

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) Grant Subcommittee

April 17, 2025, 1:00 PM

Department of Conservation and Recreation

600 East Main Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order and Welcome

Suzan Bulbulkaya, Land Conservation Manager at DCR, welcomed attendees and introduced the purpose of the meeting—to review the FY26 VLCF Grant Manual. Elizabeth Andrews, Ranking Subcommittee Member, chaired the meeting. Due to lack of an in-person quorum, no official actions or votes were taken.

Roll Call and Introductions

Subcommittee Members:

- Ms. Elizabeth Andrews (Chair, At-large Member)
- The Honorable Ed Scott (7th Congressional District)
- Mr. Stuart Leeth (4th Congressional District)

Interagency Task Force Members, DCR Staff and other attendees introduced themselves, including representatives from DOF, DWR, DHR, VDACS, Attorney General's Office, VAULT, the Nature Conservancy, Potomac Conservancy and others.

Tribal representatives included Melissa Ehrenreich (Indigenous Conservation Council) and Chief Frank Adams (Upper Mattaponi Tribe).

Meeting Overview and Objectives

The subcommittee was tasked with reviewing three primary updates to the grant manual:

1. Scoring for projects partnering with local PDR programs
2. Guidance on applications with multiple parcels/owners
3. Incorporation of the 2024 Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) into scoring

Following public comment, a final draft will be presented for action at the June 3rd meeting (subcommittee to convene 30 minutes early).

Key Discussion Highlights

Terminology Regarding Tribes

Language reverted to original phrasing after feedback from Melissa Ehrenreich to better align with tribal sovereignty and flexibility in easement language.

Multi-Parcel Projects

Clarified that disbursement of funds for multi-parcel projects will occur only after all promised parcels are conserved.

Due Diligence and Title Insurance

Richard Mahevich (OAG) recommended clarifying requirements for appraisals and title insurance on fee and easement interests.

Local PDR Program Scoring

Discussion on scoring across categories for PDR participation. Decision to retain scoring under farmland/forest categories.

Scoring Criteria Changes by Category

Adjustments made to reflect use and development vulnerability in farmland and forest preservation categories, and support for VOP priorities in the open spaces and parks category.

Cultural Resources Scoring

DHR requested removal of language requiring contact for non-designated historic resources. Language to clarify protection expectations added.

New Criterion on Grantee Performance

Proposed -3 points for overdue progress reports, with flexible language to avoid penalizing minor delays.

Future Considerations

Recommendations to consider wetland migration corridors and tribal co-management frameworks in future scoring cycles.

Next Steps

The draft manual will be posted for a 21-day public comment period. Comments will be summarized by staff. Final recommendations and action expected at the June 3, 2025 VLCF Board Meeting.