

LAND CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE

2022 Bill Priorities - Virginia Conservation Network

PROTECTING WILDLIFE

Wildlife corridors, or connections between patches of important habitat, protect public health, reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, allow wildlife to move to more suitable habitats, and make our state more resilient in the face of a changing climate. Protecting wildlife corridors helps to keep our ecosystems intact. Virginia's General Assembly must build upon past wildlife corridor legislation to provide funding and improve data collection to ensure safety for people and wildlife.

SUPPORT:

HB463 & SB141 Boat ramps; removes authorization for Department of Wildlife Resources to charge a fee for use.

HB975 Wildlife carcass removal sites; Dept. of Transportation to collect & publish annually on its website

HB1029 & SB707 Wildlife Corridor Grant Fund; established, report.

PRESERVING BIPOC HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Virginia's diverse array of historic and cultural resources tell the story of our Commonwealth and nation. Robust support for existing programs as well as exploration of broadening preservation tools available to protect these resources is critically important to ensure their benefit to current and future generations and supports key industries, including agriculture and tourism.

SUPPORT:

HB141 & SB158 Virginia Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Historic Preservation Fund; created.

HB508 "Green Book"; historic site designation.

HB1219 Historic rehabilitation; increases maximum amount of tax credit.

SB31 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and Fund; appropriation for Fund in budget bill, etc.



CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

Agriculture, a driver of rural prosperity, is also a significant climate solution when regenerative practices are applied. Regenerative principles include building soil health and fertility, increasing water percolation and retention, biodiversity, and ecosystem health, and reducing carbon emissions and current atmospheric CO₂ levels. Small-scale pasture-based meat production is especially promising. Capturing this potential involves improving the information base to best frame solutions and target interventions, increasing investment in slaughter/processing and farmer capacity building, and framing and implementing policy and programs with an equity lens.

SUPPORT:

HB 323 Local Food and Farming Infrastructure Grant Program; increases grant cap.

HB 830 Slaughter and meat-processing facilities.

HB 996 Land use assessment; parcels with multiple owners.

INCREASING NATIVE AND REDUCING INVASIVE PLANTS

Virginia is losing vast tracts of forests and urban tree canopy to development, redevelopment, and disease, and our native plants are being displaced by invasive plant species. This loss reduces the state's capacity to address climate change, improve community health, and improve air and water quality. The General Assembly needs to increase funding for the planting and maintenance of trees and regulate the sale and use of invasive plant species.

SUPPORT:

HB314 Noxious weeds and invasive plants; dissemination of consumer information.

HB491 Noxious weeds; amends definition to exclude plants that are commercially significant.

HB1317 Statewide urban and community forest management plan; Department of Forestry to develop.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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