

# 2014-16 Executive Progress Report

Commonwealth of Virginia  
Secretary of Natural Resources

## Department of Conservation and Recreation

### At A Glance

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) provides opportunities that encourage and enable people to enjoy, protect, and restore Virginia's natural and cultural resources.

**Staffing** 394 Salaried Employees, 19 Contracted Employees, 452 Authorized, and 622 Wage Employees.

**Financials** Budget FY 2015, \$131.97 million, 51.18% from the General Fund.

<b>Trends</b>	↑ Number of park users	<b>Key Perf Areas</b>	↑ State Park Visitor Satisfaction
	↑ Number of certified dams		↑ Virginia Treasures Conserved
	↓ Nonpoint pollution in Bay		↑ Agricultural Acres with Best Management Practices
<b>Legend</b>	↑ Increase, ↓ Decrease, → Steady	<b>Productivity Legend</b>	↑ Improving, ↓ Worsening, → Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to [www.vaperforms.virginia.gov](http://www.vaperforms.virginia.gov)

### Background and History

#### Agency Background Statement

The State Commission on Conservation and Development was established by the 1926 General Assembly. The original Commission consolidated the powers and duties of the Water Power and Development Commission, State Geological Commission, State Geological Survey, State Geologist, and the State Forester. In 1938, the Commission became the Virginia Conservation Commission and in 1948 was renamed the Department of Conservation and Development. In 1958, the Department became the Department of Conservation and Economic Development (DCED) and DCED contained divisions that addressed: Forestry, Mineral Resources, Parks, Water Resources, Industrial Development, Public Relations and Advertising. In 1984, economic programs were relocated within state government and DCED became the Department of Conservation and Historic Resources (DCHR). In 1989, following the establishment of Historic Resources as a separate state agency, DCHR became the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). By the early 1990s, DCR's responsibilities included Stormwater Management, Dam Safety, State Parks, Natural Heritage, and Land Conservation. On July 1, 2013, programs related to stormwater management, permitting, erosion and sediment control, and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, which were housed in DCR's Stormwater Management Division, were transferred to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the remaining personnel became part of the Division of Nonpoint Pollution Prevention. The Division shortly thereafter reverted to its historical name, the Division of Soil and Water Conservation.

DCR works with localities and farmers to minimize nonpoint source pollution into Virginia's waters and the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. The Agency also provides for the proper and safe design, construction, operation and maintenance of dams. DCR manages 36 state parks of which many have newly constructed or renovated cabins, camping, meeting facilities, and visitor centers. It also identifies, inventories, and protects rare plants, animals, and communities and maintains a database of these resources. In the area of land conservation, DCR serves as a central contact, repository, and clearinghouse for land conservation interests in Virginia.

#### Major Products and Services

**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION.** DCR works to improve water quality in the Commonwealth of Virginia. DCR partners closely with the state's 47 local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, farmers, urban and suburban landowners, and other land managers to control runoff pollution. DCR provides tools and information to the 47 local Districts and provides financial assistance (cost-share) to these Districts and farmers to protect Virginia's waterways and to facilitate good conservation practices. DCR's nutrient management program works to ensure that farmers apply nutrients to their fields at the rate needed to meet agronomic needs and thus avoid over application of nutrients. DCR's newest water quality program is the voluntary Resource Management Plans Program that encourages farmers to reduce erosion, exclude livestock from streams, establish stream buffers, and use nutrient management planning.

**DAM SAFETY.** DCR, through the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, requires each owner of a regulated *high, significant, or low* hazard dam to apply for an *Operation and Maintenance Certificate*. It administers funds to provide for qualified dam rehabilitation, dam break inundation zone mapping, and floodplain projects proposed by local governments and private entities in order to advance public safety and infrastructure protection. DCR is responsible for developing and maintaining a flood protection plan for the Commonwealth.

**STATE PARK/NATURAL AREAS/OPEN SPACE.** DCR develops, manages, and protects Virginia's State Park System, Natural Area Preserve System, and more than 600 miles of trails.

**NATURAL HERITAGE.** DCR is responsible for the identification, protection, and stewardship of Virginia's natural heritage resources, which are defined as the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, or rare or state significant natural communities. DCR maintains a database of this information that helps customers make informed land conservation decisions, and perform environmental assessments of proposed developments.

**PLANNING AND RECREATION RESOURCES.** DCR is responsible for creating and updating the *Virginia Outdoors Plan*, which is the Commonwealth's comprehensive outdoor recreation and open space planning document, conducts master planning for state parks, designs and constructs recreation facilities for state parks and natural area preserves, and provides grants and technical assistance related to land use and outdoor recreation. DCR also administers the statewide Scenic Rivers Program and a statewide system of trails.

**LAND CONSERVATION.** DCR administers a statewide land conservation grant program through the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation. It also verifies the conservation value of donations of real property interests for which donors request state land preservation tax credits of \$1 million or more.

**BOARD STAFFING.** DCR provides staffing for the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, the Board of Conservation and Recreation, and the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, as well as the Cave Board, which is an advisory board.

## Customers

### Customer Summary

DCR has a broad range of customers, ranging from millions of state park visitors to Soil and Water Conservation Districts, farmers, dam owners, the land conservation community, local water quality and conservation organizations, and federal, state and local governments. DCR expects to see continued growth in citizen awareness and interest in nonpoint source water quality programs, land conservation, dam safety and floodplain management, and use of state parks and natural area preserves.

Customer Table

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Recreationalist	Recreational Users (campers, picnickers, hikers, etc.)	8,997,661	10,500,000	Increase
Farm/Forest Owner	Agricultural Producers Participating in Cost-Share and nutrient management planning	5,000	47,000	Increase
Property Owner	Dam Owners	2,100	3,000	Increase
Natural Resources and Earth Science	Users of Environmental Databases and Tools	500	2,000	Increase
Taxpayer	Land Preservation Tax Credit Applicants	222	400	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Local Governments and PDCs including 21 PDCs, 95 counties, 38 cities, 191 towns, and 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts	392	392	Stable
Property Owner	Downstream Owners Protected by Dam Safety Actions	43,000	65,000	Increase
Organization	Conservation Organizations and Land Trusts	50	100	Increase
Non-Profit Agency (Boards/Foundation),	Stakeholder Groups	30	75	Increase
State Government Employee	Employees of the DCR	1,093	1,500	Stable
Volunteer	Park and Natural Area Volunteers	2,500	10,000	Increase
General Assembly	Legislators and Support Services Staff	100	300	Increase
Organization	Media Outlets	626	626	Stable
Interstate Entity	Breaks Interstate Park	1	1	Stable

Interstate Entity	Chesapeake Bay Program (US EPA, CBC, VA, MD, PA, NY, WV, DE, DC)	1	1	Stable
Interstate Entity	Chesapeake Bay Commission	1	1	Stable
Higher Education Institutions	Colleges and Universities	40	60	Increase
State Agency(s),	State Agencies	40	50	Increase
Federal Agency	Federal Agencies	12	12	Stable
Governor	Administration	1	1	Stable
Governor	State Boards and Foundations	9	9	Stable
Attorney General	Office of the Attorney General	1	1	Stable

## Finance and Performance Management

### Finance

#### Financial Summary

As provided for in the Appropriation Act (State Budget), DCR's financial resources come from a mixture of funds. For fiscal year 2016, approximately 42 percent of the department's budget comes from the state's General Fund, 7 percent from the federal government, and 51 percent from nongeneral funds from other sources.

On July 1, 2013, major functions in the Stormwater Management Division were transferred to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). As a result of this transfer, DCR's financial resource base has changed, as approximately \$2.1 million in general fund support and \$9.2 million in nongeneral funds were transferred to DEQ, along with 83 salaried positions.

DCR continues to provide financial assistance to 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts to address agricultural water quality problems and also to provide financial assistance to dam owners in the form of grants and loans from the Dam Safety and Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund.

DCR manages a capital budget for improvements and acquisitions of state parks and natural area preserves. The capital improvement program historically has been funded primarily via General Obligation Bonds (GOB) and Virginia Public Building Authority Bonds. In 2002, GOB initiatives provided \$119 million for capital improvements and land acquisition. Other non-GOB capital projects include the repair and renovation of state park and Soil and Water Conservation District dams, valued at approximately \$30 million, the phase one development of High Bridge State Park (valued at approximately \$7.5 million), the phase one development of Powhatan State Park (valued at approximately \$7.5 million), the phase one development of Widewater State Park (valued at approximately \$7.5 million), construction of an improved highway intersection to serve Powhatan State Park, and the construction of additional overnight cabins at seven state parks.

#### Fund Sources

Fund Code	Fund Name	FY 2015	FY 2016
0100	General Fund	\$69,138,217	\$58,996,178
0200	Special	\$3,725,812	\$3,725,812
0204	Open-Space Preservation Fund	\$700,000	\$700,000
0215	Natural Area Preservation Fund	\$109,000	\$109,000
0216	Land Preservation Fund	\$351,356	\$351,356
0241	Open Space Recreation And Conservation Fund	\$198,000	\$198,000
0252	Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund	\$258,750	\$5,000
0263	State Park Conservation Resources Fund	\$18,745,478	\$18,745,478
0265	State Park Acquisition And Development Fund	\$100,000	\$100,000
0280	Appropriated Indirect Cost Recoveries	\$1,283,914	\$1,283,914
0800	Debt Service	\$75,000	\$75,000
0811	9(B) Debt Service - Construction Costs	\$161,144	\$161,144
0902	Virginia Stormwater Management Fund	\$0	\$0
0908	Sludge Management Fund	\$187,995	\$187,995
0910	Dam Safety/Flood Prevention & Protection Assist Fd	\$40,000	\$40,000

0918	Va Land Conservation Fund - Unrestricted	\$7,700,000	\$7,700,000
0925	Soil/Water Conservation Dist Dam Maint/Sm Repair	\$100,000	\$100,000
0934	Virginia Water Quality Improvement Fund	\$8,000,847	\$8,800,847
0936	Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund	\$5,322,734	\$28,313,417
1000	Federal Trust	\$9,362,696	\$9,362,696

## Revenue Summary

Visitors to the State Parks System pay admission and parking fees. Fees are also charged for services such as cabin rentals, camping, swimming, boat and canoe rentals, and special events. The funds collected are used to support the State Parks System and to meet customer demand for services.

Revenues from the recordation fee are used to support the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund, which is a subfund of the Water Quality Improvement Fund. The funds are disbursed, via Soil and Water Conservation Districts, for agriculture best management practice cost-share, in accordance with state law. The recordation fee revenues dedicated to the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund consist of 50 percent of a \$20 fee collected on every deed.

## Performance

### Performance Highlights

**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION.** In Fiscal Year 2015, DCR is able to provide more than \$34 million in funding to Soil and Water Conservation Districts for local operational costs and to assist farmers with implementing effective practices to reduce pollution. DCR works with the farming community, local Districts, and federal agencies to expand and target cost-effective agricultural conservation practices (i.e., livestock exclusion and nutrient management) that improve water quality. DCR also continues to pursue necessary levels of funding and technical support to Districts and farmers to meet pollution reduction targets in Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation plan.

**DAM SAFETY.** DCR, upon approval from the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, makes grants or loans to local governments and private entities for the purpose of providing matching funds for flood prevention or protection in order to ensure public safety. Over the past four years, over 360 grants have been awarded for a total of \$4.6 million to assist dam owners and localities with improvements to their dams and flood protection projects. DCR has also undertaken an initiative to locate dams of regulated size using aerial photography, topography, and field visits. DCR also uses a system to provide for early warning alerts to emergency responders and dam owners, in order to ensure public safety. DCR is also tasked with providing a simplified mapping service for owners of low hazard dams. Since the program was initiated, over 50 applications for the service have been received.

**STATE PARKS.** Virginia's parks have garnered 82 awards. Customer satisfaction is high, with around 93 percent of survey respondents rating their park experience as good or excellent in 2013. In 2001, the State Parks System was awarded the National Gold Medal for excellence in park and recreation management by the National Sporting Goods Association's Sports Foundation, in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association, and was again a finalist for the 2013 National Gold Medal Award. In 2014, there were over 8.9 million visits to state parks. Working with private sector partners, DCR is actively pursuing the construction of a mountain bike trail at Pocahontas State Park. This venture is expected to bring millions of dollars in economic activity to Virginia as this bike trail will serve as a key ongoing legacy project of the Richmond 2015 UCI Road World Championships. The Virginia Association for Parks has embarked on a major fundraising campaign to create new exhibits at 11 state park visitor centers.

**NATURAL HERITAGE AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVES.** DCR remains on the leading edge of biodiversity conservation innovation within the Network of Natural Heritage Programs covering all of Canada, the 50 U.S. States, and 19 Latin American countries. The Natural Heritage Program's development of an on-line information portal, Natural Heritage Data Explorer, is being replicated in multiple states and provinces. Additionally, the newly completed Wetlands Catalog identifies previously unmapped wetlands and prioritizes all of the wetlands across Virginia for conservation and restoration purposes. Staff is developing advanced species distribution modeling maps of federally listed species' predicted ranges, allowing for significant cost savings to the development community. Field discoveries of new species continue, with 34 species new to science and 340 native species not previously recorded in Virginia having been found by staff scientists. DCR has also significantly expanded its Natural Area Preserve System, which now comprises 62 preserves and 55,372 acres, supporting 441 different and rare species and natural communities. In July a new Natural Area Preserve public access guide was released.

**PLANNING AND RECREATION RESOURCES.** The *Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)*, completed in Fiscal Year 2014 and launched in April in a promotional video by First Lady McAuliffe, is the first Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) in the nation to be entirely web-based. The plan has been presented at several conferences and implementation of the plan commenced with the launching of annual meetings with each of the Commonwealth's Planning Districts. Access to the plan is available through the DCR website, [www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational\\_planning/vop.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/vop.shtml). Master plans for state parks are being regularly developed and/or updated and work is underway on a master plan for Breaks Interstate Park. In response to requests from localities, scenic river studies were completed on the Clinch and Dan rivers. During this performance cycle, DCR's Design and Construction section completed seven capital construction projects totaling over \$1.1 million, with numerous other projects in the planning and design stages. Trail initiatives were advanced with the distribution of quarterly trails e-newsletters, an annual water recreation workshop with over 100 in attendance, and participation by staff in numerous national and regional trail

initiatives. During this period, 14 outdoor recreation projects were submitted to federal funding agencies for grant approvals.

**LAND CONSERVATION.** DCR will continue to further the Commonwealth's land conservation progress by assisting land owners, land trusts, and other agencies, by organizing educational workshops and conferences for land conservation professionals, providing state-of-the-art land conservation planning information, maps, and intranet mapping tools, tracking conserved lands, providing matching grants through the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, and reviewing state land preservation tax credits as required by state law.

DCR has also developed the Commonwealth's first comprehensive, continually maintained, Geographic Information System (GIS) data layer for Virginia's protected conservation lands. This database includes mapped boundaries and attributes for public and certain private lands having various conservation, recreation, and open-space roles.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES.** DCR's performance measures provide the public with information regarding the ongoing successes of the agency's state park, natural heritage, soil and water conservation, dam safety and floodplain management, recreational resource, and land conservation programs.

**Selected Measures**

Measure ID	Measure	Alternative Name	Estimated Trend
19950404.001.001	Percent of excellent or good responses on the State Park Customer Satisfaction Survey.	State Park Visitor Satisfaction	Improving
199.0003	Number of "Virginia Treasures" annually conserved or completed.	Virginia Treasures Conserved	Improving
199.0001	Number of agricultural acres with conservation best management practices state-funded through the Department's agricultural cost-share program, in support of statewide water quality goals.	Agricultural Acres with Best Management Practices	Improving
19950314.001.004	Number of dams with Regular Operation and Maintenance Certificates	Number of Dams Regulated	Improving
19950317.001.003	Number of natural heritage resources observed in the field.	Natural Heritage Resources Observed	Improving
199.0002	Number of acres conserved for land conservation purposes within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.	Acres conserved within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed	Improving
19950404.001.004	Agency administrative cost per state park reservation made.		Improving

**Key Risk Factors**

**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION.** DCR continues to provide programmatic and financial support to Virginia's 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Districts) in order to reduce nonpoint source pollution, generated from agricultural and urban runoff sources. DCR recognizes that local Districts have limited resources and need both financial and technical assistance from DCR. Within its existing resource base, DCR will continue to provide funding for targeted agricultural conservation practices and provide technical implementation assistance to ensure that pollution reduction practices are employed efficiently and effectively. This assistance is critical in order for Virginia to meet pollution reduction goals outlined in Virginia's federally-approved Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) and other total maximum daily loads. Within its available resources for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, DCR is providing 100 percent funding for farmers and landowners who implement stream exclusion practices, which entails keeping livestock away from streams and establishing vegetative buffers along streams. Stream exclusion is a key practice under the WIP and provides significant local water quality benefits by reducing bacteria impairments and reducing sediment and nutrient pollution. In 2014, DCR launched the Resource Management Plans Program that will largely utilize private planners to develop conservation plans for farms. The Nutrient Management Program is working to include more farmland and increase the participation of non-regulated farms. Both of these programs are also key components of the Chesapeake Bay WIP and will require significant participation by producers for Virginia to attain necessary water quality nutrient and sediment reductions in the Bay and in other waters statewide.

**DAM SAFETY.** As part of the DCR's efforts to protect the public and infrastructure within dam break inundation zones, DCR continues to identify a growing number of dams that should be regulated. Through DCR's efforts, several hundred additional dams have been identified and DCR expects that Virginia may ultimately have at least 3,000 dams that will meet the minimal size requirements for regulation once the inventory is completed. Virginia is geographically located in an area that experiences intense storms. This fact, coupled with an inventory of aging dams and more dams lying in high risk areas, demonstrates the importance of continuing to support Virginia's Dam Safety Program. DCR is also conducting a probable maximum precipitation study to update information last compiled in the 1970's regarding precipitation events across the Commonwealth. This information is utilized in determining the necessary spillway capacity for dams in order to minimize the potential for their failure during large rainfall events.

There are 12 Districts that are responsible for 104 dams constructed by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Since many of these NRCS dams are reaching the end of their maintenance agreements with Districts, DCR is currently developing a plan for the rehabilitation of approximately 50 high hazard dams.

**STATE PARKS.** In July of 2013, Powhatan State Park officially opened, bringing the number of state parks in the Commonwealth to thirty-six. Land has also been acquired for five additional parks, which are Widewater (Stafford County), Seven Bends (Shenandoah County), Middle Peninsula (Gloucester County), Mayo River (Henry County), and Biscuit Run (Albemarle County). Each state park, including those not yet developed, has (or will have) an adopted master plan identifying facilities needed to bring the park to its desired level of development. There are over 300 major capital projects identified in these publicly-developed plans. Increased demand for services from customers has required DCR to use a combination of seasonal and year-round wage employees and volunteers, and DCR continues to look for ways to meet continued demands within existing resources. DCR is also working on strategies to open the land-banked park properties for limited public use until funds are available for traditional capital improvements.

Also, there is a need for continued capital improvements to the State Parks System to address general maintenance and infrastructure improvements. In Fiscal Year 2015, DCR received slightly more than \$2.2 million to address general park maintenance and this level of funding represents an ongoing need to address critical maintenance issues.

**NATURAL HERITAGE AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVE SYSTEM.** Virginia has some of the most biologically sensitive habitats and species populations in the world, and DCR manages the state's Natural Heritage database. Currently, slightly over 30 percent of the community and species information in this database is over 25 years old; therefore, DCR continues to seek creative solutions to this aging data problem.

Virginia's Natural Area Preserve System, managed by DCR, has grown significantly in the past ten years and this growth has largely occurred due to expansion because of resources provided in the 2002 State Park and Natural Areas Bond package. The expanding size of the Natural Area Preserve System has increased demands on existing staff for biological resource management such as invasive species control, managed hunts, prescribed burning, and law enforcement. Management complexity has increased due to more required oversight of easements and Natural Area Preserve System boundaries, and the need for increased public access. As public demand for access increases, a corresponding need arises for construction and regular maintenance of bridges, gates, signs, and trails.

**PLANNING AND RECREATION RESOURCES.** Since 2009, a 30% reduction in staff has impacted the ability of the Planning and Recreation Resources Division to provide needed service delivery for programs both within the DCR as well as to localities across the state. Over the past five years, legislation affecting changes in the state park master planning process and in statewide trails have placed additional demands on staff time. As a growing number of state parks is added to the inventory, master planning requirements also continue to increase. DCR responses to these staff reductions have included reduction of the scope of work conducted on master plans (to executive summaries only), and reduction of the amount of technical support provided to localities. With an aging workforce of highly skilled professionals, over 60% of the division's staff will be eligible for retirement within the next 5 years, making succession planning of critical importance.

**GENERAL OPERATIONS.** Limitations on staffing and funding have presented challenges to the operations and programs in state parks (including law enforcement), natural heritage, dam safety, and programs delivered to Soil and Water Conservation Districts. DCR continues to look for innovative solutions to address adequate staffing within its existing general and nongeneral fund resource bases. DCR also has recognized that its information technology platform needs internal restructuring to enhance operations, particularly in light of recent program changes. This restructuring has already begun within the scope of existing resources.

## Agency Statistics

### Statistics Summary

The statistics below provide a snapshot of major DCR program activities. For the number of jobs resulting from state park operations, the figure is derived from a model developed by the National Park Service that looks at factors such as park visitation, park spending, and employment.

#### Statistics Table

Description	Value
Number of dams regulated by the Department to ensure public safety and property protection	643
Number of natural areas managed for the benefit of the rare plants, animals and natural communities	61
Number of state parks open to the public	36
Estimated number of jobs resulting from state park operations (from 2010)	2,000
Number of land trusts operating in Virginia	26
Number of written natural heritage information requests answered per year	2,333
Number of species new to science discovered by DCR	32
Number of species new to Virginia discovered by DCR	300

## Management Discussion

### General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

DCR continually examines methods to improve services to customers while controlling costs in an environment of limited resources and increasing demands. Following the transfer of certain Stormwater Management Division programs to DEQ in fiscal year 2014, DCR reorganized its remaining water quality programs to focus on effective pollution reduction practices, such as the use by farmers and other stakeholders of resource management plans and nutrient management plans. In addition to protecting the safety of the public and landowners through the enforcement of the Virginia Dam Safety Act, DCR is also working with customers to perform simplified analyses to determine whether certain dams could qualify for a low hazard classification and thus reduced and streamlined regulatory requirements. DCR also contains the Office of Environmental Education charged with providing environmental education opportunities for formal and nonformal educators through training programs and field-based experiences.

DCR also continues to add capital improvements to existing state parks and to design new state parks. DCR maintains a comprehensive Conservation Lands database and continues to build a nationally-recognized Natural Heritage database. It also continues to respond to requests for land conservation information from the general public, other state agencies, land trusts, legal and real estate experts, and landowners.

### **Information Technology**

DCR relies heavily on Information Technology (IT) for day-to-day central operations that serve all of its divisions and that effectively meet the needs of citizens and stakeholders. DCR has implemented the use of a SharePoint platform for its intranet communications. DCR's systems also track payments to Virginia's 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts for cost-share and operational support.

In support of its customers, DCR uses IT to model land use practices used in the clean-up of the Chesapeake Bay and to assist Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the implementation of best management practices on farmland and in the use of nutrient and resource management plans for agricultural planning. IT resources also track all identified dams in Virginia in order to determine hazard status and the level of compliance to protect public safety. DCR uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software to support the management of information on rare species and natural communities and protected lands in the area of natural heritage. GIS data are also used to support Dam Safety and Floodplain Management, Soil and Water Conservation planning, and for planning improvements to State Parks and Natural Areas. DCR's IT platform also supports a State Parks reservation center that enhances visitorship. A system has also been recently developed to address DCR real estate information. DCR is also completing the development of Agricultural Conservation Planning and Resource Management Planning Modules. DCR continues to work to meet to ensure that all database information is tied together so that information is shared on a timely basis with decision makers.

### **Workforce Development**

DCR has a maximum employment level of 452 salaried positions. As of August 8, 2014, there was a 17 percent vacancy rate at DCR. Almost 10 percent of the current workplace is eligible for retirement with full benefits. Much of DCR's authorized wage workforce (1756 positions) provides seasonal help needed in the 36 state parks. DCR will ensure that its workforce has the environment in which to adapt to frequently changing demands and the problem-solving and analytical skills needed to respond promptly to demands from the public and to complex issues.

### **Physical Plant**

Providing and maintaining adequate funding will be necessary in order for DCR to properly maintain and continue to grow its State Park System and its Natural Area Preserve System. The 2002 Parks and Natural Areas Bond and the 2008 Virginia Public Building Authority Bond have created a significant expansion to State Parks and Natural Area Preserve Systems. These expansions require public access and facilities development funds. The 2013 General Assembly authorized additional bond projects for Powhatan State Park, Widewater State Park, and for new cabins at various state parks.

In 2013, DCR's central office in Richmond consolidated to one location. Prior to this consolidation, DCR's offices were located in four separate buildings in the State Capitol area. DCR maintains multiple field office locations across Virginia requiring office infrastructure management.