-selection seminars will be required for selected project applicants to better coordinate NEPA and Section 106 procedures and timelines (anticipated to be held October-December 2026).
- Quarterly Reports will be needed for all active projects. Templates are provided on DCR LWCF website.
- In progress projects will require posted acknowledgement signs as indicated in NPS LWCF Manual.

This grant opportunity may be a good fit for your entity if:

- For **acquisition**: you have a willing and patient seller who will allow appraisals and a full NEPA-level environmental review to take place during the application and authorization process. The process takes at least one year and may take up to two.
- For **development**: your project is past the conceptual stage, with complete or nearly complete design plans that provide enough detail to support a full NEPA-level environmental review and establish an area of potential effect (APE) for Section 106 review. You must also be ready to determine what permits will be needed for your project.
- You already have significant source/s of non-federal funds (or donated/ in-kind value) to leverage 1:1 with a LWCF grant award. Pre-approval project planning and design expenses may be eligible towards the project match with appropriate documentation and if expressed clearly in the budget worksheet.
- You are prepared to be both responsive and patient. LWCF often involves short turnaround times followed by long waiting periods – a true “hurry up and wait” process.

II. LWCF Program Requirements

To be eligible for an acquisition or development grant, the project must be on publicly owned land or involve acquiring land that will become publicly owned. The sponsor must hold, or for acquisition projects acquire, sufficient legal title and control to manage the property for outdoor recreation in perpetuity and comply with LWCF conversion requirements (54 U.S.C. 200305(f)(3)) and federal aid procurement regulations (2 CFR 200).

Applicants must submit proof of property ownership with their preapplication. As outlined in the **LWCF Maps and Property Documents Guidance** document available on DCR LWCF website, both development and acquisition projects must submit a property records card showing the current owner, current deed for the property, and any available plat surveys. Acquisition projects must also submit a letter from the willing seller, which includes allowances to perform required

UASLFA appraisal and review, surveys, and/or wetland determinations if needed.

LWCF-assisted sites must be open to the general public and not limited to special groups. Newly acquired parkland must open within three years of purchase, with basic public access amenities such as parking and entry points. Development projects must begin construction within one year of grant authorization and be completed and open to the public within the three-year project period. All projects must include deed restrictions with required LWCF language to prevent conversion before project closeout.

States must also have a current State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) that identifies recreation needs and sets priorities for use of LWCF funds. Virginia's current SCORP is the **2024 Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)**. Proposed projects must align with VOP priorities, which are reflected in the preapplication questions and scoring criteria. See **How to Reference the VOP** document for guidance in using the VOP to complete the preapplication.

This manual provides a brief overview of the LWCF program, please refer to NPS LWCF Manual for additional information and guidance. **NPS released a new manual effective May 1, 2026. The prior version is no longer accepted for guidance in this grant round or moving forward.**

III. Eligibility

A. Eligible Project Sponsors – The following are eligible to apply for LWCF funding:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, counties)
- Tribes (federal or state recognized)
- State agencies (Dept. of Forestry, Wildlife Resources, etc.)
- Regional park authorities identified in the [Code of Virginia](#)
- Other public authorities that have proof of ability to hold and maintain property in perpetuity may be eligible. If this is not the case, there must be an agreement with the locality where park is located to maintain and own the property for public outdoor recreation if the authority were to dissolve in the future.

Land trusts, non-profit organizations, planning district commissions, associations, educational institutions, and private individuals **are not eligible** to receive LWCF funding.

B. Eligible Projects - Eligible project fall into three categories: acquisition, development, and combination acquisition and development. Detailed eligibility and cost guidance is provided in the **NPS LWCF Manual** (Ch. 3 and Ch. 5).

1. Acquisition

Acquisition grants support the purchase of lands, wetlands, and waters for public outdoor recreation—either as new parkland or additions to existing parks, forests, wildlife areas, beaches, and similar public recreation areas. Eligible acquisitions may also include land that creates physical connections between recreation areas (e.g., trails, waterways, habitat corridors). Requirements include:

- Land must be acquired in fee-simple through purchase, transfer, or donation.
- The site must open for public use within three years of project authorization.
- NPS funds acquisitions based on Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (UASFLA or “yellow book”) appraised value.
 - UASFLA appraisals must be completed within one year of project submission.
 - A separate UASFLA-certified reviewer must conduct a full review.
 - Appraisal and appraisal review costs are not reimbursable.
- In rare cases, a perpetual easement instead of fee simple acquisition may be approved if it guarantees public access and long-term LWCF compliance.

Areas acquired may serve a wide variety of public outdoor recreation activities including but not limited to: walking and driving for pleasure, sightseeing or wildlife viewing, swimming/other water sports, fishing, picnicking, boating and water access, hunting and shooting, camping, horseback riding, bicycling, outdoor pools or splashpads, and other outdoor sports and activities.

2. Development

Development grants support construction or renovation of outdoor recreation facilities and the infrastructure needed for safe, accessible public use. NPS authorizes funding based on a detailed, realistic budget submitted by the sponsor.

A development project may include a single improvement or a set of related improvements within one site, such as a state park or a city playground, or across multiple sites under the same sponsor, such as improving picnic facilities in a number of parks. If the project is part of a larger effort, applicants must clearly identify the specific LWCF funded portion and/or phase. NPS prefers the ‘entire park’ boundary to be LWCF protected. If there is reason for this to be less than the case, the LWCF portion must be able to stand-alone with its own amenities needed for public access.

Eligible development projects include, with certain exceptions: sports and playfields, picnic facilities, land or water-based trails and trailheads, swimming facilities, boating facilities, fishing/hunting facilities, public target range facilities, winter sports facilities, camping facilities, restoration and beautification efforts as defined in the NPS LWCF manual including native plantings and landscaping, renovations to eligible facility types, support facilities such as parking areas, restrooms, simple cabins, trail hostels, and park-specific operations and maintenance facilities.

Pre-award planning expenses for development projects, such as site studies, preliminary design, environmental review, cost estimating, and construction drawings, may be eligible if:

- They were incurred within a reasonable time period from application and are specifically documented to the park project,
- The funding sources, procurement procedures, and invoices have full documentation, &
- They are clearly described in the budget narrative.

These pre-award costs are used as match. If seeking pre-award costs, please provide a summary of the work, how it contributes to the purposes of the project, and when the costs were incurred. These will be reviewed by DCR and NPS. At NPS discretion, they will have to provide a Letter of Acknowledgement for these costs to move forward in the submission process.

3. Combination Acquisition and Development

Projects that include both land acquisition and development on the acquired site are eligible. These projects must meet all requirements for both acquisition and development, and both components must be completed within the three-year LWCF project period.

C. Ineligible Projects Types - LWCF funds may not be used for the following (list is not exhaustive):

- Indoor facilities, including recreation centers or facilities that support primarily non-outdoor purposes like dining facilities or overnight accommodations such as a lodge or hotel, however simple lodging facilities that support outdoor recreation experiences may be eligible
- Facilities for professional or semi-professional arts or athletics
- Acquisition of or restoration of historic sites and structures
- Acquisition of lands, or interests in lands, that completely restrict access to specific persons (e.g., non-residents of a community)
- Operation and maintenance activities
- Renovations necessary due to neglect or lack of proper maintenance
- Condemnation of any kind of interest in property
- Incidental costs related to land acquisition such as appraisals, surveys, or title work
- Indirect costs/ administrative fees, including in-house project administration
- Equipment to be used for maintenance including, but not limited to, automotive equipment, tractors, mowers, etc.
- Interest expenses, contingency reserves, and charges in excess of the lowest responsive bid when competitive bidding is required.

Please see list on DCR LWCF website for ineligible project costs.

*****The NPS LWCF Manual describes project eligibility requirements (Chapter 3) and eligible costs (Chapters 5) in detail. Final eligibility determination is at the discretion of NPS. *****

IV. Cost Share and Reimbursement Requirements

The LWCF program requires a minimum 1:1 match, meaning LWCF can cover no more than 50% of eligible project costs. For example, if a property costs \$800,000, the maximum LWCF award is \$400,000. Because appraisal, title work, and administrative expenses are ineligible, LWCF often covers less than half of the total project cost for acquisitions.

Matching funds may come from state, local, private, or non-governmental sources and may include cash or eligible in-kind contributions of land, services, donations, volunteer hour values, or materials. Other federal funding typically cannot be used as match. Applicants must confirm the original source of all match funds; many state grant programs, including those from the Virginia Department of Transportation, use federal dollars which may make them ineligible. The only federal programs allowed as match are the Recreational Trails Program and HUD Community Development Block Grants.

New as of the May 1, 2026 NPS LWCF Manual, the value of other publicly owned land not obtained for or currently being used for recreation can be used to match the LWCF grant request on a separate property or as match for development. Both the newly acquired or developed property and the matching property will obtain LWCF protections and must be open for outdoor recreational use. If interested in this option, please contact grant staff prior to completion of grant application to discuss.

LWCF is a reimbursement program. Sponsors must pay project costs upfront and will receive periodic reimbursements for 50% of eligible expenses after submitting invoices and proof of payment. Acquisition projects are typically reimbursed in a single payment after closeout. All fiscal documentation—including deeds, payment records, and required forms (e.g., Virginia W-9 and SAMS registration)—must be submitted to DCR for transmittal to NPS. Final reimbursement approval rests with NPS.

Additional guidance on the drawdown/reimbursement process and mandatory procurement procedures can be found in guidance documents posted on the DCR LWCF website under “LWCF Project Administration.” Reimbursements typically take 4-6 weeks for the review and pass-through process.

V. Perpetuity Requirements

LWCF requires that the entire park or recreation area receiving assistance be permanently protected for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. This protection must be recorded in the property deed. These areas were previously referred to as “6(f)” properties but are now called “LWCF-assisted areas” or “LWCF boundary areas.” Past Virginia LWCF projects with this protection can be found on the [VOP Mapper](#) “LWCF Projects” layer as general point locations (yellow dots). The information box for each point will show the LWCF legacy number, project title, and year closed.

Any conversion of LWCF-assisted land to a non-outdoor recreational use requires approval from the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and the provision of equivalent replacement property at the sponsor’s expense. Both DCR and NPS strongly discourage conversions.

The perpetuity requirement applies to the entire park, unless a smaller unit is clearly a stand-alone, self-sustaining recreation area with independent access, utilities, and support facilities. DCR and NPS must approve any boundary that does not encompass the full park, and NPS may reject proposals that do not meet this standard. Applicants considering a reduced boundary should consult DCR early; DCR may coordinate with NPS to determine eligibility.

Restrictive Deed Wording

The following language is to be incorporated into the property deed of all LWCF-assisted areas and recorded in the city, town, or county court house of the project area. The deed with Tax ID Parcel information as well as attached plats or maps must be submitted to DCR to process the final drawdown and project closeout for authorized projects:

The property identified below has been acquired or developed with federal assistance provided by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior in accordance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended, 54 U.S.C. § 200301 et seq. Pursuant to a requirement of that law, this property may not be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses (whether by transfer, sale, or in any other manner) without the express written approval of the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation and the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, or their designee. By law, the Secretary shall approve such conversion only if it is in accord with the then existing statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan and only on such conditions as the Secretary considers necessary to ensure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location.

VI. Grant Administration

Quarterly Reports

Awarded grants must submit quarterly reports every three months during the active grant period. Reports are due two weeks after the reporting periods ending March 30, June 30, September 30, December 30. A template is available on the DCR LWCF website under “LWCF Project Administration.”

Procurement

All project-related procurement must comply with 2 CFR 200 and the Virginia Public Procurement Act. Additional guidance on procurement procedures can be found in guidance documents posted on the DCR LWCF website under “LWCF Project Administration.”

Temporary Signage

Temporary signage is required for projects receiving \$500,000 or more in funding. The format and required contents are provided in Chapter 7 Section A.3.B of the NPS LWCF Manual.

VII. Stewardship and Post-Completion Requirements

LWCF-assisted properties must be maintained to ensure safe, sanitary, accessible, and reasonable public use and access. Additional guidance is provided in Chapter 8 (Post-Completion and Stewardship) of the NPS LWCF Manual.

LWCF Acknowledgment Signs

Permanent signs shall be installed on the property to acknowledge the federal-state-local partnership role in providing new high quality outdoor recreation areas and facilities and to facilitate continued awareness of the LWCF Act obligations by recipients/subrecipients as well as the public. A sign must be continuously maintained at the site and must include the LWCF logo. The cost of manufacturing the sign is the responsibility of the project sponsor.

Inspections

DCR conducts periodic inspections of LWCF-assisted areas to verify compliance with program and stewardship requirements. If deficiencies are found, the sponsor will receive written notice and a required timeline for correction. If a potential conversion is identified, DCR will consult with NPS and provide direction on the conversion process and required next steps.

Conversions

LWCF-assisted areas may not be converted to any non-outdoor recreational use without written approval from the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Approval is granted only when the proposed conversion is consistent with the state's SCORP and when the project sponsor provides replacement property of equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent recreational utility and reasonable location. See Chapter 9 of the NPS LWCF Manual for more information.

Sponsors considering a conversion must coordinate with DCR early in the process. Conversions can take several years to complete, and NPS approval is not guaranteed. Required documentation includes UASFLA appraisals, NEPA correspondence, and all materials related to both the proposed conversion and the replacement property. Sponsors are responsible for all associated costs, and LWCF funds cannot be used for any part of the conversion process.

VIII. Environmental Review and Documentation Requirements

Projects selected by DCR in the preapplication phase must complete all required environmental and historic preservation reviews during the Compliance Phase before DCR can submit the full application package to NPS for authorization. This includes demonstrating compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act through the appropriate agency correspondence and review processes. Guidance on these procedures is available in the **Preapplication Environmental Guidance** and **Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance** documents on the DCR LWCF website.

For 2026, applicants will no longer be required to complete NEPA and Section 106 reviews *before* submitting an application to DCR. However, early coordination remains highly beneficial, as these reviews must be completed before DCR can forward a selected project to NPS for authorization. Once a project is selected for award, sponsors are expected to begin all required environmental and historic-preservation reviews immediately. DCR will review submitted materials for completeness prior to NPS submission.

Early coordination with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) is still essential. DHR review must be completed before NPS can conduct the required federal Tribal consultation under Section 106, which occurs prior to award. Applicants should provide any pre-existing Tribal correspondence when available.

Project sponsors are strongly encouraged to begin agency communication as early as possible, even before selection. Cultural or ecological surveys may be required, and identifying these needs early can help avoid delays. Some pre-award environmental expenses may be eligible for reimbursement. Any additional costs incurred after project authorization would require an NPS-approved amendment, and additional funding is not guaranteed.

Projects that do not complete NEPA and other NPS submission requirements within seven months after selection may need to reapply.

IX. Award Amounts

Award amounts for 2026 are expected to range from \$150,000 - \$2.5 million.

- Minimum grant award request is \$150,000 (total project cost \$300K)
- Maximum grant award request is \$2.5 million, however applicants can indicate their interest in additional funding should it become available

Depending on the quantity and quality of preapplications received, awarded amounts may be less than full request. A committee will review and score preapplications. Higher scoring projects will be prioritized for funding.

X. Award Timeline

The anticipated timeline for the 2026 LWCF grant round is as follows:

- June 30, 2026 - DCR opens Phase I preapplication grant round; posts guidance and preapplication documents
- Mid-July 2026 - DCR preapplication webinar
- August 27, 2026 – Preapplication submission deadline to DCR
- September 2026 – Reviews and scoring completed
- Early October 2026 - DCR informs sponsors of projects selected for moving forward to Phase 2 Compliance

- October-December 2026 – 4-5 Mandatory virtual information seminars for selected project sponsors (primary coordinator or their representative)
- October-November 2026 - DCR performs site visits
- January-May 2027 - DCR will be communicating with NPS Compliance and Awarding Officers to determine feasibility and eligibility of projects. Project sponsors will be completing compliance activities and grant forms and receiving feedback. DCR will submit project document packages to NPS for mandatory pre-review. Any feedback will be coordinated.
- June-August 2027 – NPS review, application updates, and final approval procedures
- September 2027 - Expected official project awards (date is determined by NPS)
- Project period date range is expected to be approximately October 2027 through September 2030.

All projects will have a three (3) year project period from NPS authorized project period start date. For development projects, physical work on the project site must begin within one year of the NPS project start date. **It is essential that no purchases** (unless allowed in a NPS Acknowledgement Letter of pre-award expenses) **nor any physical construction begin on the project until there is written notification of NPS authorization**, otherwise those costs incurred may be ineligible for reimbursement.

XI. Application Procedures and Selection Process

The LWCF Act requires that project selections be made through an open project selection process (OPSP). For full details on the OPSP in Virginia and to review the 2026 LWCF Scoring Criteria, view the **Virginia's Open Project Selection Process** document and **LWCF 2026 Scoring Criteria** documents found on the DCR LWCF website.

Preapplication Procedures

1. Read this guide in its entirety, referencing the NPS LWCF Manual, and other documents listed on page one as necessary.
2. Download the preapplication forms and templates from the DCR LWCF website at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>.

Guidance on how to complete the forms and a checklist of additional documentation required are included as Appendix B at the end of this manual.

If you are unable to download or use the preapplication documents, please contact recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov or 804-508-8896 to obtain an alternative format.

3. Complete the preapplication. All questions should be answered in the space available. Be clear and concise. Only include photographs, maps, and attachments where instructed to do so.

4. Submit the preapplication as separate attachments or as a zipped file attached to one email (maximum email size 50 MB) to recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov by **August 27, 2026 at 4:00 pm**.

If your preapplication documents will exceed 50 MB, please contact DCR at the email address above at least two business days prior to the submission deadline to discuss using an alternative submission method.

If you do not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of your electronic submission within one business day of submission, please contact DCR at the email or phone number listed above to ensure your preapplication was received.

Selection Process for NPS Submittal and Award

1. Preapplications received by the deadline undergo a preliminary review by DCR Recreation Grants staff to verify completeness and project eligibility.
2. All eligible and complete preapplications are scored by a panel of DCR and other state agency staff members, as a committee, in alignment with the 2026 LWCF Scoring Criteria.
3. Project sponsors of the highest scoring projects will be contacted to review program requirements and confirm their desire to proceed to Phase 2 Compliance.
4. DCR Recreation Grants staff perform a site inspection of the proposed project location.

The inspection will include a review of the property, discussion of eligibility concerns, and an overview of next steps. If the property is not yet owned by the sponsor, the current owner must be informed that site access will be needed between mid-October and late November.

5. DCR Recreation Grants staff will submit application documents to NPS for mandatory compliance review.
6. DCR Recreation Grants staff will work with the project sponsor(s) to update and finalize other documents for NPS final submittal.
7. NPS is the responsible entity to issue award authorizations for projects. **Do not proceed with acquisition or construction until project authorization date is confirmed and release of project grant award agreement.**
8. Once all project documents and forms are approved in the federal GrantSolutions system, NPS will release a Notice of Award (NOA) to DCR. DCR will then send a sub-agreement to the project sponsor. Once all signatures are obtained, the project can move forward.

XII. Contact Information

For technical questions on the linked reference documents, preapplication forms, and submission methods contact tarik.mansouri@dcr.virginia.gov or call Recreation Grants Assistant Tarik Mansouri at 804-508-9521.

For questions on applicant and project eligibility, eligible costs, and administration requirements contact kristal.mckelvey@dcr.virginia.gov or call Recreation Grants Manager Kristal McKelvey at 804-508-8896.

Appendix A: Preapplication Checklists

Please save all documents with Park Name to assist with filing. For example, *Riverside Park-DCR Preapplication Form, Riverside Park-Location Map*

Checklist 1 - Required Items due with preapplication on August 27, 2026	
☐ DCR Preapplication Form	Form provided on website, complete all fields, resources and additional guidance available in Appendix B: DCR Preapplication Form Guidance
☐ Site Development Plan (development/construction projects) or Conceptual Design Plan (acquisition projects)	Plan of the existing <i>and</i> proposed site features that identifies the location of planned recreational developments, improvements, and other use features such as where the public will access the site, adjacent roads, parking, etc. Development projects are expected to have more detailed site plans (site development plan) than acquisition projects (conceptual site plan). Also include the title of the project and a north arrow.
☐ Project Budget Worksheet and Narrative	Template provided on website with sections for narrative, matching fund sources, and itemized budget. Add lines as needed. Submit as Excel document to allow future revisions.
☐ Project Timeline	Template provided on website with example tasks to include
☐ Willingness to Sell/ Letter from Landowner (acquisition projects)	Indicates the landowner's willingness to sell the property to the applicant and permission to perform required UASLFA appraisal and review, surveys, and/or wetland determinations
☐ Proposed LWCF Boundary Area Map	See requirements in <i>Maps and Property Documents Guidance</i> on website
☐ Property Tax Card/s	See requirements in <i>Maps and Property Documents Guidance</i> on website
☐ Property Deed/s	See requirements in <i>Maps and Property Documents Guidance</i> on website
☐ Most Recent Plat Survey/s	See requirements in <i>Maps and Property Documents Guidance</i> on website. Recorded and unrecorded surveys are acceptable.
☐ Photos of Project Site	Up to 10
☐ EPA NEPA Assist Report	See requirements in <i>Preapplication Environmental Guidance</i> on website
☐ ESA Section 7 USFWS iPAC species list	See requirements in <i>Preapplication Environmental Guidance</i> on website

Checklist 2 - Optional Items

Please include with Phase I preapplication submission if they have already been completed, otherwise they will be completed in Phase II after notice of selection. Items in **Bold type** are optional but preferred for Phase I preapplication submission.

☐ US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Section 7 iPaC effect letter and species conclusion table	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) Environmental Services Project Review comment letter and map	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ DCR Natural Heritage Information Services comment letter	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ Department of Historic Resources (DHR) National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 Archives Search submission confirmation	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document. DHR Archives Search takes minimally 30 days and must be completed prior to requesting ePIX Federal Project Review.
☐ Department of Historic Resources (DHR) National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 Archives Search results and ePIX submission confirmation	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Intergovernmental Review comment letter	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ DEQ WetCat report	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Regulatory Request System (RRS) (previously Joint Permit Application) submission	See detailed guidance in <i>Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance</i> document.
☐ Public Comment Period response summary	Needed if project does not qualify for NEPA Categorical Exclusion
☐ Permits (USACE, DEQ, E&S, as applicable)	
☐ UASFLA Appraisal (acquisition projects)	Compliant with Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions
☐ UASFLA Appraisal Review (acquisition projects)	Separate appraisal review must be completed by different appraiser in accordance with UASFLA.
☐ Shapefile of LWCF Boundary Area	

Appendix B: DCR Preapplication Form Guidance

The DCR Preapplication Form will be used by grant administrators to gather needed project details and by the review committee to rank preapplications for funding priority. The criteria being used to evaluate and rank preapplications are posted along with the other 2026 application materials on the DCR LWCF webpage.

Question 6

Project title should begin with the name of the park, e.g. Riverside Park playground improvement, or Riverside Park eastern expansion.

Question 9

While awards are not expected to exceed \$2.5 million, it is possible additional funding will become available prior to NPS authorization due to project withdrawals, timing of federal appropriations, and/or too few preapplications being received that are ready for NPS submission.

Question 13

If the area is already a viable park or outdoor recreation area, include the current name, unless there are plans to change the name in the next three years. If the area is not yet a park/outdoor recreation area, then include the proposed future name.

Question 16

Include the tax parcel ID numbers for all parcels that are wholly or partially within the park boundary, including the proposed LWCF acquisition.

Question 21

The [Virginia Outdoor Plan Mapper](#) can be used to identify older LWCF funded projects in Virginia.

Question 22

Generally, the acreage in question 20 and 22 should be the same, because LWCF requires that the entire park be protected in perpetuity. For acquisitions that will be additions to existing recreation areas, please note both the existing park acreage and the acreage of the parcel to be added, to reach the total acres to be protected.

Question 23

ConserveVirginia, the DCR Nature-Based Recreation Access Model, and the Trust for Public Lands ParkServe model can all be used to help demonstrate project need.

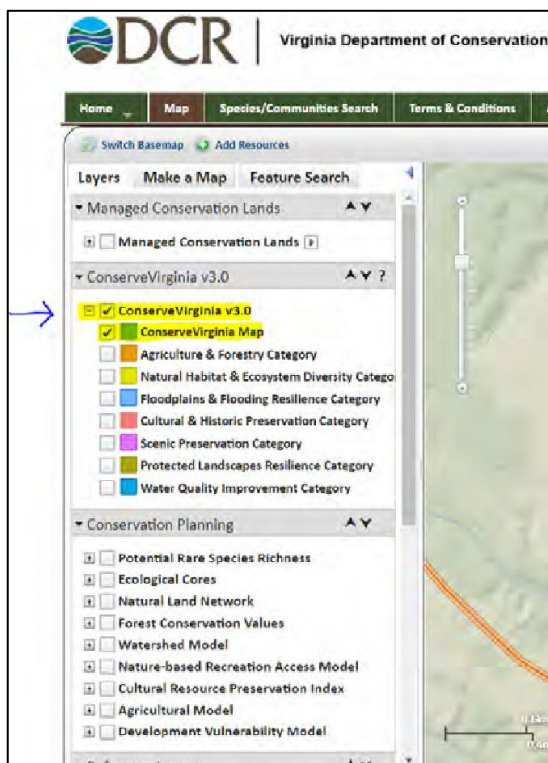
ConserveVirginia

The ConserveVirginia map can be accessed through DCR's Natural Heritage Data Explorer.

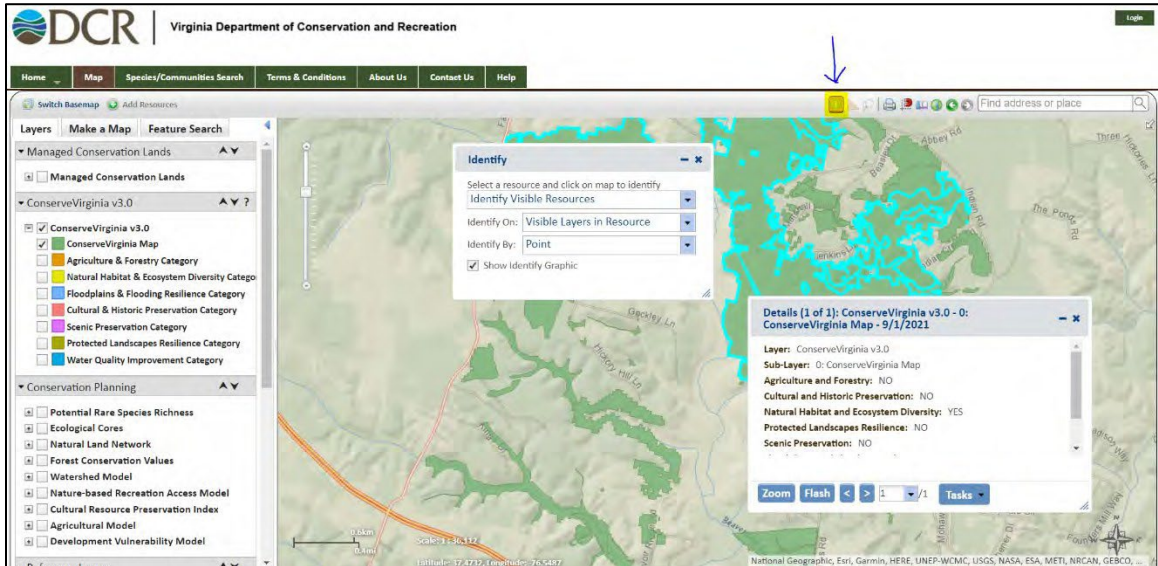
1. To access the Natural Heritage Data Explorer, visit: <https://vanhde.org/> and click on the "Map" tab. A separate browser tab will open. Please read and accept the Terms of Use.



2. Navigate to your location by either using the map's zoom feature, or entering an address into the box in the upper right side of the screen labeled "find address or place"
3. Under the ConserveVirginia Category on the left side of the screen, check the box next to "ConserveVirginia v3.0"



4. Expand that drop down and check the box next to “ConserveVirginia Map.”
5. To find whether your parcel is within ConserveVirginia, click the “identify” icon in the top right of the map, next to the triangle and the magnifying glass.



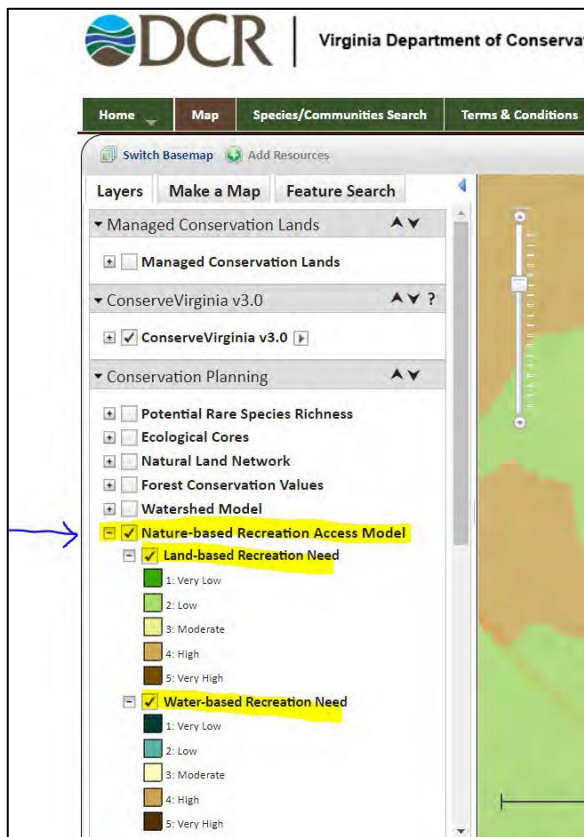
6. Two windows will pop up. Within the “Detail” window, it will say “Yes” next to any sub-layer/ category that is within ConserveVirginia. In this case, the identified location is within the Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity layer.



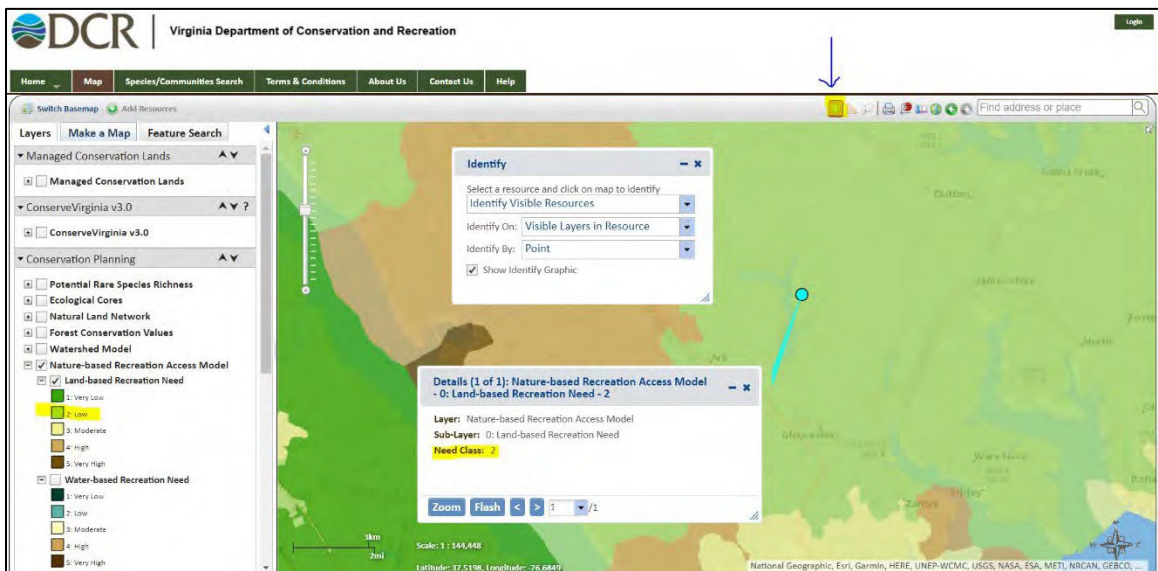
Nature-based Recreation Access Model

The Nature-based Recreation Access Model maps can also be accessed through DCR's Natural Heritage Data Explorer. Follow steps 1 and 2 outlined for ConserveVirginia above to access the mapper. Once you have located your area on the map, follow these steps to view the Nature-based Recreation Access Model need rating:

1. Under the Conservation Planning Category on the left side of the screen, check the box next to "Nature-based Recreation Access Model"
2. Expand that drop down and check the box next to "Land-based Recreation Need" or "Water-based Recreation Need" as applicable depending on project scope.



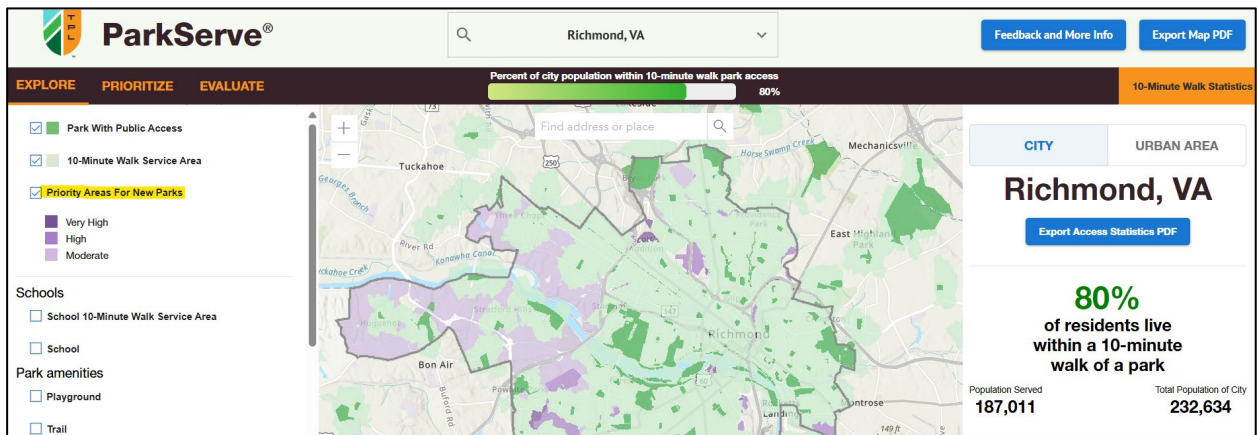
3. To find the score you have selected, click the "identify" icon in the top right of the map, next to the triangle and the magnifying glass.



4. Two windows will pop up. Within the “Details” window, the “Need Class” will be listed. This corresponds to one of the five need classes listed in the legend.

Trust for Public Land ParkServe

ParkServe can be found at: <https://www.tpl.org/parkserve>. The model primarily identifies priority areas for new parks in urban and suburban areas and may not include analysis for all project areas.



Question 24

Detailed guidance on using and citing the Virginia Outdoors Plan can be found in the LWCF *How to Reference the VOP* guidance document available on the DCR LWCF website.

Question 25

Many resources to aid in responding to this question can be found in the Virginia Outdoors Plan [Section 2.1 Recreation for All](#).

Question 26

Please include citations for local and regional plan references.

Question 27

Some resources to aid in responding to this question can be found in the Virginia Outdoors Plan [Section 3.1.5 Becoming More Resilient](#).

Question 29

In this response, please include information on previous studies AND any of the specific LWCF grant-required compliance activities as outlined in the *Preapplication Environmental Guidance* and *Compliance Phase Environmental Guidance* documents.

Question 30

Guidance for completing the Project Timeline and Project Budget and Budget Narrative are included within those template documents.