

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE DEPARTMENT
OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA LAND
CONSERVATION FOUNDATION**

Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
January 2025**

Travis A. Voyles
Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

Matthew S. Wells
Director

Andrew W. Smith
Chief Deputy Director



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

Frank N. Stovall
*Deputy Director
for Operations*

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Dam Safety,
Floodplain Management and
Soil and Water Conservation*

Laura Ellis
*Deputy Director for
Administration and Finance*

January 8, 2025

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia
Members of the Virginia General Assembly

Dear Governor Youngkin and General Assembly Members:

We are pleased to provide you this report, which has been prepared on behalf of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (Foundation or VLCF) Board of Trustees by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The Department of Conservation and Recreation serves as staff to VLCF. The report is presented in accordance with § 10.1-1018.1 of the Code of Virginia, instructing the Chairman of the Board of VLCF to annually submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and report of the interim activity and work of the Board.

In 2024, the Foundation, in concert with its federal, tribal, state, local, and private conservation partners, celebrated its 25th anniversary of conservation achievements since it was first funded in the 1999 General Assembly Session. As of June 30, 2024, a total of \$118.6 million has been appropriated to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund (Fund). The Foundation has leveraged this state funding to protect more than 269,683 acres across Virginia. This includes 154,991 acres from direct VLCF grants, and an estimated 114,692 additional acres protected with the VLCF funds required to be transferred to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. A small percentage of the accrued interest in the Fund has helped DCR develop the Commonwealth's most comprehensive conserved lands database and other mapping tools. The database helps to track progress towards the goals and, together with other mapping tools, offers a means for better-informed decision-making by the VLCF trustees.

Virginia citizens have many reasons to be proud of the conservation achieved through grants awarded from VLCF. The projects enabled by VLCF grants have a positive impact across the Commonwealth, protecting priority lands under the statewide ConserveVirginia initiative, including working farms and forests; natural, cultural, and historical resources; and parks and other lands for recreational purposes. Notably, VLCF has recently awarded grants to several Virginia Indian Tribes for the conservation and restoration of their homelands. Additionally, lands that protect water quality in nearby streams and rivers; lands that provide habitat for threatened and endangered species, fish and wildlife, and natural areas and open space have been conserved.

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***State Parks • Soil and Water Conservation • Outdoor Recreation Planning
Natural Heritage • Dam Safety and Floodplain Management • Land Conservation***

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation program provides several notable features:

- The Foundation's funds often have been leveraged to achieve a match greater than the 50 percent match required by state law for entities other than state agencies and tribes;
- The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation is strategic in the awarding of grants. The competitive process, incorporation of ConserveVirginia into the scoring criteria, and interagency team approach used by the Foundation to score and award grant funding help to ensure that the best lands are conserved; and
- The grant scoring criteria provide an emphasis on projects requiring enhanced riparian buffers and those that provide public access to conserved lands. These efforts protect water quality and help to address the public's growing desire for publicly available lands across the commonwealth's diverse landscapes and populations.

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation has contributed to the Commonwealth's conservation efforts through its grant programs. As additional funds become available, we are confident that the Foundation will remain a responsible steward and partner through which Virginia will excel in its conservation efforts.

Respectfully submitted,



Travis Voyles
Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, and
Chair of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation



Matthew Wells
Director, Department of Conservation and
Recreation, and Executive Secretary of the
Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

Attachment

cc: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees
Michael Maul, Director of Planning and Budget
Kendra Brown Shifflett, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, Senate Finance Committee
Anne E. Oman, Staff Director, House Appropriations Committee

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2024

Chair and Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

The Honorable Travis Voyles, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

The Honorable Matthew Lohr, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Executive Secretary

Matthew S. Wells, Director, Department of Conservation and Recreation

Gubernatorial Appointees	Address	Term Expires	Cong. Dist.
Vacant			1
Jay C. Ford	Eastville	6/30/2025	2
Brian Hallberg	Chesapeake	6/30/2026	3
Stuart Leeth	Richmond	6/30/2026	4
Kathleen Kilpatrick	Fork Union	6/30/2026	5
Morgan Slaven	Staunton	6/30/2027	6
Ed Scott	Rochelle	6/30/2027	7
Gabriella Hoffman	Alexandria	6/30/2027	8
William Lloyd	Abingdon	6/30/2028	9
Samantha Vargas Poppe	Oak Hill	6/30/2024	10
Michael Molina	Vienna	6/30/2028	11
Chief Frank Adams	King William	6/30/2027	

Senate Appointees

The Honorable David W. Marsden	Burke	6/30/2024
The Honorable Richard H. Stewart	Montross	6/30/2024

House Appointees

Leslie Cockburn	Castleton	6/30/2025
James Beamer	Richmond	6/30/2027
Elizabeth Andrews	Williamsburg	6/30/2028
Sonya Powell	Fairfax	6/30/2028

PREFACE

This report has been prepared in accordance with, and fulfills the requirements of, § 10.1-1018.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, which instructs the Chairman of the Board of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and report of the interim activity and work of the Board on or before December 15 of each year. The document shall report on the status of VLCF and its Fund including, but not limited to: (i) land conservation targeting tools developed for the Foundation; (ii) descriptions of projects that received funding; (iii) a description of the geographic distribution of land protected as provided in § 10.1-1021.1; (iv) expenditures from, interest earned by, and financial obligations of the Fund; and (vi) progress made toward recognized state and regional land conservation goals.

The following pages provide a status report for grants awarded by VCLF and an update on related land conservation activities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (Foundation or VLCF) serves an important land conservation mission in the Commonwealth. It leverages state funds through matching grants and partnerships to protect working farms and forests, historic lands, cultural resources, open space and parks, and natural areas. The Foundation's distinctive features include a cross-cutting grant review process to maximize conservation values of funded projects, an inter-agency staff review team that involves expertise from multiple state agencies, and a final review by a diverse Board of Trustees whose membership includes appointees from the Governor, Speaker of the House of Delegates, and the Senate of Virginia.

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

In fiscal year 2024, the state budget appropriated \$16,000,000 for VLCF, with \$4,000,000 of that appropriation going to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020(C) of the Code of Virginia. Unspent and released funds from previous grant rounds totaled \$2,672,683 and were added to the FY24 round, for a total of \$14,672,673 in available VLCF grant funds. The Foundation received 40 proposals requesting approximately \$20.6 million. The Board met on November 13, 2023, to award funding to 29 projects that propose to protect 55,575 acres. Details of these projects are provided starting on page 2.

Information regarding projects from past grant rounds and their funding amounts can be found in Appendix A of this report. Additional data reflecting the geographic distribution of these recent grant awards, and all prior projects can be found in Appendix B.

Since FY2000, total funds appropriated to the Foundation total \$118.6 million (Table 1) and have resulted in the protection of 269,683 acres. To date, \$90.4 million has been allocated to VLCF's matching grant program. Additionally, more than \$28.1 million has been allocated to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) for the Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund in accordance with Virginia Code § 10.1-1020(C)(1). Moneys from this Fund are used to aid localities acquiring open-space easements or landowners conveying open-space easements with the costs associated with the conveyance of the easements.

Since first receiving funding in FY2000, the Foundation has held 19 grant rounds. During those grant rounds, VLCF received 540 applications requesting more than \$211 million in state funding, which was more than twice the available amount (Table 2). It is worth noting that in many cases, the total project cost far exceeds the amount requested. To date, VLCF has awarded funding to 356 of the 540 grant applications and awarded more than \$102.1 million to land conservation projects to protect more than 154,990 acres, at an average cost to the Foundation of \$659 per acre.

Table 1: VLCF Funding General Summary in Dollars

Source of Funding	Amount Available/ Appropriation	Amount to VOF	Amount to VLCF Grants	Amount Paid Out or Allocated to Grant Round	Grant Award Date
Appropriation Act (CH 935 –1999)	1,750,000	0	1,750,000	1,303,399.00	12/1/1999
Appropriation Act (CH 1073 – 2000) Specific Civil War Battlefields	3,400,000	0	3,400,000	3,382,004.92	
Appropriation Act (CH 1073 – 2000)	6,200,000	1,550,000	4,650,000	3,730,783.00	1/4/2001
Vehicle Registration (CH 1042 – 2003)	1,463,275	365,819	1,097,456	2,629,822.67	6/7/2005
Appropriation Act (CH4 – 2004)	2,500,000	625,000	1,875,000		
Unallocated Interest	56,982	14,246	42,736		
Appropriation Act (CH 951 –2005)	10,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000	9,015,182.92	12/1/2005
Vehicle Registration (CH 951 – 2005)	381,061	95,265	285,796		
Appropriation Act (CH 951 –2005)	2,500,000	625,000	1,875,000		
Unallocated Interest	188,960	47,240	141,720	5,447,399.00	6/13/2007
Vehicle Registration (CH 2 – 2006)	783,563	195,890	587,673		
Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2006)	2,500,000	625,000	1,875,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 847 – 2007)	500,000	125,000	375,000		
Unallocated Interest	300,000	75,000	225,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 847 – 2007)	3,000,000	750,000	2,250,000		

Source of Funding	Amount Available/ Appropriation	Amount to VOF	Amount to VLCF Grants	Amount Paid Out or Allocated to Grant Round	Grant Award Date
Vehicle Registration (CH 3 –2006)	663,269	165,817	497,452	4,036,136.00	1/7/2009
Vehicle Registration (CH 847 –2007)	397,880	99,468	298,412		
Appropriation Act (CH 879 –2008)	2,000,000	500,000	1,500,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 872 –2010)	2,000,000	500,000	1,500,000		
Vehicle Registration (CH 781 –2009)	4,666	1,166	3,500	2,106,149.00	9/13/2011
Appropriation Act (CH 874 –2010)	500,000	125,000	375,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 874 –2010)	500,000	125,000	375,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 890 –2011)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2012)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000	1,024,471.00	12/6/2012
Appropriation Act (CH 806 –2013)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2014)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000	1,542,239.00	1/6/2015
Appropriation Act (CH 3 –2014)	1,000,000	250,000	750,000		
Appropriation Act (CH 665 –2015)	3,000,000	750,000	2,250,000	1,958,244.00	10/27/2015
Appropriation Act (CH 780 –2016)	8,000,000	2,000,000	6,000,000	4,679,903.00	9/14/2016
Appropriation Act (CH 836 –2017)	4,500,000	900,000	3,600,000	3,244,922.00	9/19/2017
Appropriation Act (CH 854 –2019)	4,500,000	1,125,000	3,375,000	3,446,666.00	11/22/2019

Source of Funding	Amount Available/ Appropriation	Amount to VOF	Amount to VLCF Grants	Amount Paid Out or Allocated to Grant Round	Grant Award Date
Appropriation Act (CH 1289-2020)	10,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000	1,946,725.00	2/5/2021
Appropriation Act (CH 56 - 2020)				3,367,797.00	6/10/2021
Appropriation Act (CH 552-2021)	10,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000	<i>6,734,097.00</i>	10/27/2021
Appropriation Act (CH 2 - 2022)	16,000,000	4,000,000	12,000,000	<i>14,921,675.00</i>	11/14/2022
Appropriation Act (CH 2-2023)	16,000,000	4,000,000	12,000,000	<i>14,672,673.00</i>	11/13/2023
	\$118,589,656	\$28,134,911	\$90,454,745	<i>\$89,190,288.79</i>	

NOTE: Italicized numbers are estimated, as one or more projects have not been closed out.

NOTE: Unexpended portions from several grant rounds were reverted to the General Fund.

NOTE: Unexpended portions from withdrawn projects or projects that closed at a lesser amount than authorized were reprogrammed to subsequent grant rounds unless reverted to the General Fund.

Table 2: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Grant Award Summary

Grant Award Date	# of Applications Received	Amount requested from VLCF	# Projects Awarded	Amount Awarded by VLCF	# of Projects Closed	Total Amount Expended	Total Acres Preserved	Easement Amount Expended	Acres by Easement
12/1/1999	20	\$5,800,000	12	\$1,688,842	9	\$1,303,399	1,136.87	\$384,600	532.00
Projects Specified in Appropriations Act		\$3,400,000	4	\$3,400,000	4	\$3,382,005	1,257.00	\$0	0
1/4/2001	41	\$11,200,000	19	\$3,919,695	18	\$3,730,783	2,764.55	\$1,164,666	1,218.15
6/7/2005	23	\$6,011,695	12	\$3,027,665	11	\$2,629,823	6,552.80	\$1,080,729	3,441.00
12/1/2005	52	\$30,850,220	22	\$9,717,411	20	\$9,015,183	6,931.02	\$1,401,200	2,271.46
6/13/2007	31	\$24,847,590	15	\$6,217,843	13	\$5,447,399	10,543.31	\$2,257,114	2,598.80
1/7/2009	22	\$5,404,839	16	\$4,310,945	15	\$4,036,136	12,040.52	\$978,518	2,080.00
9/13/2011	27	\$5,933,991	17	\$2,404,408	15	\$2,106,149	2,283.63	\$880,708	1,379.57
12/6/2012	15	\$2,775,121	12	\$1,569,250	9	\$1,024,471	1,400.43	\$644,250	1,237.21
1/6/2015	23	\$3,955,725	14*	\$1,781,081	14	\$1,542,239	5,461.38	\$485,496	1,771.91
10/27/2015	18	\$3,890,884	14	\$2,250,000	11	\$1,958,244	1,820.36	\$1,083,645	1,469.91
9/14/2016	36	\$11,450,556	23	\$6,423,011	17	\$4,679,903	4,750.45	\$2,429,893	4,453.92
9/19/2017	29	\$7,438,001	24*	\$4,238,800	19	\$3,244,922	4,027.77	\$1,882,259	3,398.64
11/19/2019	34	\$15,140,144	19	\$5,859,684	14	\$3,446,666	13,928.29	\$1,671,704	480.90
2/5/2021	15	\$10,498,371	12	\$3,406,250	8	\$1,946,725	5,225.74	\$942,432	1,126.40
6/10/2021	35	\$11,367,545	22	\$4,835,000	15	\$3,367,797	4,193.24	\$1,796,250	2,299.41
10/27/2021	34	\$10,532,985	30	\$7,500,000	14	\$6,734,097	6,416.96	\$5,607,965	6,239.32
11/14/2022	45	\$20,035,453	40	\$14,927,440	14	\$14,921,675	8,682.25	\$9,607,704	6,188.10
11/13/2023	40	\$20,612,307	29	\$14,672,673	0	\$14,672,673	55,574.86	\$7,523,829	52,050.1
TOTAL	540	\$211,145,427	356	\$102,149,998	240	\$89,190,289	154,991.43	\$41,822,962	94,237.42

NOTE: Italicized numbers represent estimated totals as one or more projects have not been closed out.

NOTE: Asterix indicates a change in prior reporting. In 1/6/2015, a grant was awarded to one project with funds coming from two categories. This one project was mistakenly counted as two grants. The error was fixed decreasing the number of awards by one. On 9/19/2017, one grant was awarded to the Natural Heritage Program with a contingency that the funds would go to two other projects if the original grant was withdrawn. The original grant was withdrawn, and the funds went to two other projects therefore increasing the number of projects awarded by one.

The Foundation met its charge to develop a strategic plan for the expenditure of moneys received from the Fund. The strategic plan governing fiscal expenditures has been incorporated into successive VLCF grant manuals beginning in 1999 and is updated regularly. The Board approved the most recent revisions to the grant manual at the May 16, 2023, meeting to establish the FY2024 grant round. The grant scoring criteria are outlined in Appendix C. The most current grant manual can be found at: www.dcr.virginia.gov/vlcf.

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation serves as a coordinating mechanism for bringing together several state agencies' land conservation efforts and priorities. The Foundation is one of the key tools that Virginia utilizes to attain its land conservation targets. A coordinating multi-agency task force consisting of the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the State Forester, the Director of the Department of Historic Resources, the Director of the Department of Wildlife Resources, and the Executive Director of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, or their designees, provide the VLCF Board with assistance on such matters as grant criteria, grant priorities, and grant selection. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation serves as the lead staff for the Foundation.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Office of Land Conservation serves as a statewide central contact, repository, and clearinghouse for land conservation in Virginia. During VLCF grant rounds, this office serves as an important source of information for potential grant applicants and acts as the grant manager for projects funded.

The Office's website (<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/>) and the Foundation's website (<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/vlcf>) include a wide variety of land conservation materials and contact information to assist landowners, conservation organizations, and managers with their conservation planning. In addition, the state's comprehensive statewide conserved lands resource mapping tool, Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE), developed by DCR's Division of Natural Heritage can be found here: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/nhdeinfo>. This important and useful land conservation-planning tool is updated regularly.

FOUNDATION OVERVIEW AND ACTIVITIES IN FISCAL YEAR 2024

Board of Trustees Meetings

In Fiscal Year 2024, the VLCF Board of Trustees met twice to authorize one grant round, discuss applications, consider interest expenditures, and to address land preservation tax credit matters. Meetings of the Board during this time-period were as follows:

- November 13, 2023 – Board of Trustees Meeting: The Board was presented with the FY24 Grant Round applications received and awarded grants to projects as recommended by the interagency task force. The Board approved disbursement of the Stewardship Fund payments.
- June 5, 2024 – Board of Trustees Meeting: Board members recognized the 25th anniversary of VLCF. Secretary Voyles and representatives from state agencies and organizations presented key successes of the Foundation. Board members approved expenditures of up to \$250,000 of interest generated by the Fund. Board members received a presentation on proposed changes to the FY25 grant manual. The Board approved the fiscal plan, proposed timeline and recommended changes to the grant manual.

Interagency Task Force Meetings

Grant applications for VLCF grant rounds are scored and ranked by an interagency task force comprised of representatives of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Forestry, Department of Wildlife Resources, Department of Historic Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, as required by Virginia Code § 10.1-1018(E).

In FY24, the task force met twice to review and rank grant applications received in the FY24 grant round, to develop grant recommendations for the Board, and to discuss and make recommendations to update the FY25 grant manual.

Competitive Grant Awards FY24 (November 13, 2023 Grant Round)

During the FY24 grant cycle, the Foundation received 40 applications requesting \$20,612,307 in grant funds. The project costs for all 40 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$56,722,241 and would protect 57,172 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on November 13, 2023, to consider these applications and approved \$14,672,673 in grant funds for 29 projects to protect 55,575 acres (Table 4).

Summaries of the 29 projects awarded funding in the FY24 grant round are as follows:

FARMLAND PRESERVATION CATEGORY

- 1. Piedmont Environmental Council – *Farmland Protection near Barboursville:*** This project seeks to acquire a conservation easement to preserve a 544-acre farm in the Rappahannock River Basin in Orange County. The project will conserve 245 acres of forest, and buffer 3.3 miles of tributaries to the Rapidan River and the Blue-Cedar-Barbour Runs Stream Conservation Unit. This farm intersects with the following ConserveVirginia categories: Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Water Quality Protection, and Cultural and Historic.

Total Project Cost	\$2,300,000
Match	NRCS-ALE and landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$605,000
Grant Amount	\$605,000

- 2. Trust for Public Land – *The Lower Potomac River Corridor:*** The U.S. Navy and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation will co-hold the conservation easements protecting 320 acres of farmland in Westmoreland County along the Potomac River and Popes Creek. The project is within the viewshed of the George Washington Birthplace National Monument. The ConserveVirginia categories are: Agriculture, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Scenic Preservation and Water Quality Protection.

Total Project Cost	\$2,955,000
Match	Navy - REPI, Trust for Public Land, landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$585,000
Grant Amount	\$585,000

- 3. Virginia Outdoors Foundation – *East West Creek Farms LLC:*** This project will acquire a conservation easement to protect 721 acres of family farmland in Mecklenburg County with prime soils and statewide important farmland. Part of a larger multi-generational family farming operation, this property also contains two miles of frontage on Parham Creek and Flat Creek, which will remain protected with 50-foot forested buffers. ConserveVirginia categories: Agriculture and Forestry.

Total Project Cost	\$1,536,500
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$610,000
Grant Amount	\$610,000

- 4. Stafford County – *AP Legacy, LLC Farm:*** This project will protect a 73.35-acre Century Farm located in Stafford County. The easement will be held by Stafford County, under the County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program. The easement will protect 41 acres of prime farm soils and soils of statewide importance; 12 acres of mixed forestland; and environmental features including 7,120 linear feet of forested perennial streams, 3.5 acres of wetlands, and special flood hazard area. The property was the site of the Brunswick Parish Glebe, one of two 18th century glebes in Stafford, owned by Parson John Waugh (1630-1706). ConserveVirginia categories: Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$496,900
Match	Stafford County PDR Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$248,450
Grant Amount	\$248,450

5. **Piedmont Environmental Council – Farmland Protection along Rapidan River Tributaries:** This project will place a conservation easement on 229 acres of farmland and forestland, including 161 acres of prime and statewide significant soils and 135 acres of forest. Located in Greene County, the project will also protect and improve water quality by maintaining 35 to 50-foot forested riparian buffers along 1.2 miles of Rapidan River tributaries. ConserveVirginia categories: Agriculture, Forestry, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Protected Landscapes, Scenic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,010,000
Match	NRCS-ALE and landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$282,500
Grant Amount	\$282,500

6. **Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Nottoway 186:** This project will place an easement on a 186-acre farm in Southampton County in agricultural and forestal use, with wetlands, and more than 3,000 feet of frontage on the state scenic Nottoway River. The property also contains working pine forest and old-growth cypress and mixed hardwood stands along the river. ConserveVirginia categories: Agriculture and Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Cultural and Historic Preservation, Scenic Preservation, and Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,362,000
Match	US Endowment for Forestry and landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$537,500
Grant Amount	\$537,500

7. **Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Panamint Farm:** This project funds the partial purchase of an easement on Panamint Farm in Louisa County. The 533-acre cattle farm supports pastures and grazing with gently rolling hills throughout with a mixture of open fields and woodland. Gold Mine Creek flows along the western property boundary. There are over 8,800 feet of perennial and intermittent streams with 35- to 50-foot fenced riparian buffers providing habitat and protection for wildlife. The property contains farmland and forest with roughly 200 acres of native Oak Hickory mixed forestlands.

Total Project Cost	\$1,017,500
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$550,000
Grant Amount	\$110,300

FORESTLAND PRESERVATION CATEGORY

- 8. The Nature Conservancy - Clinch Mountain, Pinnacle Rock:** This grant will help fund the fee acquisition of 680 acres of forest in Washington County, protecting over 4.7 miles of perennial streams by providing a 100’ wide riparian buffer. The property will be open to the public and contains the Pinnacle rock formation. ConserveVirginia: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, and Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,134,500
Match	The Nature Conservancy
VLCF Grant Request	\$567,250
Grant Amount	\$567,250

- 9. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources – Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative III:** Department of Wildlife Resources will acquire 762 acres of forestland in Accomack County with this grant, which complements a recently acquired VLCF-funded 8,800 acres on the Eastern Shore. This fee-simple acquisition presents opportunities to facilitate natural marsh migration, support coastal resiliency, provide new public lands for wildlife-related recreation, and, importantly, improve habitat for migratory birds and species of greatest conservation need in an area of hemispheric importance. The property provides for daily public access to wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, hiking, and more. ConserveVirginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,637,300
Match	Federal Wildlife Restoration grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$450,000
Grant Amount	\$450,000 (\$441,300 from Forestland Conservation and \$8,700 from Open Spaces and Parks)

- 10. Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia – Acquiring Rappahannock Tribe’s Ancestral Homelands Phase III:** This grant will help the Rappahannock Tribe acquire 964 acres of ancestral homelands along the Rappahannock River at Fones Cliffs to conserve it as a natural area and use it for educational purposes benefitting the Tribe and the public. The Conservation Fund purchased the property, which the former owner had rezoned as a golf course community and will convey a conservation easement to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, an overlay easement to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, and fee title to the Tribe. The property is within the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge boundary. This project will create 2,454 acres of contiguous conserved habitat along three miles of riverfront. ConserveVirginia: Cultural & Historic Preservation, Forestry, Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Scenic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$3,752,850
Match	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a private foundation, Bureau of Indian Affairs
VLCF Grant Request	\$2,000,000
Grant Amount	\$1,716,166 (\$450,000 from Forestlands Preservation and \$1,266,166 from Historic Preservation)

11. Virginia Department of Forestry – Taylors Mill Farm Conservation Easement, Additional Funding: This easement project received a VLCF grant in FY23 for \$400,000 and DOF is requesting additional funds to cover the unexpected higher cost of the required boundary survey due to the difficult terrain, lack of any prior survey, and limited number of bidders willing to undertake the work. The property is a family-owned farm that lies on the boundary of Fountains Creek, southeast of Emporia in Greensville County. This property is approximately 1,145 acres, of which 860 acres are forested with high conservation value forest. The property contains nearly seven miles of perennial and intermittent streams, and 640 acres of wetlands. ConserveVirginia categories: Agriculture, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,352,000
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$45,000
Grant Amount	\$45,000

12. Land Trust of Virginia – Huff Rock: This project will acquire a conservation easement on the 662-acre Huff Rock property located in Wise County six miles east of Big Stone Gap. The property is on Powell Mountain, which forms the eastern border of the Powell River Valley, and 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 incredible geologic formations, such as 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". ConserveVirginia categories: Cultural and Historic Preservation, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Scenic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$383,000
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$182,000
Grant Amount	\$182,000

13. Virginia Department of Forestry – Poplar Hollow Conservation Easement, Additional Funding: This grant provides additional funds to supplement a prior grant award (\$300,000 FY22) due to the appraisal valuing the easement at \$1,100,000. Adding \$250,000 to the existing award would bring the total funding to 50% of the value of the easement to be held by DOF. The 611-acre property in Shenandoah County contains High Conservation Value Forest. ConserveVirginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,163,500
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$250,000
Grant Amount	\$250,000

14. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources – Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative II: This grant funds the fee-simple acquisition, conservation, and improvement of 476 acres of forestland in Accomack County to complement a recent VLCF-funded acquisition of 8,800 acres on the Eastern Shore. These properties tie together three disjunct properties that the DWR currently owns, facilitating

natural marsh migration, support for coastal resiliency, access to new public lands for wildlife-related recreation, and improving habitat for migratory birds and species of greatest conservation need in an area of hemispheric importance. ConserveVirginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,018,150
Match	Federal Wildlife Restoration grant
VLCF Grant Request	\$300,000
Grant Amount	\$300,000

- 15. Virginia Department of Forestry – Southampton 900:** This grant funds the purchase of a conservation easement on 900 acres of a larger 1,200 privately-owned property. The property has approximately 371 acres of riverfront wetlands and 3.57 miles of State Scenic Blackwater River frontage. ConserveVirginia categories: Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Water Quality Improvement, Scenic Preservation, and Floodplains and Flooding Resilience.

Total Project Cost	\$1,603,500
Match	Enviva Conservation Fund, landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$750,000
Grant Amount	\$164,450

HISTORIC AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

- 16. American Battlefield Trust (ABT) – Whitby Tract at Second Deep Bottom Battlefield:** This grant funds the fee acquisition and conservation of 8.87 acres in Henrico County. The Whitby Tract is located entirely within the Core Area of the Second Deep Bottom Battlefield, a Priority I.3 (Class B) battlefield as defined by the 1993 Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields. ConserveVirginia categories: Cultural and Historic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$605,615
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program, ABT
VLCF Grant Request	\$300,215
Grant Amount	\$300,215

- 17. American Battlefield Trust (ABT) - Welch-Penden Tract at Glendale Battlefield;** ABT will use these grant funds to acquire and conserve 12.46 acres in Henrico County. The Welch-Penden Tract is located entirely within the Core Area of the Glendale Battlefield, a Priority I.3 (Class B) battlefield as defined by the 1993 Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields. ConserveVirginia categories: Cultural and Historic Preservation.

Total Project Cost	\$441,550
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$219,433
Grant Amount	\$219,433

18. American Battlefield Trust - Brandy Rock Farm I Tract at Brandy Station Battlefield: This grant funds the purchase of a historic easement on 100 acres in Culpeper County. The Brandy Rock Farm I Tract is unimproved and located entirely within the Core area of the Brandy Station Battlefield, a Priority I.3 (Class B) battlefield as defined by the 1993 Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields. ConserveVirginia categories: Cultural and Historic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,048,255
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program, landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$271,660
Grant Amount	\$271,660

19. Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation – Stanley Hall at New Market Battlefield: This grant will fund the fee acquisition and conservation of 9.54 acres in Shenandoah County. The Foundation will open the property for interpretation about the creation of the Valley Pike, the story of slavery in the Shenandoah Valley, and the Battle of New Market. Preservation of the Stanley Hall property will also preserve the Hupp House former slave quarters, which is suffering from severe neglect. ConserveVirginia categories: Scenic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$607,543
Match	American Battlefield Preservation Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$303,771
Grant Amount	\$303,771

20. Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation – French Tract at Fisher’s Hill Battlefield: This grant funds the acquisition of 146 acres in Shenandoah County that lie within the core and study areas of the Fisher's Hill Battlefield and the study area of the Cedar Creek Battlefield as identified by the National Park Service. The Fisher's Hill Battlefield is ranked as a Priority I.3 Class B battlefield and the Cedar Creek Battlefield is ranked as I.1 Class A. The property was under threat of imminent development and is adjacent to conserved lands owned by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation. ConserveVirginia categories: Cultural and Historic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,648,518
Match	American Battlefield Protection Program
VLCF Grant Request	\$350,000
Grant Amount	\$350,000

NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION CATEGORY

21. Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR), Division of Natural Heritage – Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve: This grant funds the fee acquisition of a 1,000-acre addition to the Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve in Floyd County and will provide daily public access. The property 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 the Commonwealth. This property has been a long-standing protection priority for over 25 years and is now becoming possible through the public and private partnership with The Conservation Fund. ConserveVirginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Forestry, Natural Habitat and

Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$3,617,677
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$3,617,677
Grant Amount	\$3,617,677

22. DCR, Division of Natural Heritage – Pedlar Hills Addition – Supplemental Funding: This grant funds the remaining funds needed to complete the acquisition of 156 acres as an addition to Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve in Montgomery County. In FY22, a VLCF grant was awarded for \$515,000 for the acquisition, however the subject property proved to be more expensive than originally proposed. The property is adjacent to the preserve and comprised mostly of forested slopes that serve as important habitat buffer for the preserve and provide daily public access. The property lies within the Pedlar Hills Conservation Site and has a biodiversity rank of B1 - the highest rank possible - due to a suite of highly viable rare species habitats and rare woodland natural communities. This property will help close a broad gap between parts of the preserve, protect a sub-population of a federally endangered plant, protect a large swath of forest, and improve management access to the preserve. Conserve Virginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience.

Total Project Cost	\$580,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$65,000
Grant Amount	\$65,000

23. DCR, Division of Natural Heritage – Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve: This grant supports the fee-simple purchase of 48 acres in Franklin County as an addition to Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve. Located in one of Virginia's essential conservation sites, this property supports several natural heritage resources and is necessary to complete the overall preserve design. The property is forested with a globally rare forest type, the Central Appalachian Basic Ash-Hickory Woodland. Conserve Virginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$250,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$250,000
Grant Amount	\$250,000

24. DCR, Division of Natural Heritage – Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve – Browne Farm Easement: This grant supports the acquisition of an easement on 45 acres in Halifax County, adjoining Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve. The tract is almost entirely forested with mature upland hardwood forests predominantly comprised of the globally rare Southern Piedmont Hardpan Forest. This easement will enhance DCR's ability to protect natural heritage resources and key visual and ecological buffers along the main public access corridor into the preserve. Located in one of the most significant essential conservation sites in Virginia, the property harbors multiple natural heritage

resources including four rare plants and one globally rare natural community. ConserveVirginia categories: Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience.

Total Project Cost	\$250,000
Match	N/A
VLCF Grant Request	\$250,000
Grant Amount	\$250,000

OPEN SPACES AND PARKS

25. Washington County – Abrams Creek Property Addition to Mendota Trail: This grant helps fund the acquisition of 220 acres to become a county park open to the public. The project will protect the nearby Mendota Trail ridgeline viewshed and enhance recreational opportunities in this underserved area in Southwestern Virginia. The property includes over 4,200 feet of Abrams Creek - a significant tributary to the North Fork of the Holston River. The property is about 2,000 feet downstream of Abrams Falls, a majestic 75-foot freefall waterfall. The property consists primarily of Appalachian hardwoods with ridgetops over 2,060 feet. ConserveVirginia categories: Agriculture, Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Scenic Preservation.

Total Project Cost	\$1,295,200
Match	Landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$241,100
Grant Amount	\$241,100

26. Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission – Bushy Park Farm Acquisition: This grant supports the acquisition of a 118-acre parcel in Middlesex County. This property contains pristine uplands, beach, tidal and nontidal wetlands and has been deemed both a priority conservation area and area most vulnerable for development. Middlesex County and its partners will establish a public beach park, offering access to the Rappahannock River and Bushy Farm Creek. The park will also offer a nature area with trail access to forested areas, 50 acres of pristine tidal pond, and tidal wetlands. ConserveVirginia Categories: Agriculture, Scenic Preservation.

Total Project Cost	\$2,448,255
Match	Thomas Knight Trust, Middlesex County
VLCF Grant Request	\$750,000
Grant Amount	\$750,000

27. Franklin Parks Foundation – Deer Creek: In partnership with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and the City of Franklin, the Franklin Parks Foundation will acquire 96 acres with river frontage on the state scenic Blackwater River for the creation of additional parkland to Blackwater Park, plus a primitive camp site and boat launch, with the grant funds requested. The project protects old growth hardwood bottomlands, supports several rare species and significant natural communities including anadromous fish and colonial water birds, and will provide daily public access. The wetland forests cover 60 acres of river frontage. ConserveVirginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Scenic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$1,178,300
Match	VOF Preservation Trust Fund, Enviva Forest Fund, OBICI Healthcare Fund, landowner donation
VLCF Grant Request	\$180,000
Grant Amount	\$180,000

28. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources – *Highlands-Lonesome Pine*: This grant helps fund the acquisition of potentially the largest recorded public access easement in Virginia, on property currently owned by the Cumberland Forest Highland LLC (The Nature Conservancy), in Wise, Buchanan, and Dickenson counties. This 44,327-acre easement project in the heart of Appalachia presents an extraordinary and rare opportunity to provide new public access for recreational boating, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, nature-based photography, and hunting, as well as improve restored mined lands to support elk and a myriad of other wildlife species that use a matrix of forested and open grassland habitats. This property would provide an important foothold from which to secure public access on an additional 106,000 acres in this historically economically depressed and socially vulnerable region of the Commonwealth. ConserveVirginia categories: Cultural and Historic Preservation, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Scenic Preservation, Water Quality Improvement.

Total Project Cost	\$7,024,275
Match	Federal Wildlife Restoration grant funds
VLCF Grant Request	\$1,000,000
Grant Amount	\$1,000,000

29. Wildlife Foundation of Virginia – *Marshland on the Mattaponi River*: This grant helps fund the fee acquisition of 482 acres of marshland on the Mattaponi River in the Town of West Point. In addition to the marsh, this project will provide permanent protection of habitat to support wildlife resources, including several species of greatest concern as outlined in the Virginia Wildlife Action Plan. The property also provides protection of habitat for many State tier two species, including game species (American black duck). Partners for this project include Ducks Unlimited, the Department of Wildlife Resources (who will hold an open-space easement on the property), the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the property owner. ConserveVirginia categories: Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity.

Total Project Cost	\$480,200
Match	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VLCF Grant Request	\$220,200
Grant Amount	\$220,200

Table 3: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for the November 13, 2023 Grant Round (FY24)

FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY24 Budget Bill Chapter 2, Item 375 A.1. \$16,000,000	Approved May 16, 2023 Reallocation of Unspent Grant Funds	Subtotal	Nov. 13, 2023 Additional Reallocated Unspent Grant Funds	TOTAL Available for Grant Round
I. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$4,000,000				
II. Grant Program					
(i) Farmland Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$300,000	\$2,700,000	\$278,750	\$2,978,750
(ii) Forestland Conservation	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000
(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$69,075	\$2,469,075	\$242,170	\$2,711,245
(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$2,400,000	\$1,756,314	\$4,156,314	\$177,788	\$4,334,102
(v) Open Spaces and Parks	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000
TOTAL	\$16,000,000	\$2,125,389	\$14,125,389	\$698,708	\$14,824,097
<i>Summary of Additional Unspent Grant Funds</i>					
Farmland Preservation	\$578,750	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY20 Piedmont Environmental Council, Crossroads of Old Fredericksburg Road \$300,000 . FY21RII Piedmont Environmental Council, Protected Farmland along the Rappahannock River \$208,000 ; FY21RII Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Morse Brothers Farm \$70,750 .			
Forestland Conservation	\$0				
Historic Area Preservation	\$311,245	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY22 Campbell Co. Training School Complex Restoration Project \$69,075 . FY21 Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, Stoner Keller \$242,170 .			
Natural Area Protection	\$1,934,102	<u>Withdrawn:</u> FY20 DCR-DNH Crow’s Nest NAP Addtn \$45,126 ; FY21RII DCR-DNH Pickett’s Harbor NAP-Lake Allure Woods \$142,298 ; FY22 DCR-DNH Dendron Swamp NAP Addtn \$300,000 ; FY23 DCR-DNH Mill Creek Springs NAP Expansion \$665,140 . <u>Unexpended Remainder:</u> FY21RII DCR-DNH, Crow’s Nest NAP Addition – Accokeek Bottomlands \$68,921 ; FY22 DCR-DNH, Poor Mtn NAP - NE Addition \$54,703 ; FY23 Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Bull Run Mtns Eastern Overlook \$54,164 . <u>Revised Scope:</u> FY21 DCR-DNH, Southside VA Conservation & Recreation Complex \$603,750 .			
Open Spaces and Parks	\$0				

Table 4: FY24 Competitive Grant Awards FY24 (Grant Round November 14, 2022)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
	Farmlands Preservation						
1	Farmland Protection near Barboursville*	7	\$605,000	544.64	Open	\$605,000	544.64
2	Lower Potomac River Corridor*	1	\$585,000	320.00	Open	\$585,000	320.00
3	East West Creek Farms LLC*	5	\$610,000	720.48	Open	\$610,000	720.48
4	AP Legacy, LLC Farm *	7	\$248,450	73.35	Open	\$248,450	73.35
5	Farmland Protection along Rapidan River Tributaries*	7	\$282,500	229.00	Open	\$282,500	229.00
6	Nottoway 186*	2	\$537,500	186.00	Open	\$537,500	186.00
7	Panamint Farm*	5	\$110,300	533.00	Open	\$110,300	533.00
	Forest Protection						
8	Clinch Mountain, Pinnacle Rock**	9	\$567,250	680.00	Open	\$567,250	680.00
9	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative III - FY24	2	\$450,000	762.00	Open	\$450,000	762.00
10	Acquiring Rappahannock Tribe's Ancestral Homelands Phase III	1	\$1,716,167	964.00	Open	\$1,716,167	964.00
11	Taylor's Mill Farm, Additional Funding Request*	4	\$45,000	1,145.00	Open	\$45,000	1145.00
12	Huff Rock*	9	\$182,000	660.92	Open	\$182,000	660.92
13	Poplar Hollow, Additional Funding Request*	6	\$250,000	611.00	Open	\$250,000	611.00
14	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative II - FY24	2	\$300,000	476.00	Open	\$300,000	476.00
15	Southampton 900*	4	\$164,450	900.00	Open	\$164,450	900.00
	Historic Area Preservation						
16	Whitby Tract at Second Deep Bottom Battlefield**	4	\$300,215	8.87	Open	\$300,215	8.87
17	Welch-Penden Tract at Glendale Battlefield**	4	\$219,433	12.46	Open	\$219,433	12.46
18	Brandy Rock Farm I Tract at Brandy Station Battlefield*	7	\$271,660	100.00	Open	\$271,660	100.00
19	Stanley Hall at New Market Battlefield**	6	\$303,771	9.54	Open	\$303,771	9.54
20	French Tract at Fisher's Hill Battlefield II**	6	\$350,000	146.08	Open	\$350,000	146.08
	Natural Area Protection						
21	Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve - LCI Addition	9	\$3,617,677	1,000.00	Open	\$3,617,677	1000.00
22	Pedlar Hills Addition - Supplemental Funding	9	\$65,000	156.00	Open	\$65,000	156.00

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres
23	Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve - Anderson Addition	9	\$250,000	<i>48.07</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>	<i>48.07</i>
24	Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve - Browne Farm*	5	\$250,000	<i>45.38</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>	<i>45.38</i>
	Open Spaces and Parks						
25	Abrams Creek Property Addition to Mendota Trail**	9	\$241,100	<i>220.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$241,100</i>	<i>220.00</i>
26	Bushy Park Farm Acquisition	1	\$750,000	<i>118.07</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$750,000</i>	<i>118.07</i>
27	Deer Creek**	4	\$180,000	<i>96.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$180,000</i>	<i>96.00</i>
28	Highlands-Lonesome Pine*	9	\$1,000,000	<i>44,327.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$1,000,000</i>	<i>44327.00</i>
29	Marshland on the Mattaponi River**	1	\$220,200	<i>482.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$220,200</i>	<i>482.00</i>
	Totals		<i>\$14,672,673</i>	<i>55,574.86</i>		<i>\$14,672,673</i>	<i>55,574.86</i>

NOTE: Italicized numbers are estimated, as one or more projects have not been closed out.

*Denotes acquisition by easement

**Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality)

The E. Shore Forest Conservation Initiative III - FY24 project received funding from two categories: Forestland Preservation and Open Spaces and Parks. The Rappahannock Tribe's project received funding in two categories: Forestland Preservation and Historic Preservation.

Restricted Funds Grant Rounds

Dominion Energy Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Project (November 1, 2017 and December 10, 2020)

On July 3, 2017, the Army Corps of Engineers issued a final permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was developed and executed by the Commonwealth of Virginia including the Department of Historic Resources acting as the State Historic Preservation Office, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation, and Virginia Electric and Power Company, doing business in Virginia as Dominion Energy Virginia to resolve adverse effects on historic properties due to the Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Project.

The VLCF Board was tasked with holding a grant round for \$12.5 million and awarded nine grants in 2017. In 2020, the Board approved a second grant round to award the remaining funding resulting from a withdrawn project and leftover grant funds, totaling \$1,145,829. This grant round was for the same historic preservation and land conservation purposes to mitigate impacts from the Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton Transmission Line as the first grant round.

As of June 30, 2024, a total of nine projects have been completed, permanently protecting over 1,735 acres and adding to the public's understanding of historical events through new interpretive materials. One remaining project is underway and has been granted an extension until December 31, 2025. In total, \$12,250,000 in grant funds have been distributed, with \$250,000 left to be distributed at the closure of this final project.

American Battlefield Trust – Atkins Tract: This grant will assist in the purchase and interpretation of the 39.45-acre Atkins Tract in Henrico County. The property is situated entirely in the Core Area of the Glendale Battlefield and partially in the Study Area of the Malvern Hill Battlefield, two battles that were part of the Peninsula Campaign. This tract is also located in the Gravel Hill Community, a historic African American community founded in 1777 by formerly enslaved persons who had been freed.

Please refer to the 2022 Annual Report for descriptions of the nine successfully completed projects.

STATUS OF LAND CONSERVATION IN VIRGINIA

Land Conservation Status Summary

The Conservation Lands Database reports that as of June 30, 2024, a total of 4,315,874 acres across Virginia has been preserved by federal, state, and local governments, and private conservation organizations (Table 5). This data indicates that about 17.08 percent of the Commonwealth’s total land is permanently protected. In Virginia’s portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, a total of 3,020,073 acres of land, or about 21.68 percent, has been protected. (Approximately 60 percent of Virginia geographically lies within the Bay watershed.)

Table 5: Land Preservation Statistics in Virginia (through June 30, 2024)

Group Holding the Property or the Easement	Acres of Land Preserved Statewide	Percentage Preserved by Holder	Acres of Land Preserved in Virginia’s Portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed	Percentage Preserved by Holder	Acres of Land Preserved in Virginia’s Non-Bay portion	Percentage Preserved by Holder
Federal	2,354,103	55.75%	1,683,545	55.75%	670,558	51.75%
State	1,449,924	33.60%	989,175	32.75%	460,749	35.56%
Local	160,220	3.71%	141,305	4.68%	18,916	1.46%
Private/Non-profit	351,626	8.15%	206,048	6.82%	145,578	11.23%
Total Protected	4,315,874	100.00%	3,020,073	100.00%	1,295,801	100.00%
Total Acreage of Land in VA*	25,270,000		13,831,890		11,438,110	
Percent Protected	17.08%		21.68%		11.33%	

Since tracking of conserved lands began in 2000, the amount of land protected each year, whether through conservation easements or fee simple acquisitions, has varied greatly (Table 6). There was a high of 107,017 acres conserved in FY2010 and a low of 26,483 acres in FY2022. In total, since 2000, approximately 1,320,208 acres have been preserved overall, with a yearly average of 55,009 acres. Sixty-seven percent of the preserved acres over that period of time are within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Table 6: Current Annual Protection Trends as of June 30, 2024

Fiscal Year	Statewide Acreage	Bay Acreage	Non-Bay Acreage
2001	43,463.72	29,855.67	13,608.05
2002	50,536.81	36,567.11	13,969.70
2003	48,369.96	39,714.31	8,655.65
2004	39,680.24	30,790.04	8,890.20
2005	69,559.79	44,184.72	25,375.07
2006	70,798.22	55,622.16	15,176.06
2007	97,984.66	73,312.31	24,672.35
2008	94,252.32	60,675.43	33,576.89
2009	90,388.85	62,222.70	28,166.15
2010	107,017.18	80,122.57	26,894.61
2011	34,289.15	21,881.23	12,407.92
2012	56,144.62	36,536.18	19,608.44
2013	45,510.56	25,508.41	20,002.15
2014	75,463.18	44,873.68	30,589.50
2015	37,314.56	22,523.29	14,791.27
2016	33,618.49	23,063.90	10,554.59
2017	41,210.89	24,389.91	16,820.98
2018	54,123.17	35,424.90	18,698.27
2019	40,951.83	30,007.42	10,944.41
2020	58,706.16	26,424.63	32,281.53
2021	37,421.39	23,403.57	14,017.82
2022	26,483.08	10,257.15	16,225.93
2023	37,138.79	25,975.46	11,163.33
2024	29,780.23	18,343.80	11,436.43
Total	1,320,207.85	881,680.55	438,527.30
Average annual acreage protected	55,008.66	36,736.69	18,271.97

Land Preservation Tax Credit Responsibilities

Beginning January 1, 2007, the Department of Conservation and Recreation became responsible for verifying the conservation value of donated land or conservation easements that result in land preservation tax-credit applications for \$1 million or more. The Department's recommendations are forwarded to the Department of Taxation. Annual reports summarizing the conservation value of all tax credits claimed during 2009 through 2023 are published separately from this report and are available online at: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/lp-taxcredit>. The Land Preservation Tax Credit program recently met an important milestone and celebrated the conservation of over one million acres.

Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Since 2001, the VLCF has allocated more than \$28 million to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (Table 7). Pursuant to the funding formula provided in § 10.1-1020 (C)(1) of the *Code of Virginia*, the VLCF transfers 25 percent of its appropriation to VOF, unless otherwise provided in the state budget. These monies are transferred to the Open Space Land Preservation Trust Fund to assist with the purchase of farm and forestland easements held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. The projects involve the partial purchase of development rights and the reimbursement of costs of the easement donations (legal, appraisal, etc.). Funds are periodically further leveraged with grants from the VLCF and other deposits to the Open Space Land Preservation Trust Fund.

As of June 30, 2024, a total of \$28,134,911 has been appropriated from VLCF to the Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund. Of this amount, \$20,574,922 has been spent in part on 564 conservation easements protecting 114,692 acres. The VLCF funds were leveraged to secure private, local, and federal funds totaling over \$7.8 million towards the easements noted. The remaining balance of the transferred funds has been committed to 66 projects that will protect an additional 7,662 acres.

Table 7: VLCF Funding Allocated to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Fiscal Year	Source	Amount Allocated to VOF
FY2001	Appropriation Act	\$1,550,000
FY2004	Vehicle Registration	\$365,819
FY2005	Appropriation Act	\$625,000
FY2005	Interest	\$14,246
FY2005	Appropriation Act	\$2,500,000
FY2005	Vehicle Registration	\$95,265
FY2006	Appropriation Act	\$625,000
FY2006	Interest	\$47,240
FY2006	Vehicle Registration	\$195,890
FY2007	Appropriation Act	\$625,000
FY2007	Vehicle Registration	\$165,817
FY2008	Appropriation Act	\$125,000
FY2008	Interest	\$75,000
FY2008	Appropriation Act	\$750,000
FY2008	Vehicle Registration	\$99,468
FY2009	Vehicle Registration	\$1,166
FY2009	Appropriation Act	\$500,000
FY2010	Appropriation Act	\$500,000
FY2011	Appropriation Act	\$125,000
FY2012	Appropriation Act	\$125,000
FY2012	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2013	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2014	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2015	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2016	Appropriation Act	\$250,000
FY2016	Appropriation Act	\$750,000
FY2017	Appropriation Act	\$2,000,000
FY2018	Appropriation Act	\$900,000
FY2019	Appropriation Act	\$0
FY2020	Appropriation Act	\$1,125,000
FY2021	Appropriation Act	\$2,500,000
FY2022	Appropriation Act	\$2,500,000
FY2023	Appropriation Act	\$4,000,000
FY2024	Appropriation Act	\$4,000,000
TOTAL		\$28,134,911

CONSERVATION PLAN AND TOOL DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive Plan Development

Subsection 1 of § 10.1-1021 of the *Code of Virginia* directs the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to prepare a comprehensive plan “that recognizes and seeks to implement all of the purposes for which the Foundation is created.” In the process of developing this comprehensive plan, the Code of Virginia directs the Foundation to:

- i. Develop a strategic plan for the expenditure of unrestricted moneys;
- ii. Develop and maintain an inventory of those properties in which the Commonwealth holds a legal interest “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
- iii. Develop and maintain a needs assessment for future land conservation projects considering the reports and information listed in Subsection 1c. Subsection 1c specifies that “[i]n developing the needs assessment, the Board of Trustees shall consider among others the properties identified in the following: (i) Virginia Outdoors Plan, (ii) Virginia Natural Heritage Plan, (iii) Virginia Institute of Marine Science Inventory, (iv) Virginia Joint Venture Board of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and (v) Virginia Board of Historic Resources Inventory. In addition, the Board shall consider any information submitted by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on farmland preservation priorities and any information submitted by the Department of Forestry on forest land initiatives and inventories.” The Department of Wildlife Resources’ Wildlife Action Plan also serves as a resource to the Foundation in identifying lands in need of protection.

ConserveVirginia

Virginia’s land conservation investments are essential to making the Commonwealth a wonderful place to live and visit. Land and water conservation protects the places we love, supports a high quality of life and fosters economic growth and prosperity. The Commonwealth is dedicated to ensuring the highest conservation outcomes from state funds spent on protecting land, and ConserveVirginia, Virginia’s land conservation strategy, is a key tool in guiding these investments. This strategy includes spatial data representing only the highest statewide priorities on unprotected lands that were provided by 15 state and federal agencies and conservation organizations.

The 2021 General Assembly supported the establishment of ConserveVirginia in the Code of Virginia (§ 10.1-104.6:1). DCR is now charged with developing this GIS-based land conservation strategy; updating and maintaining mapping tools; making those tools available to the conservation community; and supporting the integration of ConserveVirginia into conservation prioritizations and grant programs, while collaborating with the conservation community and consulting with the Chief Resilience Officer and Special Assistant for Coastal Adaptation and Protection.

ConserveVirginia identifies approximately 7.8 million acres of priority lands for conservation. The ConserveVirginia Map is the synthesis of 24 mapped data inputs, divided into seven categories, each representing a different overarching conservation value: Agriculture and Forestry; Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity; Floodplains and Flooding Resilience; Cultural and Historic Preservation; Scenic Preservation; Protected Landscapes Resilience, and Water Quality Improvement. Identified lands can cross multiple categories.

ConserveVirginia is envisioned to guide land conservation in Virginia for the next generation. Data must be updated every two years. The most recent update, version 3.0 added almost one million new acres due to refined priorities provided by partners. Lands that were conserved since the release of version 2.0 were removed because they were successfully protected. This strategy charts a dynamic new path for data driven prioritized land conservation and a method by which to set both conservation and funding needs and to monitor progress.

Outdoor recreation opportunities and needs, including access for underserved communities, are critical components of the strategy and are addressed across the categories via DCR's Nature-based Recreation Model (discussed later, herein). In 2016, the Trust for Public Land reported that outdoor recreation generates \$13.6 billion in consumer spending and \$923 million in state and local tax revenues in Virginia. Identifying land conservation opportunities to expand upon recreational opportunities, on land and water, is a key consideration for conservation efforts across all ConserveVirginia categories. The Virginia ConservationVision Nature-based Recreation Access Model is used to assess public access values of land conservation projects, to place emphasis on providing outdoor recreation opportunities in areas where there is currently greatest need.

Three broad approaches have been implemented to help advance ConserveVirginia since its inception:

1. Engagement of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and other state grant programs to place emphasis on funding projects identified in the strategy.
2. Focus of land conservation funds and efforts by state agencies on these priority lands.
3. Expansion of existing, and creation of new, funding sources and tools to advance protection of these priority lands.

Through ConserveVirginia, Virginia is leading targeted, value-based land conservation to ensure the greatest conservation outcomes and prosperity for future generations across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Although their names are similar, ConserveVirginia should not be confused with Virginia ConservationVision, described below. Simply put, ConserveVirginia is a summary of only top priorities of seven categories on unprotected lands, whereas Virginia ConservationVision is Virginia's land conservation atlas that includes full ranges of value priorities represented by eight models, regardless of the conservation status of lands. An update of ConserveVirginia, to version 4.0, is planned for release in 2025.

The Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)

The Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) is the Commonwealth's official outdoor recreation and land conservation plan. The VOP serves as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for compliance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) federal assistance program provided by the National Park Service in accordance with the LWCF Act of 1965. The plan has been expanded to substantially meet the requirements of the Foundation's comprehensive plan. The VOP is prepared by DCR and updated every five years. The VOP is the state's official plan for the protection and conservation of Virginia's important natural, outdoor recreational, and open space resources. The plan is based on an inventory of publicly held park and open space land, including local, state, and federal outdoor recreational lands, and an assessment of Virginia's outdoor recreational needs. This inventory of existing lands and facilities, and unmet needs serves as a basis for the Foundation's needs assessment, as required under § 10.1-1021 of the *Code of Virginia*.

The current Virginia Outdoors Plan identifies and expands on the Foundation's key land conservation needs and protection strategies and continues to serve as a sound foundation for future land conservation activities within the Commonwealth. The plan's chapter on land conservation covers the benefits of land conservation, tools for achieving land conservation, and recommendations for types of land that should be protected.

Projects that protect the Commonwealth's natural, scenic, open space, and cultural resources are identified as part of the VOP regional outreach. In addition to an assessment of existing statewide outdoor recreational resources and conserved lands, the VOP also provides recommendations for regional featured projects. As part of the development of the VOP, DCR hosts annual meetings in collaboration with each of Virginia's 21 planning districts. These meetings are the foundation for DCR's assessment of outdoor recreation and land conservation implementation progress. Regional accomplishments are identified, and the needs and priorities for outdoor recreation and land conservation are assessed by engaging government agencies, localities, regional planning districts, and outdoor recreation and land conservation stakeholders.

As per the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan must be updated every five years. This includes an up-to-date comprehensive public survey as well as input from all Regions of the Commonwealth and partner agencies. The Department's Planning and Recreation Resources Division staff are actively working on planning and coordination for the 2023 VOP with the anticipated completion expected in 2024. The GIS based production will allow users a new and improved hands-on approach to recreation. It will summarize the most recent results of the Virginia Outdoors Survey and provide planning districts and localities best practices in grant management and applications.

Further, the Land and Water Conservation Fund program continues to fund the acquisition of park properties. The LWCF Program is a 50-50 match reimbursement grant program with annual apportionments to the state to distribute to eligible recipients upon a grant round process. VLFC funding

can be a match source for these projects as well. The Department’s LWCF and VLCF staff continue to coordinate to assist partners in their funding needs as appropriate.

Virginia’s Natural Heritage Plan

The Virginia Natural Area Preserves Act (Virginia Code § 10.1-209 *et seq.*) charges the Department of Conservation and Recreation with establishing and maintaining the state’s Natural Heritage Program (NHP) and developing a Natural Heritage Plan (NHPlan) to guide the preservation of Virginia’s natural heritage resources: habitat for rare plants and animals; significant natural communities and significant geologic features (e.g., caves and other karst features). Land conservation planning is a key component of the NHPlan and vital to the effective conservation of the state’s natural heritage. The NHPlan, entitled “*Virginia’s Precious Heritage: A Report on the Status of Virginia’s Natural Communities, Plants and Animals, and a Plan for Preserving Virginia’s Natural Heritage Resources*”, is available on DCR’s website (http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/documents/NHPc_Web.pdf). The data and conservation planning tools that comprise the NHPlan are continually expanded and enhanced, and updates to natural heritage resources data are updated quarterly for external sharing and partner use quarterly.

A revision of the NHPlan is under development for completion in 2024. The revised plan will lay out DCR’s approach to identifying those places that are most important for preserving Virginia’s natural heritage resources. The NHPlan is developed from a foundation of the most comprehensive and up-to-date biodiversity data available in the Commonwealth. The revised NH Plan will more effectively identify highest priority natural heritage resources to conserve, where data and information will be tailored to partners’ (e.g. partner agencies, non-profits, land trusts) land conservation targets, missions and territories (i.e. where they work in the Commonwealth).

Over the past five decades, DCR has worked to convert its detailed scientific data and information into easily interpreted and versatile map-based tools to use and share to inform conservation decisions. Field data on natural heritage resources are used to develop maps of conservation sites. Conservation sites are mapped boundaries that encompass one or more natural heritage resources and the surrounding habitat or buffer necessary to permanently protect those resources. Each conservation site includes detailed information on the location, viability, threats and conservation status of the resources they contain. DCR has developed and maintains mapped boundaries for 2,433 conservation sites around the state, totaling more than 3,400,362 acres of terrestrial, stream- and karst-associated lands.

Mapped Conservation Sites are central to the NHPlan, and relied upon by a variety of local, state, and federal governmental agencies with conservation and natural resources management objectives. These and other DCR data are also shared with conservation partners via the Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE), for conservation planning and project review efforts. The NHDE, accessible at <https://vanhde.org/>, is an efficient tool utilized by 200 government agencies, conservation organizations, universities, and private companies. Moreover, to date, this tool has been replicated in a dozen other states

based on the model of environmental review efficiency that has been set in Virginia. DCR staff strive to keep natural heritage resources data up-to-date and reflective of current conditions for internal uses, and these data are updated for partners on a quarterly basis.

In addition to Conservation Sites, DCR uses and shares with partners two additional statewide datasets to help inform conservation prioritization efforts. These GIS-based datasets identify the Natural Area Preserve Resiliency Areas and Conservation Sites of greatest conservation urgency.

The Natural Area Preserve Resiliency Areas are key lands surrounding the Natural Area Preserves (NAPs), where the Program works to: (i) focus land protection efforts and land management activities; (ii) concentrate on partnerships with existing landowners and land managers of those resiliency lands; and (iii) tailor information sharing based on resources in those resiliency areas. Focusing acquisition efforts, partnership, and management of lands in resiliency areas will help to ensure protection of the rare species and natural communities protected on NAPs in light of climate change and other landscape scale disturbances; enable development of public access opportunities that do not jeopardize rare species and habitats; and help to assure that management of natural heritage resources on the NAP System (e.g. access for use of prescribed fire and invasive species control) can be carried out with better success and efficiency.

Conservation Sites for rare plant and animal species habitat that are of greatest conservation urgency are also ranked/prioritized with multiple levels of “essential” status, for internal and partner uses. These sites are analyzed by the rarity of those resources; the quality and viability of the specific occurrences of those species and communities; and the threats to those occurrences based on surrounding landscape and land use patterns. This analysis identifies the very most important sites that need protection and management – those that are essential to the preservation of the rarest and most threatened species and natural communities in Virginia. Availability of this dataset enables conservation efforts to be focused on most essential areas for conservation of natural heritage resource and allows opportunities to be swiftly recognized when they arise in relation natural heritage resources of most urgent conservation need.

These aspects of DCR’s Natural Heritage Program data, information, Natural Heritage Data Explorer, and the NHplan are integral to the Foundation’s planning efforts and important components of the Virginia Outdoors Plan. DCR’s land conservation planning tools play an important role in land conservation planning by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and Virginia’s land conservation community.

Another key component of the NHPlan and data provided to partners and the public, is the DCR-maintained inventory of all conserved lands in Virginia. The Department’s Conservation Lands Database addresses the requirements of § 10.1-1021(1)(b) of the *Code of Virginia*, which directs VLFCF to develop an inventory of those properties in which the Commonwealth holds a legal interest “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.” The Conservation Lands Database includes local, state, and national parks, university lands, as well as privately held protected lands and conservation easements with parcel-level boundaries and attributes. These lands are mapped to the parcel level for a comprehensive spatial dataset of lands that serve conservation, recreation, and open-space purposes. The database is refined for accuracy on a daily basis. Parcel information related to management intent, legal protection status, dates of initial conservation action, and boundary refinements are available to the conservation community. New parcels are constantly incorporated into the Conservation Lands Database, through regular data sharing between DCR and other state agencies, localities, land trusts, and other conservation organizations.

The Conservation Lands Database is available to the public through DCR’s Natural Heritage Data Explorer (NHDE) website at <https://vanhde.org/>. This mapping website allows users to view, query, and explore conservation lands data in the context of several base layers (i.e., aerial photography, hydrologic data, jurisdictional boundaries, etc.) and alongside other maps of natural and cultural resource features (Virginia ConservationVision). Information on the Conservation Lands Database is available at <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/clinfo> where GIS shapefiles can be downloaded for use in any GIS. The Conservation Lands Database is used by the Chesapeake Bay Program to establish and track progress on land conservation related goals for the 2025 Watershed Agreement.

Virginia Natural Heritage maintains collaborative roles with partners to integrate the Virginia Conservation Lands Database into the USGS’ PAD-US (Protected Areas Dataset for the United States) and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities’ NCED (National Conservation Easements Database), two national efforts to map protected lands. The PAD-US manages national public lands data, while the NCED concentrates on private conservation easements. Virginia Natural Heritage is considered the state’s data aggregator for both efforts.

DCR’s Natural Heritage Program also maintains Virginia ConservationVision, a set of eight statewide, publicly available GIS models for conservation planning. Each map quantifies relative importance of ecological, cultural, recreational, forested, agricultural, and watershed values throughout the Commonwealth, as well as relative vulnerability to development. The Foundation provided funding for the development of these conservation tools, available at the Virginia ConservationVision page (<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvision>) and on the NHDE website. These models have been used by many state and local governments, Planning District Commissions, and conservation organizations, to provide explicit, quantitative guidance in the development of green infrastructure plans, strategic conservation plans, comprehensive plan revisions, and various other land use and conservation prioritization decisions.

The following is a brief description of the available GIS models that make up Virginia ConservationVision:

1. Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment

The Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment is a landscape-scale, geospatial analysis for identifying, prioritizing, and connecting natural lands. The VaNLA uses land cover data to identify natural habitats called Ecological Cores, which are large patches of natural land with at least 100 continuous acres of interior cover. Interior cover begins 100 meters inward from edges caused by fragmenting features, such as roads or utility corridors, and the edge zones are added to the interior areas to create Ecological Cores. Smaller features called Habitat Fragments, with 10 to 99 acres of continuous interior cover, are included because they support other VaNLA features and because they are important in localities with few large patches of natural land. The predominant cover in Ecological Cores statewide is forest, but marshes, beaches, and dunes are significant components where they are abundant and meet minimum size requirements. Ecological Cores are ranked by integrity, from C1-Outstanding to C5-General Ecological Integrity, to reflect the wide range of important benefits and ecosystem services they provide, including biodiversity conservation, wildlife habitat, aesthetic values, recreational opportunities, and protections for air and water quality. Ecological Cores are connected by Landscape Corridors to create a statewide network of the highest priority lands, known as the Natural Lands Network, and are aggregated along with contiguous natural cover into larger planning units called Natural Landscape Blocks. A set of special Landscape Corridors connecting a great diversity of environments were selected and expanded for potential conservation as Resilience Corridors to maintain connectivity to allow species movement between elevations, between latitudes, and inland from the ocean. These Resilience Corridors were integrated with Ecological Cores ranked C1, and other partner datasets to develop the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity category of *ConserveVirginia*. Resilience Corridors formed the basis of the Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors that were developed for the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan, described below.

2. Cultural Resources Preservation Index

The Cultural Resources Preservation Index, developed by the Department of Historic Resources (DHR), displays the likelihood of a given location having conservation value when considering known and evaluated cultural heritage resources. The dataset includes unprotected National Historic Landmarks; lands listed on, contributing to, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the Virginia Landmarks Register; and sites or properties without formal evaluations of eligibility that are recommended to have potential for eligibility. The index is ranked from 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest) and shows the highest priority occurring within broad hexagons to obscure locations of sensitive resources. The index can be used to prioritize lands for protection of significant cultural resources. The DHR developed a highest priority Cultural & Historic Resources dataset for integration *ConserveVirginia*.

3. Nature-Based Recreational Model

The purpose of the Nature-based Recreation Access Model is to quantify the availability of opportunities for nature-based recreation on Virginia's public lands and waters, and to identify areas where more opportunities are needed. DCR developed two sets of metrics to evaluate land- and water-based recreation needs. The land-based model uses travel times to, and the numbers and sizes of, protected lands with public access, and the recreation pressures on those lands based on local population sizes. The water-based model uses travel times to, and the numbers of, water access points,

and the numbers of water-based activities offered at those points, as well as the recreation pressures on those points based on local population sizes. The Nature-Based Recreation Access Model is part of ConserveVirginia in that it is used to assess the potential public access values of all lands proposed for protection via the VLCF Grant Program.

4. Forest Conservation Value (FCV) Model

The Forest Conservation Value (FCV) Model is a tool designed by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) to strategically identify the highest priority forestland for conservation in Virginia. The intent is to maximize the efficiency of limited resources by focusing conservation efforts on the highest quality, most productive and most vulnerable forestland statewide. The FCV model evaluates components for forested blocks, management potential, connectivity to other conserved lands, watershed integrity, and threat of conversion to prioritize the highest value forestlands for conservation. The model ranks all forestland in Virginia from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) FCV. The highest priority forestlands identified in the FCV provided the forest component data input to the Agriculture & Forestry category of the ConserveVirginia.

5. Agricultural Model

The Agricultural Model quantifies the relative suitability of lands for agricultural activity. The model output is a spatial dataset with agricultural value ranging from 0 (unsuitable) to 100 (optimal). Agricultural value is assessed primarily based on three measures of soil suitability from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The model also accounts for current land cover and travel time to markets in the final valuation. Staff at NRCS and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) were consulted during development of the model. The model can be viewed as a web map on the NHDE and in ArcGIS Online, and the dataset is available for download from the Virginia ConservationVision website. For ConserveVirginia version 3.0, the agricultural data input to the Agriculture & Forestry category was developed by the American Farmland Trust from its *Farms Under Threat: State of the States* project (version 2.0) database.

6. Watershed Model

The purpose of the Watershed Impact Model is to help establish geographic priorities for conservation, restoration, or implementation of best management practices, where the goal is to maintain or improve water quality and aquatic ecological integrity. It is intended as a geospatial screening tool for assessing where activities on the land have the greatest impact on water quality. The model relies on multiple data sources representing conditions that drive the terrestrial influence on aquatic systems, including precipitation, geology, soils, topography, and hydrology. Although land cover also exerts a key influence on hydrologic flow and pollutant loads reaching streams, it is not used to calculate potential impact. Instead, potential impact is calculated under a "worst case scenario" assumption of barren land. By leaving land cover out of the equation, the calculation of potential impact is robust in the face of land cover changes that can happen over very short time scales.

7. Development Vulnerability Model

The Development Vulnerability Model quantifies the risk of conversion from greenspace (natural, rural, or other open space lands) to urbanized or other built-up land uses. The model output is a raster

dataset in which the relative vulnerability of lands ranges from 0 (least vulnerable) to 100 (most vulnerable). Vulnerability values are not probabilities but should be interpreted as a relative measure of development potential. Conservation lands on which biodiversity preservation is believed to be the primary goal are considered undevelopable and are coded with the value -1, while areas in which development has already occurred are coded 101.

8. Potential Rare Species Richness

The Potential Rare Species Richness data layer represents the relative number of Virginia's threatened, endangered, and rare plant and animal species likely to occur across the Commonwealth, by summarizing predictions of suitable habitat within three-mile diameter hexagons. The layer is derived from the collection of current Predicted Suitable Habitat (PSH) maps; each individual PSH map indicates where suitable habitat for a particular species is expected to exist. These maps are developed and maintained by the Natural Heritage Program to assist in protection and inventory of rare species in Virginia.

Virginia ConservationVision products are available to the public through the NHDE website, where they can be compared to each other, reference layers, conserved lands, and ConserveVirginia. They are also available for use in desktop GIS, with access information provided at the bottom of the page for each model linked to the Virginia ConservationVision page.

Along with ConserveVirginia, the Conservation Sites Database and the Conservation Lands Database, Virginia ConservationVision is utilized to assess grant proposals to the Foundation for funding consideration. These maps prioritize pertinent conservation values and are used in scoring potential lands in all VLCF interest areas, alongside other criteria. Furthermore, other state agencies and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation rely on specific Virginia ConservationVision maps to screen potential conservation easement lands.

The Natural Heritage Plan and the assemblage of conservation information and tools developed by DCR's Natural Heritage Program greatly assist VLCF with strategic planning. Likewise, they are available to grant applicants, to assess the conservation values and strengths of prospective land conservation proposals to the VLCF. These tools will continue to be developed, updated, and refined to enable objective evaluations of VLCF proposals in multiple grant categories; planning of future natural area conservation needs; and fulfillment of information requests from land planners and managers at the local, state, and federal levels.

Virginia's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan

Virginia is one of the first states in the eastern U.S. to create a Wildlife Corridor Action Plan (WCAP). This plan places a clear emphasis on protecting vital habitat corridors for reducing wildlife-vehicle conflicts and promoting biodiversity conservation. Wildlife-vehicle conflicts can occur when wildlife traverse roads seeking to food, water, shelter, mating, and dispersal. This leads to potential driver safety

risks and deadly impacts to wildlife populations. More than 60,000 known wildlife-vehicle conflicts occur annually in Virginia, costing the Commonwealth and its citizens approximately \$533 million each year.

To create the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan, a collaborative leadership team was established comprised of members from multiple state agencies involved with wildlife habitats and road infrastructure. The plan goals are to identify corridors comprised of high-quality habitats for priority species and ecosystem health; identify areas of high risk for wildlife-vehicle conflicts; identify priority areas for wildlife crash countermeasures to promote habitat connectivity and to improve road safety; and to provide a publicly available website to host the plan and its relevant data.

High priority wildlife corridors were identified by leveraging and enhancing data from the ConserveVirginia and the Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment conservation planning tools, as well as other data sources, to develop Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors. Areas of high wildlife-vehicle conflict rates were estimated using an analysis based on two databases compiled using police-reported collisions. An analysis of the corridor and wildlife-conflict products was conducted to identify 26 Wildlife Crossing Nexus Areas as state priority areas potentially requiring wildlife crash countermeasures. These nexus areas are both located within Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors and experience the highest rates of wildlife-vehicle conflict across the state. Virginia now has established a strong basis to strategically direct state resources for the mutually compatible benefits of protecting wildlife corridors and promoting driver safety. The WCAP is available here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/corridors/>. As this important tool continues to be developed, updated, and refined it enables evaluations of VLCF proposals across multiple grant categories to achieve multiple significant statewide objectives.

Strategic Plan Development

Subdivision (1)(a) of § 10.1-1021 of the *Code of Virginia* directs the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to “[d]evelop a strategic plan for the expenditure of unrestricted moneys received from the Fund.” The current strategic plan is embodied in the grant program guidelines approved by the VLCF Board most recently on May 16, 2023. This document clearly addresses how the funding will be expended through grants and delineates what categories the funding is to be used for, who is eligible, what the match requirements are, and what evaluation criteria are to be used to evaluate the applications. The plan may be found at: www.dcr.virginia.gov/virginia_land_conservation_foundation/.

Revised grant criteria guided the review of applications received during the recent grant round that was considered by the Board. As in the past, all the technical information collected from these grant applicants was evaluated by an interagency task force.

The interagency task force is comprised of representatives of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Forestry, the Department of Historic Resources, the Department of Wildlife Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Through this rigorous multi-agency review and scoring process, only those proposals that

best serve the purposes of the Foundation and that make the best fiscal sense are recommended to the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees.

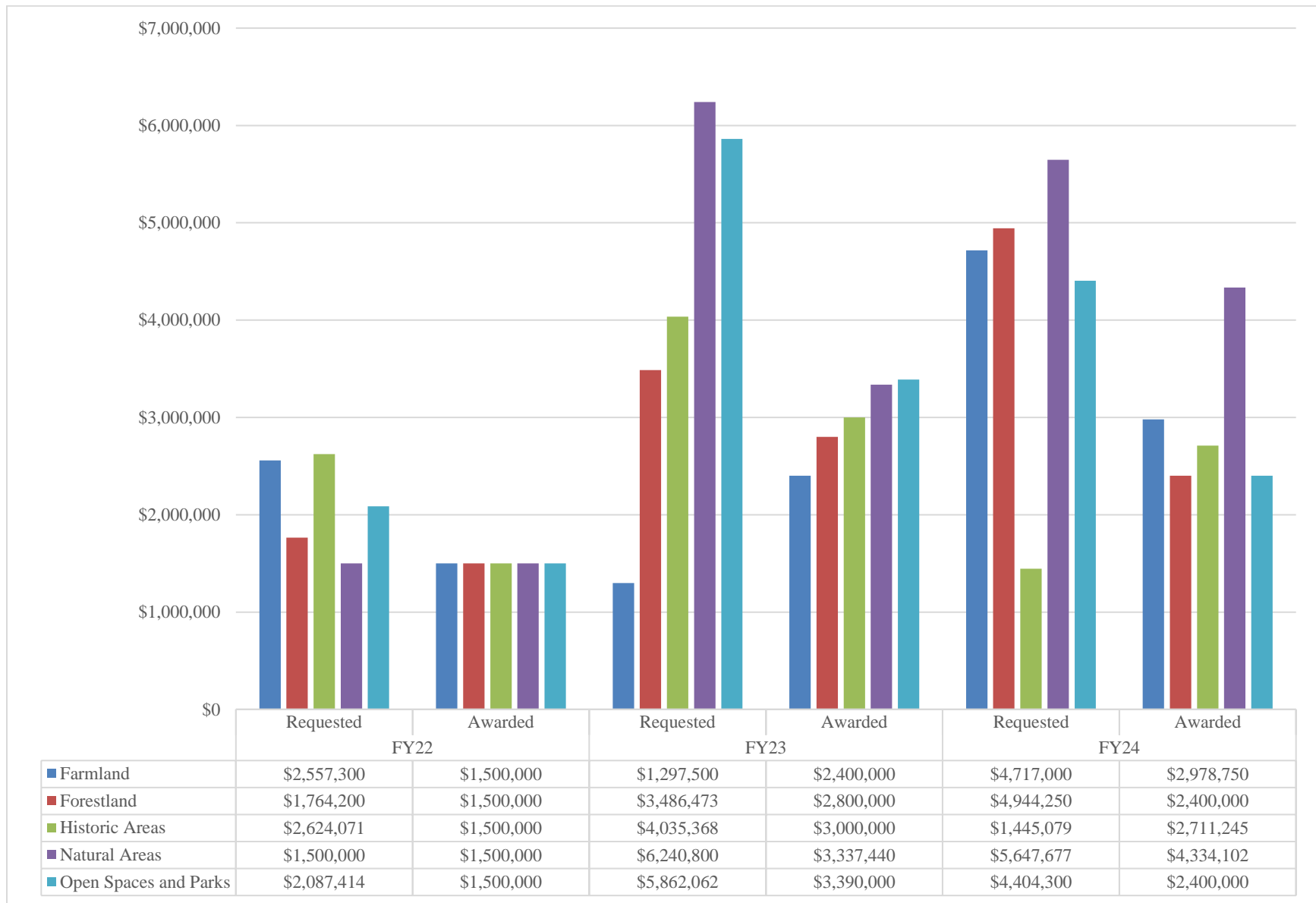
The Foundation continues to use and develop state-of-the-art land conservation information systems and decision support tools. Conservation Lands and Conservation Sites Databases, and ConserveVirginia assist the Foundation in ranking and selecting priority land preservation projects and the Foundation continues to seek ways to more effectively leverage these tools.

Looking Forward: Estimate of Funds Needed to Achieve Foundation Goals

The reporting requirements of the Foundation in § 10.1-1018.1 of the Code of Virginia require an estimate of the funds needed to achieve goals established by the Board for (a) natural area protection, (b) open spaces and parks, (c) farmland preservation, (d) forest land preservation, (e) historical and cultural sites, (f) meeting the needs of under-resourced communities, and (g) any other goal determined by the Board. The grant funding categories are set in § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia, so we look to the funding requested in each grant round over the past few years. Figure 1 illustrates how the total funding available for grant rounds held in fiscal years 2022 through 2024 is slightly more than half of the amount of funding requested for projects across all categories.

If the amount of requested funding may be considered need, then, on average nearly twice the amount of money available in a typical year is needed to meet the need. However, the amount requested by applicants is dependent on the amount of funding available. Additionally, potential applicants may or may not apply for grant funding based upon how much funds are available. Total project costs often exceed the available grant funding by more than four times.

Figure 1: VLCF Grant Awards Versus Requested Amount from FY22 to FY24



APPENDIX A: PAST VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION GRANT ROUNDS

Appendix A includes updated information on recent grant rounds with remaining open grants. Detailed information on past grant rounds starting in 1999 can be found in prior VLCF reports, at <https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/>

Competitive Grant Awards FY21 Round I (February 5, 2021 Grant Round)

Item 374 A.1. of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly included \$10,000,000 for the Virginia Land Conservation Fund pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia. Due to the uncertainty of the budget due to the pandemic, \$4,500,000 was available for the first FY21 grant round. An additional \$31,250 that was not allocated in the FY20 historic category was added for a total of \$3,406,250 in grant funds (Table 8). On September 22, 2020, the Board met and approved the grant round.

In total, the Foundation received 30 applications requesting \$10,498,371 in grants. The project costs for all 30 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$55,049,487 and would protect 15,876 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on February 5, 2021, to consider the applications and approved \$3,406,250 in grant funds for 12 projects to protect 12,261 acres, see Table 9. Eight projects have been completed and four were withdrawn, completing the grant round. Funding from the four withdrawn projects and projects completed under budget were included in the same category in future grant rounds.

Table 8: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for FY21 February 5, 2021 Grant Round

	FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY21 Budget Bill Chapter 1289, Item 374 A.1. \$4,500,000	FY20 Remainder	TOTAL
1.	VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25%)	\$1,125,000		\$1,125,000
2.	Grant Program			
	(i) Farmland and Forest Preservation	\$843,750		\$843,750
	(ii) Historic Area Preservation	\$843,750	\$31,250	\$875,000
	(iii) Natural Area Protection	\$843,750		\$843,750
	(iv) Open Spaces and Parks	\$843,750		\$843,750
	TOTAL for Grant Round	\$3,375,000	\$31,250	\$3,406,250

Table 9: FY21 Grant Awards (February 5, 2021 Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
	Farmlands Preservation							
1	Farmland Protection along the Blue Ridge Turnpike*	5	\$315,000	450.58	May 2024	\$315,000	447.10	Y
2	Farmland Protection along the Robinson River*	5	\$106,875	592.18	April 2024	\$106,875	596.38	Y
	Forestlands							
3	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative	2	\$421,875	8,654.00 See FY20	May 2023	\$421,875	7,912.11 (See FY20)	Y
	Historic Area Preservation							
4	Brill **	6	\$411,807	72.00	June 2022	\$411,807	73.82	Y
5	Stoner-Keller*	6	\$242,170	120.27	Withdrawn			Y
6	James Jackson Tract at the Wilderness Battlefield**	7	\$221,023	36.17	Withdrawn			Y
	Natural Area Protection							
7	Southside Va. Conservation & Recreation Complex (Phase I)***	5	\$843,750	2,010.00	March 2024	\$207,418	3,898.99	Y
	Open Spaces & Parks							
8	Appomattox River Trail - Critical Petersburg Gap Connection**	4	\$28,943	7.90	July 2023	\$28,943	9.09	Y
9	Blackwater Conservation Acquisition	4	\$375,000	203.00	Oct. 2022	\$375,000	200.36	Y
10	Rappahannock River Park	7	\$210,000	46.53	Withdrawn			Y
11	River Farm	8	\$150,000	24.71	Withdrawn			Y
12	Camp Kum Ba Yah Inc. II*	6	\$79,807	44.00 See FY20	March 2022	\$79,807	42.13 (See FY20)	N
	Totals		\$3,406,250	12,261.34		\$1,946,725	5225.74	91.67%

*Denotes acquisition by easement

**Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality)

***As of May 16, 2023, board meeting, original grant of \$843,750 reduced to \$240,000, due to landowner donation rather than purchase, leaving \$603,750 to be rolled into FY24 grant round.

Competitive Grant Awards FY21 Round II (June 10, 2021 Grant Round)

Item 374 A.1. of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly included \$10,000,000 for the Virginia Land Conservation Fund pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia. Due to the uncertainty of the budget during to the pandemic, \$4,500,000 was available for the first FY21 grant round, Table 10. The remaining \$5,500,000 would be awarded at a second grant round. During this FY21 Round II grant cycle, the Foundation received 35 applications requesting \$11,367,545 in grants. The project costs for all 35 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$56,064,352 and would protect 9,153.71 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on June 10, 2021, to consider these applications and approved \$4,835,000 in grant funds for 22 projects to protect 6,138.11 acres, see Table 11.

As of the date of this report, 15 projects have been successfully completed, and seven projects were withdrawn, completing this grant round. Funding from the seven withdrawn projects and projects that were completed under budget have been included in the same category in future grant rounds.

Table 10: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for FY21 Round II June 10, 2021 Grant Round

FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY21 Budget Bill Chapter 56, Item 374 A.1. *	Reallocated Unspent Grant Funds	TOTAL
1. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$1,375,000		\$1,375,000
2. Grant Program			
(i) Farmland Preservation	\$825,000		\$825,000
(ii) Forest Preservation	\$825,000		\$825,000
(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$825,000		\$825,000
(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$825,000	\$500,000	\$1,325,000
(v) Open Space and Parks	\$825,000	\$210,000	\$1,035,000
TOTAL for Grant Round	\$4,125,000	\$710,000	\$4,835,000
<i>Summary of Additional Unspent Grant Funds</i>			
Natural Area Protection	\$500,000	Withdrawn: FY20 Capital Region Land Conservancy, Bluebell Tract.	
Open Space and Parks	\$210,000	Withdrawn: FY21 Culpeper County Rappahannock River Park.	

Table 11: FY21 Round II Grant Awards (June 10, 2021 Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
	Farmlands Preservation							
1	Forkland Dairy*	5	\$500,000	906.00	Aug. 2022	\$500,000	904.39	Y
2	Protected Farmland along the Rappahannock River*	7	\$208,000	732.45	Withdrawn			Y
3	Kevin Jones Farm*	1	\$46,250	70.00	Oct. 2023	\$46,250	69.99	Y
4	Morse Brothers Farm*	5	\$70,750	106.00	Withdrawn			N
	Forest Protection							
5	Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative II	2	\$400,000	749.00	Withdrawn			Y
6	Three Creek Capron*	4	\$200,000	376.00	April 2023	\$200,000	381.64	Y
7	Round Hill Swamp at Doles Farm*	4	\$225,000	705.37	Jan. 2023	\$225,000	706.82	Y
	Historic Area Preservation							
8	Drexel-Morrell Center**	7	\$228,450	56.48	Feb. 2023	\$228,450	56.40	Y
9	Rollins Tract at Bristoe Station Battlefield**	7	\$285,000	22.35	July 2024	\$285,000	22.36	Y
10	Fussell's Mill Tracts at Second Deep Bottom Battlefield**	4	\$282,000	52.01	May 2024	\$282,000	50.47	Y
11	Edwards Tract**	6	\$29,550	107.35	April 2023	\$29,550	107.35	Y
	Natural Area Protection							
12	Pickett's Harbor Maritime Forest & Migratory Bird Habitat Protection	2	\$255,549	4.50	Withdrawn			Y
13	Pickett's Harbor Natural Area Preserve - Lake Allure Woods*	2	\$142,298	44.00	Withdrawn			Y
14	Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Addition – Accokeek Bottomlands	1	\$450,000	52.30	June 2023	\$381,079	58.81	Y
15	The Cedars Natural Area Preserve - Kinzer Hollow Cave	9	\$204,000	60.28	June 2024	\$136,315	55.28	Y
16	The Cedars Natural Area Preserve - Northeast Addition	9	\$164,000	62.90	Withdrawn			Y

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
17	Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve - Northeast Addition	9	\$109,153	77.00	July 2022	\$109,153	78.15	Y
	Open Spaces & Parks							
18	Blackwater Conservation Acquisition	4	\$168,500	203.00 (See FY21)	Aug 2022	\$168,500	200.36 (See FY21)	Y
19	Hoskins Creek Waterfront Land Acquisition in Tappahannock	1	\$200,000	6.91	Sept. 2024	\$200,000	6.91	Y
20	South Garden International LLC Public Access Land Expansion	1	\$312,000	125.59	April 2023	\$312,000	98.79	Y
21	Nottoway River Wildlife and Recreation Area	4	\$264,500	1,597.00	May 2024	\$264,500	1595.88	Y
22	The Green at the Science Museum of Virginia	4	\$90,000	5.20	Withdrawn			Y
	Totals		\$4,835,000	5,918.69		\$3,367,797	4,193.24	95%
*Denotes acquisition by easement								
**Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality)								

Competitive Grant Awards FY22 (October 27, 2021 Grant Round)

Item 374 of Chapter 552 of the 2021 Virginia Acts of Assembly included, in the amount for Preservation of Open Space Lands, \$10,000,000 from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia (Table 12). On June 10, 2021, the Board met and approved the FY22 grant round.

During the FY22 grant cycle, the Foundation received 34 applications requesting \$10,532,985 in grants. The project costs for all 34 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$58,915,997 and would protect 8,345.76 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on October 27, 2021, to consider these applications and approved \$7,500,000 in grant funds for 30 projects to protect 8,022 acres (Table 13). As of the date of this report, 17 projects have been successfully completed, 12 projects remain open, and five projects have been withdrawn.

Table 12: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for FY22 October 27, 2021 Grant Round

FUNDING CATEGORIES		FY22 Budget Bill Chapter 552, Item 374 A.1. \$10,000,000
I.	VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$2,500,000
II.	Grant Program	
	(i) Farmland Preservation	\$1,500,000
	(ii) Forest Preservation	\$1,500,000
	(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$1,500,000
	(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$1,500,000
	(v) Open Space and Parks	\$1,500,000
TOTAL for Grant Round		\$7,500,000

Table 13: FY22 Grant Awards (October 27, 2021 Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
	Farmlands Preservation							
1	Forkland Dairy*	5	\$500,000	906.00	March 2022	\$500,000	904.39 (See FY21R2)	Y
2	Thomas Neck Family Farm*	1	\$879,750	840.60	April 2023	\$879,750	840.00	Y
3	Kevin Jones Farm (Phase II)*	1	\$120,250	70.00	Nov. 2023	\$120,250	69.99 (See FY21R2)	Y
	Forest Protection							
4	Pierces Lowgrounds - Meherrin River Conservation Easement*	4	\$350,000	2,860.00	May 2024	\$350,000	2,816.40	Y
5	<i>Roanoke River Working Forest*</i>	5	<i>\$464,000</i>	<i>932.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$464,000</i>	<i>932.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
6	Over the River and Point Beach*	4	\$225,000	321.64	May 2024	\$225,000	324.90	Y
7	<i>Poplar Hollow*</i>	6	<i>\$300,000</i>	<i>611.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>	<i>611.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
8	<i>Caroline Diamonds - The Oak Barrens and Barrel Springs**</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$161,000</i>	<i>96.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$161,000</i>	<i>96.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
	Historic Area Preservation							
9	Siegen Forest*	7	\$647,370	170.00	Dec. 2023	\$628,910	163.89	Y
10	<i>Campbell's Bridge Mills**</i>	4	<i>\$375,000</i>	<i>5.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$375,000</i>	<i>5.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
11	CCTSC Restoration Project*	5	\$69,075	8.95	Withdrawn			Y
12	Pegram's Battery Tract at Cedar Mountain**	7	\$249,876	44.75	May 2024	\$249,876	44.75	Y
13	Edwards**	6	\$158,679	107.35	April 2023	\$158,679	107.35 (See FY21R2)	Y
	Natural Area Protection							
14	Difficult Creek South Addition	5	\$30,000	2.16	May 2024	\$24,982	2.16	Y
15	<i>Pedlar Hills Glades Natural Area Preserve Addition</i>	9	<i>\$515,000</i>	<i>156.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$515,000</i>	<i>156.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
16	Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve Land Donation	6	\$20,000	1.00	Oct. 2023	\$1313,511	1.05	Y
17	Dendron Swamp Natural Area Preserve Addition	4	\$300,000	102.00	Withdrawn			Y

	Project Title	Cong. Dist	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
18	Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve - Northeast Addition	9	\$236,847	77.00	July 2022	\$182,144	78.15 (See FY21R2)	Y
19	<i>Chestnut Creek Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition</i>	9	<i>\$165,000</i>	<i>11.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$165,000</i>	<i>11.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
20	Difficult Creek North Addition - Life Estate	5	\$50,153	1.39	June 2023	\$50,153	1.47	Y
21	The Cedars Natural Area Preserve Powell River Addition	9	\$50,000	205.00	Withdrawn			Y
22	<i>Pinnacle State Natural Area Expansion - Weaver Creek**</i>	9	<i>\$133,000</i>	<i>92.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$133,000</i>	<i>121.46</i>	<i>Y</i>
	Open Spaces & Parks							
23	Copper Creek Initiative	9	\$100,000	8.00	May 2024	\$99,046	5.96	Y
24	Camp Kum-Ba-Yah*	6	\$250,000	44.00	Feb. 2022	\$250,000	42.13 (See FY20)	N
25	Eleanor Park Conservation Easement*	1	\$387,416	1.90	Jan. 2023	\$387,416	1.81	Y
26	The Green at the Science Museum of Virginia	4	\$250,000	5.20	Withdrawn			Y
27	<i>Brander Street**</i>	4	<i>\$150,000</i>	<i>6.29</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$150,000</i>	<i>4.47</i>	<i>Y</i>
28	Basic Park - Natural Area	6	\$87,500	44.20	Withdrawn			Y
29	Brush Mountain Park - Edison Property Expansion**	9	\$210,000	207.00	Sept. 2022	\$210,000	204.66	Y
30	Ballenger Creek Nature Preserve*	5	\$65,084	73.00	Feb. 2024	\$65,084	72.98	N
	Totals		\$7,500,000	7,104.43		\$6,751,790.00	6,416.96	93%
*Denotes acquisition by easement								
**Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality)								

Competitive Grant Awards FY23 (November 14, 2022 Grant Round)

Item 375 A.1. of Chapter 2 of the 2023 Virginia Acts of Assembly included, in the amount for Preservation of Open Space Lands, \$16,000,000 from the general fund to be deposited into the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, pursuant to § 10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia. Additional unspent grant funds from previous years were added to the available funding for a total of \$14,927,440 in grant funds (Table 14). On July 12, 2022, the Board met and approved the grant round.

During the FY23 grant cycle, the Foundation received 45 applications requesting \$20,035,453 in grants. The project costs for all 45 applications, including applicant match, totaled \$65,840,538 and would protect 15,285 acres if all projects were funded. The Board met on November 14, 2022, to consider these applications and approved \$14,927,440 in grant funds for 40 projects to protect 13,955 acres (Table 15). As of June 30, 2024, 14 projects from this grant round have been successfully completed and one has been withdrawn.

Table 14: Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: Funding Source and Allocation for the FY23 November 14, 2022 Grant Round

FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY23 Budget Bill Chapter 2, Item 375 A.1. (\$16,000,000)	Carryover Funding from Past Grant Rounds	TOTAL Available for Grant Round
I. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (25% per § 10.1-1020 C.)	\$4,000,000		
II. VLCF Grant Program			
(i) Farmland Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000
(ii) Forest Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$400,000	\$2,800,000
(iii) Historic Area Preservation	\$2,400,000	\$600,000	\$3,000,000
(iv) Natural Area Protection	\$2,400,000	\$937,440	\$3,337,440
(v) Open Space and Parks	\$2,400,000	\$990,000	\$3,390,000
TOTAL	\$16,000,000	\$2,927,440	\$14,927,440
Summary of Additional Unspent Grant Funds			
Forestland Preservation	\$400,000	<u>Withdrawn</u> FY20RII, Dept. Wildlife Resources, E. Shore Forest Conservation Initiative II \$400,000 .	
Historic Area Preservation	\$600,000	<u>Withdrawn</u> : FY20 Patrick Henry Mem. Foundation, Red Hill \$600,000 .	
Natural Area Protection	\$937,440	<u>Unexpended Remainder</u> : FY20 DCR-DNH, Bush Mill Stream NAP Addition \$4,544 ; FY20 DCR-DNH, Gateway to Cape Charles NAP \$63,347 . <u>Withdrawn</u> : FY20 Suffolk Parks and Rec., Blackwater R. Park & South Quay NAP Addition \$400,000 ; FY21RII DCR-DNH Pickett's Harbor Maritime Forest \$255,549 ; FY21RII DCR-DNH The Cedars NAP Northeast Addition \$164,000 ; FY22 DCR-DNH, The Cedars NAP Powell River Addition \$50,000 .	
Open Spaces and Parks	\$990,000	<u>Withdrawn</u> : FY20 DCR-State Parks, Wilderness Rd. Connectivity Prop. \$500,000 ; FY21 NOVA Parks, River Farm \$150,000 ; FY21RII VOF, The Green at the Science Museum of VA \$90,000 ; FY22 VOF, The Green at the Science Museum of VA \$250,000 .	

Table 15: FY23 Competitive Grant Awards (November 14, 2022 Grant Round)

	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
	Farmland Preservation							
1	<i>Farmland Protection along Brook Run*</i>	7	\$500,000	698.00	<i>Open</i>	\$500,000	698.00	Y
2	<i>Farmland Protection West of Gordonsville*</i>	7	\$237,500	360.44	<i>Open</i>	\$237,500	360.44	Y
3	Harris Farm*	7	\$400,000	327.00	May 2024	\$400,000	317.13	Y
4	<i>Protection of Thornridge Farm*</i>	10	\$160,000	203.32	<i>Open</i>	\$160,000	203.32	N
5	Downtown Greens Expansion Project*	1	\$400,000	56.00	Dec. 2023	\$400,000	56.17	N
	Forest Land Conservation							
6	The Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe's Return to the River	1	\$310,000	866.00	Oct. 2023	\$310,000	853.40	Y
7	<i>The Rappahannock Tribe's Return to the River, Phase II</i>	1	\$500,000	703.09	<i>Open</i>	\$500,000	703.09	Y
8	Nottoway River Wildlife and Recreation Area II	4	\$450,000	1,597.00	May 2024	\$450,000	1,597.00 (See FY21R2)	Y
9	Pierces Lowgrounds Meherrin River Conservation Easement II*	4	\$300,000	2860.00	May 2024	\$300,000	2,816.40 (See FY22)	Y
10	<i>Taylor's Mill Farm*</i>	4	\$450,000	1,145.00	<i>Open</i>	\$450,000	1,145.00	Y
11	<i>Roanoke River Working Forest II*</i>	5	\$395,000	1,347.00	<i>Open</i>	\$395,000	1,347.00	Y
12	<i>Securing Conservation Corridors in the "Green Sea"</i>	2	\$281,219	244.00	<i>Open</i>	\$281,219	244.00	Y
13	Three Creek Capron Phase II*	4	\$36,054	376.00	March 2023	\$36,054	376.00 (See FY21R1)	Y
14	<i>Caroline Diamonds - The Oak Barrens at Barrel Springs II**</i>	1	\$131,935	96.00	<i>Open</i>	\$131,935	96.00	Y
15	Hornet Swamp*	4	\$400,000	615.00	April 2024	\$400,000	615.00	Y
16	Newfound Farm*	6	\$100,150	59.00	Aug. 2023	\$100,150	60.27	Y
17	<i>New River Hill Park (See OSP category below)</i>	9	\$148,142	<i>See below</i>	<i>Open</i>	\$148,142	<i>See below</i>	Y

	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
	Historic Area Preservation							
18	Haskins Farm at New Market Heights**	4	\$600,000	50.00	Oct. 2023	\$600,000	49.09	Y
19	5270 New Market Road**	4	\$588,250	40.00	May 2024	\$582,485	41.02	Y
20	Shiflett Tract at Piedmont Battlefield*	6	\$253,433	141.39	Nov. 2023	\$253,433	141.39	Y
21	Edwards Tract at Port Republic Battlefield*	6	\$172,058	107.35	April 2023	\$172,058	107.35 (See FY21R2)	Y
22	<i>Amelia & Associates LLC Tract at Boydton Plank Road Battlefield**</i>	4	<i>\$121,982</i>	<i>11.72</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$121,982</i>	<i>11.72</i>	<i>Y</i>
23	<i>Woodworth Cottage**</i>	6	<i>\$135,000</i>	<i>0.26</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$135,000</i>	<i>0.26</i>	<i>Y</i>
24	<i>French Tract at Fisher's Hill Battlefield*</i>	6	<i>\$474,258</i>	<i>146.09</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$474,258</i>	<i>146.09</i>	<i>Y</i>
25	<i>Maunder Tract at Second Manassas Battlefield**</i>	10	<i>\$253,439</i>	<i>3.11</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$253,439</i>	<i>3.11</i>	<i>Y</i>
26	<i>Carter Tract at Seven Pines Battlefield**</i>	4	<i>\$183,745</i>	<i>11.78</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$183,745</i>	<i>11.78</i>	<i>Y</i>
27	<i>Proctor Tract at Cedar Mountain Battlefield**</i>	7	<i>\$217,835</i>	<i>7.36</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$217,835</i>	<i>7.36</i>	<i>Y</i>
	Natural Area Protection							
28	<i>Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Addition – Accokeek Bottomlands II</i>	1	<i>\$390,000</i>	<i>222.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$390,000</i>	<i>222.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
29	<i>Brocks Gap Natural Area Preserve</i>	6	<i>\$670,000</i>	<i>244.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$670,000</i>	<i>244.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
30	Mill Creek Springs Natural Area Preserve Expansion	9	\$665,140	318.00	Withdrawn			Y
31	<i>Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve – Battlefield Addition Tract</i>	6	<i>\$453,800</i>	<i>110.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$453,800</i>	<i>110.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
32	<i>Ellett Escarpment Natural Area Preserve</i>	9	<i>\$293,500</i>	<i>33.46</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$293,500</i>	<i>33.46</i>	<i>Y</i>
33	Bull Run Mountains NAP Addition - Eastern Overlook**	10	\$500,000	10.13	May 2023	\$445,836	10.13	Y
34	<i>Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition</i>	9	<i>\$365,000</i>	<i>56.00</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$365,000</i>	<i>56.00</i>	<i>Y</i>
	Open Spaces and Parks							
35	<i>Mayo Island**</i>	4	<i>\$1,500,000</i>	<i>14.50</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$1,500,000</i>	<i>14.50</i>	<i>Y</i>
36	Red Hill*	5	\$602,830	596.00	Dec. 2023	\$602,830	600.45	N
37	<i>Memorial Drive Recreation Area**</i>	5	<i>\$500,000</i>	<i>6.87</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>	<i>6.87</i>	<i>Y</i>

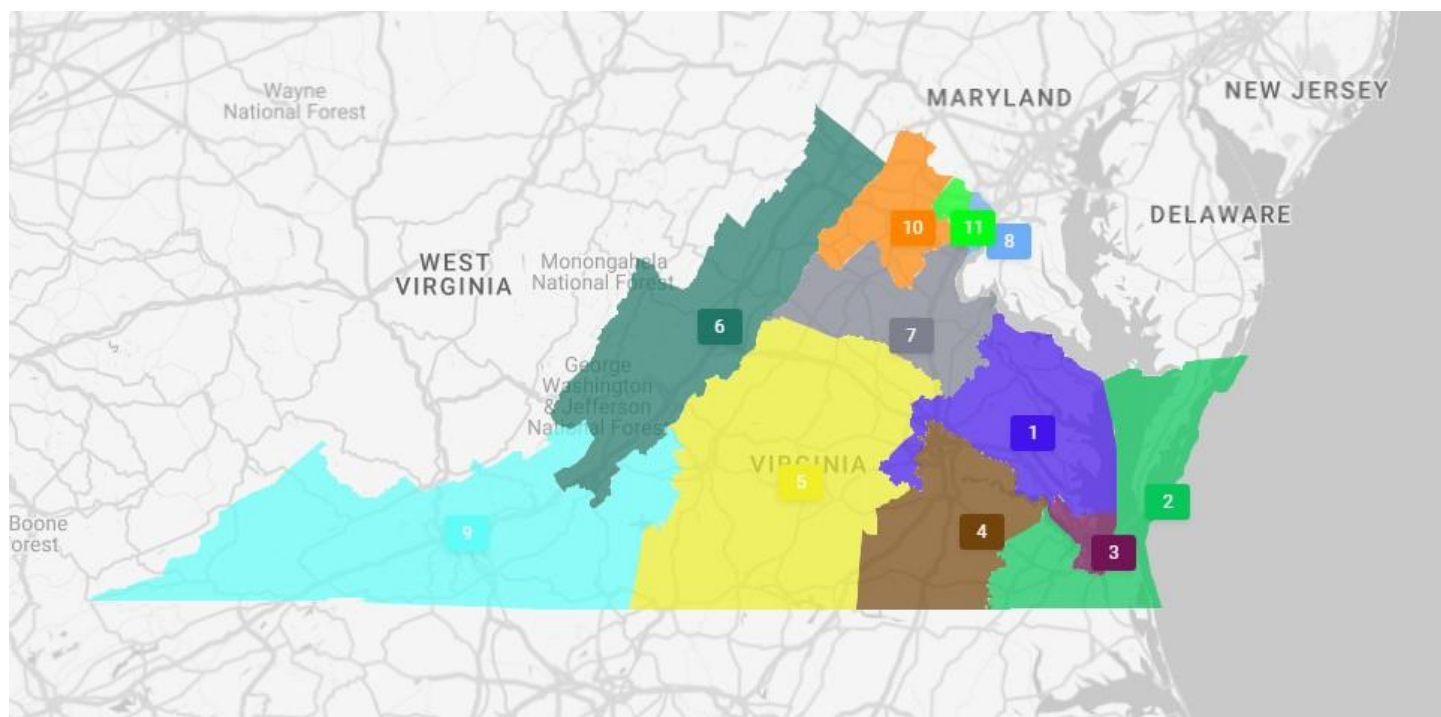
	Project Title	Cong. Dist.	Grant Award	Estimated Acres	Project Closing Date	Final Payment	Final Acres	In Conserve-Virginia?
38	<i>Gent Branch – Elk Conservation Area</i>	9	\$71,937	179.00	<i>Open</i>	\$71,937	179.00	Y
39	<i>Coles Point Boating Access</i>	7	\$532,025	2.60	<i>Open</i>	\$532,025	2.60	Y
	<i>New River Hill Park (see FOR category above)</i>	9	\$8,208	82.00	<i>Open</i>	\$8,208	82.00	Y
40	<i>Moore’s Creek Land Acquisition</i>	5	\$175,000	8.60	<i>Open</i>	\$175,000	8.60	Y
	Totals		\$14,927,440	13,955.07		\$14,202,371	8,680.25	92.5%
*Denotes acquisition by easement.								
**Denotes fee acquisition with open-space easement held by governmental entity (state or locality).								

Note: *Italicized numbers represent expected payments and acreages based on the grant proposal.*

APPENDIX B: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation works diligently to support projects across the breadth of Virginia. The following supporting data illustrates the number of grants awarded within Virginia's eleven Congressional Districts at the time of each VLCF grant round. The district boundaries have been realigned over the years, so the cumulative totals provided in Tables 16 and 17 are not wholly representative of today's Congressional Districts. The map below reflects Virginia's 2021 Congressional boundaries.

Since 1999, the greatest concentration of grants awarded to date has come in the 4th Congressional District (Table 16), which runs from the North Carolina border up I-95 to north of Richmond. The greatest amount of grant funds also has been expended in the 4th Congressional District (Table 17). This may reflect the rapid growth and loss of open space and historic resources in this area of Virginia. Funds for projects have been awarded in all Districts. The Foundation has been successful in assisting with the conservation of an array of outstanding resources and habitats through easements and acquisitions across Virginia.



Map source: <https://www.virginiaredistricting.org/legdistricting/comments/plan/547/1>

Table 16: Geographical Distribution of Foundation Grant Awards and Completed Projects (By Project)

District	12/1999 thru 9/2016	09/2017 Awarded	11/2019 Awarded	02/21 Awarded	06/21 Awarded	10/21 Awarded	11/22 Awarded	11/23 Awarded	Total Awarded
1 st	38	2	3	0	4	4	5	4	60
2 nd	10	2	2	1	3	0	1	3	22
3 rd	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
4 th	25	3	4	2	6	6	10	5	61
5 th	14	1	2	3	2	6	4	3	35
6 th	21	5	2	3	1	5	7	3	47
7 th	13	1	3	2	3	2	5	4	33
8 th	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
9 th	27	3	1	0	3	7	5	7	53
10 th	23.75	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	30
11 th	1.25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	181	23	19	12	22	30	40	29	356

Table 17: Geographical Distribution of Grant Awards (By Funding in Dollars)

Cong. District	12/99 thru 09/2016 Award	09/2017 Award	11/2019 Award	02/21 Award	06/21 Award	10/21 Award	11/22 Award	11/23 Award	Total Awarded
1 st	8,272,777	385,005	572,500	0	1,008,250	1,548,416	1,731,935	3,271,366	16,790,249
2 nd	4,881,525	719,400	530,175	421,875	797,847	0	281,219	1,287,500	8,919,541
3 rd	1,555,125	523,161	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,078,286
4 th	6,120,105	366,482	1,319,000	403,943	1,230,000	1,650,000	4,630,031	909,098	16,628,659
5 th	2,132,386	174,200	900,000	1,265,625	570,750	1,178,312	1,672,830	970,300	8,864,403
6 th	4,354,080	967,222	381,134	733,784	29,550	816,179	2,258,699	903,771	10,444,419
7 th	2,883,812	82,159	1,212,500	431,023	721,450	897,246	1,887,360	1,407,610	9,523,160
8 th	1,150,000	400,000	322,500	150,000	0	0	0	0	2,022,500
9 th	6,191,290	223,480	500,000	0	477,153	1,409,847	1,551,927	5,923,027	16,276,724
10 th	8,340,779	397,691	121,875	0	0	0	913,439	0	9,773,784
11 th	828,273	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	828,273
TOTAL	46,710,152	4,238,800	5,859,684	3,406,250	4,835,000	7,500,000	14,927,440	14,672,672	102,149,998

APPENDIX C: GRANT CRITERIA

Prior to each grant round, the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation reviews the grant evaluation criteria that are utilized to evaluate grant applications and revises them as necessary. An inter-agency task force comprised of representatives of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Forestry, Department of Wildlife Resources, Department of Historic Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation work together to develop the recommended document.

The FY 2024 scoring criteria total 172 points. One hundred points are allocated to each of the five funding categories, which the applicant chooses (Farmland Preservation, Forest Land Preservation, Historic Area Preservation, Natural Area Protection, or Open Spaces and Parks). The scoring criteria for each category are developed by the corresponding subject matter experts from state agencies, represented by the inter-agency task force. An additional 72 points are allocated amongst nine common criteria (Virginia Outdoors Plan Identified Need; Recreation Access Model Identified Need; Water Quality Benefit; Protection of Cultural Resources; Additional Conserve Virginia Values; Fish and Wildlife Values, Public Access; Underserved Communities; and Ratio of Match to Total Project Cost). Table 18 shows the possible points to be awarded in total.

The scoring criteria details for each of the categories outlined in Table 18 are provided in the pages that follow from the 2024 VLCF Grant Manual. The criteria adopted by the Foundation help to ensure that land conservation funding will be expended wisely to protect properties with substantial resource value for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Table 18: VLCF - Grant Application Scoring Sheet and Criteria

Primary Category	Statutory Category scoring	VOP Identified Need	Recreation Access Model Identified Need	Water Quality Benefit	Protection of Cultural Resources	Additional Conserve Virginia Values	Wildlife Values	Public Access	Underserved Communities	Ratio of Match	Total Score
	Max. 100 points	Max. 3 points	Max. 3 points	Max. 11 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 12 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 10 points	Max. 3 points	Max. 172 points
Farmlands Preservation											
Forestland Preservation											
Historic Area Preservation											
Natural Area Protection											
Open Spaces & Parks											

Appendix 1 - Farmland Preservation Category

Criterion	Score
<p>Category I: Land Evaluation (40 points)</p> <p>A. Soil Productivity (25 points) Calculate the percentage of project land in each soils class. Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of these three categories x 25 (e.g., 30% prime, 20% unique and 10% important = 0.60 x 25, which equals 15 points.) More information on these soil classes can be found in § 3.2-205 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 points • Larger by 0% - 24% = 10 points • Smaller by 1% - 24% = 7 points • Smaller by 25% or more = 5 points 	
<p>Category II: Land Use (40 points)</p> <p>A. Current use and status of the land (8 points)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is the land currently being farmed? 4 points, if yes. 2) Is this a Century Farm? 4 points, if yes. <p>B. Proximity to conserved lands (10 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 = 10 points • Parcel is within one-quarter mile but not adjoining other preserved lands = 7 points • Parcel is within one-half mile but further than one-quarter mile of other preserved lands = 5 points <p>C. Development vulnerability (8 points) What is the vulnerability rank for this parcel as determined by the ConservationVision Development Vulnerability model (https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaconvisvulnerable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each ranking from Class II to Class V is awarded 2 points (e.g., a property in Class IV = 6 points) <p>D. Best Management Practices (BMPs) (10 points) Is a farm management plan that specifies BMPs or voluntary BMPs (e.g., stream fencing, buffers, conservation tillage, cover crops, animal waste management, etc.) being utilized as part of the normal operation of this farm? Does the property have either/both a conservation plan or a Nutrient Management Plan for all nutrient applications made to cropland, hayland, and/or pastureland?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has implemented applicable BMPs to protect water quality, either voluntarily or through a state or federal conservation program = 4 points • Applicant has a conservation plan developed by local conservation staff (Soil & Water Conservation District or Natural Resources Conservation Service) = 3 points • Applicant has a Nutrient Management Plan prepared by a DCR certified nutrient management planner = 3 points <p>E. Local farmland policy (4 points) Is the project supported by local farmland protection policies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One point each for: comprehensive plan; agricultural zoning; agricultural and forestal districts; and use value taxation. 	

F. Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points)

Is the project included in ConserveVirginia? (<https://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)

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 2 - Forest Land Preservation Category

Criterion	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 999 acres, divide acreage by 1,000, then multiply by 8. For parcels larger than 999 acres, see points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0-999 acres = Property Acreage / 1000 * 8 points 1000-4,999 = 8 points 5000-9999 = 9 points ≥10,000 acres = 10 points 	
<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 999-acre projects, divide the acreage by 1,000, then multiply by 18 to calculate points. For parcels larger than 999 acres, see points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0-999 acres = Forested Acreage / 1000 * 18 points 1,000-4,999 = 18 points 5,000-9,999 = 19 points ≥10,000 acres = 20 points 	
<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: https://vanhde.org/content/map. To calculate points for projects up to 999 acres, divide High FCV acreage by 1,000, then multiply by 13. For larger parcels, see below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0-999 acres = High FCV acreage / 1000 * 13 points 1,000-4,999 = 13 points 5,000-9999 = 14 points >10,000 acres = 15 points 	
<p>4) Water Quality (15 points) Streamside forests provide considerable water quality, filtration, nutrient retention, and flood attenuation to downstream users. Scored based on the total linear feet of intermittent or perennial streams or rivers (as identified on the USGS 7.5” quad) or wetland or impoundment shoreline that is on or bordering the property. To calculate points, divide total length of streams or shorelines (measured in feet) by 1,000.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: 0 -15,000 feet = feet / 1,000 points ≥15,000 feet = 15 points 	
<p>5) Adjacency to Conserved Lands (5 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. Greater than 5 miles receives 0 points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score: Within 5 miles = 5 – (miles away from conserved lands) 	
<p>6) 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 * 10 	

<p>7) ConserveVirginia (20 points) Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Score: 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)	
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Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 3 - Historic Area Preservation Category

Criterion	Score	Notes
<p>1) Historic Significance (30 points)</p> <p><u>Historic Resource/Property is:</u> 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 -AND- <u>Integrity:</u> Resources that retain a high degree of historic integrity = 5</p>		
<p>2) Underrepresented Communities & Resources (10 points)</p> <p>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 AND/OR Property or area has special community significance related to its history, as explained in application, regardless of formal documentation = 5</p>		
<p>3) Threat (10 points)</p> <p>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>		
<p>4) Use & Treatment of Historic Resources & Property (10 points)</p> <p>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>		
<p>5) Historic Resource Protection (10 points)</p> <p>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>		
<p>6) Adjacency to Conserved Land (5 points)</p> <p>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>		

<p>7) Further Public Interests (5 points)</p> <p>Project includes specific plans for programs that promote research, education, community outreach, or heritage tourism = 5</p> <p>Project includes general plans for programs to be developed that would promote research, education, community outreach, or heritage tourism = 3</p> <p>Project contains no plans that would further public interests = 0</p>		
<p>8) ConserveVirginia (20 points)</p> <p>Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (https://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 _____

Appendix 4 - Natural Areas Category

Criterion	Score
<p>I. <u>Biodiversity Significance</u> (35 points)</p> <p>1. 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) (20 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within Essential Conservation Site = 20 points; • Located within conservation site = 10 points; <p>2. Parcel Significance: What is the number of natural heritage elements present on the subject parcel, or associated with it? (10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 point per viable, extant EO; • 2 points per essential EO; • 0.5 point per viable, extant EO outside parcel but within conservation site that also overlaps the proposed parcel for protection <p>3. Does the project have global significance? (Biodiversity rank of conservation site) Proportion of parcel area (acres) within conservation sites, weighted by B-rank. (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1 = 5 points x proportion within conservation site; • B2 = 4 x proportion within conservation site; • B3 = 3 x proportion within conservation site; • B4 = 2 x proportion within conservation site; • B5 = 1 x proportion within conservation site 	
<p>II. <u>Ecological Integrity</u> (20 points)</p> <p>1. 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)? (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 x proportion within ecological core; • C2=8 x proportion within ecological core; • C3=6 x proportion within ecological core; • C4=3 x proportion within ecological core; • C5=1 x proportion within ecological core; AND <p>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) <p>2. Local/Parcel Integrity: How much of the parcel is in natural vegetation? (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcel supports natural community/natural vegetation: 75% or more of parcel area = 5 points, 50-74% = 4 points, 25-49% = 3 points, 1-25% = 2 points <p>3. Connectivity with Conserved Lands: Is the parcel adjacent to other conserved lands with Biodiversity Management Intent (BMI)? (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjoins BMI 1 = 5 points; • Adjoins BMI 2 = 4 points; • Adjoins BMI 3 = 3 points; • Adjoins BMI 4 or 5 = 2 points; • Land not adjacent to conserved land = 0 points 	

<p>III. <u>Management Needs, Likelihood of Success, and Threat</u> (25 points)</p> <p>1. Management Needs: What is the intensity of current and future management actions needed to successfully maintain/restore natural heritage resources? (10 points) Parcel conditions require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimal natural heritage resources management = 10 points; • moderate management = 6 points; • intensive management/restoration = 3 points <p>2. Management Capacity: Does the applicant have proven experience and capacity in terms of staff resources and expertise to address management needs? (8 points) Application provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thorough description of both experience and staff capacity = 8 points; • a cursory description = 4 points; • not mentioned = 0 points <p>3. Site visit & Owner contact: NHP Staff have had timely opportunity to visit tract and discuss with landowner necessary conservation measures and implications of natural area preserve dedication. (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit & discussion = 5 points; • Site visit only = 3 points; • Discussion only = 2 points <p>4. Threat: Is there high development threat for the project area? (2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tract threat is ranked Class IV or Class V in the Conservation Vision Development Vulnerability Model = 2 points; ranked Class III = 1 point; otherwise = 0 points. Or Tract is on the market or in estate for settlement = 2 points. 	
<p>IV. <u>ConserveVirginia</u> (20 points)</p> <p>Is the property included in ConserveVirginia? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 x 20 = 12 points) 	

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 5 - Open Space and Parks Category

Criterion	Score
<p>1) 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 = 5 • Public access that provides opportunities to view water resources while recreating = 2 	
<p>2) Project Location (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 conservation or 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 is critical to the recreational use of an existing site = 5 	
<p>3) 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 connecting trails, or identified 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, a potential resource or a proposed statewide connecting trail identified in VOP = 7 • Conserves land adjacent to, or in direct viewshed of, a recreational trail = 5 	
<p>4) 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>5) Virginia Outdoors Plan Need (10 points) Does the project address a need identified in the <i>Virginia Outdoors Plan</i>? Applicant must specify VOP page #. Add all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project provides public access to natural areas = 3 • Project provides public access to a developed park = 2 • Project provides trails for hiking or walking OR access to water trails = 2 • Project provides public access to historic areas = 1 • Project provides bicycle or equestrian trails = 1 • Project provides other need identified in VOP = 1 	
<p>6) Public Utilization (10 points) Availability of land for public use may include, but is not limited to, hunting, fishing, hiking, or wildlife watching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open for public utilization between 241 and 365 days per year = 10 • Open between 181 and 240 days per year = 5 • Between 121 and 180 days per year = 3 • Between 61 and 120 days per year = 2 • Between 1 and 60 days per year = 1 	

<p>7) Benefit Underserved Community (15 points) Does the project provide a recreational resource to an underserved population? Use the VIMS Social Vulnerability Index (https://cmap2.vims.edu/SocialVulnerability/SocioVul_SS.html) to determine if the project benefits an underserved community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High Social Vulnerability = 15 • High Social Vulnerability = 10 • Moderate Social Vulnerability =5 • Low or Very Low Social Vulnerability =0 <p><i>Applicant must provide a reference source if not using the VIMS Social Vulnerability Index.</i></p>	
<p>8) Recreation Need (10 points) I. Land-based Recreation Need (Maximum score: 7) 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) (https://vanhde.org/content/map) or the Trust for Public Land’s ParkServe Model? [https://www.tpl.org/parkserve] (score will be higher of the two if data is available on both models)</p> <p>A. <i>DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model Land-based Recreation Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • Low: 1 • Very low need: 0, but other supporting evidence provided to show need: up to 3 points <p>B. <i>ParkServe Park Need:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very High: 7 • High: 5 • Moderate: 3 • No need identified in the model, but other supporting documentation provided, such as evidence of no other parks within ½ mile walk: up to 3 points <p>II. Water-based Recreation Need (Maximum Score: 3) 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: 3 • High: 2 • Moderate: 1 • 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: 1 	
<p>8) ConserveVirginia (10 points) Is the property included in any category of ConserveVirginia and providing daily outdoor recreation access? (https://vanhde.org/content/map)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 x 10 = 6 points) 	

Total Maximum Score 100 points _____

Appendix 6 - Additional Scoring Criteria

1. Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) Identified Need

Degree to which a project satisfies resource conservation needs as identified in the *Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)* or in a local comprehensive plan.

Maximum 3 points

- Meets a resource conservation need identified in the VOP **and** in a local comprehensive plan = 3 points
- Meets a resource conservation need identified in the VOP **or** in a local comprehensive plan = 2 points
- Not identified in VOP or in a local comprehensive plan = 0 points

2. Virginia Recreation Access Model Identified Need

If the project includes public access AND there is at least a moderate need for recreation access identified in the Recreation Access Model, based on the terrestrial or aquatic layers, then up to 3 points may be awarded.

Maximum 3 points

- Demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial **and** aquatic recreational access = 3 points
- Demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial **or** aquatic recreational access = 2 points
- No demonstrated moderate, high, or very high need for terrestrial or aquatic recreational access = 0 points

3. Water Quality Benefit

Extent to which the project will protect water quality beyond the required 35'-wide vegetated buffers on perennial streams, rivers, shorelines, and waterbodies with perennial outflow.

Maximum 11 points

- 4 points if the buffer is forested (at least 50% forest canopy) and protected as such in perpetuity, PLUS
- Up to 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer = 2 points
- 1 point for every 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 50'-wide buffer, up to 3 points, OR
- Up to 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer = 3 points
- 1 point for every 1000' of water frontage that is buffered by a 100'-wide buffer, up to 4 points

4. Protection of Cultural Resources

Is there a local cultural resource on the property that will be protected by this project? Examples include remnants of prior settlements or burial sites of enslaved or indigenous people, former segregated schoolhouses, sites of early racial integration, historic roadbed or railbed systems, etc.

Maximum 10 points.

- Provide photographs and other documents to authenticate the resource = 8 points
- Provide educational opportunities for the public, signage, trails, etc. = 2 points

5. Additional ConserveVirginia Values

Does the application include information to support 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.

Maximum 12 points

ConserveVirginia Categories:

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

6. Fish and Wildlife Values

Degree to which the application includes information that benefits wildlife, habitat, and human/wildlife interaction.

Maximum 10 points

- Identify wildlife presence = 1 point; if DGIF Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species is present = additional 3 points
- Protect wildlife habitat = 1 point; if DGIF Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species habitat is protected = additional 4 points
- Public access to view, hunt, or fish wildlife = 1 point

7. Public Access

Degree to which the project has public or visual access.

Maximum 10 points

- Full Public Access (50% of the year or more) = 10 points
- Limited Public Access (less than 50% of the year) = 5 points
- Visual Access = 2 points
- No Access = 0 points

8. Underserved Communities

Degree to which the community where the project is located is underserved/socially vulnerable.

Maximum 10 points

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

9. Ratio of Match to Total Project Cost

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 = 3 points
- Sixty percent or more of total project cost = 2 points
- Fifty percent of total project cost = 0 points

Total Maximum Score for Additional Scoring Criteria: 72 points