

## Land Conservation

Land conservation preserves Virginia's heritage, offers recreational opportunity, and improves water quality, wildlife and quality of life. In addition to managing its lands, DCR helps landowners, land trusts and localities by serving as a clearinghouse and keeping an inventory of protected lands. The agency also helps by identifying important open space and lands rich with plant and animal diversity. As well, DCR provides grants and information on conservation easements and other land protection tools.



## Planning for Virginia's Future

DCR authors the state's most comprehensive land planning, conservation and recreation document, the Virginia Outdoors Plan. The plan details outdoor recreation needs, issues and priorities. It also includes models for multi-purpose land use and sustainable development, and spells out long-term state and planning-district level recommendations.



## Connect

Learn more about how you can connect with DCR and others who share your interests.

Visit [www.dcr.virginia.gov](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov).



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Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation  
**Your Conservation Connection**



## State Parks and Natural Areas

Since their inception in the 1930s, state parks have informed citizens on the value of natural places and, indeed, nature itself. When we see the wild world first-hand, we appreciate its inherent value and value to current and future generations. State parks are fun and safe places where people relax and clear their minds; they're also the world's greatest classrooms.

DCR manages 40 Virginia State Parks, and there's one within an hour's drive of every Virginian. The parks are perfect settings for families and groups to enjoy water sports, hiking, biking, horseback riding and other healthy outdoor activities. Millions of out-of-state guests visit parks each year, contributing to nearby localities' economies. More new parks and facilities are on the horizon. A visit to a state park enhances guests' appreciation of the outdoors and restores the mind, body and spirit.

In a similar vein, DCR manages more than 60 natural area preserves to protect some of the state's most significant areas. These places are home to rare, unique and endangered species and natural communities. Although undeveloped, more than 20 preserves offer some public access. DCR also works with other public and private landowners to identify and protect natural heritage resources throughout the state.

Serving a diverse commonwealth rich in history and nature, DCR touches all Virginians' lives. As the state's lead conservation agency, DCR protects what Virginians care about – access to the outdoors, natural habitats, open space, clean water and safe infrastructure.



## Soil and Water Conservation

Runoff from yards, streets, parking lots, farm fields and construction sites is the leading source of water pollution in Virginia. This runoff is called "nonpoint source pollution" because its sources are widespread. That's why everyone must work to stop it.

DCR works with the state's 47 soil and water conservation districts to help farmers install conservation measures. The measures protect water quality and, because they typically also keep soil in place, sustain productivity. The agency also helps by teaching citizens and businesses lawn care techniques that keep pollution from reaching nearby streams and faraway waterways, such as the Chesapeake Bay.



## Dam Safety and Floodplain Management

Flooding is the most common natural disaster. DCR encourages local floodplain practices that reduce flood risk, and the agency helps communities comply with the National Flood Insurance Program. We work to ensure more than 2,000 dams across the state are built, operated and maintained properly by their owners.

