

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, June 9, 2026 – 11:00 a.m.

West Reading Room, Patrick Henry Building
1111 East Broad St, Richmond, VA 23219

AGENDA

Welcome

1. Call to order, welcome, introduction of members, and opening remarks
David Bulova, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

Business and Financial Matters

2. Approval of minutes for the November 3, 2025 Board Meeting
Secretary Bulova
3. Virginia Land Conservation Fund financial report
Laura Ellis, Deputy Director for Administration and Finance, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
4. Annual resolution to authorize DCR to expend interest from the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020
Suzan Bulbulkaya, Land Conservation Manager, DCR
5. Analysis of returned VLCF grant funds by category
Damian Martin, Land Conservation Specialist, DCR
6. Grantee requests for Board approval of existing VLCF awarded projects:
 - a. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources request to extend their FY23 grant to acquire and conserve 244 acres in Chesapeake beyond the three-year limitation due to delays associated with federal match funding
Becky Gwynn, Executive Deputy Director, Department of Wildlife Resources
 - b. The Nature Conservancy request to change the scope of their FY24 grant to acquire and conserve 680 acres in Washington County due to severed mineral rights
Meg Short, Land Protection Manager, and Brad Kreps, Program Director, Clinch Valley Program, The Nature Conservancy
7. Discussion of [House Bill 846](#), regarding public-body coholder requirements for accredited land trusts
Nikki Rovner, Director, DCR
8. Review of VLCF grant projects that have closed since November 2025
Damian Martin, Land Conservation Specialist, DCR

New VLCF Grant Rounds

9. Update on the Dominion Surry-Skiffes Creek grant funding and approval of the 2026 Grant Round

Linda Crowe, Land Conservation Specialist, DCR

10. Discussion and approval of the VLCF FY27 Grant Round

Suzan Bulbulkaya

- a. Proposed FY27 Grant Manual and public comments
 - i) Overview
 - ii) Accounting for migration of wetlands in the scoring criteria
- b. Proposed FY27 Fiscal Expenditure Plan
- c. Proposed timeline for applications and awards
- d. Public comment
Secretary Bulova
- e. Board discussion and adoption of FY27 Grant Round documents

Other Business

11. Public comment

Secretary Bulova

12. Adjourn

Secretary Bulova

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees

Chairman: The Honorable David Bulova, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

Vice Chair: Morgan Slaven

Member Ex Officio: The Honorable Katie Frazier, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Executive Secretary: Nikki Rovner, Director, Department of Conservation and Recreation

1st Congressional District Robert Beals

2nd Congressional District Ryan Horsley

3rd Congressional District Col. Brian Hallberg

4th Congressional District Stewart Leeth

5th Congressional District Kathleen Kilpatrick

6th Congressional District Morgan Slaven

7th Congressional District The Honorable Ed Scott

8th Congressional District Gabriella Hoffman

9th Congressional District The Honorable Katie Lamb

10th Congressional District Bradley Gable

11th Congressional District Michael Molina

Chief William “Frank” Adams

The Honorable David W. Marsden

The Honorable Richard H. Stuart

Elizabeth Andrews

James Beamer

Lauren Alexandra Martin

Sonya Powell

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Financial Condition Report

June 9, 2026

Fund Statement

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
Fund Statement
As of April 30, 2026

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE - June 30, 2022 **\$16,287,778**

INCOME

FY22 Stewardship Funds	\$2,124,370
FY23 Stewardship Funds	\$1,667,123
FY24 Stewardship Funds	\$2,222,606
FY25 Stewardship Funds	\$979,432
FY23 Appropriation - Chapter 2	\$16,000,000
FY24 Appropriation - Chapter 1	\$16,000,000
FY25 Appropriation - Chapter 2	\$16,000,000
FY26 Appropriation - Chapter 725	\$16,000,000
FY23 Interest	\$506,071
FY24 Interest	\$1,485,359
FY25 Interest	\$1,665,087
FY26 Interest*	\$1,298,741
TOTAL INCOME	\$75,948,789

DISBURSEMENTS

FY23 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$2,124,370
FY24 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$1,667,123
FY25 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$2,222,606
FY26 Stewardship Fund Disbursements*	\$979,432
FY23 Grant Payments	\$5,507,148
FY24 Grant Payments	\$7,980,536
FY25 Grant Payments	\$6,810,796
FY26 Grant Payments*	\$16,804,734
FY23 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,000,000
FY24 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,000,000
FY25 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,340,301
FY26 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments*	\$4,000,000
FY23 Administrative Expenses	\$122,897
FY24 Administrative Expenses	\$54,947
FY25 Administrative Expenses	\$151,724
FY26 Administrative Expenses*	\$139,538
TOTAL DISBURSEMENT	\$60,906,153

* Changes since last report

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE - April 30, 2026 **\$31,330,414**

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation
June 9, 2026

Resolution: Authorization for Administrative Funding for FY27

Background:

Pursuant to Va. Code § 10.1-1020(G): Up to \$250,000 per year of the interest generated by the Fund may be used for the Foundation's administrative expenses, including, but not limited to, the expenses of the Board and its members, development of the Foundation's strategic plan, development and maintenance of an inventory of properties as provided in subdivision 1 b of § [10.1-1021](#), development of a needs assessment for future expenditures as provided in subdivision 1 c of § [10.1-1021](#), and fulfillment of reporting requirements. All such expenditures shall be subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

Interest Balance on July 1, 2025	\$2,147,188
Interest Earned during FY26 through April 30, 2026	\$1,298,741
Budgeted VLCF Administrative Expenses for FY26	(\$150,000)
Budgeted Natural Heritage Expenses	(\$100,000)
FY26 Grant Round	(\$1,000,000)
Available interest	\$2,195,929

Authorization:

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees authorizes the Department of Conservation and Recreation to expend up to \$250,000 of interest generated by the Fund in FY 2027 for use consistent with the legislative authority provided by *Code of Virginia* § 10.1-1020.G.; as outlined below:

FY 2027 \$250,000

Address existing administrative, web service and database-related expenses incurred by the Department of Conservation and Recreation in support of Virginia Land Conservation Foundation grant management activities. Specifically, the funding will be used in support of staff assisting with the VLCF grant program, the Webgrants online Grants Management Portal, land conservation database support of the Foundation's mission, and fulfillment of statutorily required reporting requirements.



Assessment of Returned VLCF Grant Funds

Analysis of Withdrawn and Under Expended VLCF Projects FY20 to FY24

In the past 26 years, the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation has awarded 413 grants for land conservation projects across Virginia. Of those grants, 49 are still open, 66 have been withdrawn, and 297 grants have been successfully completed, conserving more than 106,000 acres.

At the June 3, 2025 VLCF Board meeting, staff presented summaries of projects that closed within the past six months. With five withdrawn grants returning more than \$2.2M in grant funds, the Board requested that staff evaluate past grant rounds to determine if there is an inherent risk in the success rate of projects in certain categories over others. Staff analyzed the five VLCF grant categories looking back five years to determine if there are any patterns of withdrawn projects and returned grant funds under each category.

The following analysis is based on “closed projects” from grant rounds FY20 to FY24, through May 1, 2026. During these five years, VLCF held five grant rounds awarding a total of \$50,262,296 to 152 grants.

For this analysis, “closed projects” means (i) those grant awards that were successfully completed and (ii) those that were unsuccessful and withdrew their grants. Meaning, they are closed out in our records. Some successful projects close under budget. Those under expended funds are included in this analysis as well.

At the time of this analysis, the FY23 grant round had 3 of 40 grants still open, and the FY24 grant round had 10 of 29 grants still open.

SUMMARY of VLCF GRANTS AWARDED FY20 to FY24

Grant Awards: 152

Grant Amount: \$50,262,296

Acres to be Protected: 99,383

OPEN VLCF GRANTS FY20 to FY24

Open Projects: 13

Total Grant Amount: \$4,647,938

CLOSED VLCF GRANTS FY20 to FY24

Closed Projects: 139

Total Grant Amount: \$45,614,358

Successful Projects: 104 (74.8% of closed projects)

Withdrawn Projects: 35 (25.2% of closed projects)

Under Expended Projects: 25 (17.9% of closed projects)

Withdrawn Amount: \$8,930,377 (19.6% of grant amount)

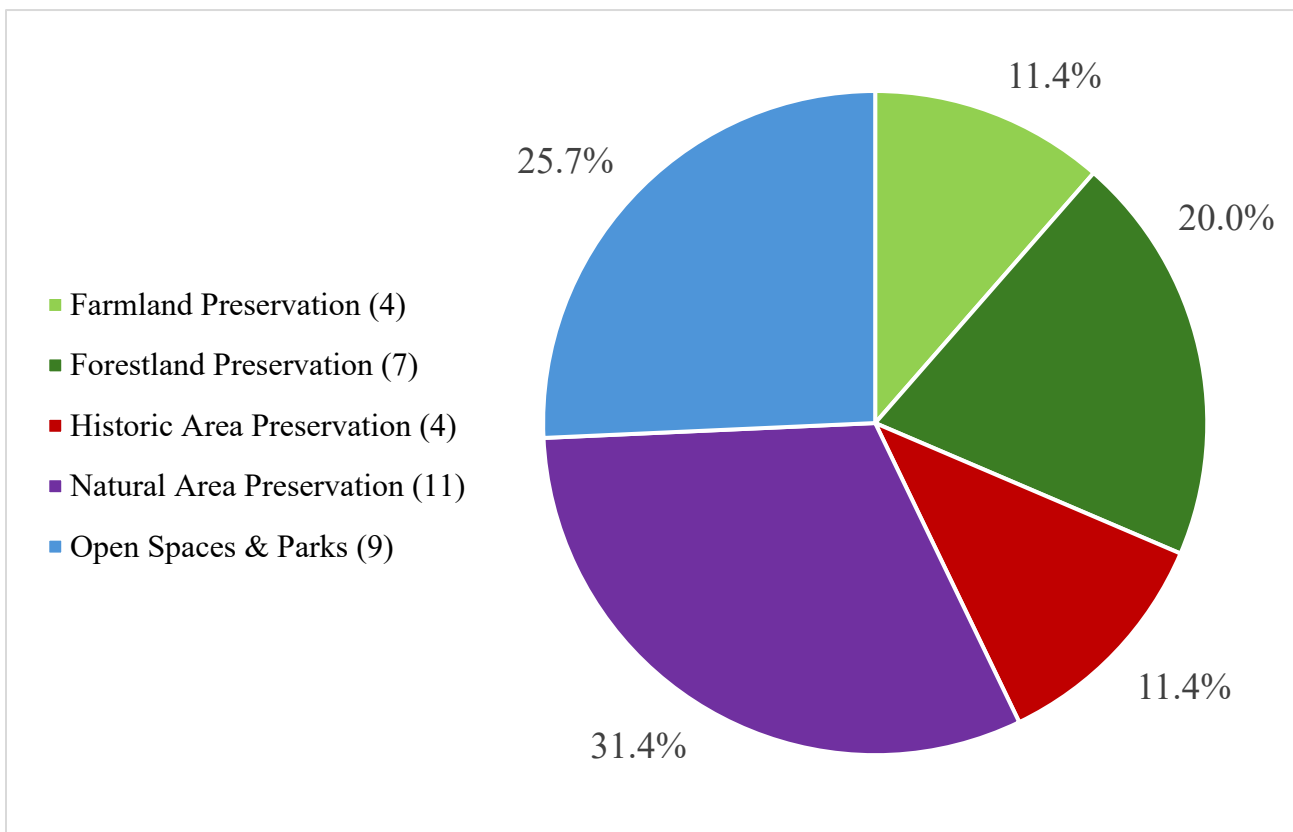
Under Expended Amount: \$1,320,735 (2.9% of grant amount)

Summary of FY20 - FY24 VLCF Grant Rounds									
VLCF Grant Category	Awarded Projects	Open Projects	Closed Projects	Completed Projects	Withdrawn Projects	Under Expended Projects	Grant Amount	Withdrawn Amount	Under Expended Amount
Farmland Preservation	23	2	21	17	4	0	\$7,129,700	\$738,750	\$0
Forestland Preservation	30	4	26	19	7	1	\$7,728,743	\$1,984,235	\$88,236
Historic Area Preservation	29	4	25	21	4	3	\$8,965,326	\$1,132,268	\$29,588
Natural Area Preservation	35	0	35	24	11	18	\$12,379,505	\$2,956,987	\$1,113,614
Open Spaces & Parks	35	3	32	23	9	3	\$9,411,084	\$2,118,137	\$89,297
Totals	152	13	139	104	35	25	\$45,614,358	\$8,930,377	\$1,320,735

Total Number of Withdrawn Projects and Associated Amount (\$) by Category

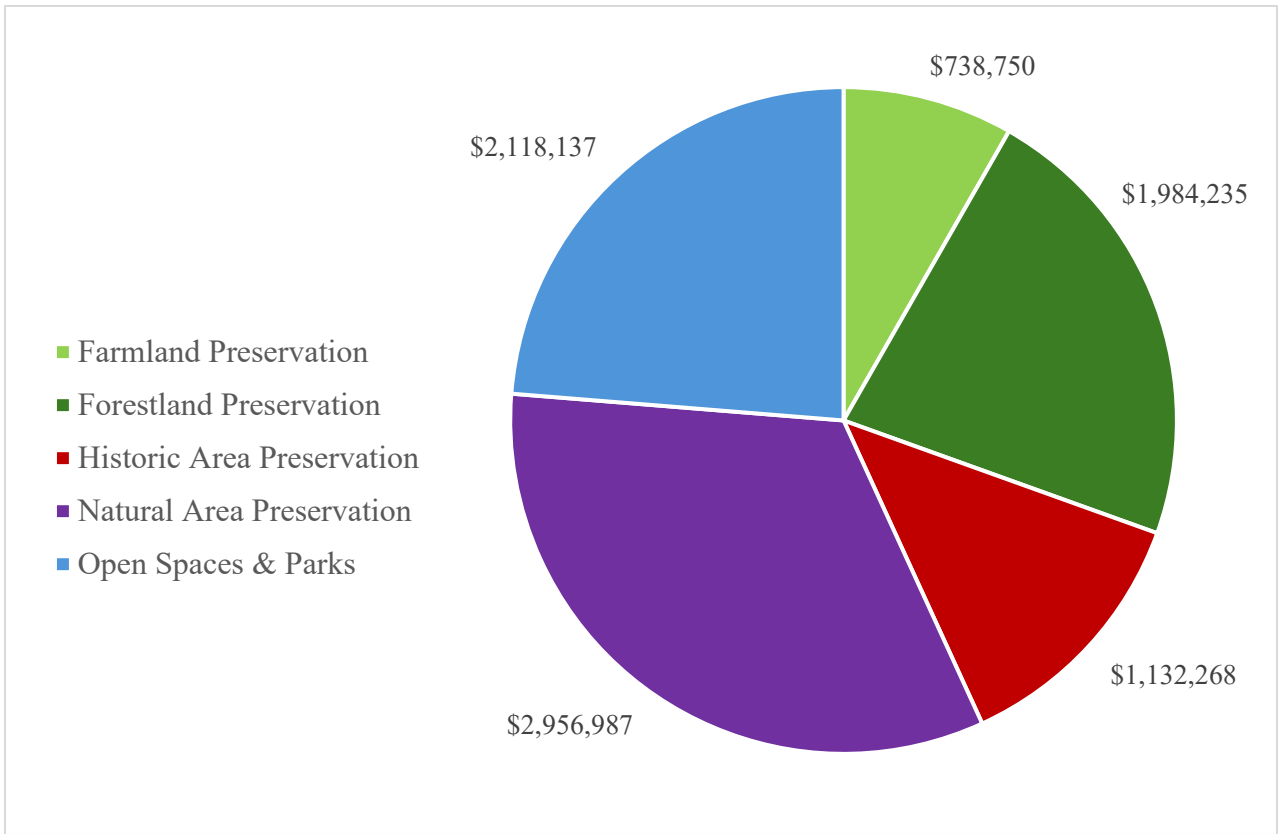
A total of 139 VLCF projects closed within those five years. Of the 139 projects, 35 were withdrawn (25.2% of all closed projects). The Natural Area Preservation category had the highest number of withdrawn projects (11) that accounted for 31.4% of all withdrawn projects, followed by Open Spaces & Parks (9) 25.7%, Forestland Preservation (7) 20.0%, and then Historic Area Preservation (4) 11.4% and Farmland Preservation (4) 11.4% (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of total number of withdrawn projects by category



A total of \$45,614,358 of VLCF grant funding was awarded for all closed projects between FY20 and FY24. Of that total, \$8,930,377 (19.6%) has been returned due to withdrawn projects. The Natural Area Preservation category had the largest amount of funding returned due to withdrawn projects with \$2,956,987 (33.1% of total returned funding), followed by Open Spaces & Parks with \$2,118,137 (23.7%), Forestland Preservation with \$1,984,235 (22.2%), Historic Area Preservation with \$1,132,268 (12.7%), and then Farmland Preservation with \$738,750 (8.3%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proportion of total withdrawn amount (\$) by category



Total Number and Amount (\$) of Under Expended Projects by Category

Part of this analysis considers projects that were under expended. That is, projects that closed under the proposed budget of the application resulting in grant funds being returned to the respective VLCF category for future grant rounds. Of the 139 closed projects, 25 were closed under budget (17.9% of all closed projects) with a total of \$1,320,735 being returned (2.9% of total grant awards). The Natural Area Preservation category had the highest number of under expended projects (18) that accounted for 72% of all under expended projects, followed by Open Spaces & Parks (3) and Historic Area Preservation (3), Forestland Preservation (1), and then Farmland Preservation (0).

The total under expended amount was \$1,320,735. The Natural Area Preservation category contributed 84.3% of the total under expended amount of \$1,113,614. Open Spaces & Parks category had a total of \$89,297 of under expended funds, Forestland Preservation had a total of \$88,236, Historic Area Preservation \$29,588, and \$0 from the Farmland Preservation category.

Analysis of Closed Projects Within Each Category

The following figures and tables analyze the number of projects and amount (\$) of grant awards for both withdrawn and under expended projects *within* each category, rather than total numbers relative to the other categories.

Number of Withdrawn Projects Within Each Category

The Natural Area Preservation category had the highest number of withdrawn projects (11) that accounted for 31.4% of all Natural Area Preservation projects, followed by Open Spaces & Parks (9) – 28.1% of all Open Spaces & Parks projects, Forestland Preservation (7) – 26.9% of all Forestland Preservation projects, the Historic Area Preservation (4) – 16.0% of all Historic Area Preservation projects and Farmland Preservation (4) – 19.0% of all Farmland Preservation projects (Figure 3; Table 1).

Figure 3: Percentage of withdrawn projects within each category for all closed projects

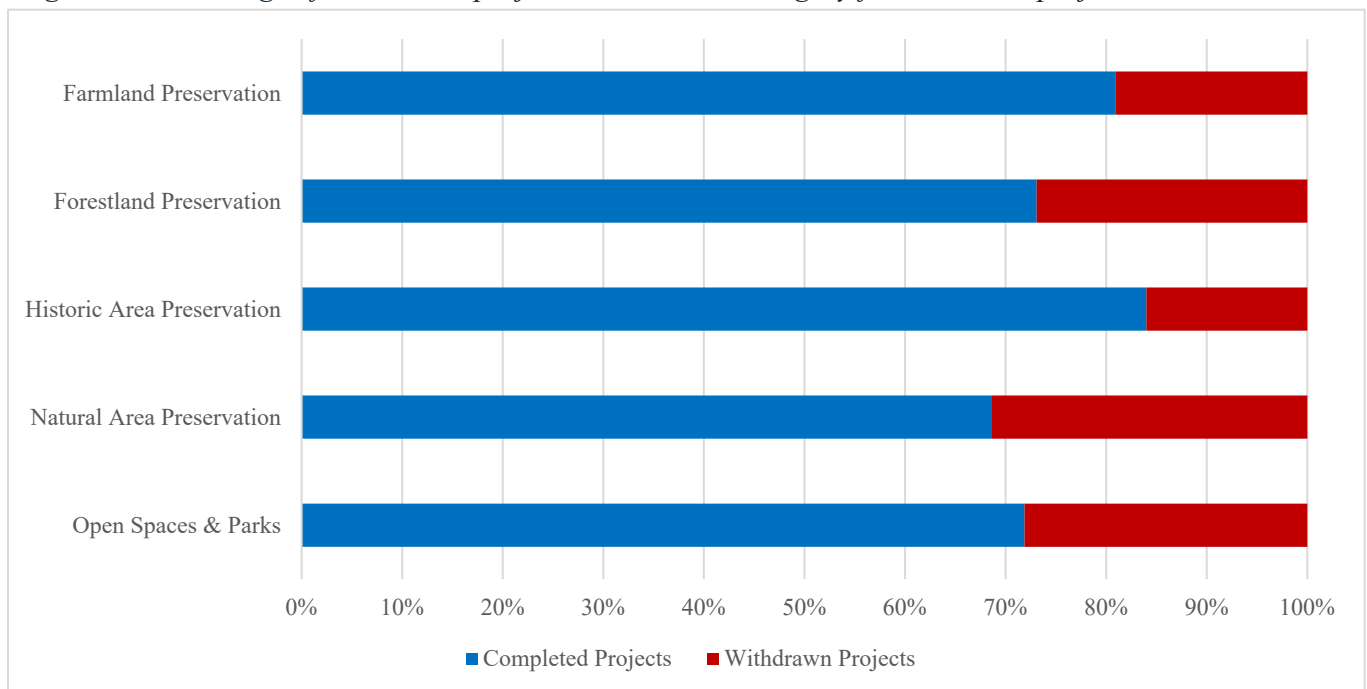


Table 1: Number of projects withdrawn and the relative percentage within each category for all closed

Category	Total # Closed Projects	# Withdrawn Projects	% Projects Withdrawn
Farmland Preservation	21	4	19.0%
Forestland Preservation	26	7	26.9%
Historic Area Preservation	25	4	16.0%
Natural Area Preservation	35	11	31.4%
Open Spaces & Parks	32	9	28.1%

Withdrawn Amount (\$) Within Each Category

The Natural Area Preservation category had the largest value of withdrawn funds, (\$2,956,987) that accounted for 23.9% of all Natural Area Preservation grant awards, followed by Open Spaces & Parks (\$2,118,137) – 22.5% of all Open Spaces & Parks funding, Forestland Preservation (\$1,984,235) – 25.7% of all Forestlands Preservation funding, Historic Area Preservation (\$1,132,268) – 12.6% of all Historic Area Preservation funding, and then Farmland Preservation (\$738,750) – 10.4% of all Farmland Preservation funding (Figure 4; Table 2).

Figure 4: Amount (\$) awarded and withdrawn within each category for all closed projects

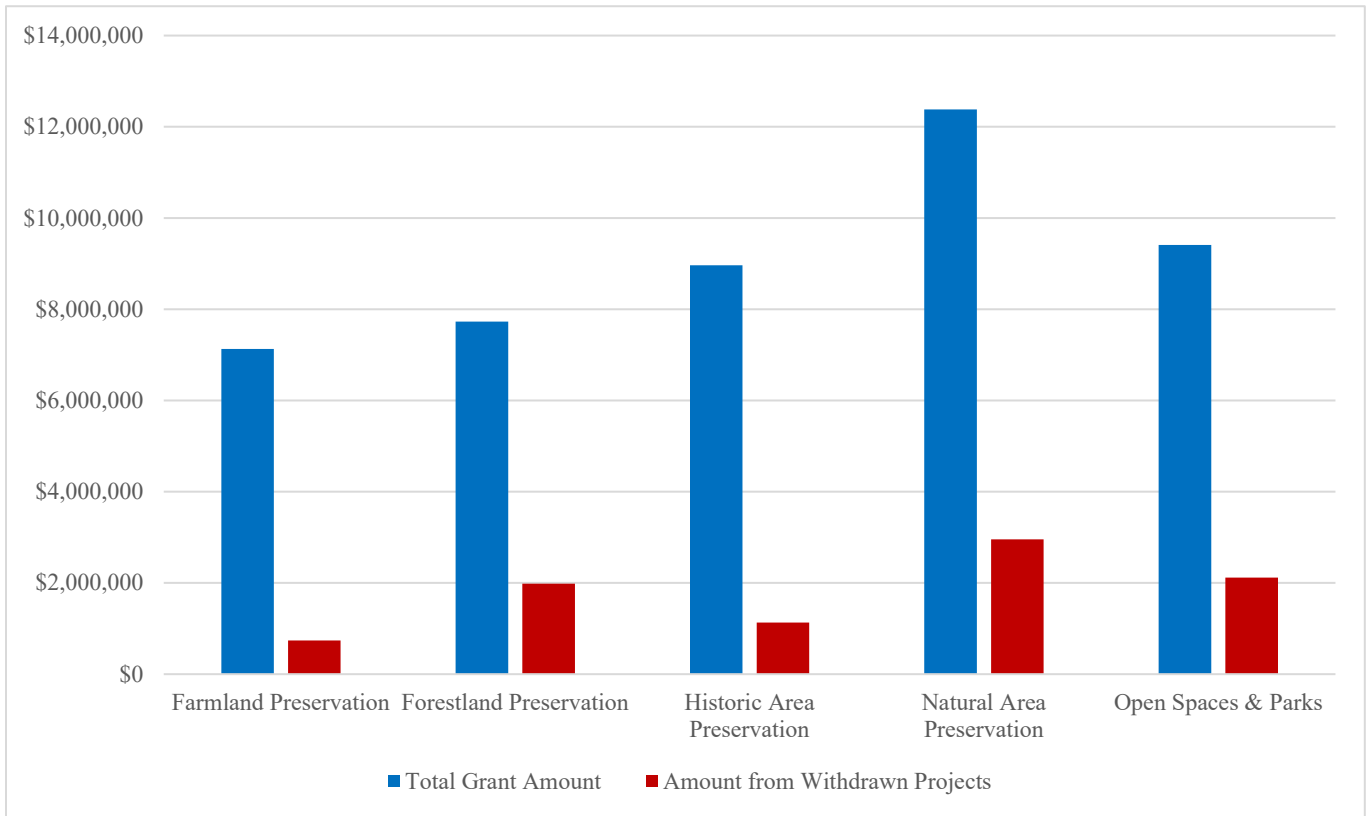


Table 2: Amount (\$) awarded and withdrawn and the relative percentage within each category for all closed projects

Category	Total Grant Amount	Amount from Withdrawn Projects	% Funding Withdrawn
Farmland Preservation	\$7,129,700	\$738,750	10.4%
Forestland Preservation	\$7,728,743	\$1,984,235	25.7%
Historic Area Preservation	\$8,965,326	\$1,132,268	12.6%
Natural Area Preservation	\$12,379,505	\$2,956,987	23.9%
Open Spaces & Parks	\$9,411,084	\$2,118,137	22.5%

Number of Under Expended Projects Within Each Category

The Natural Area Preservation category had the highest number of under expended projects (18) that accounted for 51.4% of all Natural Area Preservation projects, followed by Historic Area Preservation (3) – 12.0% of all Historic Area Preservation projects and Open Spaces & Parks (3) – 9.4% of all Open Spaces & Parks projects, Forestland Preservation (1) – 3.8% of all Forestland Preservation projects, and then Farmland Preservation (0) – 0.0% of all Farmland Preservation projects (Figure 5; Table 3).

Figure 5: Percentage of under expended projects within each category for all closed projects

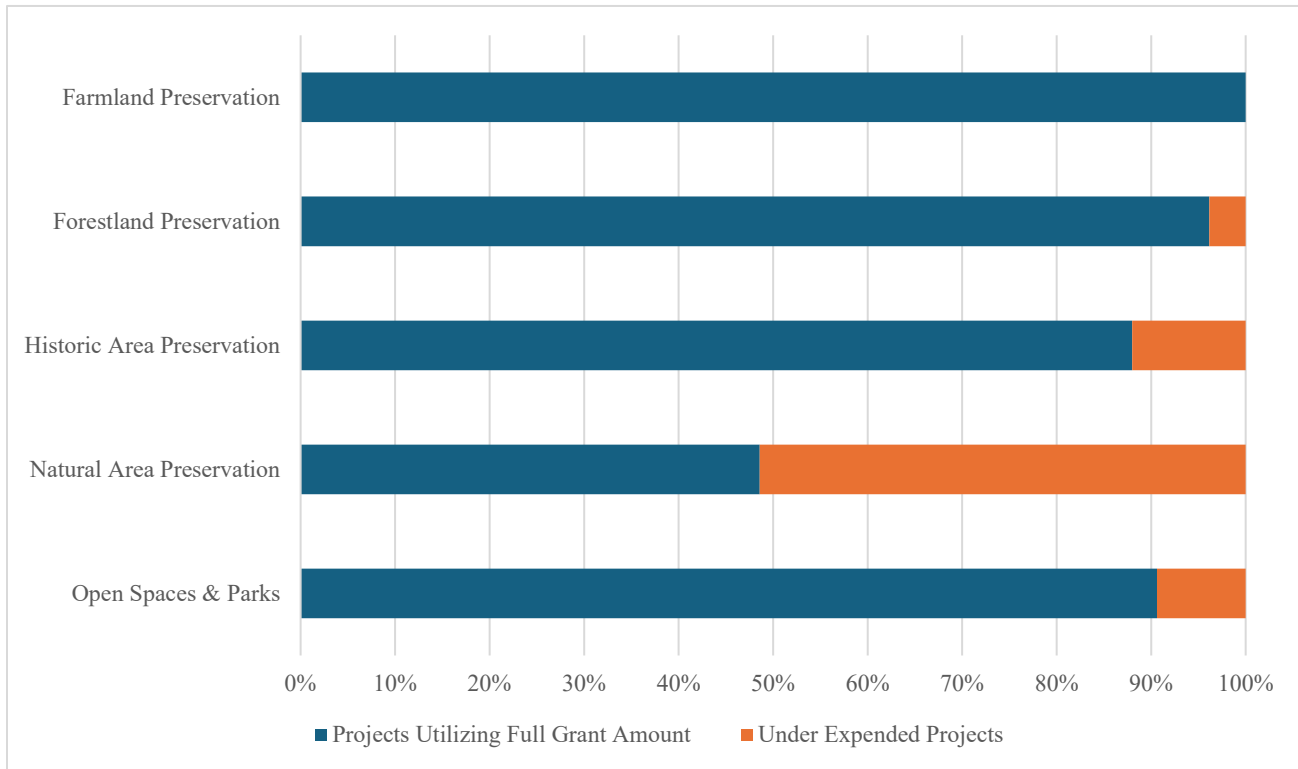


Table 3: Number of projects under expended and the relative percentage within each category for all closed projects

Category	Total # Closed Projects	# Under Expended Projects	% Projects Under Expended
Farmland Preservation	21	0	0.0%
Forestland Preservation	26	1	3.8%
Historic Area Preservation	25	3	12.0%
Natural Area Preservation	35	18	51.4%
Open Spaces & Parks	32	3	9.4%

Amount (\$) from Under Expended Projects Within Each Category

The Natural Area Preservation category had the largest value of under expended funds (\$1,113,614) that accounted for 9.0% of all Natural Area Preservation grant awards, followed by Open Spaces & Parks (\$89,297) – 0.9% of all Open Spaces & Parks funding, Forestland Preservation (\$88,236) – 1.1% of all Forestlands Preservation projects, Historic Area Preservation (\$29,588) – 0.3% of all Historic Area Preservation funding, and then Farmland Preservation (\$0) – 0% of all Farmland Preservation funding (Figure 6; Table 4).

Figure 6: Percentage of under expended funds relative to total grant payment within each category

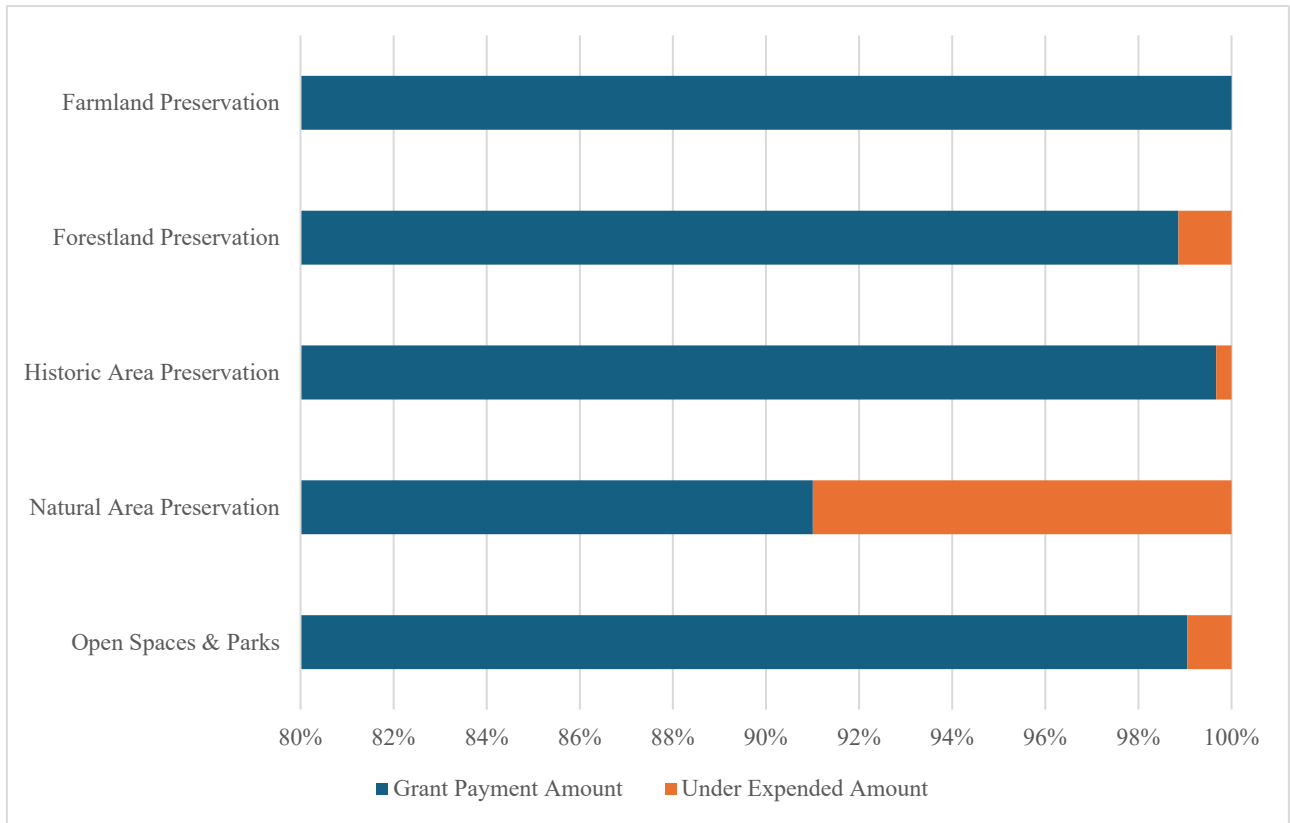


Table 4: Amount (\$) awarded and under expended and the relative percentage within each category for all closed projects

Category	Total Grant Amount	Under Expended Amount	% Funding Under Expended
Farmland Preservation	\$7,129,700	\$0	0.0%
Forestland Preservation	\$7,728,743	\$88,236	1.1%
Historic Area Preservation	\$8,965,326	\$29,588	0.3%
Natural Area Preservation	\$12,379,505	\$1,113,614	9.0%
Open Spaces & Parks	\$9,411,084	\$89,297	0.9%

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees

June 9, 2026

TOPIC: Department of Wildlife Resources Request for VLCF Grant Extension Beyond Three Years to December 31, 2026

SUBJECT: VLCF Grant 296 (23) – Securing Conservation Corridors in the "Green Sea"

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

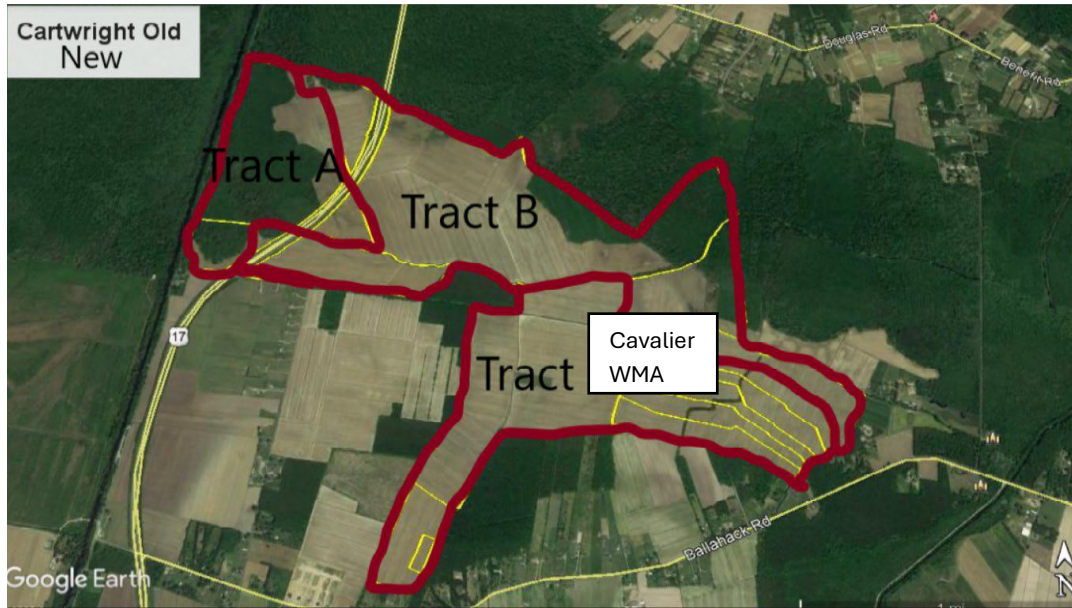
- The Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) was awarded a VLCF FY23 grant for \$281,219 to contribute to the acquisition and conservation of 244 acres in the City of Chesapeake.
- The 244-acre parcel is part of a larger project to secure a conservation corridor made up of three parcels totaling 1,250 acres, connecting the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) to the Cavalier Wildlife Management Area.
- Due to the need to move quickly to acquire the property when it came up for sale, Ducks Unlimited (DU) assisted DWR by purchasing the property as a conservation buyer, holding the property until DWR could secure all of the necessary funding.
- Due to the complexities of this project being a part of a larger, three-parcel 1,250-acre acquisition by DU on behalf of DWR and timing complications for DWR securing federal funds, the three-year VLCF deadline has passed.
- More time is requested by DWR to complete the acquisition now that all federal funding has been secured through USFWS and EPA.

SUMMARY:

In November 2022, the Department of Wildlife Resources was awarded a VLCF grant for \$281,219 to contribute to a total cost of \$1,125,000 to acquire and conserve 244 acres in the City of Chesapeake. The grant funds are needed to supplement a federal grant for \$844,000 that DWR obtained from USFWS Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration grant funds. The expected purchase price was \$1,075,000. The grants also cover due diligence costs.

This parcel is one of three totaling about 1,250 acres that expands efforts to build a corridor of conservation lands bridging the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and the Cavalier

Wildlife Management Area. Ducks Unlimited (DU) is serving as an intermediate conservation buyer to effect initial security of this acreage. Through this FY23 project, the DWR would acquire the first 244 acres of this larger property into public ownership (Tract A; see map below).



Ducks Unlimited was able to step in and purchase Tract A as timing was critical. The 4,000-acre farm immediately south of the property is being transformed into the Coastal Virginia Commerce Park, and the disruption to a host of natural systems is expected to be substantial. There is relatively limited access to the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge on the east side of

the Refuge, and recurrent flooding on Ballahack Road that cuts off public access to the entrance of the DWR's Cavalier Wildlife Management Area. This parcel (and the two adjoining parcels not included in the VLCF grant) will provide ripe new opportunities for outdoor recreation, such as wildlife viewing, kayaking (the property is immediately adjacent to the Intercoastal Waterway), hiking, fishing, walking and hunting.

This project has been through a couple of complicated stages. DWR is purchasing the property from DU. The two other parcels, Tracts B and C in the above map, were also purchased by DU as a conservation buyer, and DWR hoped to purchase all three parcels from DU in one transaction to reduce related due diligence costs. However, the federal funds took longer than planned to secure, DU took longer than planned to acquire the other two parcels, and the consolidated approach proved to be more complex than anticipated.

Grants awarded by VLCF have two years to be completed, then if more time is needed grantees can request a one-year extension. At the end of those three years, staff either tells the grantee time is up due to lack of progress or allows the grantee a few more months until the next board meeting to complete their project. So far, that strategy has worked. However, this year, DWR has requested an extension beyond that three-year timeframe for this project to December 31, 2026.

If this grant extension is approved, everything will be in place for DWR to work through the state acquisition process for all three parcels in two separate phases. The first phase will be to acquire the original 244 acres using the VLCF grant and USFWS funds by December 31, 2026. The remaining two tracts (not part of the VLCF application) will be acquired by DWR in 2027 using 100% EPA funding.

BACKGROUND:

Staff is not aware of a request for a grant extension coming before the VLCF Board in the past. Typically, grantees get the project done or withdraw the grant. This situation may become more prevalent as federal funding has become more uncertain.

FISCAL IMPACT:

- DWR Fiscal Impact: DWR will need to reapply for VLCF funds as part of the next grant round to complete the acquisition of the property from DU. DWR does not currently have alternate funding in place to support the project. DWR could reapply for the same grant funding in the FY27 grant round. This, however, would set back the timing of the project even further, as the grant funding would not be secured until the VLCF Board potentially awarded a grant in the future.

- VLCF Fiscal Impact: Approval of the requested grant extension results in no fiscal impact to VLCF. The grant funds are already obligated for this project. If the grant extension is not approved, the grant funds will be included in the next grant round.

OPTIONS:

Deny Request and Cancel Grant: Denial of the requested extension would result in DWR losing the grant and cancelling the project in its entirety.

Approve Request: Authorize the grant extension as requested to allow for the property to be acquired and to utilize VLCF funds to acquire 244 acres.

RECOMMENDED ACTION AUTHORIZATION:

The request to extend VLCF Grant 296(23) to December 31, 2026, to allow DWR more time to acquire 244 acres in the City of Chesapeake is:

Denied ____

Approved ____

Date: _____

Signature

David Bulova, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources and Chair, Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees

June 9, 2026

TOPIC: The Nature Conservancy (TNC) requests a change of scope to acquire less than fee simple title of 680 acres in Washington County

SUBJECT: VLCF Grant 332 (24) – Clinch Mountain, Pinnacle Rock

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

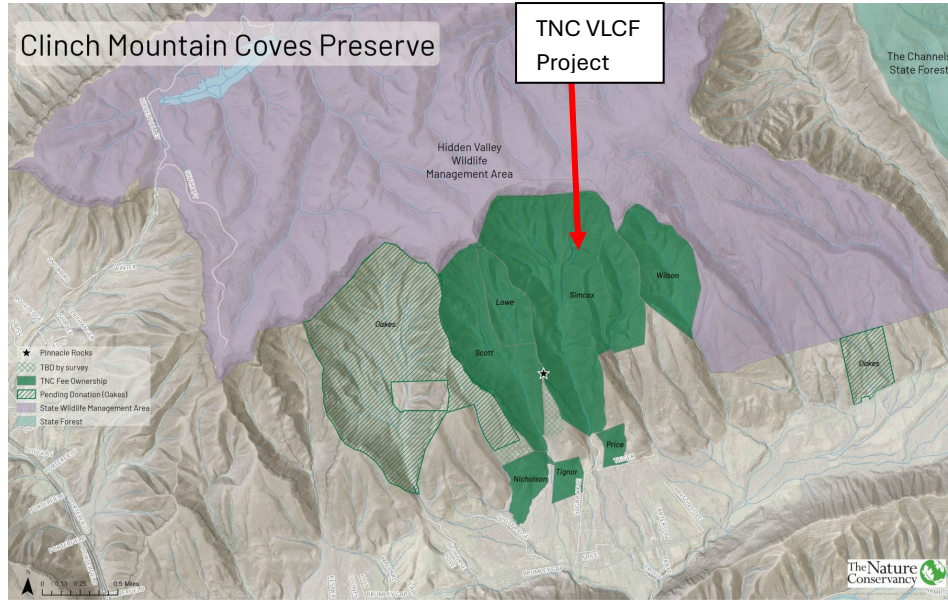
- TNC was awarded \$567,250 in November 2023, to acquire and conserve 680 acres in Washington County with an open space easement held by the Department of Forestry (DOF). TNC purchased the property in September 2024 for \$1M.
- TNC requested and was awarded a one-year grant extension to complete the open space easement with DOF by December 31, 2026. In March 2026, TNC sent VLCF staff a draft deed of easement that included language saying the mineral rights had been severed. The title policy they shared also included language excepting the severed mineral rights from coverage.
- TNC learned of the severed mineral rights before they purchased the property. The mineral rights were retained by Virginia Bright Timberlands, LLC in 2001. When asked by staff to contact the owner to purchase the mineral rights, TNC said they have done their due diligence and believe there is very low likelihood of mining occurring in that area.
- TNC is seeking a change of scope for their project to exclude acquiring the mineral rights.

SUMMARY:

The Nature Conservancy was awarded a grant for \$567,250 in November 2023 to purchase 680 acres in Washington County and conserve it with an open space easement held by the Department of Forestry. This Clinch Mountain Pinnacle Rock project received the highest score in the Forest Preservation category because the application earned maximum points by pledging to maintain 95% of the property in forest cover in perpetuity, public access 365 days per year, and to protect wildlife habitat, water quality, and five layers of Conserve Virginia in perpetuity. As a result, TNC received the full amount of funding requested: \$567,250.

The property is a key addition to TNC assembling a flagship nature preserve in the Clinch Mountains, as it is flanked by other TNC owned land, creating the Clinch Mountain Coves

Preserve. The property is also adjacent to the Department of Wildlife Resources Hidden Valley Wildlife Management Area.



TNC purchased the property in September 2024 for \$1M after learning through a title search that the mineral rights had been severed back in 2001. The owner of the mineral rights is still alive and resides in West Virginia.

In December 2025, TNC requested and was awarded a one-year grant extension by VLCF staff to complete the project by December 31, 2026. TNC worked with DOF on an open space easement. They shared that draft easement with VLCF staff in February 2026, which is when staff learned of the severed mineral rights. The title policy obtained by TNC includes language excepting the severed mineral rights from coverage.

TNC believes they have executed their due diligence and determined there is no coal or gas in that area. They conferred with the VA Department of Energy, who agreed there is low potential for minerals. The only mining prospect identified is gravel. TNC says the county comprehensive plan shows the area as conservation lands and therefore determined there is a low risk the area would be mined because there is no economically viable mineral resource present.

The open-space easement with DOF recognizes the third-party mineral interest and if mined, would require the reclamation plan to return the property to forest.

The TNC application promised:

- 100' forested riparian buffers on 24,800' of perennial streams.
- Protecting five layers of ConserveVirginia resources

- Public access 365 days per year
- Public access trails, connectivity to Hidden Valley WMA
- 95% of the property would remain in forest cover
- Protection of wildlife habitat and corridors, and
- Received extra points for public access in a high recreation needs area

The resources are not fully protected if there is a risk that mining could occur on the property.

BACKGROUND:

- This project scored the highest in the Forest Preservation category in 2023 for the extensive, significant natural resources and public access promised.
- That same year, the VLCF Board did approve funding the 44,000-acre Highlands-Lonesome Pine project with TNC and DWR. That project received \$1M under the Open Spaces and Parks category, knowing the mineral rights were severed and active mining was occurring in certain areas. TNC presented the project together with DWR to the Board and there was plenty of discussion about severed mineral rights, ongoing mining, and public access. Because it was such a large property it was determined that public access would not be significantly impeded. TNC and DWR would work with Virginia Department of Energy on all reclamation plans to ensure the mined areas would be remediated appropriately.

FISCAL IMPACT:

- TNC Fiscal Impact: TNC does not currently have alternate funding in place to support the project. They have purchased the property relying on the VLCF grant for reimbursement of 50% of their costs.
- VLCF Fiscal Impact: Approval of the requested change of scope results in no fiscal impact to VLCF. The grant funds are already obligated for this project. If the grant extension is not approved, the funds will be included in the next grant round in the Forestland Preservation category

OPTIONS:

- Deny Request and Cancel Grant: Denial of the requested extension would result in TNC losing the grant.

- Approve Request: Authorize the grant extension as requested by TNC to allow for the less than fee simple property to be acquired and to utilize VLCF funds to acquire 680 acres. There is a risk that the conservation values and conditions promised in the VLCF application will not be protected or fulfilled.
- Require TNC to seek purchase of the mineral rights: The owner of the mineral rights is identified in the 2001 deed. He lives in West Virginia and could be contacted and requested to sell his mineral rights. Then TNC will own the property in fee and there will be no risk to the many resources to be protected in perpetuity with the DOF easement.

RECOMMENDED ACTION AUTHORIZATION:

The request to change the scope of VLCF Grant 296(23), to allow TNC to acquire less than fee simple title to 680 acres in Washington County is:

Denied ____

Approved ____

Conditionally Approved ____

Date: _____

Signature

David Bulova, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources and Chair, Virginia Land Conservation Foundation



**TNC Clinch Mountain – Pinnacle Rock
VLCF Project Number: 332 (24)**

June 9, 2026

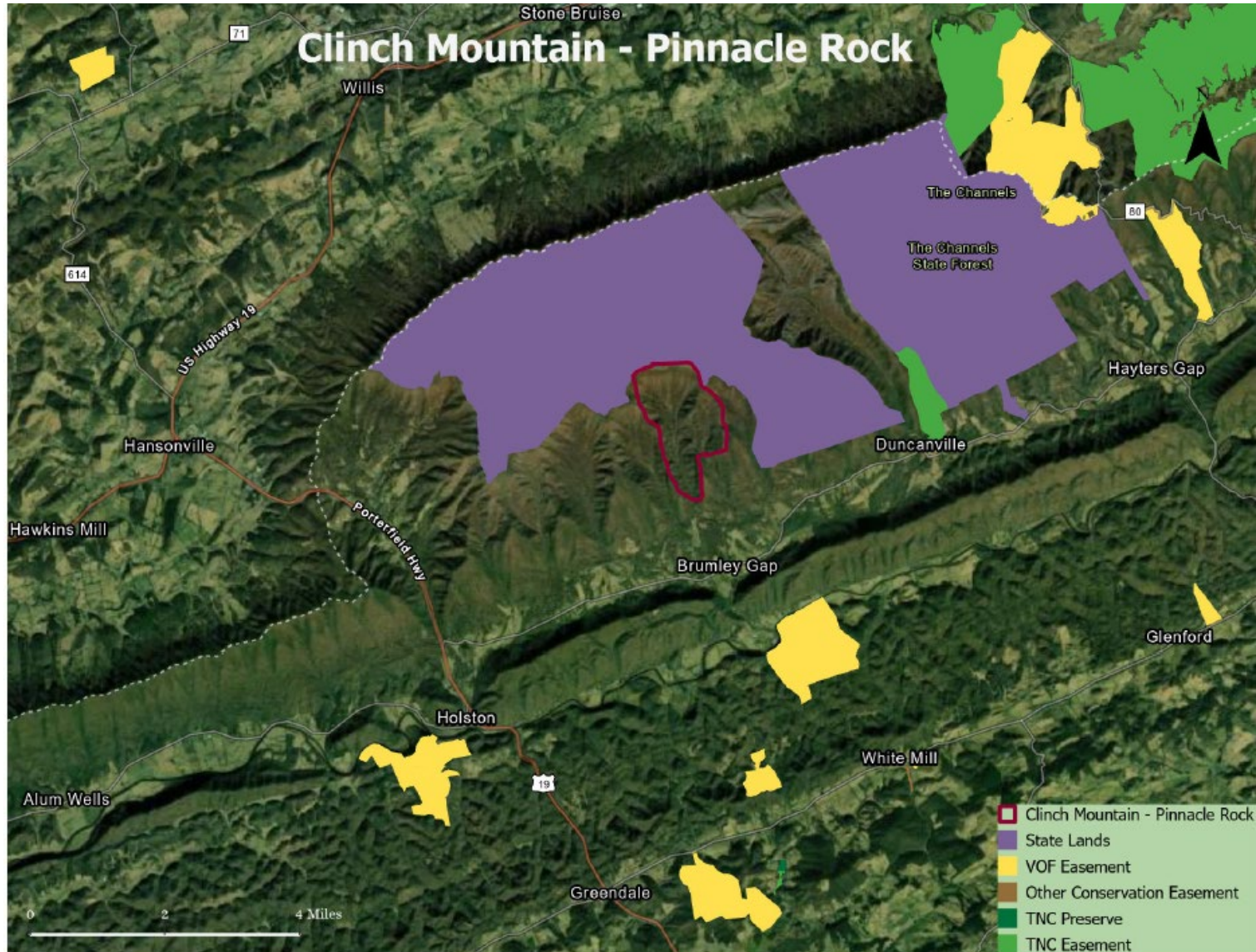


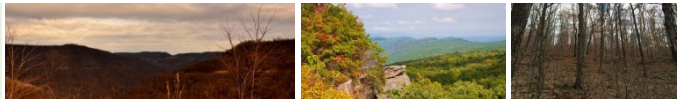


Presentation Outline

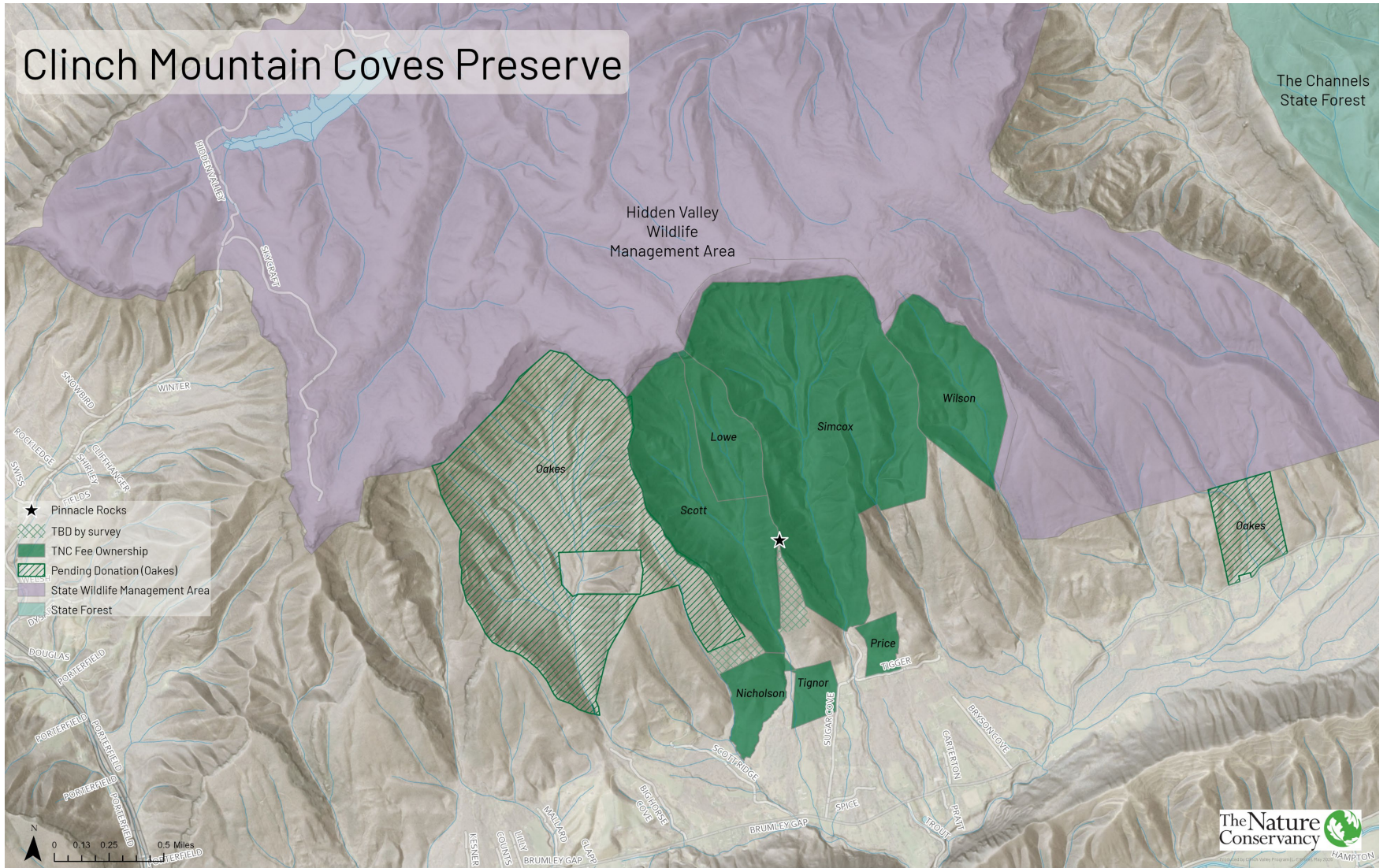
1. Pinnacle Rocks Property (VLCF Award) and TNC's Clinch Mountain Coves Preserve
2. Status of Current VLCF Award
3. Issue for Discussion: Mineral Severance on Tract 2 (Change in Scope)
4. TNC Due Diligence on Mineral Severance and Determination of Low Risk
5. Continued Alignment of Project with VLCF Forestland Preservation Category
6. Requesting VLCF Board Approval for Change in Scope
7. Questions/Discussion

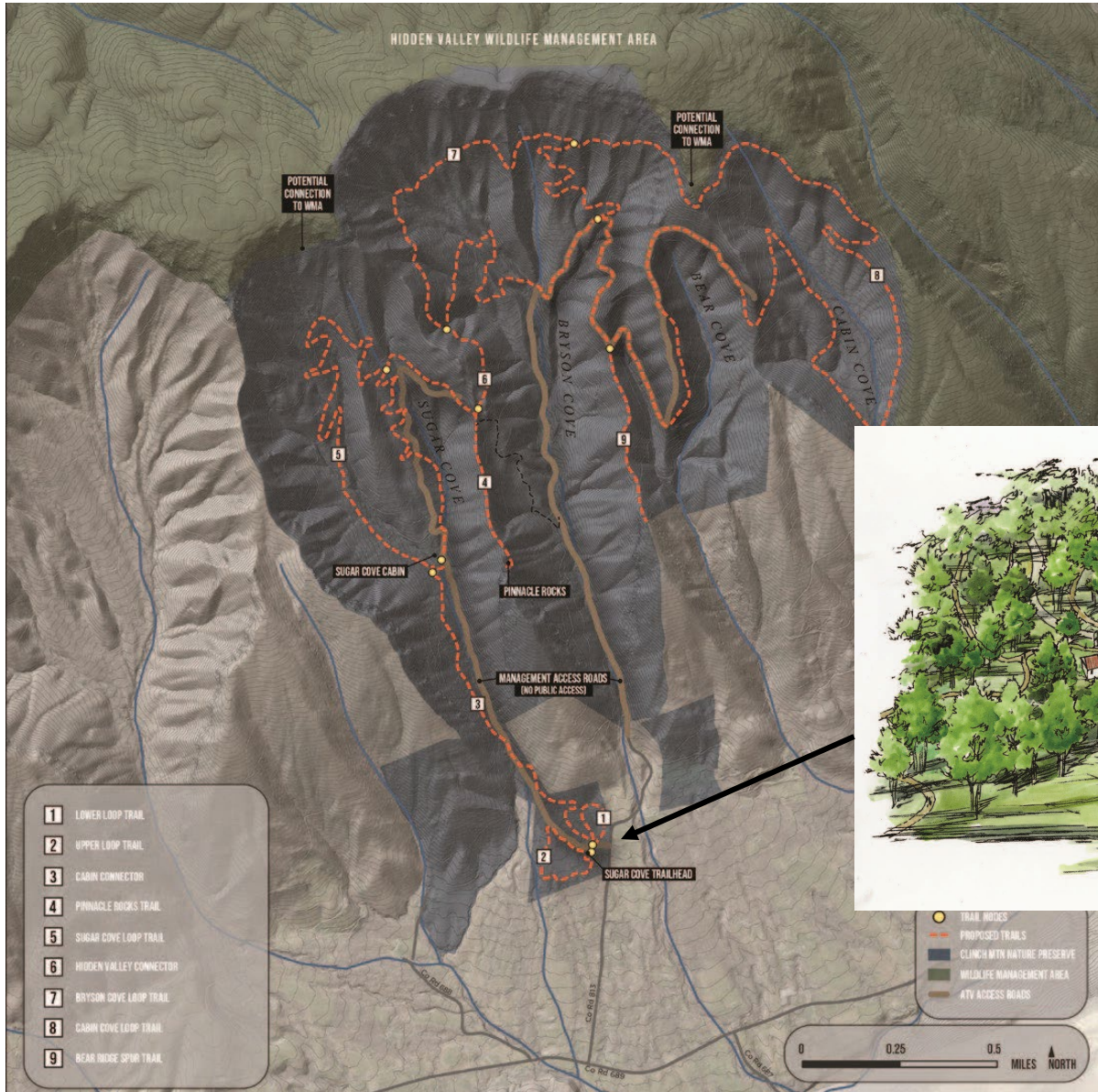
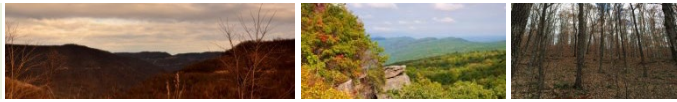






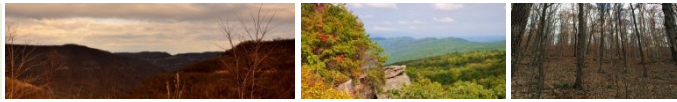
Clinch Mountain Coves Preserve





Clinch Mountain Coves Preserve – 1,300 acres





Status of the VLCF Award For Clinch Mountain- Pinnacle Rocks :

Grant Agreement executed 1/15/24

Grant Award \$567,250

Land Acquired by TNC on 9/30/24
for purchase price of \$1M

DOF Conservation Easement in Draft
Final Form

Plan to seek VLCF Reimbursement
this Fall

Award ends 12/31/26





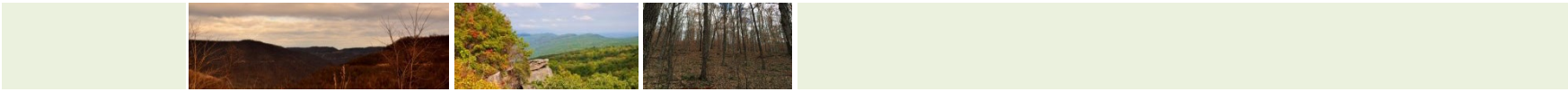
TNC Due Diligence on Mineral Severance Risk: *Remoteness Evaluation*

Based on research, TNC concludes that the risk presented by the mineral severance is very low



According to the VA Dept. of Energy:

- (1) The Pinnacle Rocks property is located outside of the Virginia coalfields.
- (2) There are no documented coal layers or geologic layers on Clinch Mountain that contain known gas reserves as per USGS geological maps.
- (3) There are no coal mining or natural gas well permits on Clinch Mountain in Washington County.
- (4) There are no permitted hard rock mines on Clinch Mountain in Washington County (or applications for permits).
- (5) There are no exploration permits on Clinch Mountain.



Additional Factors Contributing to Very Low Risk:

- (1) There is no indication that sub-surface mining of any kind is economically feasible in the vicinity of the property.

Hypothetically, if it ever became economically compelling to pursue mineral extraction in the future:

- (1) The conservation resources present on the Pinnacle Rocks tract and The Nature Conservancy as the surface owner would make state (and possibly federal) permitting process for mining quite challenging. Note: many of the adjacent tracts to the Pinnacle Rocks property are now owned by TNC and there are no mineral severances on these adjacent TNC tracts.

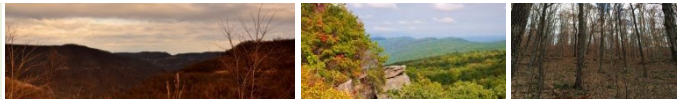
- (2) The County decision-making framework would present additional hurdles. The property is zoned as Conservation-Recreation (CR) by Washington County:

where protection of natural resources, open space, conservation, and recreation are the priorities

Washington County confirmed that TNC's preserve and the Clinch Mountain - Pinnacle Rock conservation easement comply with the Washington County Comprehensive Plan

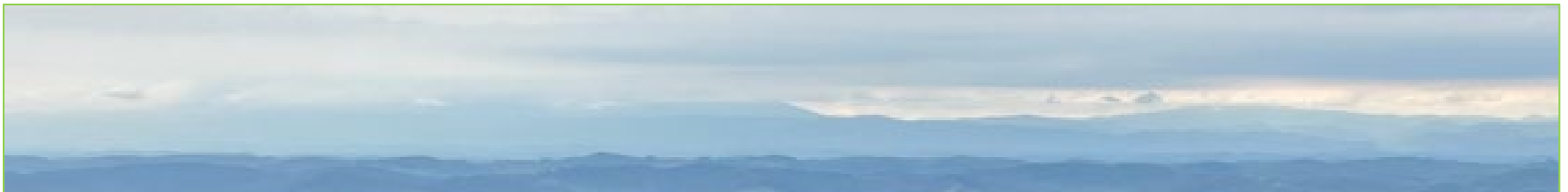
any proposed quarry in this zone would require a Special Use Permit approved by both the planning commission and the board of supervisors, with public meetings required.

- (3) Public use, enjoyment, and appreciation of the TNC preserve over time (including Pinnacle Rocks tract) will be a disincentive to mineral development.



FY 24 VLCF Application Information Remains Applicable

1. ~ 95% of the property has high conservation value forest (DOF 2020 Forest Conservation Value Model).
2. Protection of 4.7 miles of headwater streams to the North Fork Holston River (conservation easement terms include 100 ft stream buffers).
3. The pinnacle rock formation is an exceptional outdoor recreational feature.
4. Over 1-mile shared boundary with DWR's Hidden Valley WMA - connecting over 50,000 acres of forested land along Clinch Mountain.
5. Within TNC's Resilient and Connected Network – climate resilient sites designed to sustain biodiversity and ecological functions into the future.
6. Broad support from partner organizations remains (DOF, DWR, DCR, etc.).





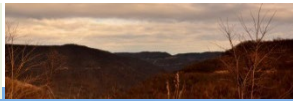
Request for Continued Support of this VLCF Grant and Approval of the Scope of Work Change

TNC does not believe the mineral severance impairs or presents any significant risk to the conservation purposes or conservation outcomes of the project.

TNC believes the fee title to the property is good and marketable.

TNC has confirmed with an updated 3rd party appraisal that the mineral severance does not diminish the Fair Market Value of the Pinnacle Rocks tract.

We respectfully request the VLCF Board's approval for a change in scope for this project.



Thank you & Questions



VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 SESSION

CHAPTER 433

An Act to amend and reenact § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Virginia Land Conservation Foundation.

[H 846]

Approved April 8, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 10.1-1020. Virginia Land Conservation Fund; purposes of Foundation.

A. The Foundation shall establish, administer, manage, including the creation of reserves, and make expenditures and allocations from a special, nonreverting fund in the state treasury to be known as the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Fund. The Foundation shall establish and administer the Fund solely for the purposes of:

1. Acquiring fee simple title or other rights, including the purchase of development rights, to interests or privileges in property for the protection or preservation of ecological, cultural or historical resources, lands for recreational purposes, state forest lands, and lands for threatened or endangered species, fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, agricultural and forestal lands and open space, and for conservation and restoration of homelands for state-recognized and federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes; and

2. Providing grants to state agencies, including the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and state-recognized and federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes, and matching grants to other public bodies and holders for acquiring fee simple title or other rights, including the purchase of development rights, to interests or privileges in real property for the protection or preservation of ecological, cultural or historical resources, lands for recreational purposes, and lands for threatened or endangered species, fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, agricultural and forestal lands and open space. The Board shall establish criteria for making grants from the Fund, including procedures for determining the amount of each grant and the required match. The criteria shall include provisions for grants to localities for purchase of development rights programs.

Interests in land acquired as provided in subdivision 1 may be held by the Foundation, state agencies, state-recognized or federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes, other public bodies, and appropriate holders. Whenever a holder acquires any interest in land other than a fee simple interest as a result of a grant or transfer from the Foundation, such interest shall be held jointly by the holder and a public body. *However, the Board may waive such requirement if such holder is accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission or meets a similar set of standards and practices adopted by the Board and the easement contains a third party right of enforcement as defined in § 10.1-1009 in favor of the Department or another public body.* Whenever a holder acquires a fee simple interest in land as a result of a grant or transfer from the Foundation, a public body shall hold an open space easement in such land.

B. The Fund shall consist of general fund moneys and gifts, endowments or grants from the United States government, its agencies and instrumentalities, and funds from any other available sources, public or private. Such moneys, gifts, endowments, grants or funds from other sources may be either restricted or unrestricted. For the purposes of this chapter, "restricted funds" shall mean those funds received by the Board to which specific conditions apply; "restricted funds" shall include, but not be limited to, general obligation bond moneys and conditional gifts. "Unrestricted funds" shall mean those received by the Foundation to which no specific conditions apply; "unrestricted funds" shall include, but not be limited to, moneys appropriated to the Fund by the General Assembly to which no specific conditions are attached and unconditional gifts.

C. In any fiscal year for which the Fund is appropriated less than \$10 million, and after an allocation for administrative expenses has been made as provided in subsection G, the remaining unrestricted funds in the Fund shall be allocated as follows:

1. Twenty-five percent shall be transferred to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund to be used as provided in § 10.1-1801.1; and

2. Seventy-five percent shall be divided equally among the following four grant uses: (i) natural area protection; (ii) open spaces and parks, including but not limited to, land for public hunting, fishing or wildlife watching; (iii) farmlands and forest preservation; and (iv) historic area preservation. Of the amount allocated as provided in this subdivision, at least one third shall be used to secure easements to be held or co-held by a public body.

D. In any fiscal year for which the Fund is appropriated \$10 million or more, and after an allocation for administrative expenses has been made as provided in subsection G, the remaining unrestricted funds in the Fund shall be allocated as follows:

1. Twenty-five percent shall be transferred to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund to be used as provided in § 10.1-1801.1; and

2. The remaining funds shall be divided equally among the following five grant uses: (i) natural area protection; (ii) open spaces and parks, including but not limited to, land for public hunting, fishing, or wildlife watching; (iii) farmland preservation; (iv) forestland conservation; and (v) historic area preservation.

E. Any moneys remaining in the Fund at the end of a biennium shall remain in the Fund, and shall not revert to the general fund. Interest earned on moneys received by the Fund other than bond proceeds shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any funds transferred to the Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund pursuant to this section and not disbursed or committed to a project by the end of the fiscal year in which the funds were transferred shall be returned to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund and shall be redistributed among the authorized grant uses during the next grant cycle.

F. A portion of the Fund, not to exceed 20 percent of the annual balance of unrestricted funds, may be used to develop properties purchased in fee simple, or through the purchase of development rights, with the assets of the Fund for public use including, but not limited to, development of trails, parking areas, infrastructure, and interpretive projects or to conduct environmental assessments or other preliminary evaluations of properties prior to the acquisition of any property interest.

G. Up to \$250,000 per year of the interest generated by the Fund may be used for the Foundation's administrative expenses, including, but not limited to, the expenses of the Board and its members, development of the Foundation's strategic plan, development and maintenance of an inventory of properties as provided in subdivision 1 b of § 10.1-1021, development of a needs assessment for future expenditures as provided in subdivision 1 c of § 10.1-1021, and fulfillment of reporting requirements. All such expenditures shall be subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

H. The Comptroller shall maintain the restricted funds and the unrestricted funds in separate accounts.

I. For the purposes of this section, "public body" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in § 10.1-1700, and "holder" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in § 10.1-1009.

Status Report on VLCF Grant Projects

June 9, 2026

Recently Completed Projects

The following 26 VLCF grant projects have successfully closed since the VLCF Board meeting on November 3, 2025. Four of the 26 projects received a second VLCF grant for supplemental funding to complete the projects, resulting in a total of 30 grants being closed since the last board meeting.

1. Piedmont Environmental Council – Farmland Protection West of Gordonsville (FY2023) – Farmland Preservation

PEC together with Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District conserved a 365.59-acre farm in Orange County with an NRCS Agricultural Land Easement, leveraging private, state (VLCF) and federal funding. Located southeast of Montpelier and along Hen + Bacon Run, the property fronts the Blue Ridge Turnpike (Route 231), part of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway. The farm has a cattle operation with 200 head of cattle, with 240 acres in pasture and 60 acres in forest. Buffering three miles of the Hen + Bacon Run, tributaries, ponds and wetlands with 50-to-100-foot vegetated riparian buffers will help enhance water quality in a Stream Conservation Unit and in the Rappahannock River watershed.

Grant Award: \$237,500; **Payment Amount:** \$237,500; **Match:** \$810,989 (NRCS ACEP-ALE and private funds); **Project Closed:** January 2026

2. The Conservation Fund – Roanoke River Working Forest II (FY2023) – Forestland Preservation

Phase II of The Conservation Fund's (TCF) Roanoke River Working Forest project protects 1,355 acres of working forestland in Charlotte County. This project consists of four separate tracts, one of which TCF has transferred in fee to the Department of Forestry (DOF), and the other three are protected via open-space easements held by DOF. The properties are located near the recently created Charlotte State Forest, also partly funded through VLCF. This project protects critical wildlife corridors and important habitat for threatened and endangered species, will maintain sustainable working forests in the timber-basket of Virginia, and helps safeguard clean drinking water.

Grant Award: \$395,000; **Payment Amount:** \$395,000; **Match:** \$2,710,766 (US Forest Legacy grant and landowner donations); **Project Closed:** May 2026

3. American Battlefield Trust – Amelia & Associates LLC Tract at Boydton Plank Road Battlefield (FY2023) - Historic Area Preservation

The American Battlefield Trust has preserved the 11-acre Amelia & Associates LLC Tract in Dinwiddie County through fee acquisition and recordation of a historic preservation and open-space easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The property is located within

the Boydton Plank Road Battlefield and the White Oak Road Battlefield. The tract is unimproved and divided into ten parcels that include 1.4 acres of freshwater forested/shrub wetland, nine acres of forest, and 226 feet of an unnamed intermittent stream. The Trust plans to steward the tract as open space available to the public year-round for educational purposes.

Grant Award: \$121,985; **Payment Amount:** \$121,985; **Match:** \$123,000 (ABPP); **Project Closed:** March 2026

4. Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation – Woodworth Cottage (FY2023) - Historic Area Preservation

The Woodworth Cottage is located in the Town of New Market in Shenandoah County and is a contributing resource to the New Market Historic District. The property is a 0.26-acre lot with a 3,468 square foot building constructed between 1865 and 1867. The property was owned by Jessie Haining Rupert, a teacher, who taught white children in the building during the day, and African American students at night. There was little support for her school, and the opposition of the school caused attendance to decrease. Eventually, due to the lack of funding and the establishment of Virginia’s free school system, Ms. Rupert closed the school in 1870. Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation received VLCF reimbursement for the acquisition and conveyance of a historic preservation and open-space easement to the Va. Board of Historic Resources. The Foundation plans to use the first floor as a museum and exhibit on the role of women and African American’s during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Grant Award: \$135,000; **Payment Amount:** \$135,000; **Match:** \$178,000 (ABPP); **Project Closed:** May 2026

5. Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation – French Tract at Fisher’s Hill Battlefield (FY2023; FY2024) - Historic Area Preservation

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF) received two grants from VLCF in FY23 and FY24 for a total of \$824,258 to purchase and conserve the 146-acre French Tract. The property is in Shenandoah County and within the Fisher’s Hill Battlefield and the study area of the Cedar Creek Battlefield. The property was part of the Confederate defensive position during the Battle of Fishers Hill and adjoins other property conserved by SVBF. The heavily forested tract is also used for agriculture and contains the ca.1810 Pifer House. The South Fork of Tumbling Run passes through the property, stretching over 4,000 feet and is protected with 35’ vegetated buffers.

Grant Award: \$474,258 (FY23), \$350,000 (FY24); **Payment Amount:** \$824,258; **Match:** \$904,000 (ABPP); **Project Closed:** April 2026

6. American Battlefield Trust – Carter Tract at Seven Pines Battlefield (FY2023) - Historic Area Preservation

The American Battlefield Trust has preserved the 12-acre Carter Tract in eastern Henrico County via fee acquisition and the recordation of a historic preservation and open-space easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The Carter Tract is located entirely within the Core

Area of the Seven Pines Battlefield. The tract includes a residence that was present at the time of the battle, a lofted barn, and several small outbuildings. The property is partially wooded with four acres of trees and 95 feet of frontage on an unnamed intermittent stream bed. The Trust intends to demolish the non-historic structures and offer periodic tours. Eventually, the Trust proposes to transfer the tract to a conservation buyer or a local entity for public use as a pocket park.

Grant Award: \$183,745; **Payment Amount:** \$183,745; **Match:** \$147,000 (ABPP) plus private funds; **Project Closed:** March 2026

7. American Battlefield Trust – Proctor Tract at Cedar Mountain Battlefield (FY2023) - Historic Area Preservation

The American Battlefield Trust preserved the 8-acre Proctor Tract in Culpeper County via fee acquisition and the recordation of a historic preservation and open-space easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The tract is located entirely within the Core Area of the Cedar Mountain Battlefield. The property contains two single-family dwellings and outbuildings with two acres of thinly scattered forestland. The Trust will remove the non-historic structures and transfer the property to the Department of Conservation and Recreation for inclusion in the Culpeper Battlefields State Park.

Grant Award: \$217,835; **Payment Amount:** \$217,835; **Match:** \$831,000 (ABPP & landowner donation); **Project Closed:** October 2025

8. DCR-DNH – Brocks Gap NAP (FY2023) - Natural Area Preservation

DCR's Natural Heritage Division acquired and conserved 214 acres along the North Fork of the Shenandoah River in Rockingham County that fall within a significant ecological core. This project is within an essential conservation site and establishes a new Natural Area Preserve. The property features Virginia's largest example of globally rare Northern White Cedar Forest as well as a population of state threatened Wood Turtles. It lies along the North Mountain fault; a major geologic boundary defining the edge of the Shenandoah Valley. The property intersects four categories of ConserveVirginia and is the site of an October 6, 1864 battle between General George Custer's cavalry division and that of Confederate General Thomas Rosser, known as the Battle of Brock's Gap.

Grant Award: \$670,000; **Payment Amount:** \$669,897; **Amount Returning to Natural Areas Category:** \$103.41; **Project Closed:** December 2025

9. DCR-DNH – Ellett Escarpment NAP (Linzey & Jones Tracts) (FY2023; FY2025) - Natural Area Preservation

DCR-DNH received funding from two VLCF grant rounds to acquire and protect 34 acres in Montgomery County made up of two separate tracts under different ownership. The project lies along the rapidly developing edge of Blacksburg, where existing karst features support Virginia's best population of a critical conservation need species known from only three locations worldwide. DNH's fee-simple purchase of the properties protected a significantly rare natural

heritage resource, along with mature calcareous forests surrounding the karst feature and a narrow ecological buffer. This project established the newest Natural Area Preserve, located in one of Virginia's Essential Conservation Sites and overlapping two categories of Conserve Virginia.

Grant Award: \$293,500 (FY23), \$165,254 (FY25); **Payment Amount:** \$393,477; **Amount Returning to Natural Areas Category:** \$65,277; **Project Closed:** December 2025

10. City of Danville – Memorial Drive Recreation Area (FY2023) - Open Spaces & Parks

VLCF funds assisted with the acquisition of nearly seven acres of land along the Dan River that surrounds the White Mill and is part of a 19-acre tract on Memorial Drive within the City of Danville. The property is also listed in the Virginia Landmarks Registry (VDHR 108-0123). The Industrial Development Authority sold the property to Danville's Parks and Recreation Department to develop a recreation area. The site contains an 1816 waterpower canal that will be repurposed for a recreation amenity for rafters and kayakers as well as a training facility for professional swift water rescue teams. On the northern edge of the property a covered 925-foot-long pedestrian bridge built in 1920 spans the Dan River, serving as a connector from the city's trail system on the south side of Virginia's Scenic Dan River to the north side trail system.

Grant Award: \$500,000; **Payment Amount:** \$500,000; **Match:** \$861,052 (City of Danville, Danville Regional Foundation, and Brownfields Grant); **Project Closed:** January 2026

11. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources – Coles Point Boating Access (FY2023) - Open Spaces & Parks

The DWR acquired three acres in Westmoreland County for the development of a boat ramp and two hand-launch sites for public access to Branson Cove and the Potomac River, as well as an ADA-accessible fishing pier, and a gravel parking area. This project provides new access to the Potomac River Water Trail, Potomac River Long-Distance Water Trail, and Westmoreland County Water Trail, addressing both county and regional priorities for additional sites that provide public access to Virginia's water resources. The property is also included on the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, providing access to public and private sites for wildlife viewing.

Grant Award: \$532,025; **Payment Amount:** \$532,025; **Match:** \$504,037 (Virginia Marine Resources Commission grant); **Project Closed:** April 2026

12. Piedmont Environmental Council – Farmland Protection Along the Rapidan River Tributaries (FY2024) - Farmland Preservation

The Piedmont Environmental Council and Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District were awarded a VLCF grant in FY24, leveraging significant federal and private funding to protect farmland and improve water quality in the Rappahannock Basin. This pioneering project includes American Farmland Trust who facilitated the transfer of the farm to the next generation by providing bridge financing to a young farmer, so he could buy his aunt's share of the subject property and use the easement proceeds for loan repayment. The young farmer runs a cow-calf operation on the farm within a matrix of pasture, hayfields and forest. This project: conserves

229 acres of farmland and forestland, including 161 acres of prime and statewide significant soils and 135 acres of forest; and protects water quality by maintaining 35 to 50-foot forested riparian buffers along one mile of Rapidan River tributaries.

Grant Award: \$282,500; **Payment Amount:** \$282,500; **Match:** \$745,193 (NRCS ACEP-ALE); **Project Closed:** April 2026

13. Land Trust of Virginia – Huff Rock (FY2024; FY2025) - Forestland Preservation

Land Trust of Virginia (LTV) received two VLCF grants (FY24 and FY25) to assist with placing a conservation easement on the 663-acre Huff Rock property in Wise County. The property is east of Big Stone Gap on Powell Mountain, which forms the eastern border of the Powell River Valley and is part of the High Knob Massif. Huff Rock is mostly forested and contains numerous conservation values including: "Outstanding" Forest Conservation Value, sensitive mountainside soils, two miles of perennial streams, "Outstanding" ecological cores, and potential endangered and threatened species. The property is contiguous to the Big Cherry Reservoir, the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, and a property conserved by the Cave Conservancy of Virginia. The property contains cave portals that connect to the cave system of the adjacent protected property and mountain top rock formations, such as the one known as "Huff Rock." The conservation easement is co-held by LTV and the Lonesome Pine SWCD.

Grant Award: \$182,000 (FY24), \$45,000 (FY25); **Payment Amount:** \$227,000; **Match:** \$263,719 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** December 2025

14. DCR-DNH – Buffalo Mountain NAP – LCI Addition (FY2024) - Natural Area Preservation

DCR-DNH acquired a 975-acre addition to the Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve in Floyd County that provides daily public access. The property falls within multiple categories of ConserveVirginia and lies within one of the Commonwealth's Essential Conservation Sites and most significant biodiversity hotspots. The site supports 29 documented natural heritage resources, including three found nowhere else in the Commonwealth, and four that are extant at only two locations in Virginia. This property has been a long-standing protection priority for over 25 years and is now protected through public and private partnership with The Conservation Fund and the largest VLCF grant award to date.

Grant Award: \$3,617,677; **Payment Amount:** \$3,232,179; **Amount Returning to Natural Areas Category:** \$385,498; **Project Closed:** April 2026

15. DCR-DNH – Grassy Hill NAP – Anderson Addition (FY2024) - Natural Area Preservation

DCR-DNH received VLCF funding to support the acquisition of 48 acres in Franklin County as an addition to Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve. This tract falls within four categories of ConserveVirginia, is located in one of Virginia's essential conservation sites, supports several natural heritage resources, and has been identified as a resiliency parcel needed to complete the overall Preserve design. This acquisition more fully protects one of Virginia's Essential

Conservation Sites and protects a globally rare natural community and a globally imperiled plant species. The property is forested with a globally rare forest type, the Central Appalachian Basic Ash-Hickory Woodland.

Grant Award: \$250,000; **Payment Amount:** \$181,373; **Amount Returning to Natural Areas Category:** \$68,627; **Project Closed:** December 2025

16. Washington County – Abrams Creek Addition to Mendota Trail (FY2024) – Open Spaces and Parks

Washington County acquired and conserved 217 acres as a county park open to the public near the Mendota Trail. This project helps protect the nearby Mendota Trail ridgeline viewshed and will enhance recreational opportunities in this underserved area. The Property is just downstream of Abrams Falls, a majestic 75-foot freefall waterfall and includes over 4,200 feet of Abrams Creek. The Property consists primarily of Appalachian hardwoods with ridgetops over 2,000 feet in elevation. Partners include Washington County Government, Mendota Trail Conservancy, Washington County Park Authority, City of Bristol, and local support.

Grant Award: \$241,100; **Payment Amount:** \$241,100; **Match:** \$320,500 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** May 2026

17. Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Jatt Farm ~ Musapatike (FY2025) - Farmland Preservation

Jatt Farm is a 354-acre farm located in Mecklenburg County now protected with a Virginia Outdoors Foundation open space easement. The farm produces cattle, hay, and timber. More than half of the property includes prime soils, and 87 acres are considered farmland of statewide importance. The property also contains 90 acres of Ecological Cores within the 135 acres of forest. The property fronts on a designated VA Byway and adjoins property also under easement with VOF. Finneywood Creek runs along the farm's northern boundary. The property lies within the Agriculture and the Scenic categories of ConserveVirginia.

Grant Award: \$480,715; **Payment Amount:** \$480,715; **Match:** \$782,830 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** October 2025

18. Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Greg & Kylie Waddle Property (FY2025) - Farmland Preservation

The Greg and Kyli Waddle Property, 823 acres of working farmland in Smyth and Washington Counties, is now protected via open space easement held by Virginia Outdoors Foundation. The farm is a working cow and calf operation, with land in pasture, hay, and corn production. The project not only protects the farmland, but also protects karst geology, as the property contains nearly 200 mapped sinkholes within a few hundred feet of the Middle Fork Holston River, which is a potential State Scenic River and contains designated Conservation Sites. The property supports Loggerhead Shrike (a state threatened bird) and habitat for Bobolink (a rare bird). The VOF easement on this property contributes to a contiguous block of more than 2,000 acres of

conserved working farmland.

Grant Award: \$914,017; **Payment Amount:** \$914,017; **Match:** \$1,705,480 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** October 2025

19. Stafford County – William Long Farm (FY2025) - Farmland Preservation

An open-space easement protecting the William Long Farm is now held by Stafford County, with the assistance of VLCF and the county’s Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program. The property is 72 acres of primarily forestland. The easement protects 60 acres of mixed hardwood forestland, five acres of farmland, four acres of wetlands, 5,000 linear feet of forested perennial streams, and important wildlife habitat. The property falls within an ecological core and has predictive suitable habitat for threatened and endangered species and is located within a wildlife biodiversity resilience corridor in DWR's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. Additionally, the property is adjacent to managed conserved lands also under easement with Stafford County through the county’s PDR Program.

Grant Award: \$254,000; **Payment Amount:** \$254,000; **Match:** \$281,798 (Stafford County PDR and landowner donation); **Project Closed:** April 2026

20. Southern Virginia Land Conservancy – Shooting Creek (FY2025) - Forestland Preservation

Located along the border of Patrick and Franklin Counties, this property contains 716 acres of mountainous forestland. With 98.6% forest coverage, this property boasts 82.9% “Very High” Forest Conservation Values and 9.7% “High” Forest Conservation Value. Almost the entire property lies within the “C1: Outstanding” ecological core distinction. Further, the Agriculture and Forestry Category of the ConserveVirginia layer covers almost the entire property. The Shooting Creek property contains tributaries that feed the DCR-designated Smith River North Stream Conservation Site, classified as B2: High Priority, due to the state and federally endangered occurrences of the Roanoke Logperch. Used primarily for hunting, the landowner wished to forever protect this property that can be traced back in the family to the early 1700s. The landowners are very proud of the history of this property and the inhabitants that have lived here throughout the centuries. The protection of this property via conservation easement co-held by SVLC and the Blue Ridge and Patrick SWCDs further protects the ecological and historical integrity of the region and the headwaters that feed Philpott Lake.

Grant Award: \$286,875; **Payment Amount:** \$286,875; **Match:** \$305,625 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** March 2026

21. Virginia Department of Forestry – Working Forests Between Battlefields (FY2025) - Forestland Preservation

The name of this project, Working Forestland Between Battlefields, reflects the conservation easement preserving 816 acres of timber lands flanked by three Civil War battlefields in Dinwiddie County. The rural landscape also supports water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic views from the East Coast Greenway. The landowners have owned this property since 2004 and

manage it according to a professional forest management plan. The landowners have turned down a solar company's offer to buy the property in order to keep stewarding this forestland, which is now under easement with the Virginia Department of Forestry. The project aligns with the locality's comprehensive plan, the Virginia Outdoors Plan, and the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation's efforts to protect the flight path between Fort Barfoot and Fortt Gregg-Adams.

Grant Award: \$775,000; **Payment Amount:** \$775,000; **Match:** \$1,227,069 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** November 2025

22. Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Richard Rolen Property (FY2025) - Forestland Preservation

Located along the North Fork Holston River in Washington County, this property contains nearly 700 acres, 600 of which are prime forestland. The forest conservation values on this property are outstanding and cover almost 90% of the property. With numerous ponds and streams, the water resources support many species of fish and insects, including the Virginia Springfly. The ecological cores on the property support the bountiful wildlife within and protects the river-life with over seven miles of river frontage on the North Fork Holston River. The love of the land and its inhabitants is reflected in the performance of maintenance already at work on this property. Among many conserved lands in the vicinity, the Richard Rolen property is now protected by a Virginia Outdoors Foundation open space easement, is adjacent to another property under easement, and within one mile of The Channels State Forest.

Grant Award: \$354,875; **Payment Amount:** \$354,875; **Match:** \$699,102 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** December 2025

23. Monacan Indian Nation – Daisy Adcock Property (FY2025) - Forestland Preservation

The Monacan Indian Nation is a federally recognized tribe with over 2,600 citizens. Bear Mountain in Amherst County has been the home of the Monacan people for more than 10,000 years and remains the cultural hub of their community. This VLCF grant assisted the Monacan Indian Nation to acquire and protect 100 forested acres of their historic homeland, adjacent to the Monacan Museum and Culture Center. The subject property contains an Outstanding Forest Conservation Value hardwood forest. The Monacan Indian Nation is committed to the responsible stewardship of their lands, protecting and managing their natural resources sustainably, while honoring the deep spiritual connection their people have with the land. The Monacan Indian Nation purchased the land with assistance from a conservation buyer, The Conservation Fund, and then recorded an open-space easement held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Grant Award: \$285,367; **Payment Amount:** \$285,367; **Match:** \$195,489 (VOF PTF); **Project Closed:** December 2025

24. DCR-DNH – South Quay Sandhills NAP – Biodiversity, Climate Resilience & Public Access in Chowan River Basin (FY2025; FY2026) - Natural Area Preservation

DCR's Natural Heritage Division received two VLCF grants and funding from a National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grant to acquire 869 acres in the City of Suffolk. Originally receiving grant funds for the acquisition of a contiguous 1,900 acres, this project underwent a change of scope to be divided into two phases. This first phase includes protecting key acreage within one of the world's documented biodiversity hotspots, including four miles of streams and 100 acres of freshwater wetlands. This project enhances one of the state's longleaf pine habitat restoration projects and meets an identified need in Virginia's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. The project also creates opportunities for both water and hiking trail access in a socially disadvantaged and economically underserved region and provides the impetus for tribal engagement.

Grant Award: \$1,300,000 (FY25), \$1,482,454 (FY26); **Payment Amount:** \$1,300,000; **Amount Returning to Natural Areas Category:** \$1,482,454; **Project Closed:** May 2026

25. Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia – Patawomeck Tribe Land Grant (FY2025) - Open Spaces & Parks

The Patawomeck Tribe acquired 14 acres on the state scenic Rappahannock River in Stafford County and conserved it with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation holding the open space easement. The Patawomeck Tribe was formally recognized by Virginia in 2010 and is one of eleven state recognized tribes. The Patawomeck community is centered in southern Stafford County and operates a museum and tribal center across the Rappahannock River from Fredericksburg at Little Falls. The project property is located just downriver from the tribal center as well as McDuff Park, which is owned by Stafford County. The Patawomeck Tribe intends to create a public access trail from McDuff Park to the property, as well as create a small boat loading area along the river.

Grant Award: \$390,932; **Payment Amount:** \$390,932; **Match:** \$239,357 (VOF PTF); **Project Closed:** December 2025

26. Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Henry W. Carneal (FY2026) - Forestland Preservation

The 564-acre Carneal property is in the Town of Saltville, lying in both Smyth and Washington counties. The property is now protected via open-space easement held by VOF. The property contains high forest value, with approximately 350 acres ranked as "outstanding" by the Virginia Department of Forestry. The southern portion of the property lies within the Saltville Battlefield Historic District with a series of well-preserved and historically significant Civil War fortifications. In addition to its forestal and historic values, the property contains frontage on the North Fork Holston River and nearly two miles of perennial tributaries to the river. The western two-thirds of the property fall within an Ecological Core ranked C1 ("outstanding") and the property provides habitat for multiple natural heritage species. In addition, it shares its western boundary with the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area.

Grant Award: \$281,150; **Payment Amount:** \$281,150; **Match:** \$595,604 (landowner donation); **Project Closed:** May 2026

Withdrawn VLCF Grant Projects

Three VLCF grant projects have been withdrawn since the Board's last meeting.

1. Piedmont Environmental Council – Protection of Thornridge Farm (FY2023)

A resolution of a required right of way agreement between the landowner and the adjacent landowner could not be reached by the grant's expiration date.

Grant Award: \$160,000. **Note:** Funds will be returned to the Farmland Preservation Category

2. Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission – Bushy Park Farm Acquisition (FY2024)

The Middlesex County Board of Supervisors decided to pursue a public park in a different location due unforeseen challenges with the cost and location of this subject property.

Grant Award: \$750,000. **Note:** Funds will be returned to the Open Spaces & Parks Category.

3. City of Virginia Beach – Gum Swamp Warren Property (FY2026)

City leadership chose to prioritize other goals and not conserve the subject property.

Grant Award: \$1,200,000. **Note:** Funds will be returned to the Open Spaces & Parks Category

Summary of Open VLCF Grants

- For the FY23 grant round, 1 of the 40 grants awarded remains open.
- For the FY24 grant round, 9 of the 29 grants awarded remain open.
- For the FY25 grant round, 13 of the 28 grants awarded remain open.
- For the FY26 grant round, 25 of the 28 grants awarded remain open.
- Currently, we are managing a total of 48 open grants with a total value of \$23,222,442.

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees

June 9, 2026

Proposed Changes to the FY27 VLCF Grant Manual

1. Updated language throughout the manual for readability and clarity, as well as for current grant round deadlines and 2026 dates.
2. Retitled the “Additional Scoring Criteria” to “Statewide Priority Scoring.” This is a more accurate descriptor of those criteria that apply to all applications regardless of which of the five categories the applicant chooses to apply for.
3. Language was added referencing the resolution adopted by the Board in November, establishing a protocol for applicants seeking a change of scope where projects deliver less acreage than pledged in an application and the grant agreement.
4. In the Farmland Preservation category, two points were removed for a designated Century Farm. This would allow for scoring to focus on the conservation values of a project, rather than on ownership of the property. **One public comment** was made on this change – requesting that this be reinstated.
5. The property acreage ranges were adjusted in the Forestland Preservation Category to better reflect actual projects received over the years. Also, language was added to require a current forest stewardship plan (less than 10 years old) to receive five points.
6. The Natural Area Preservation category was amended for clarification and use of consistent terminology to parallel the Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE) public database. The NHDE is heavily utilized for scoring in this category.
7. Under the newly titled Statewide Priority Scoring, the following changes are proposed:
 - a. Public access is better defined to differentiate between projects that provide unfettered public access and those that require special permission for the public to access the property.
 - b. The Virginia Outdoors Plan points are increased from three to six and updated to reflect the 2024 VOP.
 - c. The three points available for intersecting the Nature-Based Recreation Access Model are increased to four points.
 - d. Points for the Protection of Cultural Resources are decreased from 10 to five points. This category hasn’t been utilized successfully by most applicants, so it was agreed by the IAT to lower the points, with four additional points going to the VOP and recreational access need. The overall Statewide Priority Scoring would be lowered by one point to be 90 points maximum.

- e. **One public comment** requested the Water Quality points be amended by adding language to provide two points for projects that protect areas for migrating wetlands. The overall criterion cap for 20 points would not change.
- f. Points for Ratio of Match (three points) would be replaced with awarding points for applicants who can provide a title commitment. This will help ensure that all landowners are identified and the project can proceed without unexpected title issues.

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation FY27 Grant Manual Public Comments

- Posted on Virginia Town Hall 4/10/26 to 5/11/26
- Six comments received

	Commenter	Page	Summary of comment
1	Elizabeth Andrews VLCF Board Member	39	Add two points for projects that protect areas for migrating wetlands
2	Fauquier Co	25	Keep points for projects that protect Century Farms
3	Lisa Biever Northern Neck Land Conservancy	5, bullet 3	Incorporate provisions of HB842
4	Lisa Biever	5, bullet 5	Incorporate provisions of HB842
5	Lisa Biever	22	Incorporate provisions of HB842
6	Patrick Fanning Chesapeake Bay Foundation	39, 45	Supports existing language requiring riparian buffers and awarding points for water quality benefits

1. **Commenter:** Elizabeth Andrews, Member, VLCF Board of Trustees, 4/28/26

Proposed Grant Manual Amendments to Support Protection of Migrating Wetlands

As the Commonwealth faces sea level rise at an accelerating rate, we need to proactively plan for upland migration of wetlands to avoid losing them to inundation. Wetlands provide important water quality benefits, as well as habitat, shoreline erosion control, and flood buffering. In light of this risk of losing the significant water quality benefits provided by wetlands - and in order to help protect the investment of public funds in wetlands that now face a new threat of loss due to changing conditions - it would be helpful if additional points could be awarded to proposed projects that preserve land that a) is upland of wetlands that are projected to be inundated, and b) provides a path for upland migration because it is undeveloped and of acceptable slope to allow such migration.

Specifically, I suggest that on pp. 39-40 of the Grants Manual, the following be added [with many thanks to DCR and VIMS staff for their expertise and assistance in composing this language]:

7. Water Quality Benefit

Points may be given to a project that protects water quality by requiring permanent vegetated riparian buffers exceeding a width of 35-feet along perennial waters and wetlands. Points will also be awarded for forested buffers that maintain an evenly dispersed minimal 50% forested canopy. Because protecting water quality is a long-standing goal of the Commonwealth supported through many voluntary cost-share and tax-credit programs, these points are awarded to those projects that voluntarily provide greater water quality and habitat protections beyond the required 35-foot vegetated riparian buffer in perpetuity.

Wetlands provide invaluable protection for water quality, as well as habitat, shoreline stabilization, and flood resilience. In response to rising sea levels, tidal wetlands are naturally moving slowly inland. Man-made barriers including buildings, homes, and roads can prevent these tidal wetlands from migrating inland, resulting in loss of important marsh ecosystems. To help protect areas identified as potential future migration pathways for tidal wetlands, an additional two points will be awarded to those projects that intersect the Wetland Potential 2050 layer of the AdaptVA interactive map (https://cmap22.vims.edu/AdaptVA/AdaptVA_viewer.html); do not have bulkheads, riprap, buildings, paved roads or other infrastructure and impervious cover that would block upland migration of the adjacent wetlands; and prohibit construction or placement of buildings, paved roads, and other impervious surfaces in those areas. The landowner must agree to these protections that will be included in the final recorded legal documents to receive these two points.

Maximum 20 points

2 points if the project provides protections for migrating wetlands as stated above, PLUS

Riparian buffer points

2. **Commenter:** Fauquier County, 5/4/26

Agricultural Criteria

Keep Century Farm as a part of the scoring. See paragraph suggestion below.

"Current and historical use of property. Priority will be given to any property that is currently being farmed and/or is a designated Century Farm. Information about this program can be found at www.vdacs.virginia.gov/conservation-and-environmentalvirginia-century-farms.shtml"

-Thank you

3. **Commenter:** Lisa Biever, 5/11/26

Update requirements to reflect HB846 VLCF; purposes of Foundation, easements

HB846 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation; purposes of Foundation, easements takes effect July 1, 2026. It allows the Virginia Land Conservation Board of Trustees to “waive the requirement for a holder of a conservation easement to have such easement jointly held with a public body whenever such holder acquires any interest in land other than a fee simple interest from a grant or transfer from the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, provided that such holder is accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission or meets a similar set of standards and practices adopted by the Board of Trustees and the easement contains a third

party right of enforcement, as defined in relevant law, in favor of the Department of Conservation and Recreation or another public body.”

Grant Manual page 5, Project Requirements, bullet 3 states: "All nonprofit organization projects, whether fee simple or easement, must be protected by an open-space easement held by a public body (e.g., a state agency or local governmental entity), in perpetuity pursuant to Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (A)(2). An acknowledgement letter from the public body stating that it is willing to consider holding the easement or owning the property in fee must be included with the application."

Please revise with the following or other language deemed appropriate:

All nonprofit organization projects, whether fee simple or easement, must be protected by an perpetual open-space easement held by a public body (e.g., a state agency or local governmental entity), in perpetuity pursuant to Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (A)(2). **Conservation easements shall either (i) be jointly held with a public body, or (ii) the Virginia Land Conservation Board of Trustees may waive the co-holder requirement provided that a) the nonprofit holder is accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission or meets a similar set of standards and practices adopted by the Board of Trustees and b) the easement contains a third party right of enforcement held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation or another public body.** An acknowledgement letter from the public body stating that it is willing to consider holding the easement, owning the property in fee, **or reserving a third party right to enforcement** must be included with the application. **Applications proposing sole nonprofit easement holding must include documentation demonstrating eligibility under these requirements.**

4. **Commenter:** Lisa Biever 5/11/26

Additional comment - Update requirements to reflect HB846 VLCF; purposes of Foundation, easements

Grant Manual page 5, Project Requirements, bullet 5 states: "For projects awarded funding, the requisite public body holder shall include language in the fee-simple deed or in the easement deed that states that the property will be taken under the Open-Space Land Act, Va. Code §§ 10.1-1700 through 10.1-1705, and that the protection is perpetual in nature and not extinguishable except pursuant to the provisions of the Open-Space Land Act.”

Please revise to clarify that, when the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation waives the requirement for a qualified nonprofit organization to co-hold a conservation easement with a public body, then the conservation easement will be enabled by, and the public body third party enforcement will be pursuant to the Virginia Conservation Easement Act.

5. **Commenter:** Lisa Biever, 5/11/26

Additional comment - Update requirements to reflect HB846 VLCF; purposes of Foundation, easements

Grant Manual page 22, Appendix A – VLCF Grant Specifications, item I.6. states:

“For nonprofit applicants:

- a. an acknowledgement letter from the public body willing to: hold or co-hold an easement on the property; or hold the property in fee simple, and
- b. evidence that the nonprofit meets the holder requirements found in Va. Code §§ 10.1-1009 to 10.1-1017.”

Please revise to reflect changes indicated in HB846 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation; purposes of Foundation, easements which takes effect July 1, 2026, such as – for applicants requesting nonprofit sole holder easement project grant support – documentation that the land trust is accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission or meets a similar set of standards and practices adopted by the Board of Trustees and documentation that the Department of Conservation and Recreation or another public body is willing to serve as third party enforcer.

6. **Commenter:** Patrick J Fanning 5/11/26

CBF Comments Re VLCF Manual

On behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Inc., (“CBF”) I am submitting comments regarding the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (“DCR”) proposed revisions to the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Grant Manual (“Grant Manual”).

CBF is a non-profit organization founded in 1967 and is devoted to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. We are the largest independent conservation organization dedicated solely to the fight for effective, science-based solutions to the pollution degrading the Bay and its rivers and streams within the 64,000-square-mile-watershed. CBF boasts more than 60,000 members in Virginia and conducts restoration activities through advocacy, education, and litigation. The Grant Manual includes important provisions that impact the natural resources protections of conserved properties in the Bay watershed, prompting our interest in weighing in on the proposed revisions.

We appreciate that the proposed changes to the Grant Manual retain the important elevations recently made for water quality-related scoring. We support the retention of points for water quality benefits in the Additional Scoring Criteria. Specifically, we support the retention of the additional point afforded to riparian buffers that are forested and protected in perpetuity as well as the additional points for projects with buffers greater than 35 feet in width. CBF also supports

the retention of the prior addition in Appendix D, Subsection 5 of wetlands protection language requiring vegetated riparian buffers and livestock exclusion adjacent to such wetlands.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed revisions to the Grant Manual. Please reach out to PFanning@cbf.org or (804) 258-1481 with any questions regarding our comments.

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Proposed FY27 GRANT FUNDING PLAN

June 9, 2026

Due to the uncertain status of the state budget, the FY27 grant round will have a minimum of \$5,211,768 from accrued interest and returned grant funds, to a maximum of \$17,211,768 including general funds proposed in the Budget Bill, HB30.

FUNDING CATEGORIES	<i>PROPOSED</i> FY27 Budget Bill Item 360 A.1. \$16,000,000	Virginia Land Conservation Fund Interest \$1,000,000	Unspent Grant Funds to be Reallocated	<i>PROPOSED</i> TOTALS Available
I. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$4,000,000	\$250,000	N/A	VOF PTF: \$4,250,000
II. Grant Program				VLCF Grant Round
(i) Farmland Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$150,000	\$160,000	\$2,710,000
(ii) Forestland Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$2,550,000
(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$2,550,000
(iv) Natural Area Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$150,000	\$2,001,959	\$4,551,959
(v) Open Spaces and Parks	\$2,400,000	\$150,000	\$2,299,809	\$4,849,809
TOTAL for Grant Round	\$12,000,000	\$750,000	\$4,461,768	\$17,211,768

<i>Summary of Unspent Grant Funds</i>		
Farmland Preservation	\$160,000	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY23 Piedmont Environmental Council, Protection of Thornridge Farm \$160,000 .
Forestland Preservation	\$0	
Historic Area Preservation	\$0	
Natural Area Preservation	\$2,001,959	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY26 DCR-DNH, South Quay Sandhills NAP Supplemental Funding \$1,482,454 . <u>Unexpended Remainder:</u> FY23 DCR-DNH, Brock’s Gap NAP Showalter Addition \$103 . FY24 DCR-DNH, Buffalo Mountain NAP LCI Addition \$385,498 . FY24 DCR-DNH, Grassy Hill NAP Anderson Addition \$68,627 . FY25 DCR-DNH, Ellett Escarpment NAP \$65,277 .
Open Spaces and Parks	\$2,299,809	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY24 Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, Bushy Farm \$750,000 . FY26 City of Virginia Beach, Gum Swamp Warren Property \$1,200,000 . <u>Unexpended Grant Funds from FY26:</u> \$349,809

***PROPOSED* Item 363 of the Budget Bill, 2026**

A.1. Included in the amounts for Preservation of Open Space Lands is \$16,000,000 the first year and \$16,000,000 the second year from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, § 10.1-1020, Code of Virginia. No less than 50 percent of the appropriations remaining after the transfer to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust fund has been satisfied are to be used for grants for fee simple acquisitions with public access or acquisitions of easements with public access. This appropriation shall be deemed sufficient to meet the provisions of § 2.2-1509.4, Code of Virginia. [**Grant Funds**]

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

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
***Proposed* GRANT TIMELINES**
for VLCF FY27 and Surry-Skiffes Creek 2026
June 9, 2026

FY27 VLCF Grant Timeline for Grant Rounds	
March 2026	VLCF Interagency Task Force meetings to discuss draft grant manuals.
April 10 to May 11, 2026	Public comment period for the VLCF draft grant manual.
June 9, 2026	VLCF Board meeting to approve the VLCF and Surry-Skiffes Creek grant manuals and initiate the grant round requests for proposals (RFP).
Week of June 9th	Announce official opening of both grant rounds (update website and send emails).
June 18 and 24, 2026	Virtual Grant Workshops provide orientation and program information to grant applicants. Surry-Skiffes Creek on June 18 at 10:00 am and VLCF on June 24 at 1:30 pm.
August 21, 2026	Deadline for VLCF application submittal. (<i>9 weeks</i>)
September 4, 2026	Deadline for Surry-Skiffes Creek application submittal. (<i>11 weeks</i>)
Weeks of September 14 and October 5	Interagency Task Force meetings to score projects and finalize recommendations – usually takes two meetings.
Late October 2026	SNHR and Director's review of applications and recommendations of IAT for both grant rounds.
November 2026	VLCF Board meeting. Approval of both grant awards.
December 2026	Grant agreements sent to grant recipients for both grant rounds. Projects have two years to close.

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees

**Thursday, November 3, 2025
Auditorium, Richmond Main Library
Richmond, VA**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, Board of Trustees, took place at 2:00 p.m. on November 3, 2025, in the Auditorium of the Richmond Main Library in Richmond, VA.

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS PRESENT

The Honorable Stefanie Taillon, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, Chair

The Honorable Matthew Lohr, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Chief Frank Adams

Elizabeth Andrews

James Beamer

Bradley Gable

Colonel Brian Hallberg

Gabriella Hoffman

Kathleen Kilpatrick

Stewart Leeth

Michael Molina

The Honorable Ed Scott

The Honorable Katie Lamb

Morgan Slaven

Ryan Horsley

The Honorable David Marsden

Andrew Smith, Acting Director, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Secretary

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Robert Beals

Sonya Powell

The Honorable Richard Stuart

Lauren Martin

AGENCY STAFF PRESENT

Rob Evans, DCR

Brian Fuller, DCR

Emi Endo, DCR

Laura Ellis, DCR

Linda Crowe, DCR

Damian Martin, DCR

Gina DiCicco, DCR

Genette Harris, DOF

Karri Richardson, DHR

Kevin Schmidt, VDACS

Richard Mahevich, OAG

Charles Marston, DCR

Paul Saunders, DCR

Breanne Lindsey, DCR

Frank Stovall, DCR

Kristal McKelvey, DCR

Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR

Amanda Scheps, DOF

Lore DeAstra, VA Tax

Lesley Starke, DCR

Emily White, VOF

OTHERS PRESENT

Leslie Cockburn, Former VLCF Board of Trustees Member
 Parker Agelasto, CRLC
 Bridget Braunscheidel, Conservation Partners

Ellen Shepard, VAULT
 Rachel Henley, Virginia Farm Bureau
 Mikaela Ruiz-Ramón, TNC

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

With sixteen (16) members of the Board present, a quorum was established.

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Secretary Taillon called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. She announced the departure of Matthew Wells, former DCR Director, and informed the Board that Andrew Smith, previously the Chief Deputy Director, is now serving as Acting Director. Secretary Taillon then requested introductions from the Board members, staff, and Interagency Task Force members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 3, 2025, BOARD MEETING

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Leeth moved to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2025, meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, Board of Trustees as presented. Chief Adams seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by: Adams, Andrews, Beamer, Gable, Hallberg, Hoffman, Horsley, Lamb, Leeth, Lohr, Marsden, Molina, Kilpatrick, Scott, Slaven, and Taillon.

NEW POLICY FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

BOARD ACTION

Ms. Andrews moved to approve the Policy for Virtual meetings as presented. Ms. Slaven seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by: Adams, Andrews, Beamer, Gable, Hallberg, Hoffman, Horsley, Lamb, Leeth, Lohr, Marsden, Molina, Kilpatrick, Scott, Slaven, and Taillon.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FUND – *Laura Ellis, DCR, Deputy Director for Administration and Finance*

Ms. Ellis presented financial information and a fund statement, provided below:

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
Fund Statement
As of September 30, 2025

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE – June 30, 2022

\$16,287,778

INCOME

FY22 Stewardship Funds	\$2,124,370
FY23 Stewardship Funds	\$1,667,123
FY24 Stewardship Funds	\$2,222,606
FY25 Stewardship Funds*	\$979,432
FY23 Appropriation – Chapter 2	\$16,000,000
FY24 Appropriation – Chapter 1	\$16,000,000
FY25 Appropriation – Chapter 2	\$16,000,000
FY26 Appropriation – Chapter 725*	\$16,000,000
FY23 Interest	\$506,071
FY24 Interest	\$1,485,359
FY25 Interest*	\$1,665,087
FY26 Interest*	\$0

TOTAL INCOME	\$74,650,048
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DISBURSEMENTS

FY23 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$2,124,370
FY24 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$1,667,123
FY25 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$2,222,606
FY26 Stewardship Fund Disbursements*	\$0
FY23 Grant Payments	\$5,507,148
FY24 Grant Payments	\$7,980,536
FY25 Grant Payments*	\$6,810,796
FY26 Grant Payments*	\$4,009,812
FY23 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,000,000
FY24 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,000,000
FY25 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,340,301
FY26 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments*	\$2,000,000
FY23 Administrative Expenses	\$122,897
FY24 Administrative Expenses	\$54,947
FY25 Administrative Expenses*	\$151,724
FY26 Administrative Expenses*	\$77,682
TOTAL DISBURSEMENT	\$45,069,943

*Changes since last report

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE – September 30, 2025	\$45,867,883
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UPDATE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION – *Lore DeAstra, Department of Taxation, Land Preservation Tax Credit Analyst*

Ms. DeAstra provided an update on the Land Preservation Tax Credit Program. She provided data of the donation history for the program:

<u>Tax Year</u>	<u># of Credits</u>	<u># of Acres</u>	<u>Credit Amt Issued</u>
2000-2014	3,331	727,192	\$1,443,748,241
2015	182	42,362	\$48,625,672
2016	162	30,981	\$59,968,175
2017	200	49,127	\$75,000,000
2018	165	35,384	\$50,533,208
2019	193	34,677	\$75,000,000
2020	156	37,975	\$75,000,000
2021	183	41,859	\$75,000,000
2022	160	31,365	\$75,000,000
2023	168	37,482	\$75,000,000
2024	179	34,879	\$59,727,675
2025	62	10,431	\$50,331,564
Grand Total	5,141	1,113,714	\$2,162,934,535

LPTC PROGRAM TRANSFER FEE REVENUES – *Gina DiCicco, DCR, Land Conservation Specialist*

Ms. DiCicco presented the Board with the following information regarding stewardship fund payments:

2025 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Stewardship Fund				
	AGENCY NAME	NUMBER OF DONATIONS	% OF TOTAL DONATIONS	AMOUNT OF FUNDS
1	500 – Year Forest Foundation	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
2	Albemarle County	16	3.71%	\$36,317.29
3	Amherst County	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
4	Black Family Land Trust	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
5	Blue Ridge Foothills Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
6	Broad Water Innovations	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
7	Capital Region Land Conservancy Inc	14	3.24%	\$31,777.63
8	Chesapeake Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
9	City of Franklin	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
10	Clarke County	6	1.39%	\$13,618.98
11	Coastal Virginia Conservancy	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
12	Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District	1.5	0.35%	\$3,404.75
13	Eastern Shore Land Trust	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
14	Ever Green Team	92	21.32%	\$208,824.44
15	Fauquier County	5	1.16%	\$11,349.15
16	Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District	0.5	0.12%	\$1,134.92
17	Historic Virginia Land Conservancy	4	0.93%	\$9,079.32
18	Land Savers United	20	4.63%	\$45,369.62
19	Land Trust of Virginia	50	11.59%	\$113,491.54
20	Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
21	Monacan Soil & Water Conservation District	0.5	0.12%	\$1,134.92
22	New River Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
23	New River Land Trust	3	0.70%	\$6,809.49
24	Northern Neck Land Conservancy	12.5	2.90%	\$28,372.89
25	Northern Virginia Conservation Trust	5	1.16%	\$11,349.15
26	Old Dominion Land Conservancy, Inc.	33	7.65%	\$74,904.42
27	Piedmont Environmental Council	13.5	3.13%	\$30,642.72
28	Potomac Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
29	Shenandoah County	1.17	0.27%	\$2,648.13
30	Shenandoah National Park Trust	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
31	Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation	5.5	1.27%	\$12,484.07
32	Shenandoah Valley Conservancy (formerly Valley Conservation Council)	26.33	6.10%	\$59,772.21
33	The Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust	1	0.23%	\$2,269.83
34	The Nature Conservancy	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
35	Town of Lovettsville	3	0.70%	\$6,809.49
36	Virginia Department of Forestry	14	3.24%	\$31,777.63
37	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
38	Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
39	Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust	2	0.46%	\$4,539.66
40	Virginia Outdoors Foundation	76	17.61%	\$172,507.14
41	Warren County	3	0.70%	\$6,809.49
	TOTALS	431.50	100.00%	\$979,432.00

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Scott moved to approve the Stewardship Fund payments as presented. Ms. Slaven seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by: Adams, Andrews, Beamer, Gable, Hallberg, Hoffman, Horsley, Lamb, Leeth, Lohr, Marsden, Molina, Kilpatrick, Scott, Slaven, and Taillon.

NEW RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AN OFFICIAL PROCESS FOR AMENDING AWARDED GRANTS

– *Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR, Land Conservation Manager*

Secretary Taillon provided background information to the Board regarding the need for the proposed resolution. She explained that in June, DCR staff presented information about a Natural Area Preservation project that had received a VLCF grant award supported by significant federal matching funds. Due to uncertainty surrounding the availability of those federal funds, DCR staff requested a change in the project's scope. The Board approved that request, recognizing that similar situations might arise with other projects in the future.

To address not only uncertainties related to matching funds but also issues concerning project acreage discrepancies, VLCF staff have been working with the Office of the Attorney General to draft a resolution. The intent of this resolution is to clarify how grantees may seek amendments to existing grants when project circumstances change.

While grantees are expected to complete projects as outlined in their applications, it is understood that changes may occasionally prevent full delivery as proposed. The resolution outlines the process for requesting a change of scope based on the extent of the change in protected acreage and specifies whether such requests should be submitted to DCR, the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, or the Board.

The Board discussed the resolution, and Ms. Andrews recommended revision to the chart on the third page to match the language within the section titled "Adjustments to Project Acreage that Result in a Reduction of Acres Conserved."

BOARD ACTION

Ms. Kirkpatrick moved to approve the resolution with the amendment to update the language within the chart on page three. Mr. Scott seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by: Adams, Andrews, Beamer, Gable, Hallberg, Hoffman, Horsley, Lamb, Leeth, Lohr, Marsden, Molina, Kilpatrick, Scott, Slaven, and Taillon.

RECENTLY COMPLETED VLCF GRANT PROJECTS – *Damian Martin, DCR, Land Conservation Specialist*

Mr. Martin provided the following update regarding the status of recently completed VLCF Grant Projects. The following six VLCF grant projects have successfully closed since the VLCF Board meeting on June 3, 2025.

1. American Battlefield Trust – Muller Tract (FY2023)

The American Battlefield Trust has acquired the three-acre Muller Tract near Manassas in Prince William County and recorded a historic preservation and open-space easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources. The tract is located entirely within the Core Area of the Second Manassas Battlefield and is adjacent to the Manassas National Battlefield Park. The property is mostly open with scattered trees and includes 423 feet of an intermittent stream. The Trust intends to restore the tract to a natural state by demolishing the existing structures and offer periodic tours to the public.

Grant Award: \$253,439 **Payment Amount:** \$253,439 **Match:** \$336,453 **Project Closed:** August 2025

2. Capital Region Land Conservancy – Mayo’s Island (FY2023)

Since the 1980s, the City of Richmond sought to acquire the 14-acre Mayo’s Island property located in the James River for a public park. Mayo’s Island holds a significant historical legacy dating back to the 18th century when the first bridge was built linking the north and south sides of the James River. Since then, the island has been used for industrial, commercial, and recreational purposes. The city’s acquisition and conservation of Mayo’s Island was accomplished by assembling funding from the Community Flood Preparedness Fund, VLCF, and the State Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund. This achievement bolsters the outdoor recreation economy in downtown Richmond. Capital Region Land Conservancy and DCR now co-hold an easement on the island.

Grant Award: \$1,500,000 **Payment Amount:** \$1,500,000 **Match:** \$10,781,561 **Project Closed:** September 2025

3. Trust for Public Land – Lower Potomac River Corridor (FY2024)

The Lower Potomac River Corridor project conserved 304 acres of farmland in Westmoreland County. These two adjoining farms are located along the Potomac River and Popes Creek directly across from and within the viewshed of the George Washington Birthplace National Monument, a unit of the National Park Service. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) received the VLCF grant, and in partnership with the landowners, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, and the U.S. Navy acquired open-space easements on the two farms to be co-held by VOF and the Navy. These farms are now part of a complex of contiguous farmland, forests and wetlands protected through conservation easements, collectively amounting to 2,700-acres, and link to another 3,000 acres of public and privately conserved land, including the GW Birthplace National Monument, Westmoreland State Park, and Stratford Hall National Historic Landmark. These conserved lands now extend for eight miles along the Potomac River.

Grant Award: \$585,000 **Payment Amount:** \$585,000 **Match:** \$2,379,548 **Project Closed:** July 2025

4. Franklin Parks Foundation – Deer Creek (FY2024)

The Franklin Parks Foundation, in partnership with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and the City of Franklin, acquired and conserved 99.76 acres with frontage on the state scenic Blackwater River. VOF now holds an easement on the parcel. This project adds additional parkland to the adjacent Blackwater Park with a primitive camp site and boat launch. The property contains old growth hardwood bottomlands and supports several rare species and significant natural communities including anadromous fish and colonial water birds. The wetland forests rank high on over 60 acres of river frontage. The park will be open daily to the public.

Grant Award: \$180,000 **Payment Amount:** \$180,000 **Match:** \$1,028,177 **Project Closed:** July 2025

5. Department of Forestry – Tank Hill (FY2025)

The Department of Forestry secured a 1,486-acre open space easement to protect working forestland in Dinwiddie County with the assistance of a VLCF grant from FY25. The easement also protects riparian lands along White Oak Creek, designated as Threatened & Endangered Species Waters by the Department of Wildlife Resources due to the presence of Roanoke Logperch, a state and federally endangered fish. The landowner plans to keep the land as working forestland and has removed the possibility of major development. The project aligns with the locality's comprehensive plan, the Virginia Outdoors Plan, and efforts to protect the flight path between Ft. Barfoot and Ft. Gregg-Adams.

Grant Award: \$810,000 **Payment Amount:** \$810,000 **Match:** \$2,240,915 **Project Closed:** September 2025

6. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Lake Caledon – Caledon State Park Expansion (FY2025)

The Lake Caledon acquisition expands Caledon State Park, a designated National Natural Landmark, by nearly 20% through a Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) partnership with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the U.S. Navy. The 471-acre lakefront property in King George County was a long-standing acquisition priority for DCR, the Friends of Caledon State Park, and King George County. The property is mostly forested and had been slated for a residential subdivision before TPL secured a purchase agreement with the owners. This expansion increases recreational opportunities such as camping, hiking, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and the potential for overnight lodging.

Grant Award: \$500,000 **Payment amount:** \$500,000 **Match:** \$5,562,021 **Project Closed:** October 2025

WITHDRAWN VLCF GRANT PROJECTS

In addition, Mr. Martin provided an update regarding the VLCF Grant Projects that have been withdrawn since the Board's last meeting. The two projects that have been withdrawn are listed below:

1. The Nature Conservancy – Gent Branch – Elk Conservation Area (FY2023)

The Nature Conservancy sought to conserve approximately 179 acres Buchanan County for an elk conservation area. The project was withdrawn in late July after the landowners were unable to convey a good, insurable, and marketable fee simple title to the property.

Grant Award: \$71,937 **Note:** Funds will be returned to the Open Spaces and Parks Category.

2. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve - Browne Farm (FY2024)

Natural Heritage requested a grant to acquire approximately 45 acres as an addition to the Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve in Halifax County. This project was withdrawn in mid-September 2025 after the landowner sold the property to an individual that did not intend to sell the land to DCR for a Natural Area Preserve.

Grant Award: \$250,000 **Note:** Funds will be returned to the Natural Areas Preservation Category

Mr. Martin provided a summary of the open VLCF grants. There are six open grants remaining from the FY22 grant round. For the FY23 grant round, 21 of the 40 grants awarded are still open. Additionally, 28 of the 29 grants awarded in the FY24 grant round remain open. In total, the organization is currently managing 55 open grants with a combined value of \$24,554,262.

VLCF GRANT PROGRAM – FY26 GRANT ROUND – *Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR, Land Conservation Manager*

Ms. Bulbulkaya presented the Board with the following overview of the FY26 Grant Round:

FY26 GRANT ROUND OVERVIEW

The FY26 Grant Round was open to accept applications from June 3 through August 12, 2025.

Funding provided in state budget: \$16 million appropriation –
\$4 million to VOF Preservation Trust Fund, per Va. Code
\$12 million

Interest through June 1, 2025: **\$1,000,000 (-\$250,000 to VOF PTF)**

Returned grant funds: **\$3,060,418**

Total available grant funding: \$15,810,418

- Grant round announcements were emailed to localities, land trusts, interest groups, past applicants, conservation organizations and agencies.
- A virtual grant workshop was held on June 17, and presentations were posted to the VLFCF webpage.
- The Interagency Taskforce met on September 8 and October 7 to discuss applications and make recommendations for each category.

Total Applications Received: 32

9 in Farmland Preservation
 7 in Forestland Preservation
 6 in Historic Area Preservation
 5 in Natural Area Preservation
 5 in Open Spaces and Parks

Recommended for Funding to Board: 29

7 in Farmland Preservation
 7 in Forestland Preservation
 5 in Historic Area Preservation
 5 in Natural Area Preservation
 5 in Open Spaces and Parks

Total request funding: \$17,212,352

Total request acreage: 8,711.00

Total recommended funding: \$15,772,609

Total recommended acreage: 8,650.50

ConserveVirginia: 89.7% (26/29 are within)

VLFCF Grant Requirements are met:

1. The state budget requires at least 50% of funds be used for projects that provide public access; and
2. The Code requires at least 1/3 of funds be used for projects that secure easements to be held or co-held by a public body.
 - 18 of the recommended projects (64% of funds) would provide public access
 - 19 of the recommended projects (56% of funds) would have open-space easements

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDED GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM THE INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE

FARMLAND PRESERVATION – Gennette Harris, Department of Forestry, Working Lands Conservations Specialist

Ms. Harris presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

FARMLAND PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$2,604,182

1. Project: **Avalon Land, LLC**; Applicant: Land Trust of Virginia
Easement on 81.29 acres along the James River in Nelson County.
Total Project Cost: \$257,000; Grant Request: \$121,750; Recommend: \$121,750
2. Project: **Calloway Tract at Brandy Station**; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Easement on 475.87 acres of farmland along the Rappahannock River in Culpeper County. **Total Project Cost: \$1,758,000; Grant Request: \$879,000; Recommend: \$879,000** (\$504,578 from Farmland Preservation and \$374,422 from Historic Area Preservation)
3. Project: **Bryant Land Company**; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 408 acres of farmland in Southampton County.
Total Project Cost: \$940,600; Grant Request: \$225,000; Recommend: \$225,000 (\$224,114 from Farmland Preservation and \$886 from Forestland Preservation)
4. Project: **Windfield Farm**; Applicant: Clarke County
Easement on 126 acres of farm and forestland on the Shenandoah River in Clarke County.
Total Project Cost: \$510,500; Grant Request: \$200,000; Recommend: \$200,000
5. Project: **Parkland Farms**; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 949.67 acres of active farmland in Mecklenburg County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,727,000; Grant Request: \$1,402,000; Recommend: \$751,753
6. Project: **Brandy Rock Farm at Brandy Station**; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Easement on 225.8-acres of farmland in Culpeper County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,473,910; Grant Request: \$636,405; Recommend: \$636,405
7. Project: **Daniel & Pamela Bell Farm**; Applicant: Stafford County
Easement on 20 acres of pastureland in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$222,800; Grant Request: \$111,400; Recommend: \$111,400

Forestland Preservation – Amanda Scheps, Department of Forestry, Program Manager, Office of Working Lands Preservation

Ms. Scheps presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

FORESTLAND PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$3,929,536

1. Project: **Henry W. Carneal**; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 563.00 acres of forestland along the North Fork Holston River in Smyth & Washington Counties.
Total Project Cost: \$839,750; Grant Request: \$281,150; Recommend: \$281,150
2. Project: **Conservation and Cultural Access in Amherst County**; Applicant: The Conservation Fund
Easement on 421.25 acres of forestland on the northern slope of Bear Mountain, containing the peak of Cedar Mountain in Amherst County.

Total Project Cost: \$575,000; Grant Request: \$287,500; Recommend: \$287,500

3. Project: **Preserving Bear Mountain**; Applicant: Monacan Indian Nation
Fee acquisition of 339.40 acres of forestland on Bear Mountain in Amherst County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,800,000; Grant Request: \$1,210,000; Recommend: \$1,210,000
4. Project: **Darden Farms**; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on a 1,052.68-acre Century Farm in Southampton County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,874,100; Grant Request: \$775,000; Recommend: \$775,000
5. Project: **Closing the Gap: Dragon Run Conservation & Wildlife Corridor**; Applicant: Friends of Dragon Run
Fee acquisition and easement on 240.58 acres of active agricultural land, forestland, and bald cypress swamp in King and Queen County.
Total Project Cost: \$988,000; Grant Request: \$475,000; Recommend: \$475,000
6. Project: **Threewitts Farm LLC**; Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on a 672.00-acre Century Farm adjacent to the Dendron Swamp Natural Area Preserve in Surry County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,735,600; Grant Request: \$450,000; Recommend: \$450,000
7. Project: **Hunting Quarter Farm**; Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on a 662.00-acre Century Forest property one mile from Chub Hill NAP and State Scenic Nottoway River in Sussex County.
Total Project Cost: \$991,100; Grant Request: \$450,000; Recommend: \$450,000

Historic Area Preservation – Karri Richardson, Department of Historic Resources, Easement Program Specialist

Ms. Richardson presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$2,726,963

1. Project: **Hylton Tract at Bristoe Station**; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Fee acquisition of 152.18 acres of farmland in Prince William County.
Total Project Cost: \$8,482,475; Grant Request: \$1,100,000; Recommend: \$1,100,000
2. Project: **Martin Indigenous Archaeological Site**; Applicant: The Archaeological Conservancy
Fee acquisition of 16.26 acres along the New River in Wythe County.
Total Project Cost: \$584,900; Grant Request: \$292,250; Recommend: \$292,250
3. Project: **Pappas Tract at Fisher's Hill**; Applicant: Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
Easement on 110.50 acres of forested land in Shenandoah County.
Total Project Cost: \$620,632; Grant Request: \$310,316; Recommend: \$310,316
4. Project: **Shiflett II at Piedmont Battlefield**; Applicant: Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
Fee acquisition of 87.71 acres of farmland in Augusta County along the Middle River.

Total Project Cost: \$1,016,550; **Grant Request:** \$508,275; **Recommend:** \$508,275

5. Project: **Goodale I & Deane I Tract**; Applicant: Richmond Battlefields Association, Inc.
Easement on 14 acres of farm and forestland owned by applicant in Henrico County.
Total Project Cost: \$283,400; **Grant Request:** \$141,700; **Recommend:** \$141,700

Natural Area Preservation – Lesley Starke, DCR, Acting Director, Natural Heritage Program

Ms. Starke informed the Board that the application for Piney Grove Flatwoods Natural Area Preserve – Luster Tract Addition was withdrawn and the funding that was to be distributed to this application is intended to be reallocated to the other grant applications to provide them with full funding. Ms. Starke presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$3,088,235

1. Project: **Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve – Bournes Addition**; Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Natural Heritage
Fee acquisition of 23.50 acres as an addition to one of the Commonwealth's most irreplaceable conservation sites, Difficult Creek NAP in Halifax County.
Total Project Cost: \$120,000; **Grant Request:** \$120,000; **Recommend:** \$120,000
2. Project: **Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve Addition (Highpoint Lane Parcel)**;
Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Fee acquisition of a 5.49-acre forested addition to the Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve in Fauquier County.
Total Project Cost: \$411,000; **Grant Request:** \$411,000; **Recommend:** \$411,000
3. Project: **Eastern Divide South – Hagan Tract Addition (supplemental funding)**; Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Natural Heritage
Fee acquisition of 104.00 acres of karst landscape in Montgomery County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,350,000; **Grant Request:** \$1,074,781; **Recommend:** \$1,074,781
4. Project: **South Quay Sandhills Natural Area Preserve – Phase I Addition (supplemental funding)**; Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Natural Heritage
Fee acquisition of approximately 846.00 acres of forestland and wetlands in Suffolk County.
Total Project Cost: \$3,065,000; **Grant Request:** \$1,765,000; **Recommend:** \$1,482,454

Open Spaces and Parks – Kristal McKelvey, DCR, Chief Recreation Grants Manager, Planning & Recreation Resources

Ms. McKelvey presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

OPEN SPACES & PARKS APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$3,515,684

1. Project: **Gum Swamp Warren Property**; Applicant: City of Virginia Beach
Fee acquisition of 26.00 acres of Gum Swamp, one of the headwaters of the Virginia Scenic North Landing River in the City of Virginia Beach.
Total Project Cost: \$2,529,000; **Grant Request:** \$1,200,000; **Recommend:** \$1,200,000
2. Project: **Kane Gap Connectivity Project**; Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 250.00 acres in Scott County to complete the development of Wilderness Road and provide public access to the cultural, scenic, and natural resources of Kane Gap.
Total Project Cost: \$464,000; **Grant Request:** \$464,000; **Recommend:** \$464,000
3. Project: **Stratford Hall Historic Preserve**; Applicant: Trust for Public Land
Fee acquisition of 475.00 acres along the tidal Potomac River in Westmoreland County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,187,000; **Grant Request:** \$665,500; **Recommend:** \$665,500
4. Project: **Wilson Hollow – New River Trail Expansion**; Applicant: New River Soil and Water Conservation District
Fee acquisition of 239.00 acres of forestland and grasslands along the New River in Grayson County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,103,600; **Grant Request:** \$550,900; **Recommend:** \$550,900
5. Project: **Riverheads School Complex – Adjacent Property**; Applicant: County of Augusta
Fee acquisition of 24.59 acres adjacent to the Riverheads school complex in Augusta County for future outdoor facilities.
Total Project Cost: \$570,950; **Grant Request:** \$285,475; **Recommend:** \$285,475

COMMENTS FROM GRANT APPLICANTS AND THE PUBLIC

There was no comment from members of the public or grant applicants.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF FY26 GRANT AWARDS

The Board discussed the grant applications and how the scoring of the applications are reviewed by the Interagency Taskforce members. There was also discussion regarding the expertise members of the Interagency Taskforce members have and how their knowledge assists the various grant categories.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Beamer moved to approve the grants as presented. Ms. Slaven seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by: Adams, Andrews, Beamer, Gable, Hallberg, Hoffman, Horsley, Lamb, Leeth, Lohr, Marsden, Molina, Kilpatrick, Scott, Slaven, and Taillon.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board engaged in a discussion regarding flood plains and flood resilience in relation to current and upcoming grant applications. The Board directed the Interagency Taskforce to research this matter and present findings at the next Board meeting. The objective is to consider the potential integration of flood planning into the grant categories prior to the FY26 Grant Rounds.

VLCF DEED REVIEW AND VERIFICATION OF REQUIRED PROPERTY PROTECTIONS – *Damian Martin, DCR, Land Conservation Specialist*

Mr. Martin provided an overview of the VLCF deed review process, per the Board's request for information at a prior Board meeting. The Office of Land Conservation (OLC) reviews conservation easements and deeds of acquisition with open-space dedications to ensure compliance with the VLCF Grant Manual, Grant Agreement, and application requirements. Draft deeds are reviewed by OLC staff, with initial edits made by the Land Conservation Specialist or Grants Manager and final approval required from the Land Conservation Manager before recording. OLC collaborates with grantees to bring documents into compliance and provides detailed guidance on deed requirements, internal review procedures, and common edits. Supporting materials include a grant close-out template to track due diligence items and financial tracking tools to ensure grant reimbursements align with actual expenditures and award amounts.

BOARD MEMBER DEPARTURE

Mr. Gable left the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussed the development of easements and adequate protection of different conservation values of property. Board staff were directed to review this topic and provide an update at the next Board meeting.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Surry-Skiffes Creek

2026 Grant Manual

To be Adopted June 9, 2026

Virginia Land Conservation
Foundation

Administered by the Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation



Authority

Chapter 900 and 906 of the 1999 Virginia Acts of Assembly established the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (the “Foundation” or “VLCF” intermittently). These acts and subsequent amendments are codified at Va. Code §§ 10.1-1017 through 10.1-1026. They stipulate that the Foundation “shall establish; administer; manage, including the creation of reserves; and make expenditures and allocations from a special, nonreverting fund in the state treasury to be known as the Virginia Land Conservation Fund.” Va. Code § 10.1-1020.

Consistent with the above authority, the VLCF will administer a grant round with restricted funds received as a result of the Memorandum of Agreement (“MOA”) among Virginia Electric and Power Company d/b/a Dominion Energy Virginia (“Dominion Energy”), the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Norfolk District (“Corps”), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation dated April 24, 2017 and executed May 2, 2017 in connection with the construction and operation of the proposed Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton 500 kV Transmission Line Project. Under Stipulation II.a.1.E. of the MOA, Dominion Energy contributed \$12.5 million to the VLCF for projects across three areas as specified below. This document serves as the draft list of criteria and framework to guide in the selection of land conservation and open space easements for purposes of Stipulation III.h. of the MOA. [The complete MOA can be found at: https://www.dominionenergy.com/-/media/content/about/power-line-projects/skiffes-creek/pdfs/army-corps-of-engineers-permit/finalmoa4242017.pdf.](https://www.dominionenergy.com/-/media/content/about/power-line-projects/skiffes-creek/pdfs/army-corps-of-engineers-permit/finalmoa4242017.pdf)

VLCF held the first Surry-Skiffes restricted fund grant round in 2017 and a second grant round in 2020 to award the full \$12.5M of restricted funds provided by Dominion Energy. However, one project was ultimately unsuccessful, leading VLCF to announce this 2026 grant round to award the remaining \$250,000. All of the original approved criteria in the first grant manual remain in place and are outlined below.

General Purpose of Surry-Skiffes Creek Restricted Funds Grant Round

For the purposes of this restricted funds grant round, ~~the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation~~ the Foundation will be providing, in accordance with the legal requirements outlined above, grants for projects as outlined in Stipulation III.h. of the MOA, within the Jamestown Island-Hog Island-Captain John Smith Trail Historic District (“Historic District”) and the thematically related areas as defined in the MOA in the following three categories:

- 1) Battlefield Conservation:
 - a. Enhancement and/or preservation of the setting and feeling for the Battle of Yorktown and Fort Crafford;
 - b. Development of public interpretive programs, signage, and exhibits focusing on the Peninsula Campaign, including the Battle of Hampton Roads, the Battle of Yorktown, the Battle of Williamsburg, and the strategic importance of Fort Monroe in each; and
 - c. Development of a 3D Laser Scan of Fort Crafford and an earthwork preservation plan to include a landscape management plan;
- 2) Landscape preservation with an emphasis on projects within the James River watershed benefitting the historic properties and district; and
- 3) Landscape scale conservation that may lead to permanently protecting land necessary to preclude future river crossings and non-compatible shoreline development within the Area of Potential Effects (“APE”) [\(see Appendix 3\)](#), to the greatest extent possible.

Grant awards from this grant round may be given ~~for~~ up to 100 percent of total project costs [up to \\$250,000](#), ~~although projects that provide a match may receive a higher score.~~

Program Eligibility

The overall objective of projects executed pursuant to the MOA is to mitigate adverse impacts to historic properties, their setting, and context.

Primary evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Proximity to the Historic District and the thematically related areas.
- Landscape scale conservation that permanently protects land from future shoreline development and future river crossings.
- Projects in the James River watershed that benefit historic properties and the Historic District.
- Projects that enhance and/or preserve the setting and feeling for the Battle of Yorktown and Fort Crafford.
- Projects that provide public interpretive programs, signage, and exhibits focusing on the Peninsula Campaign.

- Applications may be submitted by state agencies, localities, public bodies, [state-recognized and federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes](#) and registered (tax- exempt) nonprofit organizations. Projects may be acquisitions in fee simple, conservation or open-space easements, or development and implementation of public interpretive programs, signage, and exhibits focusing on the Peninsula Campaign.
- ~~Project applications must be for a minimum of \$200,000 in total cost for land preservation and conservation projects and a minimum of \$25,000 in total cost for public interpretive programs, signage, and exhibits. A total of \$250,000 is available for this grant round.~~
- The reported value of any property, whether fee-simple or easement, must be substantiated by an approved appraisal that meets the requirements of Va. Code § 58.1-512.1 and that conforms to the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, completed no more than six months prior to the payment of grant funds. A full appraisal is not required at the time of submission but is encouraged. If a full appraisal is not available, an applicant may submit a preliminary appraisal.
- The reported cost of the development and implementation of public interpretive signs and exhibits, or other non-land acquisition costs must be supported by estimates from consultants and/or other providers of such materials.
- A registered nonprofit organization seeking to hold easements funded by the Foundation must provide documentation that the organization meets the holder requirements in the Virginia Conservation Easement Act, Va. Code §§ 10.1-1009 to 10.1-1017, including having a mission statement pertaining to land conservation activities and maintaining an office in Virginia.
- A locality or other public body seeking to use VLCF funds to protect lands will be required to include language in the deed of transfer that states that the property will be taken under the authority of the Open Space Land Act, Va. Code §§ 10.1-1700 through 1705.1, and that the protection is perpetual in nature and not extinguishable at the option of the property owner or the local government, except pursuant to the provisions of the Open Space Land Act.
- Where the property is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register or is a battlefield, the applicant shall first offer an easement to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources.
- All projects undertaken by registered nonprofit organizations, whether fee simple or easements, must be protected by conservation easements in perpetuity that are held or co-held by a public body, pursuant to Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (A)(2). Property offered by registered nonprofit organizations as a match must also be protected by an easement co-held by a public entity. The co-holder of easements for registered nonprofit

organizations must be a state or federal agency or a local government jurisdiction. Fee-simple property used as match may be sold **only** if the grantee provides substitute land or reimburses VLCF as stipulated in the Property Protection Requirements on page iv.

- Where the property is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register or is a battlefield, the applicant shall first offer an easement to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources.
- Applicants must demonstrate that ~~the all~~ landowner(s) ~~has~~/have been notified and ~~is~~/are receptive to negotiation on the proposed project. **A letter from the all landowner(s) indicating willingness is required.**
- The applicant must demonstrate that it will have the necessary funding and staffing to manage the property in a manner that will achieve the purposes described in the application categories.
- The proposed project must be for a specific site or sites that meet the criteria for one or more of the application categories.
- The applicant must demonstrate that resources are in place to complete the project within two years of project approval.
- Applications for fee-simple acquisition or the acquisition of easements on lands currently protected for conservation purposes by the applicant, while not considered under general funded VLCF grant rounds, will be considered in this grant program if the proposed project significantly enhances the protection from future development, enhances the protection of the natural vegetation cover, or benefits historic resources.
- When additional property is proposed as match in a grant application, the match property must be in the proximity of, or historically and/or ecologically connected to, the property that is the subject of the grant. The match property must also be protected in the same manner as the property that is the subject of the grant. The applicant must, in its VLCF application, provide the same information on the match property as for the other tract(s) for which they are requesting funding so that the match property can be included in the overall evaluation of the project. The reported value of any match property, whether acquired or donated, must be substantiated by an approved appraisal completed no more than six months prior to the donation or acquisition. Although a full appraisal is not required at the time of application, it is encouraged. See Appendix 2 for Eligible Match Contributions.
- Applicants must provide conditions to be included in any proposed conservation easement. This includes, but is not limited to, the number of division rights to be retained, amount of development permitted (residential, agricultural, etc.), riparian buffer requirements, historic- resource protections, prohibition of river crossings, preservation of forest acreage, any allowed or disallowed land use or land-

management practices, or other easement terms. A draft deed of easement or term sheet will satisfy this requirement.

- No application relying on eminent domain shall be considered, as Va. Code § 10.1-1023 prohibits the use of VLCF funds to acquire any property interest through eminent domain.
- All projects awarded VLCF funds will require title insurance. Fee simple acquisition projects must ensure that the applicant/recipient holds an unencumbered fee simple interest in the acquired property. Easement projects must ensure the same for the property owner. Grant recipients must provide a title insurance commitment that identifies the owner of the proposed acquisition, together with easements, restrictions, and other encumbrances of record, before the grant funds can be paid.
- A survey to ALTA/ACSM standards and a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment, (ASTM) standard practice for environmental site assessments, will be required on all fee-simple acquisition projects (not easement projects) that receive grant approval. All approved easement projects will require boundary surveys made to state standards as set out in the Virginia Administrative Code (18VAC10-20-370 Minimum Standards and Procedures for Land Boundary Surveying Practice).
<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title18/agency10/chapter20/section370/>
- ~~When funding is available,~~ VLCF grant-award projects will be provided with a sign that identifies VLCF funding for the project, which must be posted at the project site at a reasonably visible location.
- Applicants whose projects are awarded VLCF funds should be aware that project names will be included in press releases. Since some landowners prefer not to have their names published, please consider that when naming the project in the VLCF application.

Grant Completion

Projects that have been awarded grants by VLCF must be completed within two years from the date that the VLCF Board approves the grant awards, or the grant funds will revert to the VLCF restricted fund under which they were awarded. One twelve-month administrative extension may be granted, provided there is adequate justification for the delay and reasonable assurances provided that the project will be completed as approved.

~~Should~~ Because there ~~be~~ are uncommitted funds ~~after~~ from the initial grant round, this grant round has been announced. ~~a~~ Additional grant rounds will be announced in future years as needed until the entire \$12.5 million has been expended.

VLCF Property Protection Requirements

VLCF invests in the permanent protection of important properties across the Commonwealth, either through fee-simple acquisition or conservation easements. Accordingly, the deed of acquisition or conservation easement for the project must contain provisions consistent with these requirements, and the following protection requirements apply.

Public Bodies

No fee simple property acquired by a public body with VLCF funds can be converted to a use different from that for which it was acquired without first obtaining VLCF Board approval. The VLCF Board shall approve such conversions only if it is in accord with the existing local comprehensive plan and only upon such conditions as the Board deems necessary to assure the substitution of other properties of at least equal fair market value and of equivalent or better conservation value. The Executive Secretary of the Board shall promulgate procedures as needed to effect conversions approved by the Board.

Registered Nonprofit Organizations

Registered nonprofit organizations should consider carefully whether to apply for a fee-simple acquisition project or an easement project, as fee-simple acquisition projects will be subject to the following conditions. No fee simple property acquired with VLCF funds shall be sold by the grantee unless the following conditions are met: (1) the fair-market value of the property is supported by a current appraisal; and (2) the VLCF Board is reimbursed by a percent of the sale price equal to the percent of total project value represented by the original VLCF grant award.

An exception to the reimbursement requirements set forth above may be granted if the property is transferred to a public agency and the recorded deed of transfer states that the agency agrees to hold and manage the property in fee for the purposes for which it was originally acquired.

Ineligible Projects

- ~~Land~~ p Property that is in public ownership and permanently protected for all purposes described herein, consistent with this program, and thus adds no new protection measures consistent with this program cannot be acquired under this grant program.

However, public land purchased in the two years prior to commencement of the current grant round may be eligible as a match.

- Indirect costs (staff time or overhead) are not eligible match for acquisition/easement projects but may be considered for enhancement/interpretative projects.
- Acquisition projects that include costs for maintenance and operation of lands and facilities; any such cost must be excluded from the total project costs and will not be considered as match contribution.
- Project proposals that are not site specific.

Application Information and Deadline

~~Three (3) original applications on paper plus a~~ An electronic version ~~on a CD or USB drive of the application below~~ should be ~~delivered~~ emailed to the Department of Conservation and Recreation at ~~the address below~~ landcon@dcr.virginia.gov, and must arrive **no later than 54 p.m. on the day of the deadline. Friday, September 4, 2026.**

Please include the following information in the subject line: **SURRY-SKIFFES CREEK GRANT ROUND (PROJECT NAME).** If converting files ~~to~~ into PDF format, please ensure that the file is searchable.

Address:

~~Department of Conservation and Recreation~~

~~Attention: Virginia Land Conservation Fund **SURRY-SKIFFES CREEK RESTRICTED FUNDS GRANT ROUND**~~

~~Office of Land Conservation 600 East~~

~~Main Street, 24th Floor Richmond, VA 23219~~

General Application Inquiry: contact the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Land Conservation, (804) 371-5218.

~~Each paper copy of the application should be firmly attached with staples or binder clips, or placed in a soft-sided folder. **Please do not use hard binders. All pages must be 8.5 x 11.** Photographs are encouraged. All photos and images and their captions must be mounted or printed on 8.5 x 11 paper and be of quality suitable for reproduction by photocopier. It is not~~

~~necessary to submit 3 sets of original images, but all reproduced images must be clear and understandable. Images and photos will not be returned.~~

Application Review and Approval

Initial Review

Applications will be received and reviewed by VLCF's Executive Secretary for completeness. Complete applications will be reviewed and scored by Department of Conservation and Recreation and Department of Historic Resources staff, per the scoring system provided in Appendix 1.

Final Review

All applications will be presented to the VLCF Board for review, action, and general grant approval. After qualified approval by VLCF, the projects will be forwarded to [the State Historic Preservation Office \(SHPO\)](#) for final approval. Pending further environmental studies, appraisal reports and reviews, etc., and – for projects proposed by localities – a formal resolution of support from the local governmental unit(s), a formal grant agreement will be issued. Agreements on all approved acquisition and easement projects shall include language that dedicates the specific project to protection in perpetuity as approved by VLCF.

Funds Disbursement

At or after settlement, all grant funds shall be disbursed. All costs shall be incurred in accordance with the Virginia Public Procurement Act as may be applicable. Funding at or after settlement will be based on documentation of costs incurred. VLCF grant funds disbursed shall not be more than the appraised value [and eligible due diligence expenses](#), not to exceed the total grant amount awarded.

The following documents must be provided as deliverables prior to grant funds being disbursed:

- An appraisal of the fair market value (in the case of a fee acquisition) or of the easement value by a Virginia licensed appraiser that meets USPAP standards, prepared within six months before closing.

- A survey to ALTA/ACSM standards will be required on all fee-simple acquisition projects (not easement projects) that receive grant approval. All approved easement projects will require boundary surveys that meet state standards as set out in the Virginia Administrative Code (18VAC10-20-370 Minimum Standards and Procedures for Land Boundary Surveying Practice).
<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title18/agency10/chapter20/section370/>
- A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment for all fee-simple acquisition projects.
- Final policy or commitment for owner's title insurance less than ninety (90) days old showing title vested in the seller of the property (or easement interest) and that upon closing of the transaction, a public body will hold an unencumbered priority interest in the property subject to easements or other encumbrances of record acceptable to VLCF.
- A copy of the final draft deed, the form of which has been approved by DCR on behalf of VLCF.
- Verification of eligible expenditures including, but not limited to: copies of invoices, bills of sale, cancelled check, etc.

Project Application Elements

Project Narrative

- Describe the objectives and need for grant assistance.
- Give a ten-year (10) history of the subject property.
- Include an assessment of property market value to substantiate the project cost and grant request. Although full appraisals are not required at the time of application submittal, submission of a full or preliminary appraisal is encouraged.
- Identify specific match funds, if any, that are available or yet to be acquired.
- Identify the expected results and benefits the proposal will have.
- Describe how the project is consistent with or complements local and regional plans.
- Describe any significant contributions of the project in meeting the purposes of this grant program.
- Provide a detailed description of how the project meets specific criteria of the grant.

- Show how the proposal acts on a risk that there will be a loss of historical, natural, recreational, or significant open space lands.
- Show how approval of this proposal will have a positive economic impact, if any, on the locality or region.
- If possible, provide quantitative and qualitative projections on the benefits of the proposal.
- For easement projects, provide a list or summary of the restrictions that will be included in the easement, including historic-resources protections, limitations on allowed development, and protection of natural vegetation cover.
- List the names of organizations, cooperators, consultants, and others that will work on the project, and state what role each partner will play.
- Discuss the landowner's short-term and long-term management plans for the site.
- State the length of time that will be required to complete the project once the grant is approved.
- Identify any factors that might accelerate or delay the project.

Geographic Location

Give a precise location and address of the project area. Include maps or other information that will assist in the evaluation of the proposal, including a topographic map suitable for 8½" x 11" reproduction and an aerial photograph.

Support Documents

The application should include letters of support from individuals and organizations, as well as resolutions from governmental bodies and others whose interest in the project proposal reflects wide community-based support for the application. As a means of raising the profile of the VLCF grant program, applicants are also encouraged to inform their public officials, such as state legislators and locally elected officials, of the applicant's participation in the VLCF grant round. **These letters should be sent as part of the application, not separately.**

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Surry-Skiffes Creek Restricted Funds

2026 Grant Round

PROJECT APPLICATION

1. Applicant: _____
2. Address: _____
3. Contact person: _____ Title: _____
Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____
4. ~~a. Location~~Address of project: _____ City/County: _____
5. Type of applicant: _____ State _____ Local _____ Regional
____ Other public body _____ Registered non-profit _____ Conservation organization

[State-recognized or federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes](#)

Location of office in Virginia _____

Number of years office maintained in Virginia _____

If you are a nonprofit organization, provide documentation that you are registered and in good standing with the State Corporation Commission. The URL of the organization's SCC Business Entity Details page will suffice:

<https://sccefile.scc.virginia.gov/Find/Business>

6. Name of Project _____
(Please note that names will be publicized, and landowners may prefer not to have their names in press releases. Please ask them first.)

7. Type of Project:
 Fee-simple acquisition Easement Site development

8. Amount of grant requested _____

9. Number of acres to be protected or acquired _____

9.10. Anticipated project completion date _____

10.11. Historic Significance:

_____ Describe how the project benefits or interprets the Battle of Yorktown, Fort Crafford, or other Revolutionary War and/or colonial sites of historic significance.

_____ Describe any known prehistoric or historic architectural or archaeological resources on the property, making sure to include location, how and when the resource was documented, current condition, DHR Inventory Number (if available), and any documented eligibility determination for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register or National Register of Historic Places.

11.12. Access:

_____ Public access will be allowed more than 50% of the year

_____ Limited public access (less than 50% of the year) will be allowed

_____ Property provides demonstrated visual access (e.g., adjacency to scenic rivers)

_____ No public access allowed

Define the level and type of public access allowed on the property.

13. Where applicable, describe the scenic value of the property and how the project will protect the integrity of the existing scenic qualities.

12.14. Describe the land protection project with attention to the scoring criteria:

_____ Proximity to APE

_____ Consistency with the local comprehensive plan or other conservation initiatives

_____ Protection of historic resources

_____ Details and protection that will be provided by a conservation easement

_____ Activities specifically allowed in the conservation easement

_____ Location in the James River watershed

_____ Natural resource values

- _____ How the project benefits conservation of natural resources in the James River watershed at a landscape scale (i.e. Size of project and/or proximity to other protected areas)
- _____ Integration with existing conservation plans
- _____ Degree of threat
- _____ Administrative capacity to manage the grant
- _____ Likelihood of success
- _____ Amount of match provided, if any
- _____ Cost and readiness (likely to be completed within 12 to 24 months?)
- _____ Show Geographic location with maps (must include USGS 75-minute topographic map suitable for 8-1/2" x 11" production, and an aerial photo)

~~43.15.~~ Landowner All landowner(s) ~~has~~/have been notified and ~~is~~/are receptive to negotiation on the proposed Project (Required) _____ Yes _____ No

Letter from landowner(s) attached (Required) _____ Yes _____ No

~~44.16.~~ If application is being made by a registered nonprofit organization, provide documentation that a public body is willing to be the holder or co-holder of the conservation easement on the funded property.

~~45.17.~~ Does the proposal meet a specific recreational or resource conservation need identified ~~in~~ a local comprehensive plan?
 _____ Yes _____ No

[If yes, please include a copy of or link to the relevant excerpt from the local comprehensive plan.]

Tax Exempt Status

Project Applications from nonprofit organizations shall provide documentation in the application that gives proof of tax-exempt status under §501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. Additionally, the applicant must meet the holder requirements as described in Va. Code §10.1-1009 to §10.1-1017. **See Page 2, Program Eligibility.**

Budget Proposal

Amount of Grant Requested: _____

Amount of Matching Funds: _____

Total Project Cost (Grant amount plus Match): _____

Acquisition Cost: _____

Legal Fees: _____

Survey Fees: _____

Appraisal Fees: _____

Title Insurance: _____

Recordation Fees: _____

Environmental Site Assessment: _____

Cost of Interpretive Project/Materials: _____

Other Fees (explain): _____

Applicant Matching Funds Breakdown: Please identify each match source and amount applied to this project for each of the following categories:

Cash: _____

Land/Real Property Donations: _____

*Other: _____

Total Matching Contributions: _____

* Attach a separate sheet with a detailed cost breakdown.

• **Note:** If any portion of the applicant's matching amount is from other grants that may have **restrictions** on such funds, please identify the source of this match and provide information.

Please note that applicants must have grant match in hand or provide a **commitment letter of-for-obtaining matching-funds commitment** in the form shown on the following page.

Example Match Letter

[Date]

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation
~~Mr. Ms. Nikki Rovner~~~~Clyde E. Cristman~~,
Executive Secretary
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: VLCF Surry-Skiffes Creek Restricted Funds grant application from [organization] for [project]

Dear ~~Mr. Cristman~~Ms. Rovner:

In the grant application submitted by our organization for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation's restricted funds grant round, our project budget included a total match amount of \$_____, of which \$___ is to be obtained through grant funding that is not yet committed by any granting agency. We agree that, if this project is funded through VLCF, we will commit our organization's resources to complete the project within the two-year time frame required by the VLCF program.

Sincerely,

[Organization representative]
[Job Title]

Environmental Survey

The following survey should be completed and included in the project application. If additional environmental information is available that is pertinent to the project proposal, it should be submitted with the application. DCR staff will coordinate environmental review for concerns under DCR's purview.

Please be advised that this form is not intended to replace additional environmental information that may be required for the proposal. Some applications involving acquisition of land that are subsequently approved for grant assistance will be required to submit a Phase 1 Environmental Report.

Note: If yes is answered on any of the items below, please provide additional details if possible.

1. **Name of Applicant/Project:** _____

2. **Land Use:**

a. Briefly describe the land use in the project area. Attach a land use map if needed.

b. Is the project consistent with the locality's Comprehensive Plan? How so?

3. **Socioeconomics:** Will the proposed project impact any of the following:

	Y	N		Y	N
a. Health/Education Facilities			e. Public Utilities		
b. Emergency Service Providers			f. Local Tax Base		
c. Handicapped, Minorities, or Elderly			g. Residential Areas		
d. Economic Activity			h. VDOT – new or improved roads		

4. Natural Resources: Will the proposed project impact any of the following:

		Y	N			Y	N
a.	Soil Erosion or Sedimentation			g.	Vegetation		
b.	Streams, Rivers, or Lakes			h.	Wetlands		
c.	Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat			i.	Floodplains		
d.	Wild and Scenic Rivers			j.	Coastal Zones		
e.	National Natural Landmarks			k.	Agricultural Lands		
f.	Rare Animals and Plants and Exemplary Natural Communities			l.	Forestal Lands		
				m.	Ag/Forestal District		

5. Historic and Archaeological Resources

- a. Has the project been reviewed by the VA Dept. of Historic Resources (DHR)?
- b. Will the project have an effect on historic or archaeological resources?

6. Hazardous Wastes: Is there any potential for involvement with hazardous wastes?

7. Adjacency to Conserved Lands

a. Is the project located next to a publicly owned park, recreational area, natural area, historic site, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge?

b. If yes, please name the facility

- Park _____
- Historic Site _____
- Natural Area _____
- Wildlife or Waterfowl Refuge _____
- Recreation Area _____

Application Checklist Items

- All applications must be emailed. The various parts of the application should be compiled as one complete document (Word or searchable PDF); do not include more than one document.
- All applications from registered nonprofit organizations must meet specific criteria for eligibility and the requirements for the public body co-holders as described in the Program Eligibility section on page 2.
- Letter of transmittal.
- Battle of Yorktown and/or Fort Crafford enhancement or protection application details
- Other historic preservation project application details
- Public interpretation and enhancement project narrative (detailed)
- Land protection project application details and narrative
- Details explaining any shoreline preservation or protection of adjacent landscapes
- Budget proposal sheet (in detail)
- Geographic location with maps (must include an aerial photograph and a USGS 7.5-minute topographic map; all maps must be suitable for 8½" x 11" reproduction)
- Letter from all of the landowner(s) indicating their receptiveness to the transaction
- For all easement projects and for fee-simple projects by a nonprofit organization, a draft deed of easement to be held by a public body or a letter from a public body stating their willingness to hold the easement with a term sheet outlining the restrictions to be included in the easement
- Support documentation (letters, resolutions of government bodies, relevant published policies) included with the application (not sent separately)
- Substantiation of the value of the property to be protected
- Appraisal, title report, boundary survey, and other reports if available
- Environmental survey, if available (and other available information)
- Tax Exempt Status (if nonprofit application)
- W-9 Form: Request for Taxpayer Identification Number(s) and Certification

Appendix 1

Scoring Criteria for VLCF 2026 Surry-Skiffes Creek Restricted Funds Grant Round

Criterion	Score	Notes
<p>1) Historic Significance: Resource or property is:</p> <p>(A) directly associated with the Battle of Yorktown, Fort Crafford, or the Peninsula Campaign;</p> <p>(B) a battlefield or site identified with a preservation priority rating in the in the “Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields,” or “Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States” (together “Battlefield Reports”);</p> <p>(C) individually listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) or is a contributing resource in a listed historic district; or</p> <p>(D) formally determined eligible for listing on VLR by DHR within previous 5 calendar years and remains eligible in the opinion of DHR.</p> <p><i>* Applicants must submit the VLR nomination form or documentation of battlefield priority rating, if applicable.</i></p> <p>Maximum score: 30</p>		<p><u>Historic Resource/Property is:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle of Yorktown or Fort Crafford, or properties associated with the Peninsula Campaign = 15; or • Civil War, Revolutionary War, or War of 1812 site or battlefield designated as Priority I, II, III, or IV in the Battlefield Reports; = 15 <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually Listed on the VLR= 15; or • Designated a contributing resource in a historic district listed on the VLR or determined eligible for register in the National Register by the Keeper of the National Register = 10; or • Formally determined eligible for listing on the VLR by DHR within the previous 5 calendar years and remains eligible in the opinion of DHR = 5 <p>AND</p> <p><u>Other (5 points each, more than one may apply):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources that do not meet the criteria above = 5 • Resources with high degree of historic integrity = 5 • Designated a National Historic Landmark = 5
<p>2) Proximity to Impacts: Property or Resource is located in, or will have an impact on, the Jamestown Island-Hog Island- Captain John Smith Trail Historic District and the thematically related areas or the James River watershed.</p> <p>Maximum score: 20</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource or property is in the Battle of Yorktown, Fort Crafford = 10 • Resource or property is in APE = 15 <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource or property is in the James River Watershed outside of APE = 8 <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource or property is adjacent to existing conserved land = 5 • Possesses physical or functional proximity to existing conservation or preservation land = 5
<p>3) Landscape Scale Shoreline Preservation: Does project permanently protect shoreline and/or adjacent landscapes from development, future river crossings, and loss of natural vegetation cover?</p> <p>Maximum score: 15</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y = 15 • N = 0

<p>4) Pre-settlement Landscape Protection: Is the project within a natural landscape core as identified in the Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment (VaNLA)</p> <p>The model can be found at https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvnl</p> <p>Maximum score: 20</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1 - Outstanding = 15 • C2 - Very High = 10 • C3 - High = 5 • C4 - Moderate = 3 • C5 - General = 1 • Not within a core = 0 <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports natural communities found on limited number (0-10) of other protected lands = 5
<p>5) Public Use. Project provides public access and interpretive materials.</p> <p>Maximum score: 15</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project provides/enhances public access to property associated with the Battle of Yorktown, Fort Crafford, or other battlefields or sites provided with a priority rating in the Battlefield Reports = 15 • Property provides/enhances interpretive materials associated with the Peninsula Campaign of the Revolutionary War = 15 <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property open between 60 and 365 days per year = 10 • Open for public utilization between 1 and 60 days per year = 5 • No public access = 0
<p>6) Degree of Threat: The protection project alleviates an identifiable threat to the resource or compelling need for immediate preservation exists.</p> <p>Maximum score: 15</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property is currently on the market for sale OR in imminent danger of demolition/development = 15 • Property is listed with a Vulnerability Value of III, IV or V on the ConservationVision Development Vulnerability Model (https://vanhde.org/content/map) (Conservation Planning/Vulnerability Model) OR property is significantly deteriorated and in need of immediate preservation = 10 • Other identifiable threat to resource or compelling need for preservation = 5
<p>7) Alignment with other Initiatives: Supports national, state, regional or local conservation goals and initiatives, comprehensive plans, and/or is additive to a local or regional conservation or preservation need.</p> <p>Maximum score: 13</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project site specifically mentioned in a national, state, regional or local plan, or is identified in ConservationVision = 10 • Project site reference generally in a national, state, regional or local plan = 5 • Project associated with other MOA initiatives (https://www.dominionenergy.com/-/media/content/about/power-line-projects/skiffes-creek/pdfs/army-corps-of-engineers-permit/finalmoa4242017.pdf) = 3

<p>8) Management Capacity: Applicant intends to manage property according to a documented resource management plan and has demonstrated organizational and financial capacity to ensure appropriate treatment and ongoing maintenance of the historic and/or natural resource.</p> <p><i>*Project plans must meet the relevant preservation standards and be approved by the Department of Historic Resources.</i></p> <p><i>**Historic Structures Report or Resource Management Plan should be submitted with application, with sections applicable to grant proposal highlighted.</i></p> <p>Maximum score: 10</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural Resources: Property managed using a Historic Structures Report and applicant has documented financial and organizational capacity to maintain resource = 10 • Battlefield: Property surveyed and assessed by a professional archaeologist or professional battlefield historian and operated according to a battlefield management and interpretation plan = 10 • Property managed using general Resource Management Plan and applicant has documented financial capacity to maintain resource = 5 • Property owner will obtain Resource Management Plan and has limited financial capacity to maintain resource = 0. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Cultural or Natural Resource Landscape: Applicant has proven experience with cultural landscape and/or natural community management = 10 • Other Cultural or Natural Resource Landscape: Applicant has land management experience= 5 • Other Cultural or Natural Resource Landscape: Applicant has no proven land management experience = 0
<p>9) Ratio of Match to Project Cost</p> <p>Maximum score: 10</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighty percent or more of total project cost = 10 • Sixty percent or more of total project cost = 5 • Fifty percent or more of total project cost = 3 • Twenty percent or more of total project cost = 1
<p>10) Cost and Budget. Detailed itemized budget with realistic cost projections.</p> <p>Maximum score: 5</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes = 5 • No = 0

TOTAL MAXIMUM SCORE = 153

Appendix 2

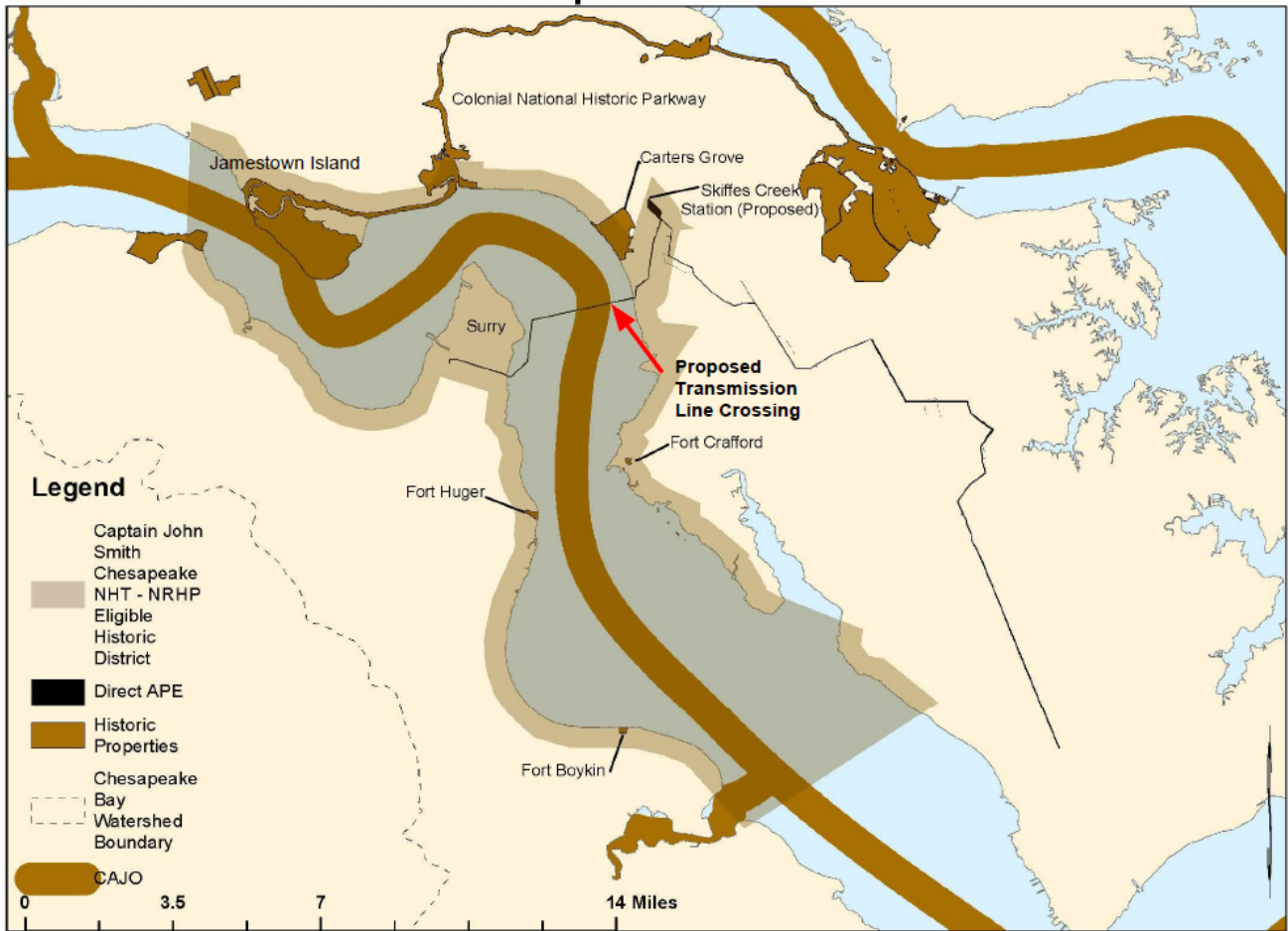
Eligible Match Contributions

- VLCF grants and match may be used only for acquisition costs and associated due diligence, and interpretive program expenses. Expenses necessary for the interpretive project development, or acquisition of the grant property/easement; i.e., appraisals, title insurance, surveys, hazardous waste assessment, and other necessary due diligence may be paid by the grant or are eligible as match. An allocation of employee salary, rent or other similar overhead expenses is not eligible for a match.
- “Pass-through” dollars from other sources, e.g., other grants, are eligible match.
- Bargain sales, i.e., the donation of a portion of the acquisition price of the land or easement to be acquired with VLCF grant funds, are eligible match.
- Property used as match must have been acquired within the two years prior to the commencement of the current grant round, as posted on the DCR website.
- Applicants may use the value of currently owned land as match as long as it was not purchased with VLCF funds and will be permanently protected as part of the project.
- The required match amount and source must be detailed within the grant application.
- The match contributions must be received by the applicant no later than the receipt of the VLCF grant funds (i.e., settlement, project closeout). This does not preclude the applicant from using funds that will be reimbursed by other non-state funding.

Appendix 3

Area of Potential Effect (APE)

Jamestown Island Area Historic Properties



FY27 Grant Manual

To be Adopted June 9, 2026

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Administered by the Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation



I. GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since 1999, the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (Foundation or VLCF), established under Va. Code §§ 10.1-1017 through 10.1-1026, has funded land conservation projects throughout the Commonwealth. The Foundation administers, manages, and holds competitive grant rounds from ~~a special, nonreverting fund in the state treasury known as~~ the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (Fund).

The Foundation administers the Fund ~~for the purpose of providing to provide~~ grants to state agencies, other public bodies, qualifying nonprofits and state-recognized and federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes. The grant funds can be used for the costs associated with permanently conserving land throughout the Commonwealth, including the purchase of development rights. VLCF grants are awarded only for acquiring interests in property that have not yet been permanently protected. There are five grant categories set out in Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (D): farmland preservation; forestland conservation; historic area preservation; natural area protection; and open spaces and parks.

VLCF Funds have been ~~used~~ awarded to protect more than ~~156,000~~ 198,000 acres across Virginia.

The Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, serving as Administrative Secretary and assisted by an interagency task force, is charged with administering, reviewing, and making recommendations on grant applications to the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources and the Foundation. Using specific criteria defined in each grant category, grants may be awarded for up to 50 percent of total project costs. The program can pay up to 100 percent of these costs for state agencies and eligible Virginia Indian Tribes, Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (A)(2).

Guiding factors for distribution of VLCF funds are set out in Va. Code §§ 10.1-1020 and 1021.1, which specify that at least one third of the funds shall be used to secure open-space easements to be held or co-held by a public body, and that the Foundation shall seek to achieve a fair distribution of land protected throughout the Commonwealth. Additionally, the state budget customarily specifies that no less than 50 percent of the VLCF funds shall be used for projects that provide public access.

The scoring criteria continue to place emphasis on providing grants to underserved communities and areas that have not previously benefited from VLCF grants. The Foundation strives to provide a fair distribution of public access and recreational opportunities, and to preserve open space, natural landscapes, and working lands across the Commonwealth. Additionally, the scoring criteria give precedence to projects that are within ConserveVirginia, as those lands are identified as conservation priorities by our state agency partners and other collaborators. There are seven ~~different overarching~~ categories within ConserveVirginia: (i) agriculture and forestry, (ii) natural habitat and ecosystem diversity, (iii) floodplains and flooding resilience, (iv) cultural and historic preservation, (v) scenic preservation, (vi) protected landscapes resilience, and (vii) water quality improvement. All conservation values identified by the applicant in the grant application must be protected in the easement.

Important Program Information

Note: We welcome Virginia's state and federally recognized tribes to apply for VLCF grants. ~~As tribal participation in the VLCF program presents a new paradigm in achieving perpetual land conservation in Virginia, we ask applicants to please contact staff to discuss your proposed project and planned means to conserve the land in perpetuity. During the application process,~~ VLCF staff ~~can~~ is available to provide technical support and guidance (see page 7 for contact information). ~~Because~~ Since federally recognized tribes are sovereign entities, please contact staff to discuss your proposed project and planned means to conserve the land in perpetuity. Staff will work with each tribe who receives a grant award on a case-by-case basis to incorporate appropriate language that meets required VLCF protections into the final project.

Eligible Applicants

- Applications may be submitted by state agencies, localities, other public bodies, state-recognized and federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes and registered (tax-exempt) nonprofit organizations that qualify as a holder under Va. Code § 10.1-1009.

Eligible Projects

- Eligible projects must be for acquiring fee-simple title or conservation and open-space easements for the perpetual protection of ecological, cultural or historical resources, lands for recreational purposes, and lands for threatened or endangered species, fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, agricultural and forestal lands and open space. Projects must protect land in perpetuity through recordation of a conservation easement and/or an open-space easement, or dedication under the Open-Space Land Act.

- If the proposed project seeks reimbursement for the fee acquisition of a property, then the acquisition cannot occur prior to the application deadline for this grant cycle.
- No application relying on eminent domain shall be considered, as Va. Code § 10.1-1023 prohibits the use of VLCF funds to acquire any property interest through eminent domain.
- Projects must be for a minimum of \$20,000 in total expense, or a grant request of no less than \$10,000.
- Applicants must demonstrate that the landowners have been notified and are receptive to the proposed project. Applicants must submit, as part of their application, a signed letter from all of the landowners indicating their willingness to conserve the property.
- The proposed project must be for specific property that meets the criteria for one or more of the five grant categories listed below. Applications that do not identify specific property boundaries will not be considered.
- Only one application may be submitted for a specific property in each grant round.
- Applications for the acquisition of easements on lands currently permanently protected for conservation purposes are not eligible for a VLCF grant unless the project proposes to further protect the property by a more restrictive easement.

Eligible Costs

- The VLCF program can reimburse up to 50% of the appraised value of the subject property (fee simple or easement) and eligible due diligence costs for transactions involving localities or qualified nonprofit organizations, or 100% of such costs incurred by state agencies or state-recognized and federally recognized Virginia Indian Tribes. See Appendix A for eligible expenses.
- If the required 50% match is not determined at the time of the application, a letter confirming that the match will be met must be included with the application. See example letter in Appendix C.
- Possible sources of match funding include: (i) cash or pass-through dollars from other sources, e.g. grants awarded from sources other than VLCF; (ii) bargain sales, i.e., the monetary value of the donated portion of the property; or (iii) other conserved property acquired in fee or restricted by an easement within the previous two years, and not acquired with VLCF funds, so long as the match property is also restricted as approved by VLCF.
- When additional property is proposed as match in a grant application, the match property must be in the proximity of or ecologically connected to the property that is

the subject of the grant. The match property must also be protected in the same manner as the grant property; information on the match property must be included in the application; all due diligence items are also required for the match property.

- Indirect costs cannot be reimbursed or considered as match. These ineligible costs include, without limitation, staff time, overhead, work provided pro bono, or maintenance/operating costs of lands and facilities.

Project Requirements

- If the applicant uses the landowner's surname in the name of the project, then they must first obtain the landowner's permission. VLCF will use the project name provided in the application in public reports to the Governor and the General Assembly and press releases.
- A nonprofit organization seeking to hold an easement must provide documentation in its application that it meets the holder requirements in the Virginia Conservation Easement Act, Va. Code §§ 10.1-1009 to 10.1-1017.
- All nonprofit organization projects, whether fee simple or easement, must be protected by an open-space easement held ~~or co-held~~ by a public body (e.g., a state agency or local governmental entity); in perpetuity pursuant to Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (A)(2). An acknowledgement letter from the public body stating that it is willing to consider holding the easement or owning the property in fee ~~simple~~ must be included ~~as part of~~with the application.
- VLCF requires certain property protections to further statewide environmental conservation goals, including permanent vegetated riparian buffers on all funded projects with perennial water resources. Additional points may be awarded for greater protections proffered in an application. These protections must be preserved in perpetuity by the deed associated with the project. See Appendix D for all of the required provisions and further information on riparian buffers.
- For projects awarded funding, the requisite public body holder shall include language in the fee-simple deed or in the easement deed that states that the property will be taken under the Open-Space Land Act, Va. Code §§ 10.1-1700 through 10.1-1705, and that the protection is perpetual ~~in nature~~ and not extinguishable except pursuant to the provisions of the Open-Space Land Act.
- Properties acquired in fee or made subject to an easement as a result of a VLCF grant may not be diverted or converted from the approved use for which the grant was made. If a conversion or diversion occurs or, ~~in the case of if an easement, an extinguishment of the easement occurs~~ is terminated, then the VLCF must be reimbursed for the loss of conserved land. The amount of reimbursement shall be a percentage of

the appraised value of the property interest acquired with VLCF funds. The following formula shall be used to calculate the percentage of reimbursement to VLCF: (full amount of the VLCF grant ÷ appraised value of the property interest at the time of the grant) × 100. As a condition of its grant, the VLCF ~~will require~~s that language be included in the deed of acquisition or ~~the deed of~~ easement to such effect.

- If a nonprofit organization is awarded a grant to acquire fee-simple property, it may be sold only if it remains under easement and the VLCF is reimbursed for its proportionate share of the fair market value at the time of the sale (percentage of VLCF reimbursement outlined in the deed × the fair market value of the property at the time of the sale). The fair market value of the property must be supported by a current appraisal. An exception to reimbursing VLCF may be granted if the property is transferred to a public agency and the recorded deed of transfer states the agency agrees to hold and manage the property for the purposes for which it was originally acquired.
- All projects awarded VLCF funds must submit the due diligence documents and invoices specified in Appendix A.
- Grant payments are made as a reimbursement and cannot exceed the amount expended by the grant recipient.
- Grant recipients are required to submit monitoring reports on completed projects to VLCF every five years upon request.

II. APPLYING TO THE GRANT PROGRAM

Applicants may apply to the program in our Grant Management Portal found here: <https://vadcr.webgrantscloud.com/index.do>. ~~The a~~Applicants should read through this entire grant manual to become familiar with program specifics and requirements. Please contact staff with questions as you work through ~~all of~~ the information. We recommend ~~that~~ applicants contact the respective category/agency representative found on pages 7-17 below, prior to submitting their application.

Application Information and Deadline

A complete application includes all of the information and documents required by the Grant Management Portal, and as outlined in this Grant Manual. The complete application must be

submitted to the Department of Conservation and Recreation no later than **5 p.m. on Tuesday, Friday, August 12, 202521, 2026.**

Questions?

- WebGrants Management Portal, ConserveVirginia, GIS, or mapping questions:
 - Gina DiCicco at (804) 837-1819, gina.dicicco@dcr.virginia.gov
 - Damian Martin at (804) 971-0257, damian.martin@dcr.virginia.gov
- General application inquiries:
 - ~~Damian Martin at (804) 971-0257, damian.martin@dcr.virginia.gov~~
 - Suzan Bulbulkaya at (804) 371-5218, suzan.bulbulkaya@dcr.virginia.gov
- Category-specific inquiries: See contact information listed under each category below
- ~~WebGrants Management Portal, ConserveVirginia, GIS, or mapping questions:~~
 - ~~Gina DiCicco at (804) 837-1819, gina.dicicco@dcr.virginia.gov~~

Application Categories and ~~Additional Scoring~~ Criteria Statewide Priority Scoring

1. Farmland and Forestland Preservation
2. Historic Area Preservation
3. Natural Area Preservation
4. Open Spaces and Parks
5. ~~Additional Scoring Criteria~~ Statewide Priority Scoring

Applicants must select one primary category for their project. A secondary category may also be chosen to increase the possibility of receiving funds but is not required. If you choose a secondary category, make sure to contact the listed agency staff to ensure your project is also eligible under the secondary category. Multiple applications for the same project within the same grant round will not be accepted.

NOTE: The applicant is advised to review the program requirements below carefully as they prepare their application and to determine the best category for their project. See Appendix B for the scoring sheets for each category and the Additional Criteria for all categories. To get a sense for how your project will score, ~~you may want to score your application using~~ use the scoring sheet to calculate points for under your chosen category **and** the Additional Criteria. **Make sure your application addresses all ~~of~~ the applicable category criteria and the ~~Additional Scoring Criteria~~ Statewide Priority Scoring criteria to be awarded maximum points.**

Program Requirements by Category

1. Farmland and Forestland Preservation Category – Two funding scenarios are set out in subsections C and D of Va. Code § 10.1-1020, based on the amount of funds appropriated in the state budget for VLCF. If less than \$10 million is appropriated, then there are four grant categories with farmland and forestland preservation sharing one single category (1/4 of funds). If \$10 million or more is appropriated, then there are five grant categories with farmland preservation and forestland preservation being separately funded categories (each category gets 1/5 of funds). For both scenarios, separate scoring criteria have been developed for agricultural lands and for forestal lands. The applicant should use the set of criteria that is most appropriate for the project being submitted.

A. Farmland Preservation Criteria

Contact: Virginia Department of Forestry, (434) 282-4823
Genny Harris, Working Lands Conservation Specialist, Office of Working Lands Preservation,
gennette.harris@dof.virginia.gov

Applications for the permanent protection of agricultural lands will be evaluated according to:

- Soil productivity. The parcel will be ranked based on the percentage that it contains of each of the following soils (as defined in § 10.1-1119.7 of the Code of Virginia) which can be found at <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>:
 - “Prime farmland” is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, nursery, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion. Prime farmland includes land that possesses the above characteristics but is being used currently to produce livestock and timber. It does not include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage.
 - “Unique farmland” is land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, as determined by the



U.S. Department of Agriculture. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of specific crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.

- “Important farmland” other than prime or unique farmland, is land that is of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, nursery, oilseed or other agricultural crops, as determined by the appropriate state agency or local government agency and that the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture determines should be considered as farmland.

Please note, if these percentage numbers of soil productivity are not provided in the application, it will be presumed that none of these soils exist on the property.

- Property acreage. The size of the parcel in relation to average agricultural parcel sizes in the locality will be used as a determining factor. More information can be found at www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus.
- Current ~~and historical~~ use of property. Priority will be given to any property that is currently being farmed ~~and/or is a designated Century Farm. Information about this program can be found at www.vdacs.virginia.gov/conservation-and-environmental-virginia-century-farms.shtml.~~
- Adjacency to conserved lands. The degree to which the property is located adjacent to, or nearby, already conserved lands held in perpetuity. Larger blocks of unbroken forest and agricultural lands including forest potentially provide the greatest value and range of benefits from and protection of rural land uses.
- Development vulnerability rank. Using the Virginia ConservationVision Development Vulnerability model, parcels will be evaluated according to their vulnerability ranking. The Development Vulnerability model can be found at www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvulnerable.
- Best Management Practices. The existence of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and farm management plans that are currently being utilized as part of the normal operation of the farm, either implemented through state and federal conservation programs or voluntarily implemented without state or federal cost-sharing or technical assistance. Best management practices may include stream fencing, buffers, conservation tillage, cover crops, or animal waste management. Examples of a farm management plan include a grazing management plan; a nutrient management plan; a conservation plan; or a resource management plan, which would include both the

conservation plan and nutrient management plan. **If a plan is not provided with the application, it will be presumed that no plan exists.**

- Locality support. Support for the project evidenced by local farmland protection policies, including:
 - Agricultural Zoning. The property is located within an exclusive agricultural zoning district, which primarily restricts land use to farming and forestry activities.
 - Agricultural and Forestal Districts. The project is within an Agricultural/Forestal district, a rural conservation zone that protects farm, forest, and open space lands from conversion to intensive non-agricultural or forestal uses for a defined term.
 - Use Value Taxation. The project is subject to agricultural use-value taxation, ensuring eligible land is assessed at its value in use instead of market value. To qualify for agricultural use-value taxation, a minimum of five acres must be a bona fide agricultural operation.
 - Purchase of Development Rights Programs. The Virginia Department of Forestry's Office of Working Lands Preservation works with localities to help establish local PDR programs by creating model policies and practices, establishing criteria to certify programs as eligible to receive funds from public sources, and determining methods and sources of funding for localities to purchase agricultural conservation easements. In an effort to support local farmland priorities, points will be awarded to those projects using a local PDR program as match.
- ConserveVirginia (www.dcr.virginia.gov/conservevirginia). The project will be evaluated based on the percentage of the total project area that is included in the ConserveVirginia Agriculture and Forestry category.

B. Forestland Preservation Criteria

Contact: Virginia Department of Forestry, (434) 987-7102

Amanda Scheps, Program Manager, Office of Working Lands Preservation,

amanda.scheps@dof.virginia.gov

www.dof.virginia.gov/conservation/index.htm

Applications for the permanent protection of working forest lands will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Property Acreage. Larger blocks of land under single ownership are more manageable, better protect ecological communities and biodiversity, and better sustain the flow of natural goods and services over time.
- Acres of Forest on the proposed property. Larger blocks of forest under single ownership are more easily managed, better protect the productivity and sustainable flow of natural goods and services from the forest, and better protect forest conservation values (e.g., have larger less-disturbed “core” areas, protect water quality, maintain habitat connectivity, etc.). To be considered for points under this



criterion, land must be devoted to forestal use as defined by the State Land Evaluation and Advisory Council’s (SLEAC) technical standards for classification of real estate devoted to forestal use. Most critically, the proposed project’s acreage must qualify as “Productive Forest Land” or “Non-Productive Forest

Land” as defined by SLEAC standards and contain at least 20 acres of forest.

- Land devoted to forestal use that has been recently harvested of merchantable timber, is being regenerated into a new forest and not currently developed for nonforest use qualifies for points under this criterion. In addition, acreage that is under contract to be planted or afforested qualifies for points. Also, to qualify for points under this criterion, the proposed parcels must be under the same ownership (currently or anticipated after acquisition using VLCF funds) and must be “contiguous.” To be considered contiguous, the proposed parcels must either (a) directly border each other or (b) all border another block of property already owned by the proposed landowner. If multiple, non-contiguous parcels are proposed, only those that separately meet SLEAC standards will receive points.
- Acres of forest with a “high” Forest Conservation Value (FCV) based upon VDOF’s analysis and map (2020 version). See the Forest Conservation Values map on the Natural Heritage Data Explorer or download GIS data from VDOF (see link below). “High” values are those labeled on the map as “5: Outstanding” or “4: Very High”. The FCV analysis ranks the relative conservation value of forestland based on watershed integrity, size of forested blocks, forest management potential, proximity to other conserved lands, threat of conversion, and presence of diminished tree species or significant forest communities. The FCV GIS layer and associated description can be

downloaded at:

<https://vdof.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/embedGallery.html?displayapps=true&displayinline=true&group=f40da8804f7645de9f2298945c5d897d>

- Development vulnerability rank. Using the Virginia ConservationVision Development Vulnerability model, parcels will be evaluated according to their vulnerability ranking. The Development Vulnerability model can be found at www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvulnerable.
- Adjacency to Conserved Lands. The degree to which the property is located adjacent to, or near, already conserved lands held in perpetuity. Larger blocks of unbroken forest and agricultural lands including forest potentially provide the greatest value and range of benefits from and protection of rural land uses.
- Management of Multiple Resources. The degree to which the property is managed according to a forest stewardship management plan (or equivalent) prepared by a professional forester. Applicant should provide a copy of a current forest resource management plan and demonstrate how recommendations are being followed to achieve forest management goals. If a plan is not provided with the application, it will be presumed that no plan exists.
- Preservation of forest acreage. The degree to which the applicant is willing to preserve a portion of forest acreage in perpetuity to protect the working forest land base. Land that is not currently forested but that the landowner will afforest and maintain as forest in perpetuity counts. The draft deed or term sheet accompanying the application must include language reflecting this commitment; otherwise this acreage will be assumed to be zero.
- ConserveVirginia (www.dcr.virginia.gov/conservevirginia). The project will be evaluated based on the percentage of the total project area that is included in the ConserveVirginia Agriculture and Forestry category.

2. Historic Area Preservation Category

Contact: Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), (804) 482-6094

Karri Richardson, Easement Program Specialist, karri.richardson@dhr.virginia.gov
www.dhr.virginia.gov/easements/easement-program-overview

Applications are encouraged for projects that conserve historic resources associated with underrepresented communities. Applications for the permanent protection of historic, archaeological, cultural, or historic landscape resources will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Historic Significance, strong proposals are likely to protect or preserve a resource that:

- A. Is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR), found at www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers, either individually or as a contributing resource in a listed historic district; or
- B. Is a battlefield property identified with a priority rating in one of the following reports issued by the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program: “Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields” (1993, as amended), or “Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States,” (2007, as amended); contact Karri Richardson at karri.richardson@dhr.virginia.gov if you need a map to confirm the location of the property within identified battlefields; or
- C. Has been formally determined to be eligible for listing on the VLR by DHR, Va. Code § 10.1 2204, within the previous five calendar years and remains eligible for listing in the opinion of DHR. For assistance in determining whether a property has been determined eligible for the VLR, please contact DHR Archives at (804) 482-6102. Note: listing on the VLR may be required by project completion for properties awarded funding in order to meet the Virginia Board of Historic Resources (VBHR) Easement Program eligibility requirements.

D. Integrity. The integrity of the historic resource to be protected or preserved shall be considered. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historic significance through attributes such as location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.



E. ConserveVirginia (www.dcr.virginia.gov/conservevirginia). The project will be evaluated based on the percentage of the total project area that is included in the ConserveVirginia Cultural and Historic Preservation category.

- Underrepresented Resources. The extent to which the application identifies and documents resources associated with Virginia’s culturally diverse history, such as properties associated with people of color (circa 1619-Civil War), the Reconstruction Era (1861-1898), the Civil Rights Movement, LGBTQ, African-American, Asian-American, Latino, Hispanic, Native American and women’s history.

- Threat. Threatened property is defined as property (i) documented to be currently or recently on the market (within the past calendar year); (ii) threatened by development, where plans/ plats have been submitted to or approved by the locality's planning department within the last calendar year; (iii) in an estate that is currently being settled; (iv) adjacent to property currently on the market or sold within the previous calendar year; or (v) with built or other historic, archaeological, or cultural resources that are threatened by demolition, destruction, or development. **Documentation supporting specific threats must be submitted with the application.**
- Use and Treatment of Historic Resources on the Property. The extent to which plans for future uses of (e.g. historic site interpretation, rehabilitation of the battlefield landscape) or alterations to the property are consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection. All plans must be described in or submitted with the application and must meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (36 C.F.R. Part 68). Plans submitted as part of the application must be approved by DHR before the project receives final VLCF funding.
- Historic Resource Protection. The degree to which the applicant is willing to preserve all historic resources on the property in perpetuity in accordance with the DHR's current easement template. Applicants must attach a list or summary of proposed restrictions to be included in the easement based on DHR's current easement template (please do not attach a copy of the easement template to the grant application). Contact Karri Richardson at karri.richardson@dhr.virginia.gov if you need a copy of DHR's current easement template.
- Adjacency to Conserved Lands. The degree to which the property is located adjacent to, or near, already conserved lands held in perpetuity.
- Furthers Public Interests. The extent to which the project includes specific plans for programs that will further or promote public interests, such as education, research, community outreach, recreation, or heritage tourism promotion. Applications for projects that conserve historic resources associated with underrepresented communities and those that also provide public educational opportunities and share untold stories to advance social equity are particularly encouraged.
- Applicants for funds in this category must provide original digital images no greater than 800 × 800 pixels in dimension. In the case of built cultural or historic structures, these should include images that document the exterior of the primary historic structure and any secondary structures, significant interior spaces and features, and the setting and viewshed of the primary resource. For archaeological sites, applicants should include a general view or site plan and images documenting the condition of the site, stratigraphy (if applicable), and representative features showing the integrity

of those features. For battlefields or other landscapes, images should document the overall site, its surroundings and viewshed, and all historic and non-historic structures, roads, and other features within the project.

- If funds are awarded for the purpose of acquiring fee-simple title to or an easement on eligible historic properties, the property owner shall separately offer to convey to the VBHR a perpetual preservation easement on the property to be acquired with the VLCF funds (including any match property). The VBHR shall decide whether to accept the easement offer based on established criteria and existing policies and procedures governing the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Easement Program (Chapter 22, Title 10.1 of Va. Code). DHR staff administers the easements on behalf of VBHR. The property must meet the Easement Program eligibility requirements (see www.dhr.virginia.gov/easements); if not, or if the VBHR declines acceptance of the easement offer, DHR may recommend an alternative easement holder.

All properties acquired with Historic Area Preservation funds shall be open for public access for a minimum of two days each calendar year. Public access shall not disturb any sensitive resources thereon, and may require approval by DHR to ensure that historic resources will not be affected.

3. Natural Area Preservation Category

Contact: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, (804) 371-6205
Rob Evans, Protection Manager, Virginia Natural Heritage Program,
rob.evans@dcr.virginia.gov
www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage



All properties conserved with VLCF funds in this category shall be dedicated as natural area preserves in accordance with Va. Code § 10.1-213. Applications in this category must include land that will contribute to biodiversity values and statewide conservation significance. Applicants are encouraged to contact DCR Natural Heritage well ahead of the grant submittal deadline so that staff and project proponents have opportunities to visit the property, understand natural heritage resource values and ~~understand~~ the management requirements of the property, to confirm project eligibility, and support success. All natural area preserves require some form of stewardship to maintain their integrity in perpetuity. Additionally, some areas have previous disturbance and/or ongoing threats that require restoration and/or abatement, respectively. Applications should describe a plan to address general stewardship needs and the specific threats to the

resources and ongoing management needs. Further, the landowner will be required to manage the property in partnership with DCR Natural Heritage in perpetuity.

Projects/Applicants must:

1. address a protection need in the Virginia Natural Heritage Plan, by making a significant contribution to the permanent protection of one or more natural heritage resources, including habitats for rare, threatened, or endangered plant or animal species or state-significant natural communities (please see the NHDE User Guide under the Help tab at <https://vanhde.org/> for more information on natural heritage resources);
2. qualify to be dedicated as a natural area preserve as provided in Va. Code § 10.1-213;
3. have been sufficiently evaluated by DCR Natural Heritage staff (including site visit) for the extent, type, and viability of natural heritage resources present and their management requirements and constraints;
4. be recommended by, via a support letter from, DCR Natural Heritage based on specific criteria listed in Va. Code § 10.1-1022.1 (B);
5. have landowners who understand the requirements of their land being dedicated to the state natural area preserve system and who demonstrate commitment to the requirement for active and ongoing management activities for natural heritage resources on the property;
6. ~~have been subject to adequate discussion between landowners and appropriate address public access feasibility in light of natural heritage resource sensitivity and management purposes for discussion with~~ DCR Natural Heritage representatives ~~to develop confidence in the feasibility of carrying out necessary management requirements~~; and
7. ensure that the proposed area for acquisition and the applicant's ability to expend VLCF and matching funds can be conducted within two years of grant award.

Applications for Natural Area Preservation category funding will be evaluated based on specific scoring (Appendix B) that address these project attributes, including the percentage of the property that is included in the ConserveVirginia Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity category.

All properties shall be made available for public access for a reasonable amount of time each year when compatible with, and without disturbing, the sensitive resources thereon. All properties shall be available for DCR Natural Heritage approved research, associated monitoring and necessary stewardship activities.



4. Open Spaces and Parks Category

Contact: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation - Planning and Recreation Resources Division, (804) 508-8896

Kristal McKelvey, Chief Recreation Grants Manager,

recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov

www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning

Applications for the permanent protection and acquisition of public recreational lands or open-space lands will be evaluated according to the following criteria, in accordance with the **outdoor recreational priorities identified in the** 2022 Virginia Outdoors Survey and 2024 Virginia Outdoors Plan. The VOP and survey results may be accessed at www.dcr.virginia.gov/vop. To support their narrative responses, applicants are encouraged to submit a conceptual site plan, visualization, or sketch of proposed site features that highlights possible locations for public access, recreational uses, support amenities, conservation areas, and other features.

- Acquires an interest in land that provides increased public access to state waters offering recreational potential.
- Acquires an interest in land that creates new priority public outdoor land-based recreational opportunities or expands existing park systems or other recreational resources to protect public conservation or recreational interests.
- Protects priority viewsheds or land important to the protection of (i) any federally designated Wild and Scenic River or American Heritage River in or adjacent to Virginia, (ii) Virginia's Scenic Rivers, (iii) designated Scenic Roads, (iv) Virginia Byways, or (v) designated scenic lands or recreational trails, including state-wide connecting trails, greenways or blueways. See the VOP Mapper at: www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vopmapper.
- Supports local or regional plans for parks, open space, and outdoor recreational facilities, or contributes to the protection of a state, regionally, or locally identified conservation corridor.
- Degree to which the grant-funded land is made available for public access and use.
- Recreation Access Need. The project will be evaluated based on whether the area is underserved by public outdoor recreation opportunities and the demonstrated

recreation need of its location based on the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model and the Trust for Public Land's ParkServe Model. Projects offering land-based recreation opportunities will be scored on whichever model demonstrates a greater need. Projects offering water-based recreation opportunities will be scored on the Nature-based Recreation Access Model's water-based recreation need rating. Information on the Nature-based Recreation Access Model can be found at www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisrec. ParkServe can be found at: www.tpl.org/parkserve. Data from other sources may also be considered for this criterion if applicant provides the source reference and link to the data justifying that the project area is underserved.

- ConserveVirginia (www.dcr.virginia.gov/conservevirginia). The project will be evaluated on the amount of the total project area that is included in any ConserveVirginia category so long as the project provides daily public access.

5. ~~Additional Scoring Criteria~~ Statewide Priority Scoring

All applications will also be scored using ~~additional~~ criteria that prioritize statewide conservation goals. Be sure to review Section VI of Appendix B, ~~Section VI~~, pages 35-37 through 39-41, for a breakdown of these criteria, which could yield 91-90 additional points for the application. Also, be sure to address each criterion in your application.

III. APPLICATION REVIEW AND GRANT AWARDS

First Application Review

Applications will be received and reviewed by DCR for eligibility and completeness. Complete applications will be shared with an interagency task force of subject-matter experts for review and scoring.

Second Application Review

The interagency task force will rank the projects and consider geographic distribution, percentage of projects with public access, and those being placed under easement.

Final Review, Grant Award, Notification

Highly ranked applications will be presented to the Foundation for consideration, action, and grant approval. After Board action to approve grants, successful grant recipients will be notified of the pending grant award via ~~an email from VLCF staff~~.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS

Grant Agreements

Within a few weeks of ~~email notification of a grant award~~Board approval, a grant agreement will be emailed to the grant recipient to sign and return the document. After the Executive Secretary has signed the agreement, a scan of the fully executed agreement will be provided to the grant recipient.

Grants are made for a two-year period. Administrative extensions of up to one year may be granted upon extenuating circumstances being documented by the grant recipient. Any additional extension requires approval from the VLCF Board.

Periodic Status Reporting

Grant recipients will report the status of the project twice per year. These progress reports will provide status updates and include any changes in scope or budget for the project.

Changes of Scope

Grantees must inform VLCF when they discover they cannot deliver the total acreage of a project as pledged in their application and grant agreement. Adequate information and a revised budget must be provided to justify a change of scope to their grant award. All requests for changes in scope must be submitted in writing to a grant manager who will guide the grantee through the proper steps pursuant to adopted Board procedures. The resolution can be found here: [add link to the resolution]

Final Steps and Closing

Certain required documents must be provided to VLCF, and approved by VLCF, prior to grant funds being disbursed. These documents are listed in Appendix A.

Under no circumstances will VLCF grant funds be disbursed until all required documents have been provided, reviewed, and approved by VLCF, and all ~~of the~~ required deeds have been recorded.

For projects that result in multiple easements or transactions, VLCF funding will not be disbursed until all easements are recorded and the entire property described in the application and grant agreement is permanently protected.

Grant payments require five business days advance notice before they can be processed for payment.

If grant funding is provided to a closing agent, then a copy of the recorded deeds must be provided to VLCF within two months after closing.

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V. APPENDICES

Appendix A

VLCF Grant Specifications

- I. Required Items in an Application
- II. Additional Recommended Items
- III. Eligible Expenses for the Grant Program
- IV. Documents and Due Diligence Items Required Prior to Payment of Funds for an Awarded Grant

Appendix B

VLCF Category Scoring Sheets and ~~Additional Scoring~~

Criteria Statewide Priority Scoring

- I. Farmland Preservation
- II. Forestland Preservation
- III. Historic Area Preservation
- IV. Natural Areas Preservation
- V. Open Spaces and Parks
- VI. ~~Additional Scoring~~ Criteria Statewide Priority Scoring

Appendix C

Example Match Letter

Appendix D

Required Property Protections and Vegetated Riparian Buffer Information

Appendix A – VLCF Grant Specifications

I. Required Items in an Application (the grant application portal will prompt you to upload these items):

1. Minimum of two maps of the project: Aerial map and Topo map (USGS USA Topo Map), both showing any neighboring conserved lands.
 2. Minimum of three photographs of the project property, representing the conservation values being protected.
 3. A signed letter from all landowners stating that they are willing participants in the proposed transaction.
 4. A match letter (see Appendix C) if the required 50% match is not yet in hand or a governing body resolution.
 5. For easement projects, a term sheet or draft easement indicating the proposed protections of the project's conservation values.
 6. For nonprofit applicants:
 - a. an acknowledgement letter from the public body willing to: hold or co-hold an easement on the property; or hold the property in fee simple, and
 - b. evidence that the nonprofit meets the holder requirements found in Va. Code §§ 10.1-1009 to 10.1-1017.
 7. For applications in the Historic Category, additional information and documents specified on pages 12 through 15.
 - ~~8. For applicants claiming more than 60% match, a preliminary appraisal is required to get points.~~
- Include screenshots of your project in all intersecting layers of ConserveVirginia and any Wildlife Corridors.

~~9.8.~~

II. Additional Recommended Items for an Application:

- ~~1. Letters of support and resolutions from governmental bodies for the project. For applicants who have obtained a title commitment for the property, provide a copy with your application to get points.~~
2. Forestry plan or agriculture plan, if applicable.
3. Shapefile delineating the boundary of your project (including match property, if applicable).
- ~~3.4. Letters of support and resolutions from governmental bodies for the project.~~

III. Eligible Expenses for the Grant Program are limited to the following items only:

1. The appraised value of the property or interest acquired.
2. Actual expenditures (written expense documentation is required) for:
 - a. Appraisal
 - b. Title search, binder, title insurance
 - c. Boundary survey
 - d. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (fee acquisitions only)
 - e. Legal Fees; Recording Costs
 - f. Property Line Demarcation
 - g. Easement fees required by public-body holders, up to \$5,000

IV. Documents and Due Diligence Items Required Prior to Payment of Funds for an Awarded Grant:

1. A full appraisal report that meets USPAP Standards, or UASFLA Standards, performed within six months of closing. For any **grant** project wherein a fee acquisition and an easement interest are being conveyed separately, both the fee and easement interests shall be appraised separately unless the public body ~~co~~-holder waives this requirement.
2. Title insurance commitment policy within 90 days prior to closing:
 - a. must confirm that the seller or donor owns marketable fee simple title
 - b. encumbrances of record must not impair conservation purposes
 - c. encumbrances of record must be acceptable to VLCF
 - d. for any **grant** project wherein a fee acquisition and an easement interest are being conveyed separately, both the fee and easement interests shall be insured under separate policies unless the public body ~~co~~-holder waives this requirement.
3. Boundary survey of the project area by a Virginia Licensed Surveyor that meets Va. Administrative Code 18VAC10-20-370 Minimum Standards and Procedures for Land Boundary Survey Practice in effect at the grant application deadline, and dated no more than 20 years before the grant application deadline.
4. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (fee acquisition only); prepared no more than six months prior to closing
 - a. report and findings must be acceptable to VLCF
 - b. issues revealed may require remedial action
5. The final version of the required deeds for final VLCF approval before closing.

6. Baseline Documentation Report for projects including a conservation or open-space easement.
7. A copy of the settlement statement for ~~the~~each transaction.
8. Invoices of the required documents listed above in Section III.2. for reimbursement.

NOTE: VLCF funds will not be distributed until all due diligence documents have been provided, reviewed, and approved by staff and all required deeds have been recorded. Please contact staff with any questions regarding the timing, requirements, and submittal of these documents.

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Appendix B – VLCF Category Scoring Sheets and ~~Additional Scoring Criteria~~ Statewide Priority Scoring

I. Farmland Preservation Category

	Score
<p><u>Category I: Land Evaluation (35 points)</u></p> <p>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.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Value the soils classified as “Prime farmland” 2. Value the soils classified “Unique farmland” 3. Value the soils classified as “Important farmland” <p>B. Parcel Size (15 points) Using data from the most recent Census of Agriculture, score the size of the farm as it compares to the average sized farm in the locality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger by 25% or more = 15 • Larger by 0% - 24% = 10 • Smaller by 1% - 24% = 7 • Smaller by 25% or more = 5 	
<p><u>Category II: Land Use (45 points)</u></p> <p>A. Current use and status of the land (7 points) 1. Is the land currently being farmed? 5, if yes. 2. Is this a Century Farm? 2, if yes.</p> <p>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?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>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/vaconvisvulnerable)? 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 × 15 = 9 points)</p> <p>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?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	

<p>E. Local farmland policy (8 points) Is the project supported by local farmland protection policies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two points each for: agricultural zoning; agricultural and forestal districts; use value taxation and Purchase of Development Rights projects. 	
<p>Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points) Is the project included in ConserveVirginia? (www.vanhde.org/content/map) Multiply the percent of the property included within the Agriculture and Forestry Category layer by 20 to calculate points. (e.g. 60% of the property is in the Ag and Forestry category; $.60 \times 20 = 12$ points)</p>	

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

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II. Forestland Preservation Category

	Score
<p>1) Property Acreage (10 points) Is the size of the tract adequate to protect and allow for management of forestal resources? Larger blocks of land under single ownership remain more manageable and functional over time. To calculate points for projects up to <u>999-499</u> acres, divide acreage by <u>4,000-500</u>, then multiply by 8. For parcels larger than <u>999-499</u> acres, see points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: <u>0-9990 – 499 acres</u> = Property Acreage ÷ <u>4000-500</u> × 8 points <u>1000-4,999-500 – 749 acres</u> = 8 <u>5000-9999-750 – 999 acres</u> = 9 <u>≥10,000-1,000</u> acres = 10 	
<p>2) Acres of Forest (20 points) How many acres of the property are currently forested or devoted to forestal use? To be considered forested or devoted to forestal use, acreage must meet the State Land Evaluation and Advisory Council (SLEAC) technical standards for classification of real estate devoted to forestal use. See the grant manual for more detail on which land can qualify as “devoted to forestal use.” For up to <u>999-499</u>-acre projects, divide the acreage by <u>4,000-500</u>, then multiply by 18 to calculate points. For parcels larger than <u>999-499</u> acres, see points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: <u>0-999-0 – 499 acres</u> = Forested Acreage ÷ 1000 × 18 points <u>1,000-4,999-500 – 749 acres</u> = 18 <u>5,000-9,999-750 – 999 acres</u> = 19 <u>≥10,000-1,000</u> acres = 20 	
<p>3) Acres of high forest conservation value (FCV 4 and 5) (15 points) Score is based upon VDOF’s analysis and Forest Conservation Values map that ranks relative conservation value of forestland based on water quality, site productivity, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, intactness, and threat to conversion attributes. Find the map here: www.vanhde.org/content/map. To calculate points for projects up to <u>999-499</u> acres, divide High FCV acreage by <u>4,000-500</u>, then multiply by 13. For larger parcels, see below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: <u>0-9990 – 499 acres</u> = High FCV acreage ÷ <u>4000-500</u> × 13 points <u>1,000-4,999-500 – 749 acres</u> = 13 <u>5,000-9999-750 – 999</u> = 14 <u>≥10,000-1,000</u> acres = 15 	
<p>4) Development Vulnerability (10 points) What is the vulnerability rank for this parcel using the ConservationVision Development Vulnerability model (www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvulnerable)?</p> <p>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 × 10 (e.g. 30% Class II, 20% Class III and 10% Class IV = 0.6 × 10 = 6 points)</p>	

<p>5) Adjacency to Conserved Lands (10 points) Is the property located adjacent to, or within five miles of, already conserved lands held in perpetuity? To calculate points, subtract the distance from already conserved land in miles from 5 then multiply by 2. Greater than 5 miles receives 0 points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: Within 5 miles = $(5 - \# \text{ miles away from conserved lands}) \times 2$ 	
<p>6) Management of Multiple Resources (5 points) Does the landowner manage the property according to a forest stewardship management plan (or equivalent) prepared by a professional forester and follow plan recommendations to achieve the forest management goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: Owner has an existing management plan <u>that is less than 10 years old</u>, and with demonstrated plan implementation = 5 Owner has management plan but no demonstrated plan implementation = 3 	
<p>7) Preservation of Forested Acreage (10 points) Landowner is willing to preserve a proportion of the property in a forested condition in perpetuity. Land that is not currently forested but that the landowner will afforest and maintain as forest in perpetuity counts. To calculate points, multiply percent forested by 10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Score: Percent of property that the landowner is willing to retain as forest $\times 10$ 	
<p>8) ConserveVirginia (20 points) Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (www.vanhde.org/content/map) To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within the Agriculture and Forestry Category by 20. (e.g. 60% of the property is in the Ag and Forestry category; $0.60 \times 20 = 12$ points)</p>	

Total Maximum Score 100 points

III. Historic Area Preservation Category

	Score
<p>1) Historic Significance (Maximum score 30 points)</p> <p>1. <u>Historic Resource/Property is:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individually listed on VLR or is a contributing resource in a listed historic district = 25, or Determined by DHR to be eligible for listing on VLR = 20, or Civil War, Revolutionary War, or War of 1812 site or battlefield designated as Priority I, II, III, or IV in the Battlefield Reports (see p. 8 of Grant manual) = 25 <p style="text-align: center;">-AND-</p> <p>2. <u>Integrity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources that retain a high degree of historic integrity = 5 	
<p>2) Underrepresented Communities & Resources (Maximum score 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property contains documented resources representing Virginia's culturally diverse history, such as places or sites associated with people of color (circa 1619-Civil War), the Reconstruction Era (1861-1898), the Civil Rights Movement, LGBTQ, African American, Asian-American, Latino, Hispanic, Native American and women's history = 5 <p style="text-align: center;">-AND/OR-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property or area has special community significance related to its history, as explained in application = 5 	
<p>3) Threat (Maximum score 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently on the market for sale, in an estate being settled, threatened by development, or in imminent danger of demolition = 10 Recently on the market for sale or sold within the prior calendar year, resource is vacant/unoccupied, or resource is significantly deteriorated and in need of immediate preservation = 5 No documentation of threat = 0 	
<p>4) Use & Treatment of Historic Resources & Property (Maximum score 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans for future use(s) (e.g. interpretation as a historic site, subdivision, timber harvest) of the property are appropriate and consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection = 5, and Plans for treatment, alteration, and maintenance of historic resources on the property are appropriate and consistent with historic resource stewardship and protection = 5 No documentation of plans for uses of property or treatment of historic resources = 0 	
<p>5) Historic Resource Protection (Maximum score 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed easement terms and restrictions provide comprehensive protection for historic resources and are specifically consistent with VBHR easement template = 10 Proposed easement terms and protections for historic resources are acceptable, and generally consistent with VBHR easement template = 5 No list of easement terms provided = 0 	

<p>6) Adjacency to Conserved Land (Maximum score 5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to existing conserved land = 5 • In viewshed of, or in close physical proximity to significant historic resources, and/or existing conserved land = 3 • Not in viewshed of, or in close physical proximity to significant historic resources or conserved land, but represents a unique cultural resource within the geographical area = 1 	
<p>7) Further Public Interests (Maximum Score 5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project includes specific plans for programs that promote research, education, community outreach, or heritage tourism = 5 • Project includes general plans for programs to be developed that would promote research, education, community outreach, or heritage tourism = 3 • Project contains no plans that would further public interests = 0 	
<p>8) ConserveVirginia (Maximum score 20 points)</p> <p>Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (www.vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <p>To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within the Cultural and Historic Preservation Category by 20. (e.g. 60% of the property is in the Cultural and Historic Preservation category; $0.60 \times 20 = 12$ points)</p>	

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

IV. Natural Area Preservation Category

	Score
<p>For more information on natural heritage resources see the NHDE User Guide under the Help tab at https://vanhde.org/.</p> <p>1) Biodiversity Significance (35 points)</p> <p>A. Will the proposed project protect one or more of Virginia's highest quality examples of a natural heritage resource? (parcel overlaid on conservation sites layer) Maximum score: 20 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within Essential Conservation Site = 20 • Located within conservation site = 10 <p>A. <u>Land Protection Priority: Does the proposed project occur within a conservation site as identified on NHDE? Or is the project adjacent to a dedicated Natural Area Preserve?</u> Maximum score: 10 points</p> <p><u>Within Documented NH Screening Layer:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Land Protection Priorities = "Action Site" = 10 points</u> • <u>Land Protection Priorities = "Portfolio Site" = 7 points</u> • <u>Land Protection Priorities = "Null" = 2 points</u> <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Adjoining a dedicated Natural Area Preserve Protected Landscape layer of Conserve Virginia and = 4 points</u> <p>B. <u>Parcel Significance: What is the number of natural heritage elements present on the subject parcel, or associated with it?</u> Maximum score: 10 20 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 4 points per essential EO • 1 2 points per viable, extant EO • 0.5 1 point per viable, extant EO outside parcel(s) but within conservation site that also overlaps the proposed parcel(s) for protection <p>C. <u>Does the project have global significance? (biodiversity rank of conservation site)</u> <u>Proportion of parcel area (acres) within conservation sites, weighted by B-rank</u> Maximum score: 5 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1 = 5 points × proportion within conservation site • B2 = 4 × proportion within conservation site • B3 = 3 × proportion within conservation site • B4 = 2 × proportion within conservation site • B5 = 1 × proportion within conservation site 	
<p>2) Ecological Integrity (20 points)</p> <p>A. <u>Regional Landscape Integrity: What percentage of parcel area (acres) is within one or more ecological cores, weighted by Ecological Integrity rank (i.e. C-rank)?</u> Maximum score: 10 points (points may add up to more, but 10 points is the max)</p> <p>Parcel is located in a Core ranked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1 = 10 points × proportion within ecological core • C2 = 8 × proportion within ecological core • C3 = 6 × proportion within ecological core • C4 = 3 × proportion within ecological core • C5 = 1 × proportion within ecological core <p>AND is any portion of the parcel within the Natural Land Network?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcel intersects with the Natural Land Network (1 point) 	

- B. Local/Parcel Integrity: How much of the parcel is in a significant natural community (Rank A-C, E) natural vegetation? **Maximum score: 5 points**
- ~~Parcel supports a significant natural community/natural vegetation: 75% or more of parcel area = 5, 50-74% = 4, 25-49% = 3, 1-25% = 2~~
 - For parcels with less than 49% overlap with a significant natural community, the following points can be supplemented. If the significant natural community element occurrence is ranked as G1= additional 2 points, if G2 = additional 1 point.
- C. Connectivity with Conserved Lands: Is the parcel adjacent to other conserved lands with high Biodiversity Management Intent (BMI)? **Maximum score: 5 points**
- Adjoins BMI 1 = 5
 - Adjoins BMI 2 = 4
 - Adjoins BMI 3 = ~~3~~ 2
 - Adjoins BMI 4 or 5 = 2
 - ~~Land not adjacent to conserved land = 0~~

3) Management Needs, Likelihood of Success, and Threat (25 points)

3)

- A. Management Needs: What is the intensity of current and future management actions needed to successfully maintain/restore natural heritage resources? **Maximum score: 10 points**
- Parcel conditions require:
- minimal natural heritage resources management = 10
 - moderate management = 6
 - intensive management/restoration = 3
- B. Management Capacity: Does the applicant have proven experience and capacity in terms of staff resources and expertise to address management needs? **Maximum score: 8 points**
- Application provides:
- a thorough description of both experience and staff capacity = 8
 - a cursory description = 4
 - not mentioned = 0
- C. Site Visit & Owner ~~Contact~~Conversation: NHP Staff have had timely opportunity to visit tract and discuss with landowner necessary conservation measures and implications of natural area preserve dedication. **Maximum score: 5 points**
- Site visit & discussion = 5
 - Site visit only = 3
 - Discussion only = 2
- D. Threat: Is there high development threat for the project area? **Maximum score: 2 points**
- Tract threat is ranked Class IV or Class V in the Conservation Vision Development Vulnerability Model = 2; ranked Class III = 1; otherwise = 0.
- OR**
- Data from other sources will also be considered for this criterion if the applicant provides explanatory information and a source reference to document the threat (i.e. tract is on the market for sale or facing imminent conversion threat). = 0 to 2
- ~~Or Tract is on the market or in estate for settlement = 2.~~

4) ConserveVirginia (20 points)

Is the property included in the ConserveVirginia Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity Category? (www.vanhde.org/content/map)

To calculate points, multiply the percent of the property included within the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity Category by 20. (e.g. 60% of the property is in the category; $0.60 \times 20 = 12$ points)

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

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V. Open Spaces and Parks Category

	Score
<p>1) Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) Priorities for Public Access to State Waters (10 points) Does the project acquire land or an easement that provides increased public access to state waters offering recreational potential?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public access to state waters that provides boating, fishing, <u>and</u> beach/bank swimming opportunities = 10 Public access that provides <u>two</u> of those recreational opportunities = 8 Public access that provides <u>one</u> of those recreational opportunities = 6 Public access that provides opportunities to view water resources while recreating = 4 	
<p>2) VOP Priorities for Public Access for Land-Based Recreation (10 points) Does the project acquire land or an easement that provides increased public access for land-based recreation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project increases recreational opportunities in natural areas (maintained in a vegetated, natural condition with public facilities generally limited to parking, trails, and observation areas) = up to 4 Project increases recreational opportunities in developed parks (structured environments with amenities and facilities that serve a variety of visitors, interests, activities, and events such as play areas, campgrounds, pools and splash pads, and outdoor sports fields/courts) = up to 3 Project provides trails for hiking, cycling, and/or horseback riding = up to 3 	
<p>3) Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) Outdoor Recreation Priorities (10 points) Does the project address an outdoor recreation <u>priority needs</u> identified in the <i>Virginia Outdoors Plan</i>? Add all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project provides public access to historic areas = up to 2 Project provides opportunities for viewing wildlife = up to 2 Provides public access to and conserves significant habitats or natural communities = up to 2 Project provides or supports dark sky conservation = 1 Project has a draft conceptual site plan, visualization, or sketch of plans to provide priority recreational support amenities within, such as: restroom, parking, drinking water, information kiosks, trash receptacles, seating, lighting, ADA accessibility features = up to 3 	
<p>4) Project Location and Recreational Expansion (10 points) Does the project conserve and create a new outdoor recreational opportunity? Or is it located adjacent to an existing park, protected conservation area, or other recreational resources that expands and protects public recreational interests?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserves new stand-alone facility that is critically needed to provide or support recreational activities = 10 Conserves an in-holding or addition that allows new types of recreation to occur on site = 8 Conserves a linkage between two or more existing natural areas or parks or conserves land along an existing recreational trail = 5 Conserves an in-holding or addition that does not expand recreation types offered = 3 	
<p>5) Scenic Resources Protection (10 points) Does the project protect scenic viewsheds or land important to the protection of any federally designated Wild and Scenic River or American Heritage River in or adjacent to Virginia, Virginia's Scenic Rivers, designated Scenic Roads, and Virginia Byways, statewide trails, or greenways or blueways?</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserves land adjacent to, or in direct viewshed of one of the listed resources = 10 • Conserves land adjacent to, or in direct viewshed of, an existing recreational trail, water trail, passenger rail, public transit route, or another recreation area = 5 			
<p>6) Alignment with Local or Regional Plans (15 points) Does the project support local or regional plans for parks, open space, and recreational facilities, or contribute to the protection of a documented conservation corridor? Include the name and page # of plan cited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the project/acquisition is specifically mentioned by location AND purpose/features in a local or regional plan = 15 • If project purpose is mentioned in a local or regional plan or other documents or fulfills a specific need in a local or regional plan = 10 • If area of project has a general reference in local or regional plan or project meets a general goal identified in a plan = 5 			
<p>7) Public Access (10 points) Availability of land for public access. Add all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of days site open to the public (365 days per year = 5, 180-364 = 2, less than 180 days = 0) • No user fees required to access site or fee-free options available = 2 • Site can be safely publicly accessed by more than one method of transportation (vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian, paddlecraft, motorboat, public transportation) = 3 			
<p>8) Recreation Need (15 points) I. Land-based Recreation Need (Maximum score: 10) Will the property provide land-based recreation and is it located in an area of land-based recreation need as identified by either the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model (2021) (www.vanhde.org/content/map) or the Trust for Public Land's ParkServe Model? (www.tpl.org/parkserve) (score will be higher of the two if data is available on both models)</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>A. DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 10 • High: 8 • Moderate: 5 • Low: 3 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 5 </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>B. ParkServe Park Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 10 • High: 7 • Moderate: 5 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 5 </td> </tr> </table>	<p>A. DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 10 • High: 8 • Moderate: 5 • Low: 3 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 5 	<p>B. ParkServe Park Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 10 • High: 7 • Moderate: 5 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 5 	
<p>A. DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 10 • High: 8 • Moderate: 5 • Low: 3 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 5 	<p>B. ParkServe Park Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 10 • High: 7 • Moderate: 5 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 5 		
<p>II. Water-based Recreation Need (Maximum Score: 5) Will the property provide water-based recreation and is it located in an area of water-based recreation need as identified by the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model (2021)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 5 • High: 4 • Moderate: 3 • Low or very low need but other supporting evidence provided, such as new type of water recreation for area or documented overcrowding at existing nearby sites: up to 3 			

9) ConserveVirginia (10 points)

Is the property included in any category of ConserveVirginia and providing daily outdoor recreation access? (www.vanhde.org/content/map)

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)

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

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VI. ~~Additional~~ Statewide Priority Scoring Criteria

1. Public Access

Up to 10 points may be given ~~dependent~~depending upon the extent of access provided to the general public. ~~Points are based on the degree to which the project provides public or visual access.~~

Maximum 10 points

- Full public access means the property will be available for public visitation 365 days a year ~~with no special permission needed to access the property.~~ = 10
- Restricted ~~Public Access~~ ~~means the property is available for public visitation 365 days a year by appointment or with special permission, or only available for public access from 180 to 364 days/year.~~ = 5
- Limited Public Access means the property will only be available for public access ~~at certain times during the year~~ ~~from 1 to 179 days per year.~~ = 3
- Visual access means the applicant can demonstrate the scenic value of the property to the public and that the project will protect the integrity of the public's scenic view. = 2

~~Degree to which the project provides public or visual access.~~

Maximum 10 points

- ~~Full Public Access (365 days/year) = 10~~
- ~~Restricted Public Access (180 to 364 days/year) = 5~~
- ~~Limited Public Access (1 to 179 days per year) = 3~~
- ~~Visual Access only = 2~~

2. Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) ~~Identified Need~~

Up to ~~three~~six points ~~will~~may be awarded to ~~applications if a project that is a VOP regional featured project, or to a project that addresses a recreation or satisfies resource conservation needs topic as identified~~discussed in the VOP or in a local comprehensive plan. The 2024 VOP includes outdoor recreation priorities and resource conservation recommendations to expand access to the outdoors, improve safety, expand better health and well-being in the outdoors, and provide resilient recreation infrastructure and landscapes.

The VOP can be found at: www.dcr.virginia.gov/vop - see especially Sections 2.1, Recreation for All and 3.1, Recreation Land Conservation, as well as the VOP Regional Featured Projects dashboard.

Maximum 3-6 points

- Addresses ~~an Outdoor Recreation Priority~~ multiple recreation or resource conservation topics -identified in both the VOP and in a local comprehensive plan, or is a VOP regional featured project = 36
- Addresses ~~an Outdoor Recreation Priority~~ multiple recreation or resource conservation topics identified in the VOP or in a local comprehensive plan = 24
- Addresses a single recreation or resource conservation topic identified in the VOP or in a local comprehensive plan = 2
- Not identified in VOP or in a local comprehensive plan = 0

3. Virginia Nature-Based Recreation Access Model Identified Need

Up to ~~three~~ four points will be given to a project that provides public access AND is located in an area where there is at least a moderate need for recreation access identified in the Nature-Based Recreation Access Model's terrestrial or aquatic layers found at:

www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisrec.

Maximum ~~3~~ 4 points

- Demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial and aquatic recreational access = 34
- Demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial or aquatic recreational access = 23
- No demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial or aquatic recreational access = 0

4. Protection of Cultural Resources

Up to ~~10~~ five points may be given to a project that identifies and protects cultural resources on the property and provides public educational opportunities. Examples include remnants of prior settlements, artifacts, evidence of unmarked burial sites of enslaved or indigenous people, former segregated schoolhouses, sites of early racial integration, historic fence lines, roadbed or railbed systems, evidence of past wharfs, pine tar industry sites, gold mining pits, tobacco barns, witness trees, caves, etc.

Provide with your application photos and documentation of the cultural resources found on site that will be protected by your project. Also, provide draft language to be used in the deed to protect the resources, and indicate whether there will be educational opportunities provided for the public. Example language for the protection of these cultural resources can be provided upon request.

Maximum ~~10~~ 5 points

- Provide photographs and other documents to authenticate the resource = 61
- Project will provide educational opportunities for the public, signage, trails, etc. = 21
- Provide draft language to be used in the deed to protect cultural resources = 23

5. Underserved Communities

Up to 10 points may be given to projects that benefit underserved communities. The Social Vulnerability Index created by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science may be used to identify underserved areas of the state. This index is found on the Adapt VA Interactive Map, see link here: https://cmap22.vims.edu/AdaptVA/AdaptVA_viewer.html. Data from other sources will also be considered for this criterion if the applicant provides their findings and the source reference.

Maximum 10 points

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

6. Additional ConserveVirginia Values

If the project includes conservation values other than the primary application category, then two points may be awarded for each additional identified category if the applicant demonstrates that the property is located within another ConserveVirginia category and the project also protects those respective resources in perpetuity. The ConserveVirginia Deed Review Criteria (www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/document/conservevirginia-deed-review-criteria.pdf) explains what provisions are needed to ensure each category is protected.

Maximum 12 points

ConserveVirginia Categories:

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

7. Water Quality Benefit

~~Up to 20 p~~Points may be given to a project that protects water quality by requiring permanent vegetated riparian buffers exceeding ~~the mandatory a width of 35-foot-feet width~~ along perennial waters and wetlands. Points will also be awarded for forested buffers that maintain an evenly dispersed minimal 50% forested canopy. Because protecting water quality is a long-standing goal of the Commonwealth supported through many voluntary cost-share and tax-credit programs, these points are awarded to those projects that voluntarily provide greater water quality and habitat protections beyond the required 35-foot vegetated riparian buffer in perpetuity.

Maximum 20 points

7 points if the buffer is forested (at least 50% forest canopy) and protected as such in perpetuity, PLUS

- 1'-2,000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer = 3
- 2,001-4,000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer = 5
- 4,001-6,000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer = 8
- 6,001'+ of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer = 10

OR

- 1'-2,000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer = 5
- 2,001-4,000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer = 8
- 4,001-6,000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer = 10
- 6,001'+ of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer = 13

8. Fish and Wildlife Values

Up to ~~a total of~~ 10 points may be given ~~dependent upon the degree to which~~ if the application includes information to demonstrate that the project benefits wildlife, habitat, and human/wildlife interaction. The breakdown for this category is: zero to three points for fish and wildlife habitat protection and management (one point for identifying wildlife, one point for protecting habitat, an added point for providing public access to view, hunt, or fish wildlife). An additional three points may be awarded for the identification of Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) Species of Greatest Conservation Need or a state or federal threatened or endangered species; with another four points awarded for protection of associated habitat.

For more wildlife information, see: <https://services.dwr.virginia.gov/fwis/> or contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, (804) 593-2043.

Maximum 10 points

- Identify wildlife presence = 1; if Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species is present = additional 3
- Protect wildlife habitat = 1; if DWR Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species habitat is protected = additional 4
- Provide public access for viewing or hunting wildlife, or for fishing = 1

9. Protection of Identified Wildlife Corridors

Zero to 10 points may be given to projects that fall within an area designated as a wildlife corridor buffer or an actual corridor in the Virginia Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. ~~As directed in § 29.1-579 of the Code of Virginia,~~ DWR and partners developed the Virginia Wildlife Corridor Action Plan identifying vital wildlife corridors, high quality habitat for priority species, and migration routes of native, game, and migratory species. The plan emphasizes protecting these vital wildlife habitat corridors and their buffers, as well as reducing wildlife-vehicle

conflicts, such as collisions, to promote driver safety. Learn more about the ~~2023~~-plan here: www.dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/corridors.

Wildlife corridors and their buffers are mapped and accessible to the public on the Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer (www.vanhde.org). To be awarded points, an application must include a description of how the project will protect the associated wildlife buffer or corridor in perpetuity. For guidance contact the Virginia DWR, (804) 593-2043. If the project intersects both a corridor and a buffer the higher of the two calculated points will be used for scoring. The points are not additive.

Maximum 10 points

- 1%-50% of the property occurs within a designated wildlife corridor buffer and includes deed language to maintain the integrity of the buffer = 2
 - >50% of the property occurs within a designated wildlife corridor buffer and includes deed language to maintain the integrity of the buffer = 4
- OR
- 1%-25% of the property occurs within a designated wildlife corridor and includes deed language to maintain the integrity of the corridor = 6
 - 26%-75% of the property occurs within a designated wildlife corridor and includes deed language to maintain the integrity of the corridor = 8
 - >75% of the property occurs within a designated wildlife corridor and includes deed language to maintain the integrity of the corridor = 10

~~10. Ratio of Match to Total Project Cost~~Project Readiness

~~If the applicant can provide a title commitment insuring the applicant's interest in the property, then three points will be awarded. This will ensure that access to the property and owners of all of the property's rights have been identified, enabling successful completion of the project. The amount of match provided by the applicant can add up to three points. If the applicant claims 60 percent or more of matching funds, then a preliminary appraisal of the property must be submitted with the application for verification to be awarded points. If providing 60 percent or more match, to get points provide an appraisal or pre-appraisal with your application.~~

Maximum 3 points

- ~~• Eighty percent or more of total project cost is provided as match = 3~~
- ~~• Sixty to 79 percent of total project cost is provided as match = 2~~

11. Progress Reports

For Grantees with active VLCF grants: The Grantee has submitted the required semi-annual progress reports of each year for each active grant.

- Yes = 0

- No = -3

Total Maximum Score for ~~Additional Scoring Criteria~~ Statewide Priorities: ~~91~~90 points

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Appendix C – Example Match Letter

[Date]

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation
c/o ~~Matthew Wells~~Nikki Rovner, Executive Secretary
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: VLCF grant application from *[organization]* for *[project]*

Dear ~~Mr. Wells~~Ms. Rovner:

In the grant application submitted by our organization for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation's ~~FY26-FY27~~ grant round, our project budget included a total match amount of \$____.__, of which \$____. __ is to be obtained through grant funding that is not yet committed by any granting agency. We understand that VLCF will not grant funds for a project whose match is uncertain, and we agree that, if this project is funded through VLCF, we will commit our organization's resources to complete the project within the two-year time frame required by the VLCF program.

Sincerely,

[Organization representative]
[Job Title]

Appendix D – Required Property Protections and Vegetated Riparian Buffer Information

To safeguard water quality and the conservation value of land conservation projects, the following protections are to be included in all VLCF projects, whether fee simple or easement acquisitions:

1. Limitations on placement of utilities: Utilities that serve permitted structures on the subject property are allowed. Utilities that do not serve permitted structures on the subject property require the grantee's review and prior written determination that the construction and maintenance of such utilities will not impair the conservation value of the property.
2. To protect water quality, the collective footprint of all impervious surfaces (excluding roads) on the property must be limited to 1% of the area of the property. Limitations above 1% must be explained in the application to be considered. Farmland Preservation easements are limited to a 2% cap on impervious surfaces to accommodate agricultural uses.
3. Agricultural Conservation Plan: If the property contains five acres of land or more in agricultural production, then a written agricultural conservation plan shall be developed or in place that stipulates the use of best management practices for water quality protection (such as proper nutrient management, utilization of cover crops, and stabilization of highly erodible lands). This plan shall be developed in consultation with the local Soil and Water Conservation District or the Natural Resources Conservation Service and shall be implemented and periodically updated by the landowner as long as at least five acres of the property remains in agricultural production.
4. Forest Management Plans: If the property contains 20 acres or more of forest, then a current written forest management plan or Virginia Forest Stewardship Plan shall be in place. A pre-harvest plan is required prior to the commencement of timber harvesting or other significant forest management activities. Such a plan shall be developed by, or in consultation with, the Virginia Department of Forestry or a professional forester meeting the criteria in § 10.1-1181.9 of the Code of Virginia, or be consistent with Virginia's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality Guide. The pre-harvest plan shall be consistent with Virginia's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality Guide and include sufficient detail to protect site, soil, and water quality.

An exception to the requirement of a pre-harvest plan may be provided for the following non-commercial, de minimis cutting of trees so long as the activities are consistent with Virginia's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality Guide: (1) for trail

clearing or daylighting of approved roads not to exceed ten feet on either side of the road; (2) for Grantor's domestic uses, such as firewood or carpentry activities; (3) that pose an imminent hazard to human health or safety; (4) of less than three acres of forest when constructing buildings and structures as allowed in the easement; and (5) removal of invasive species.

5. **Vegetated Riparian Buffers and Wetland Areas:** An area of land where natural vegetation shall be maintained at 35-feet or more in width along a river, shoreline, perennial stream (depicted on the USGS National Hydrography Dataset: <https://apps.nationalmap.gov/viewer/>), or body of water that has perennial outflow, and within wetland areas stated in the VLCF application or highlighted in the recitals of the deed of acquisition or easement.

Within vegetated riparian buffers and wetlands:

- a) Livestock shall be excluded from the buffers and the adjacent watercourses and bodies of water.
- b) Mowing shall be limited to three times per calendar year.
- c) Earth-disturbing activities, plowing, and dumping are prohibited (however, tree planting; streambank restoration; forest management in accordance with Virginia's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality Guide; archaeological investigations; and restoration, reconstruction, and maintenance of documented historic landscapes on historic properties are permissible).

The following structures, activities, and landscapes are allowed within the required vegetated riparian buffers and wetland areas on VLCF funded projects:

- a) Buildings, structures, roads or other impervious surfaces existing in the buffer prior to the grant award are permissible and may be maintained but cannot be enlarged within the buffer.
- b) A limited number and size of water dependent structures such as docks or boat launches.
- c) A limited number of stream crossings for livestock, pedestrians, or vehicles. Livestock crossings must be addressed in a written conservation plan that specifies the use of riparian buffers for water quality protection.
- d) Access points to reach the water and structures permitted in the buffer.
- e) Lawns (up to 50 feet of frontage) associated with a primary residence, if the site is not subject to severe erosion and the diminished buffer is offset by nearby buffers that are wider than 35 feet.
- f) Forest management including timber harvesting in accordance with a pre-harvest plan and compliance with Virginia's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality Guide.