

# VIRGINIA CONSERVATION BUDGET RECOMMENATIONS

## OFFICE OF RESILIENCE (PROPOSED)

- Authorize and empower a standalone Chief Resilience Officer and no less than six FTEs to facilitate interagency collaboration and leverage resources, and identify resilience coordinators within agencies (pg 25)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

- \$5M per year for the Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund (pg 33, 35)
- \$1M per year for the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund infrastructure program (pg 35)
- Support additional staff and bolster professional resources available from the Office of the Attorney General and Department of General Services (pg 33)
- \$500,000 per year through the Office of Farmland Preservation to help localities develop PDR ordinances, advise on best zoning practices for preserving farmland, consider equity in ranking projects that get funded, and provide training and technical assistance to enhance monitoring and enforcement. (pg 35)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

- Study the impacts of data center development (pg 57, 105)
- \$35M each year for the Virginia Brownfield and Coal Mine Renewable Energy Grant Program (pg 59, 99)
- \$40M each year for the existing but unfunded EV Rebate Program (pg 65)
- Establish an e-bike point-of-sale rebate (pg 81)
- Create a dedicated source of funding for charging infrastructure in rural and low-income localities (pg 65)
- Establish a fund of 200K each year to cover the cost of low-to-moderate-income electricians to take the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program. (pg 65)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Continue supporting the facility upgrade deadlines for the Enhanced Nutrient Removal Certainty Program by fully funding state grants for wastewater treatment upgrades as identified by the Needs Assessment. (pg 9)
- Maintain state funding to localities remediating aging CSO systems (pg 9)
- Include a Virginia Department of Health budget line item for harmful algae bloom testing and identification for non-tidal waterways and a DEQ budget line item to collect water samples for the VDH testing. (pg 11)
- Provide sufficient funding to DEQ to identify and eliminate potential pathways for PFAS contamination, which include wastewater discharges, land-applied sewage sludge biosolids, and landfill leachate, and to manage associated data. (pg 19)
- Increase funding for DEQ, VMRC, and local wetlands boards to enable the agencies to delineate wetlands, provide quality-control reviews of third-party delineations, and effectively implement wetlands permitting programs. (pg 27)
- Fund a study through DEQ and VIMS on the cumulative impacts of existing and proposed permitted and non-permitted surface water withdrawal intakes in the Rappahannock, York, and James River Systems on the mortality of fish larvae and eggs (pg 51)
- Study the impacts of data center development (pg 57, 105)
- Maintain adequate staffing to ensure sufficient enforcement of water quality requirements, mitigation for adverse cumulative impacts to ecosystem services, and consistency with Chesapeake Bay TMDL goals. (pg 59)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION

- \$80M each year the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (pg 5)
- \$4M each year for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (pg 5)
- At least \$250M over the biennium for the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program (pg 7)
- Provide sufficient and stable funding for technical assistance by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (pg 7)
- Support additional financial incentives for long-term conservation practices like stream exclusion fencing and riparian buffers that are critical to meeting the requirements of the Watershed Implementation Plan (pg 7)
- No less than \$200 million in general funds to the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) (pg 25)
- \$90M per year to the Land Preservation Tax Credit (pg 33)
- \$30M per year for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (pg 33, 37)
- Support additional staff and bolster professional resources available from the Office of the Attorney General and Department of General Services (pg 33)
- \$57M per year to support essential staffing, programs, and backlog of maintenance issues. (pg 43)
- Establish a \$1M, 50-50 matching grant program to encourage localities to invest in capital improvement projects or invasive species management in local parks. (pg 43)
- \$1.5M in state-derived trail funding to match the Federal Recreational Trails Program grant program. (pg 83)
- \$600,000 per year in competitive grants to support the development or implementation of school district environmental literacy plans (pg 125)

# VIRGINIA CONSERVATION BUDGET RECOMMENATIONS

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

- Include a Virginia Department of Health budget line item for harmful algae bloom testing and identification for non-tidal waterways and a DEQ budget line item to collect water samples for the VDH testing (pg 11)
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- \$5M per year for the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund (pg 33, 37)
- \$5M per year for the new Virginia BIPOC Historic Preservation Fund (pg 33, 37)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Incentivize local governments to zone for multi-family housing and eliminate parking minimums within a half mile of all bus rapid transit, light-rail, and Metro routes in Virginia (pg 61)
- \$90.1M over the biennium for a statewide housing voucher pilot program (pg 61)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

- Support additional staff and bolster professional resources available from the Office of the Attorney General and Department of General Services (pg 33)
- \$500,000 to fund a statewide tree canopy and forest health assessment (pg 47)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Protect and increase existing statewide and regional transit funding including addressing WMATA's fiscal cliff. (pg 73)
- Protect and increase rail funding to support the implementation of the Transforming Rail in Virginia program. (pg 75)
- Fund rail station modernization and provide multimodal connections between stations and activity centers. (pg 75)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- \$41M per year in recurring, state-derived VDOT funding for the Office of Trails to plan, construct, and maintain trails (pg 83)
- \$1M for grant match funds for low-income communities, communities of color, and smaller localities with populations under 25,000 for better connectivity to transportation and recreation (pg 83)
- Allocate 10% of the State's surplus funds in a given year to road safety infrastructure improvements projects. (pg 79)
- Fill the remaining full-time staff position in the Office of Trails outlined in its establishing legislation in 2022 (pg 83)
- Establish a State Trail Designation Program and direct resources toward marketing Virginia's trail systems. (pg 83)
- Create a Wildlife Corridor Grant Fund and appropriate \$5M over the biennium to attract additional private investments and help leverage the many new and expanded federal funding grants (pg 49)

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

- Support additional staff and bolster professional resources available from the Office of the Attorney General and Department of General Services (pg 33)

## VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCES

- Fund a comprehensive menhaden stock assessment (pg 51)
- Fund a study on the cumulative impacts of existing and proposed permitted and non-permitted surface water withdrawal intakes in the Rappahannock, York, and James River Systems on the mortality of fish larvae and eggs (pg 51)

## VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

- \$3M over the biennium for the Virginia Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Prevention and Removal Program (pg 15)
- Fund a 3-year pilot program from the General Fund for crab pot tagging (pg 51)

## VIRGINIA OUTDOORS FOUNDATION

- \$5M per year to extend Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Get Outdoors program (GO) (pg 33 & 43)
- Support additional staff and bolster professional resources available from the Office of the Attorney General and Department of General Services (pg 33)

## SECRETARIAT OF COMMERCE & TRADE

- \$500,000 to develop a scope of work and plan to study the economic impact and financial outcomes for outdoor recreation and related tourism (pg 41)