

DCR Agency Update

**Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee – Economic Development
and Natural Resources Subcommittee**

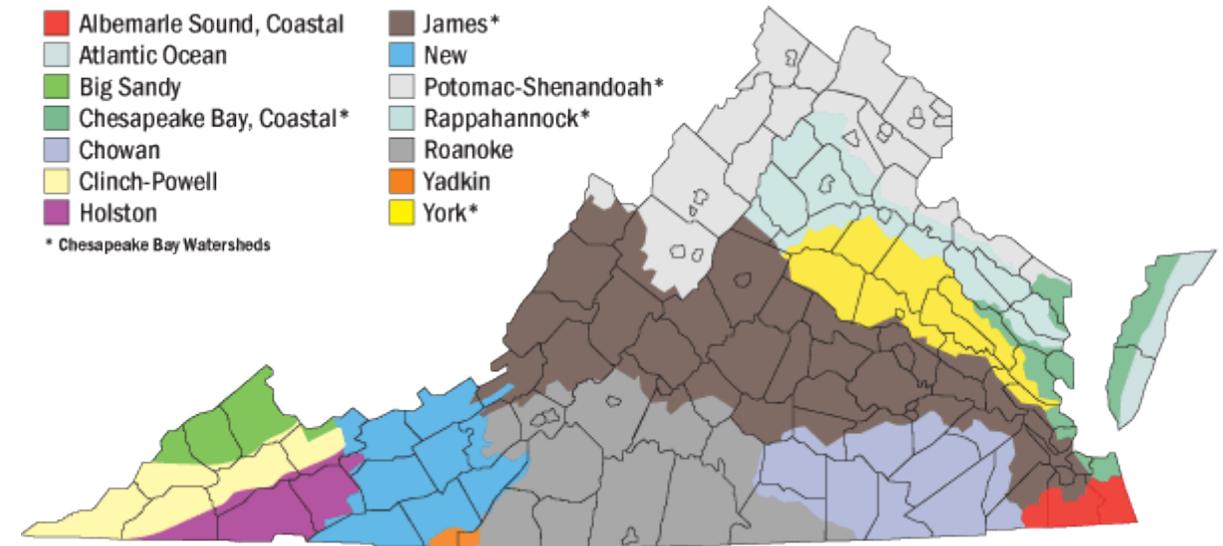
January 29, 2024

Matthew Wells - Director, Department of Conservation and Recreation



About the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

- The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is the state's lead natural resource conservation agency. DCR protects what Virginians care about - natural habitat, parks, clean water, dams, open space and access to the outdoors.
 - Virginia State Parks
 - Natural Heritage
 - Land Conservation
 - Planning and Recreation Resources
 - Soil and Water Conservation
 - Dam Regulation
 - Floodplain Management
 - Resilience Planning
 - Office of Environmental Education



Virginia Major River Basins

Operating Budget Summary

	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	Personnel Cost	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	Total Positions
2021 Appropriation	\$133,055,585	\$57,858,814	\$52,445,325	435.50	46.50	482.00
2022 Appropriation	\$152,531,045	\$58,058,814	\$53,596,197	443.50	46.50	490.00
2023 Appropriation	\$431,138,368	\$172,452,771	\$60,355,180	474.50	49.50	524.00
2024 Appropriation	\$556,564,758	\$146,799,665	\$60,651,200	480.50	50.50	531.00
2025 Base Budget	\$92,076,890	\$146,799,665	\$62,034,726	480.50	40.50	521.00
2025 Intro Changes	\$351,752,559	\$64,570,959	\$8,105,444	18.00	3.00	21.00
2025 Total	\$443,829,449	\$211,370,624	\$70,140,170	498.50	43.50	542.00
2026 Base Budget	\$92,076,890	\$146,799,665	\$62,034,726	480.50	40.50	521.00
2026 Intro Changes	\$7,354,486	\$1,450,959	\$8,105,444	18.00	3.00	21.00
2026 Total	\$99,431,376	\$148,250,624	\$70,140,170	498.50	43.50	542.00

Authorized Position Summary

Capital Outlay Budget Summary

	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	Bond Proceeds	Capital Outlay Total
2025 Base Budget	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2025 Intro Changes	\$0	\$2,660,000	\$8,100,000	\$10,760,000
2025 Total	\$0	\$2,660,000	\$8,100,000	\$10,760,000
2026 Base Budget	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2026 Intro Changes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2026 Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

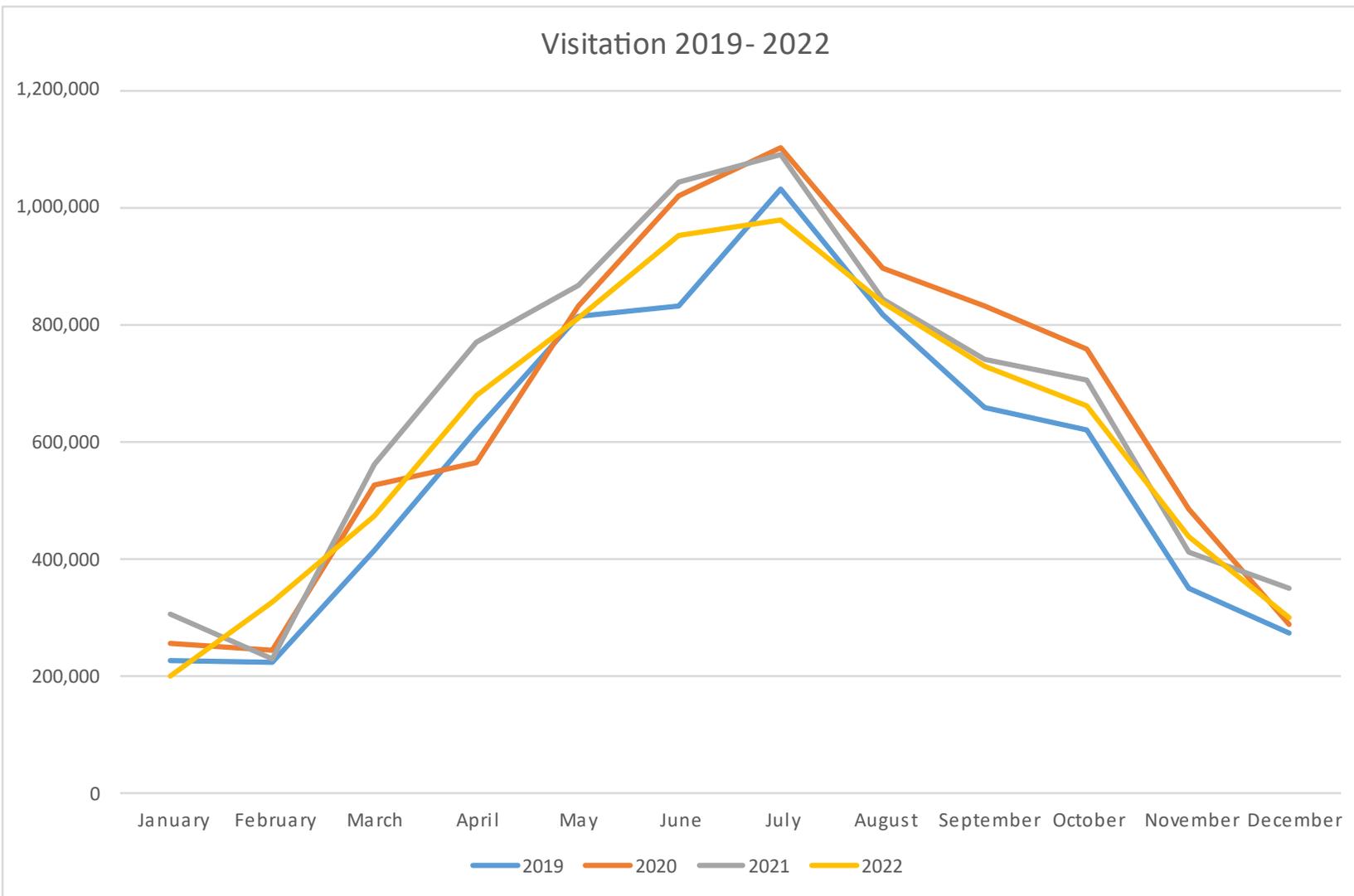
Virginia State Parks



State Parks – Overview



State Parks – Visitation



7,388,467 Visits in 2022
6.8% lower than 2021
7.3% higher than 2019

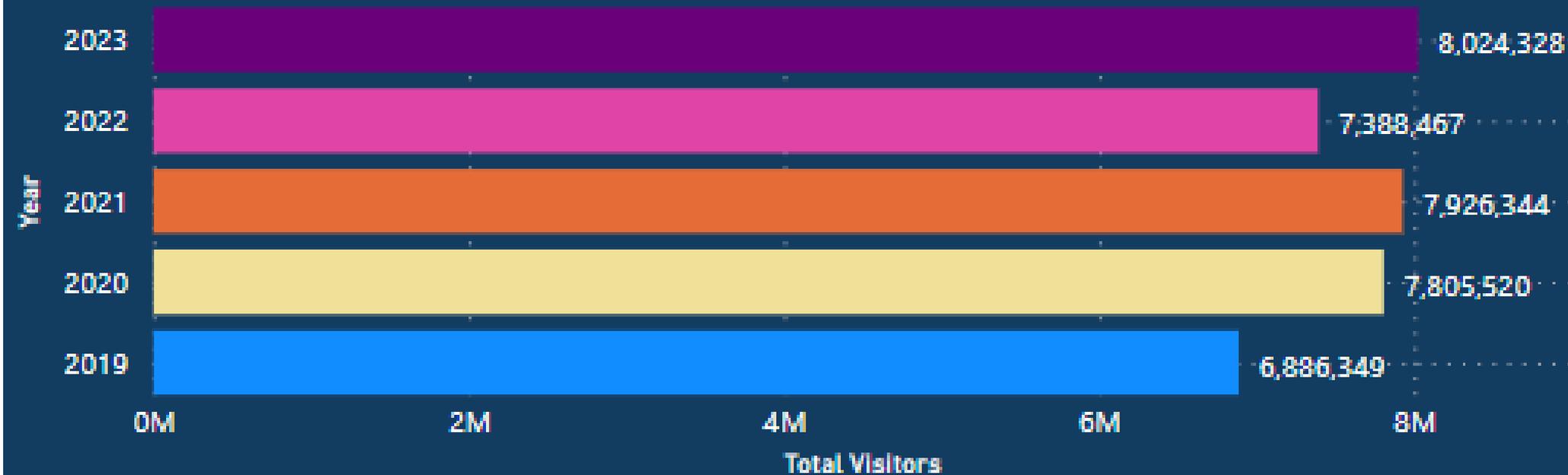
State Parks – Visitation

8,024,328 Visits in 2023

8% Higher than 2022

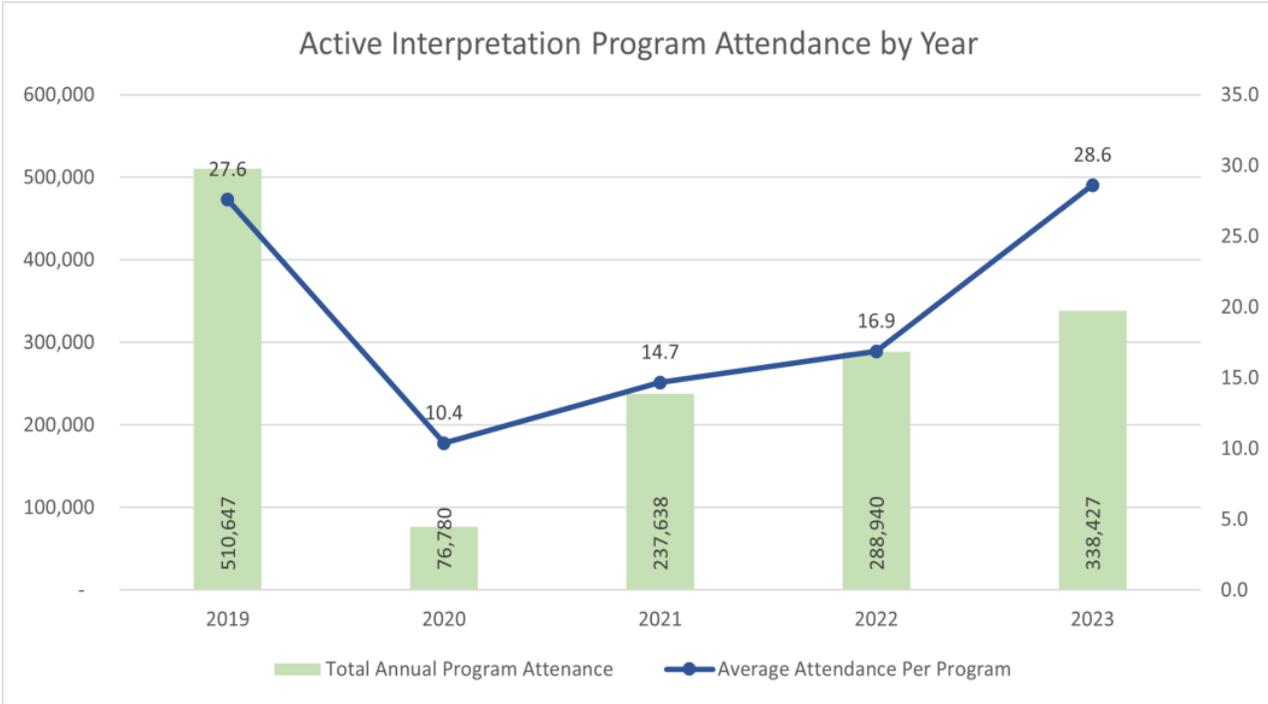
1.2% higher than 2021

Visitation by Year



2023 Program Attendance

2023 Program Attendance	Events	Adults	Children	Total Attendance
Active Interpretation	11,828	186,491	151,936	338,427
Passive Interpretation	4,071	172,980	57,638	230,618
Total Interpretive	15,899	359,471	209,574	569,045
Non-Interpretive	3,743	180,366	69,945	250,311
All events entered	19,642	539,837	279,519	819,356



State Parks – Revenues

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Admission	\$1,117,825.36	\$886,901.83	\$688,431.21	\$297,479.28	\$852,507.84
Camping	\$5,264,895.06	\$6,216,073.08	\$8,289,954.52	\$8,805,012.34	\$8,661,905.39
Parking/Launch Fees	\$3,896,854.52	\$5,292,409.42	\$7,412,955.36	\$6,626,439.82	\$6,101,718.56
Swimming	\$954,424.35	\$700,064.46	\$466,331.08	\$586,563.67	\$573,402.26
Merchandise Sales	\$2,969,889.23	\$2,724,310.44	\$4,125,749.89	\$4,209,913.63	\$4,180,702.11
Cabins	\$6,373,516.95	\$5,388,293.69	\$7,908,430.14	\$7,330,818.96	\$7,140,443.51
Other	\$3,727,645.80	\$1,660,670.20	\$3,560,394.60	\$3,089,319.47	\$3,480,137.61
Grand Total	\$24,678,606.74	\$23,233,243.38	\$32,869,741.00	\$31,302,034.12	\$31,249,839.01

State Parks – Economic Impact

- **Economic Impact***
 - \$478.7M economic activity stimulated
 - \$364.2M total economic impact
- **Visitor Spending**
 - \$304.9M total visitor spending
 - \$123.2M out-of-state spending
- **Return on Investment**
 - \$1 in GF spending = \$15.21 in fresh money and \$1.07 in state and local taxes

TABLE 1: AVERAGE VISITOR SPENDING: PROFILES BY SEGMENT (PER PARK DAY)^a

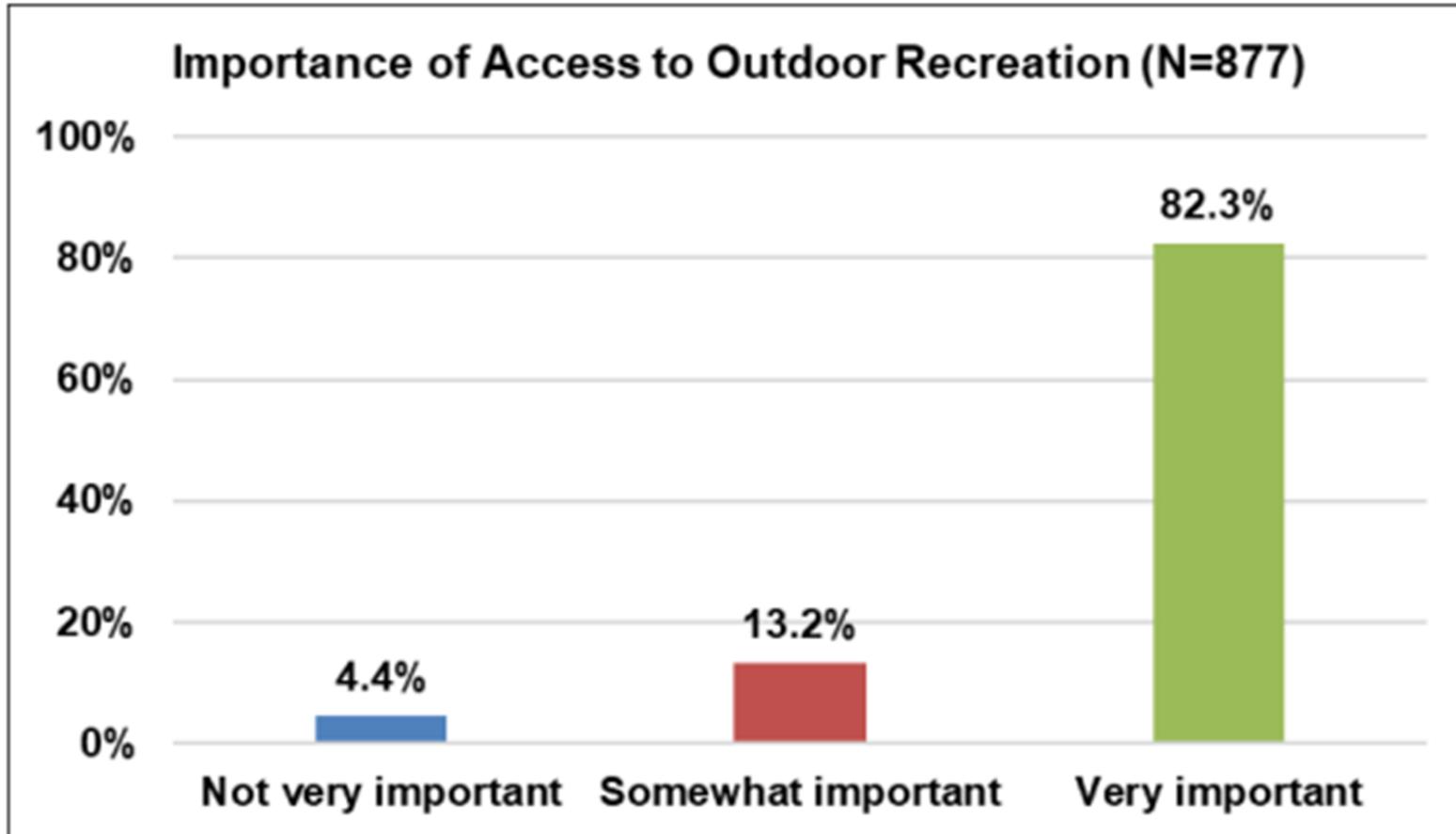
DAY VISITORS				OVERNIGHT GUESTS			
SPENDING CATEGORY	LOCAL DAY VISITOR	NON-LOCAL DAY VISITOR	NON-RESIDENT DAY VISITOR	RESIDENT CABIN GUEST	RESIDENT CAMPING GUEST	NON-RESIDENT CABIN GUEST	NON-RESIDENT CAMPING GUEST
OVERALL PER VISITOR:	\$20.54	\$61.72	\$79.22	\$64.35	\$40.98	\$86.73	\$46.83

^a This Table does not include park operational or capital improvement spending.

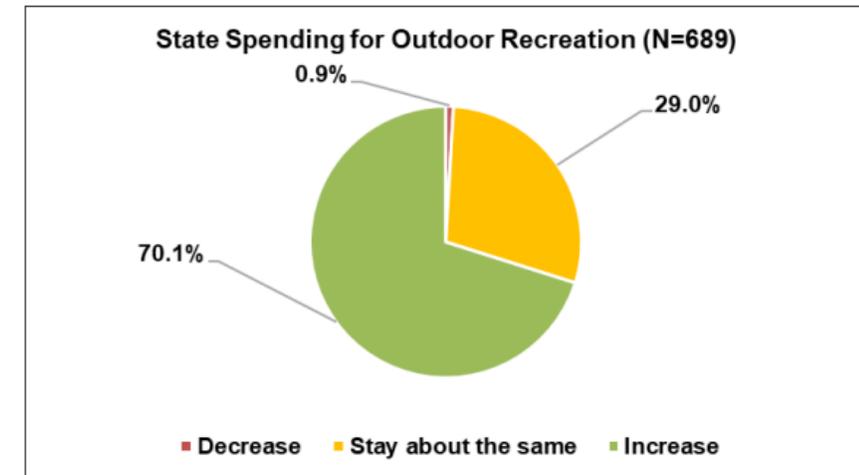
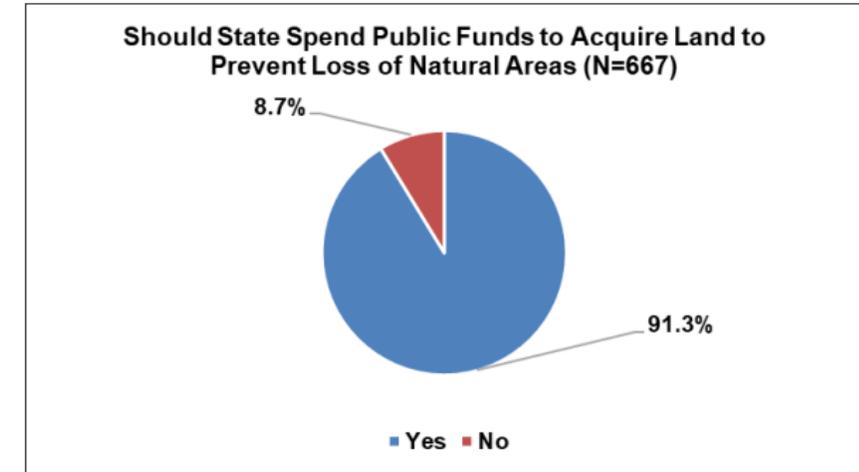
- **Jobs Impact**
 - 3,914 jobs supported
 - \$171.4M in wage & salary income

*All statistics from 2022.

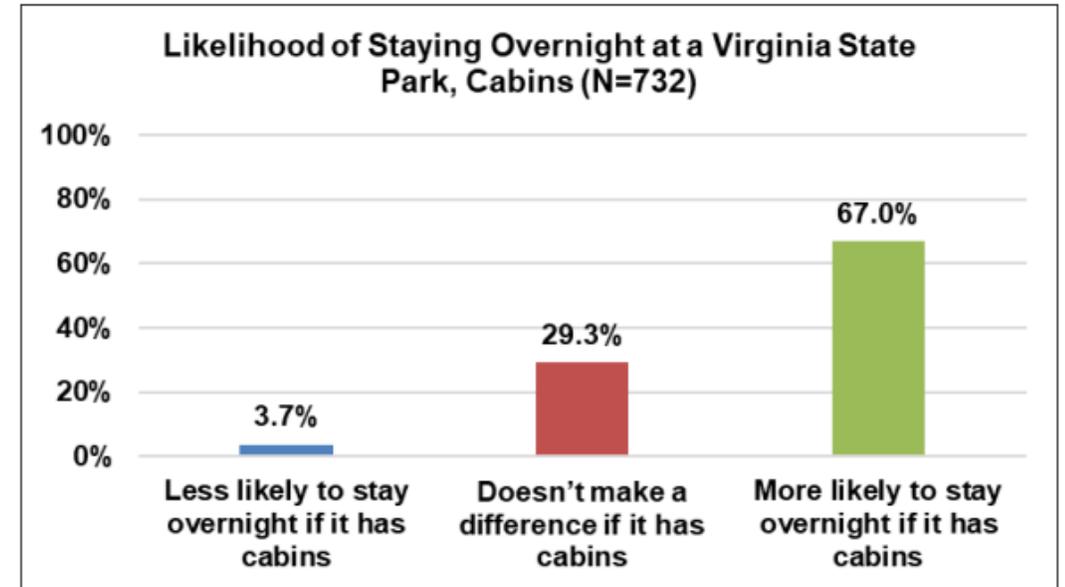
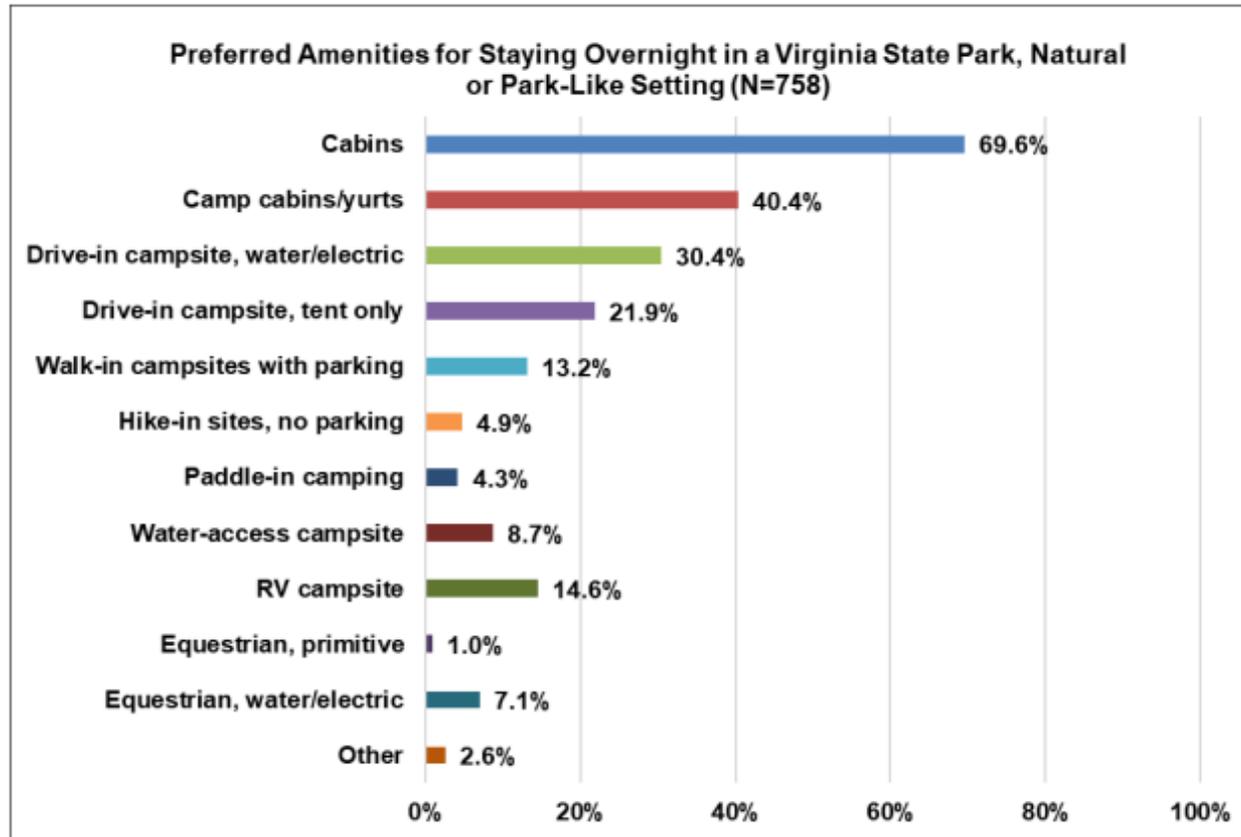
Outdoor Recreation – Public Sentiment



Source: Virginia Outdoors Plan Survey 2022

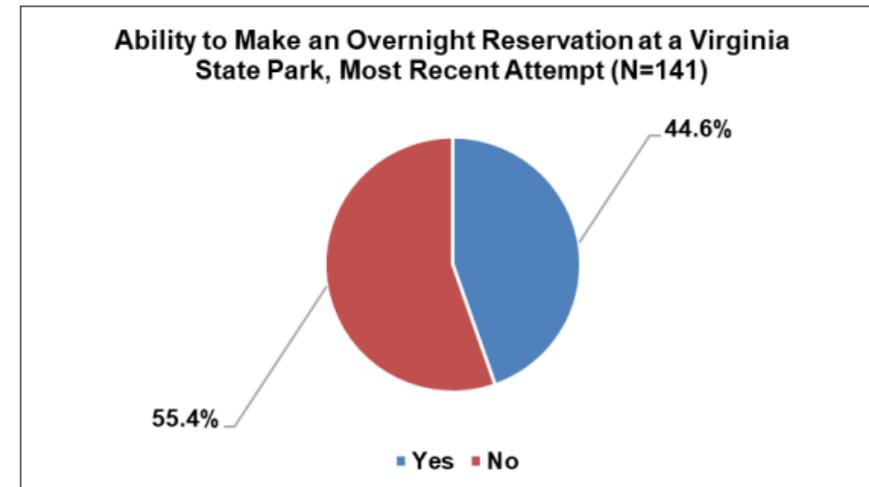
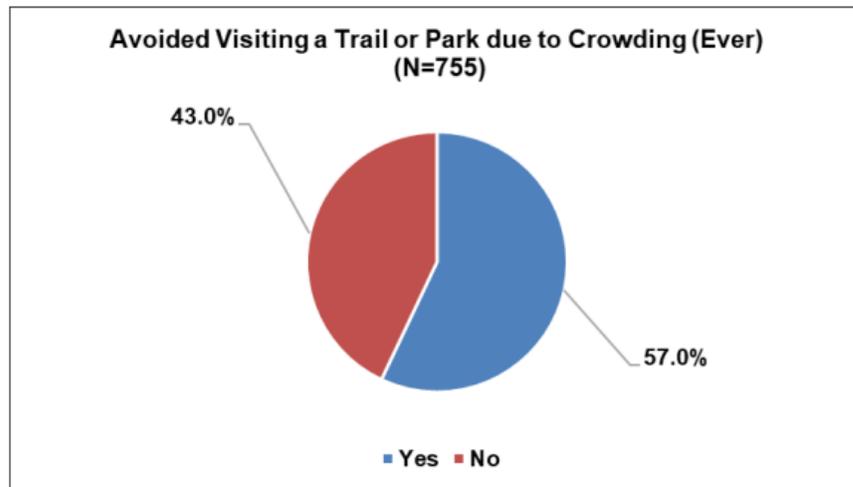
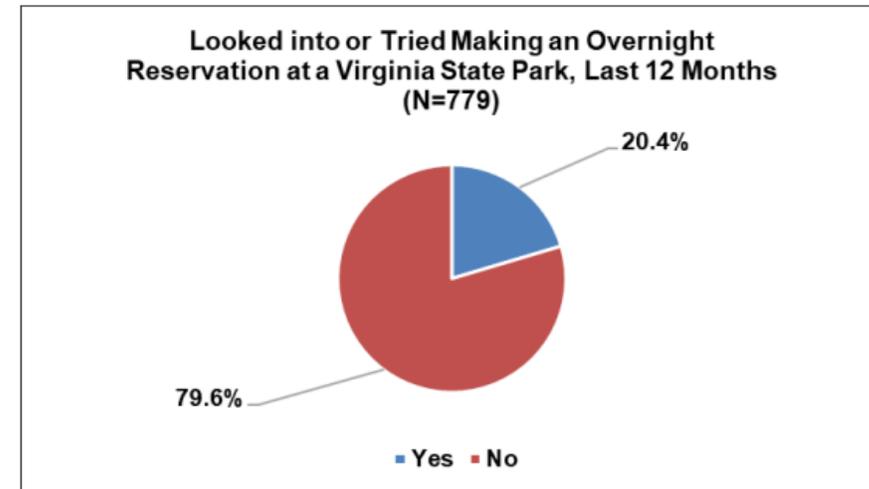
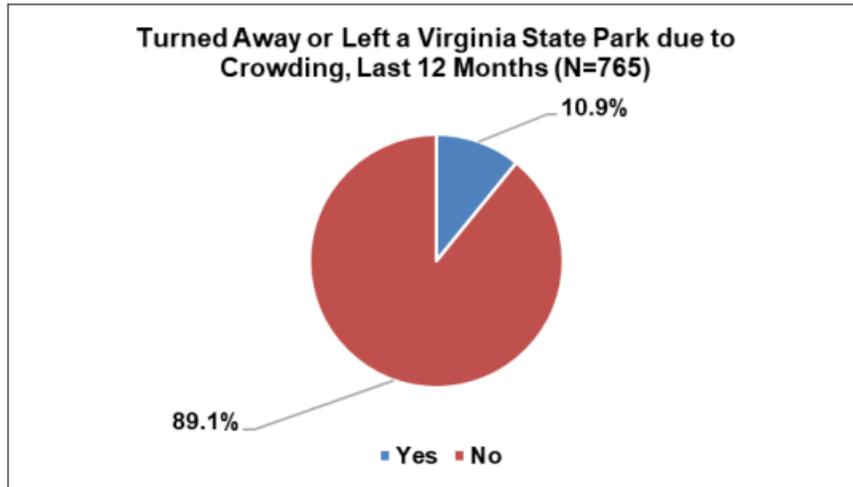


State Parks – Meeting Demand



Source: Virginia Outdoors Plan Survey 2022

State Parks – Meeting Demand



State Parks – Identified Service Gaps

Park Maintenance

- Deferred maintenance needs in excess of \$300 million
- Lack of trained maintenance personnel

Education & Interpretation

- Staffing below levels to meet the mission
- Need for improved connections in critical school districts

Visitor & Resource Protection / Law Enforcement

- Recruitment & retention challenges
- Critically high staff to visitor ratio

Park Access and Accessibility

- Fiscal barriers
- Physical barriers
- Proximity & availability barriers

Resource Management

- Lack of personnel to protect and manage critical natural and cultural resources

State Parks – Deferred Maintenance

Deferred Maintenance	Initial Amount	Funded in FY23/24	Remaining	Adjusted for Inflation
ADA Improvements	\$ 10,030,000	\$ 1,150,000	\$ 8,880,000	\$ 9,679,200
Campground Repairs	\$ 17,700,000	\$ 4,482,000	\$ 13,218,000	\$ 14,407,620
Dam Repairs	\$ 4,285,000	\$ 1,925,000	\$ 2,360,000	\$ 2,572,400
Facilities	\$ 133,353,500	\$ 17,802,000	\$ 115,551,500	\$ 125,951,135
Historic Structures	\$ 26,773,000	\$ 9,490,000	\$ 17,283,000	\$ 18,838,470
Roads and Bridges	\$ 39,884,000	\$ 6,020,000	\$ 33,864,000	\$ 36,911,760
Shoreline Stabilization	\$ 28,616,350	\$ 24,486,350	\$ 4,130,000	\$ 4,501,700
Trails	\$ 33,748,000	\$ 1,888,880	\$ 31,859,120	\$ 34,726,441
Utilities and Infrastructure	\$ 53,209,000	\$ 12,798,000	\$ 40,411,000	\$ 44,047,990
Water Access Repairs	\$ 16,862,000	\$ 7,080,000	\$ 9,782,000	\$ 10,662,380
TOTAL	\$ 364,460,850	\$ 87,122,230	\$ 277,338,620	\$ 302,299,096

State Parks – Active Capital/Maintenance Projects

Project	Funding	Funding Source	Status	Locations
High Bridge Trail State Park Visitor Center	\$ 2,544,444	ARPA, Capital Project Allocation	In Progress	High Bridge
Widewater State Park Development Phase I	\$ 14,053,000	Capital Project Allocation	Closing Out	Widewater
Utility System Upgrades	\$ 5,800,000	ARPA, Capital Project Allocation	In Progress	Various
Expand Outdoor Recreation at NAPs	\$ 2,917,500	ARPA	In Design	Various
Demolition of Unsafe Structures	\$ 1,000,000	Capital Project Allocation	In Bidding	Westmoreland
Renovate Historic Lodge	\$ 1,450,000	Capital Project Allocation	In Design	Douthat
Shoreline Stabilization	\$ 14,800,000	Capital Project Allocation	In Design	Westmoreland
Bath House Repairs	\$ 16,000,000	Capital Project Allocation	In Design	31 Parks
Cabin Renovations and Repairs	\$ 32,258,000	ARPA, Capital Project Allocation	In Construction	5 Parks
Replace Staff Residences	\$ 5,400,000	Capital Project Allocation	In Design	7 Parks
Renovate and Repair Campgrounds	\$ 5,663,590	ARPA, Capital Project Allocation	Nearing Completion	5 Parks
Replace Bridges and Trestles	\$ 8,500,000	ARPA, Capital Project Allocation	In Progress	New River Trail
Total – 56 Projects	\$ 110,386,534			



State Parks – Active Capital/Maintenance Projects

Project	Funding	Funding Source	Status	Locations
HVAC Replacements	\$ 576,808	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Various
Paving Repairs	\$ 526,957	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Various
Dredging Ramps and Docks	\$ 1,922,995	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Kiptopeke, York River
Historic Structure Stabilization	\$ 710,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Chippokes, Belle Isle
Roof Replacements	\$ 210,000	Maintenance Reserve	Nearing Completion	Pocohontas
Restroom Repairs	\$ 700,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Various
Water and Sewer System Repairs	\$ 750,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Pocahontas, York River, Leesylvania
Emergency Structural Repairs	\$ 400,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	First Landing
Critical Tunnel Safety Stabilization	\$ 200,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	New River Trail
Staff Residence Repairs	\$ 300,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Various
Electrical System Repairs	\$ 150,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Holiday Lake
Other Structural Repairs	\$ 300,000	Maintenance Reserve	In Progress	Various
Total	\$ 6,746,760			

Division of Natural Heritage

Natural Area Preserve System



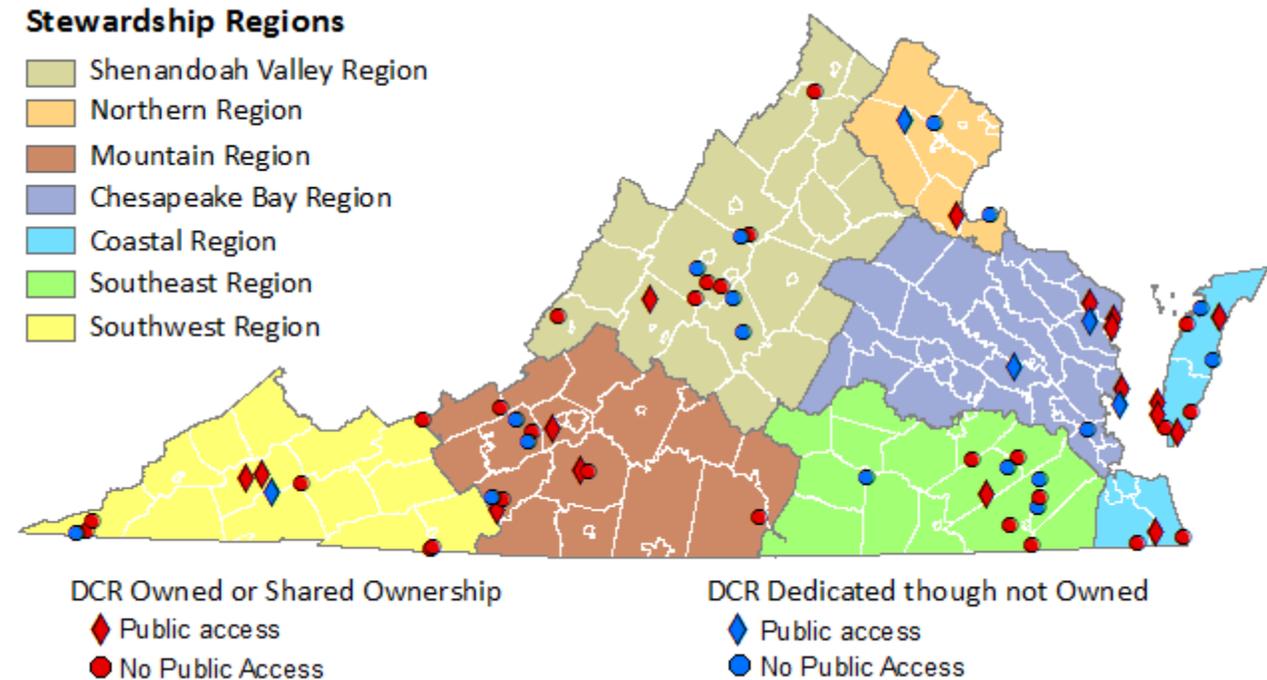
Natural Heritage

- **Mission:**
 - Conserving Virginia's biodiversity through inventory, data and information sharing, environmental review, protection, and stewardship
- **Focus on:**
 - Rare plants and animals
 - Rare and exemplary natural communities
 - Significant caves and karst features



Natural Heritage – Natural Area Preserves

- Currently (2023) there are 66 preserves; 60,286 acres protected.
- Habitats for federally-listed species, state-rare plants and animals, and outstanding examples of Virginia's natural communities.
- 44 preserves are DCR-owned and managed; 22 are owned by variety of landowners including TNC, VOF, ODU, DOF, Newport News, Fairfax County and various private individuals.
- Visitation in 2023 was 200,000



Proposed Budget – State Parks & Natural Heritage

General Fund – Operations & Equipment	FY2025	FY2026	FTE
State Parks – Development of Culpeper Battlefields State Park	\$1,279,509	\$965,169	5
State Parks – Operations of Hayfields State Park	\$1,121,557	\$783,004	4
State Parks – Start-Up Operations at Clinch River State Park	\$323,122	\$275,970	2
Natural Heritage – Emergency Vehicle and Equipment Needs	\$1,430,000	\$38,000	
State Parks & Natural Heritage – Additional Law Enforcement Positions	\$772,000	\$662,000	4
Increase funding for Breaks Interstate Park	\$285,000	\$285,000	
Study on the Potential Acquisition and Development of Oak Hill	\$150,000	---	
Free Admission to State Parks for Virginia National Guard members	\$20,000	\$20,000	

Proposed Budget – State Parks & Natural Heritage

Capital & Maintenance	FY2025
Natural Heritage – Protect and expand Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve	\$3,500,000
State Parks – Underground Storage Tanks (UST) Replacement	\$3,000,000
State Parks – Land Acquisition NGF Authorization	\$2,660,000
State Parks – Address Climate Control in Yurts	\$1,600,000
Agency-wide – Maintenance Reserve	\$8,500,000

Additional Technical Amendment

Technical Amendment	FY2025	FY2026
Agency-wide – Restores 10 NGF Position Authorizations	10 FTE	10 FTE

Water Quality, Dam Safety, and Floodplain Management

Community Flood Preparedness Fund

Applications and Awards Rounds 1 - 3

	Round 1 (Oct 2021)	Round 2 (Dec 2021)	Round 3 (Dec 2022)	Totals
Funds Available	\$ 18,000,000	\$ 17,000,000	\$ 70,000,000	\$ 105,000,000
Number of Applications	32	37	64	133
CFPF Funds Requested	\$ 14,532,740	\$ 29,725,495	\$ 92,472,050	\$ 136,730,285
Funds Awarded	\$ 7,796,040	\$ 24,551,923	\$ 65,388,627	\$ 97,736,590
<i>Low Income Awarded</i>	\$ 3,766,515	\$ 19,759,944	\$ 42,384,643	\$ 65,911,103
<i>Non-Low Income Awarded</i>	\$ 4,029,525	\$ 4,791,979	\$ 23,003,983	\$ 31,825,487

Revenue, Obligations, Balance

CFPF	Amount
Total Revenue	\$380,392,587
Obligations	
Round 1	\$7,796,040
Round 2	\$24,551,923
Round 3	\$65,388,627
Round 4 - Projects	\$75,000,000
Round 4 – Short Term	\$10,000,000
Staff and Contractual Costs FY22 - FY26	\$14,095,365
Set Aside for CRMP Phase II and VFPM Contracts	\$30,000,000
RVRF Capitalization	\$25,000,000
Total Obligated	\$251,831,955
Fund Balance Available	128,560,632.28

Community Flood Preparedness Fund

Awards Rounds 1 - 3



CFPF Round 4

Community Flood Preparedness Fund Round 4 – Total Available \$85,000,000

As the name suggests, the CFPF is focused on larger, community scale projects. It also provides support for capacity building and planning, which has been beneficial to smaller and poorer localities. Round 4 was the first time that the CFPF offers loans, and the first time that awards are capped.

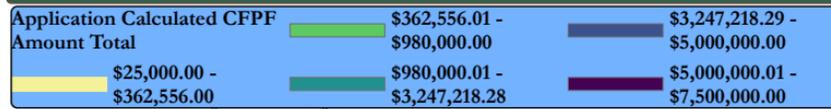
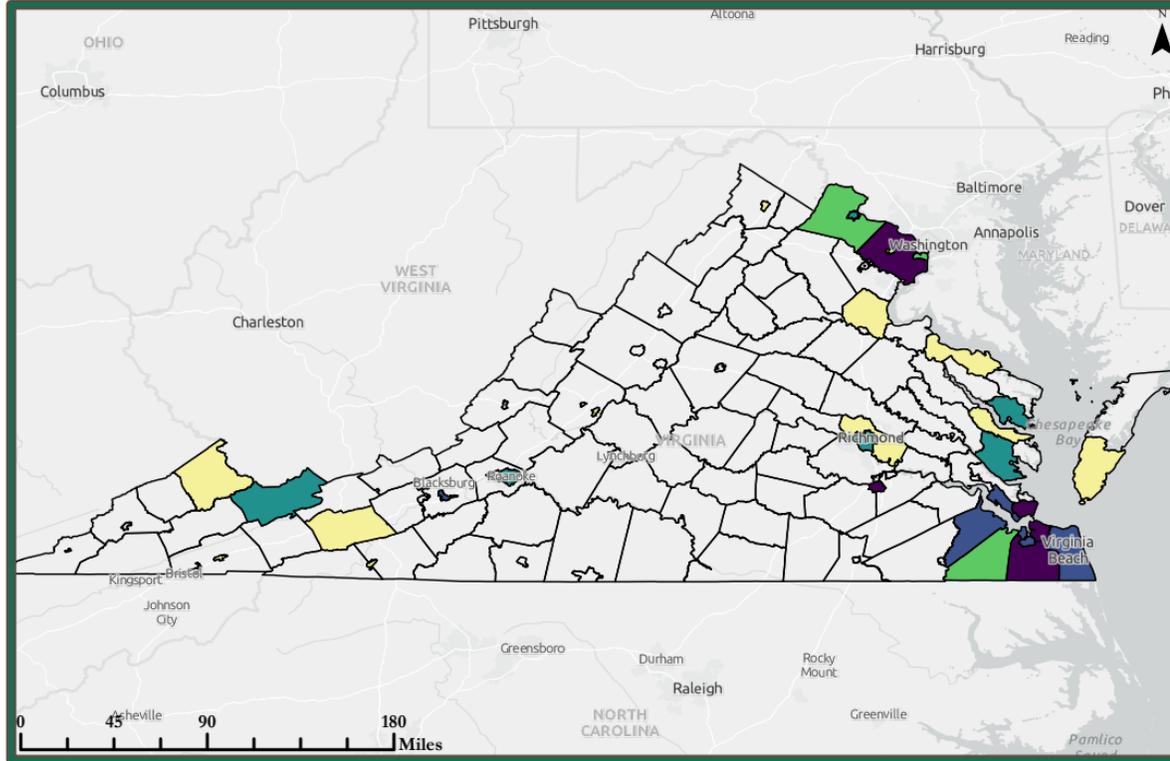
Category	Amount	Award Type	Notes
Planning & Capacity Building, Studies, and Resilience Projects	\$50,000,000	Grants	Awards require match that varies depending on activity/project type. Reduced match for low-income geographic areas. Total awards per applicant are capped.
Resilience Projects	\$25,000,000	Loans	Below market-rate loans for resilience projects. Awards do not require match. Designed primarily to accommodate large projects that exceed grant caps.
Start-Up Funding	\$10,000,000	Loans	Short term (36 month) loans to provide up-front funding for activities funded by CFPF grants. Currently, CFPF grants are paid on a reimbursement basis, which is a limiting factor for some localities.

CFPF Round 4 – Applications

	Projects Submitted	Total Project Cost	Funding Requested	Applications Recommended for Approval - Review Committee	Funding Recommended for Approval - Review Committee
Capacity Building	19	\$ 8,000,547.51	\$ 6,612,611.37	18	\$ 6,605,083.37
Study	18	\$ 11,112,053.65	\$ 9,662,576.21	16	\$ 9,203,340.22
Projects	31	\$ 127,877,875.56	\$ 59,826,570.19	14	\$ 34,191,576.41
TOTAL	68	\$ 146,990,476.72	\$ 76,101,757.77	48	\$ 50,000,000.00
<i>Low Income</i>	45		\$ 45,529,043.99		\$ 27,708,959.36

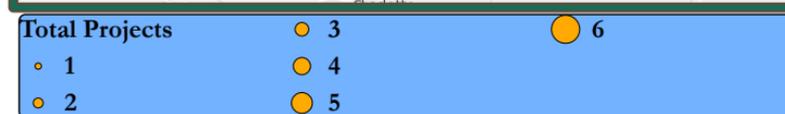
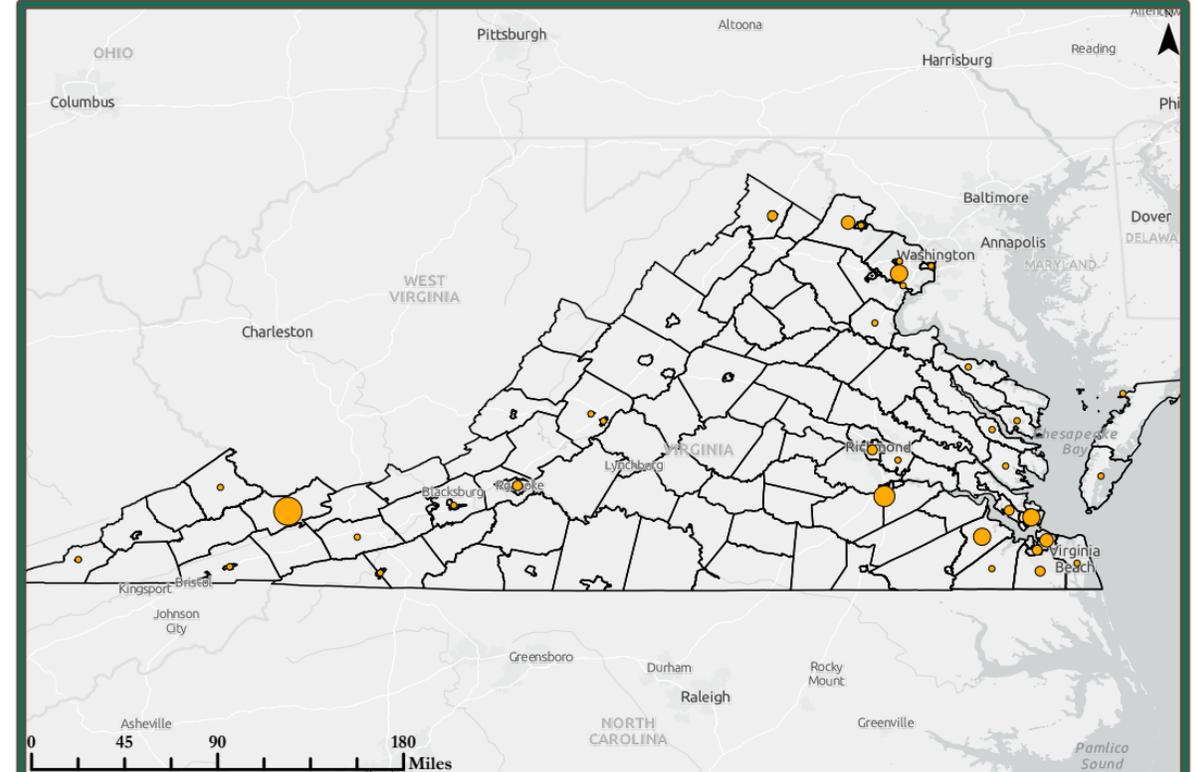
CFPF Round 4 – Applications

CFPF - ROUND 4 APPLICATIONS



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 || Basemap: ESRI || Layer Credit: DCR, VDEM

CFPF - ROUND 4 APPLICATIONS



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 || Basemap: ESRI || Layer Credit: DCR, VDEM

RVRF Round 1

Resilient Virginia Revolving Fund Round 1 – Total Available \$18,500,000 (not including STORM set-aside)

As a complement to the CFPF, the RVRF focuses on providing loans for non-federal match and property-scale projects. The initial round was launched using funds available from the initial capitalization of \$25M.

Category	Amount	Award Type	Notes
Set-aside – FEMA Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation (STORM) Revolving Loan Fund Match in partnership with VDEM.	5,000,000	Loans	Set-aside for match to leverage FEMA STORM RLF Funds. STORM RLF provides grants to capitalize state RLFs and requires a 10% match.
Non-federal match for federal resilience grants to localities.	\$5,000,000	Loans	Below market-rate loans for localities to use as non-federal match for resilience projects (FMA, HMA, CDBG, BRIC, etc.).
Hazard Mitigation of Buildings	\$7,500,000	Loans	Below market-rate loans for projects related to the hazard mitigation of buildings. Awards are for discrete projects that localities wish to support (may be on private property). Satisfies statutory requirement that a portion of the RVRF be set aside for this purpose.
Capitalization for Local Flood Resilience Programs	\$1,000,000	Loans	Interest-only loans to localities with existing revolving funds. Providing interest-only loans allows principal to be revolved within the locality. Loans to localities may be rolled over indefinitely.
Capacity Building for Local Flood Resilience Funding Programs	\$5,000,000	Grants	Grants to localities to support the establishment of Local Flood Resilience Funding Programs. Subject to the approval of DCR, these programs could fund a range of property-scale projects.

RVRF Round 1 – Applications & Status

- \$6.1 million in FEMA STORM RLF funds awarded to Virginia (VDEM) to provide non-federal match for 4 projects with a total cost of \$36 million:

Norfolk - FMA 2022 Elevation of SRL and RL Properties
Norfolk - FMA 2021 Elevations - 7 Residential Properties
Portsmouth - Lake Meade Dam Adaptations
Greene County - Building Department C&CB

- One application under the “Capitalization for Local Flood Resilience Programs for \$500,000 (maximum amount).
- Based on feedback, DCR intends to reopen applications for non-federal match and hazard mitigation of buildings.
- Applications will be accepted and evaluated on a rolling basis until June 30, 2024.
- DCR will continue to engage with stakeholders to shape future rounds.
- NOFO for STORM RLF Round 2 has been posted for \$150 million, and DCR will work with VDEM on submitting an application.

RVRF	
Deposits	Amount
Initial Deposit	25,000,000
FY24 Deposit	100,000,000
Total Deposits	125,000,000
Obligations	
Round 1	18,500,000
STORM RLF Set-Aside	5,000,000
Agency Costs	1,500,000
Total Obligations	25,000,000
Fund Balance Available	100,000,000

Flood Funds Transparency

April 2022 Letter to Sen. Lewis/Del. Bulova on Commitments – ALL COMPLETE

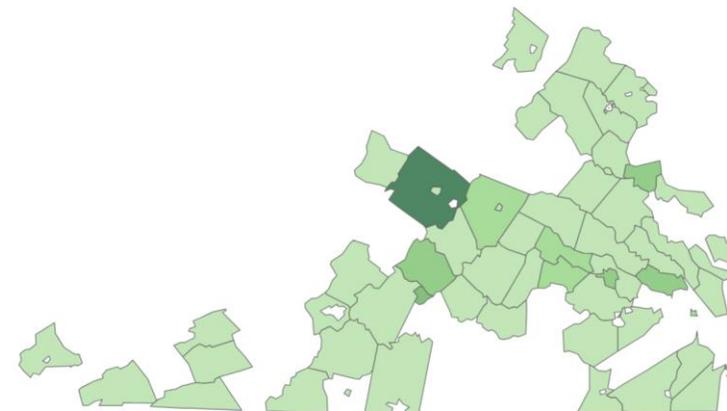
- DCR will make all grant and loan information available online in a location that the public can access:
- CFPF/RVRF applications within 15 calendar days of the grant or loan round application deadline
- CFPF/RVRF final scoring and approval decisions
- DCR will hold a 30-day public comment period prior to each new grant offering to solicit feedback on proposed revisions to the CFPF Grant Manual (similar process for RVRF Loan Manuals)
- DCR will establish a Review Panel to assist in the evaluation of CFPF/RVRF applications. The Panel will include representatives from other state agencies, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and other impacted stakeholder groups.



Dam Safety Grant Update

- Virginia's **Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund** provides grants to local governments and private dam owners whose dams fall under state regulations. The FY23/24 budget appropriated \$21,464,294 for the Fund.

	Total Grant Round Maximum	Approved by SWCB	Funds Disbursed	Unexpended Balance	Number of Funded Projects	Number of Distinct Dams Funded
2021	\$1,000,000	\$726,039	\$476,411	\$249,628	55	34
2022	\$1,250,000	\$1,600,001	\$287,785	\$1,312,216	202	64
2023	\$5,000,000	\$2,862,541	0	\$2,862,541	113	43
2024	\$10,000,000	TBD	0	TBD	TBD	TBD
Totals	\$17,250,000	\$5,188,581	\$764,196	\$4,424,385	370	141



- The 2024 DSFPPF round is currently open, offering a total of \$10,632,500 in grants.

Category	Amount
Dams of regulatory size without hazard classification.	\$1,000,000
Dams of Regulatory size with <u>known</u> hazard classification.	\$2,000,000
Privately-owned, high-hazard dams.	\$7,632,500

Office of Environmental Ed Update

VA K-12 ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PLAN

MEANINGFUL WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES (MWEE)

COMPLETED

PHASE 1: DISCOVERY

APRIL 2023 - JANUARY 2024

Discovering our purpose and our desired future. The first phase focuses on gathering information, input and data.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT

JANUARY 2024 - DECEMBER 2024

Developing the road map & assessment tools for success and begin the design and drafting of the plan based on data from phase 1.

PHASE 3: DISTRIBUTION

JANUARY 2025 - AUGUST 2025

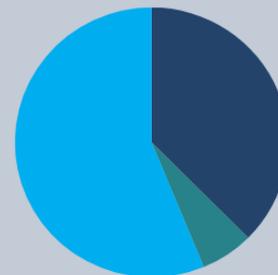
Release to public and begin implementation and assessment stages.

REQUESTED

\$700,553.07

AWARDED

\$382,421.44



NGO's - 9
School Districts - 6
SWCD - 1

IMPACT

14,460 STUDENTS

450 PUBLIC SCHOOL STAFF

Proposed Funding – Water Quality

The Governor’s Introduced Budget continues to provide significant funding for water quality, including full funding of the state portion of the agricultural needs assessment through FY2026.

	General FY2025	Nongeneral FY2025	General FY2026	Nongeneral FY2026
Water Quality Improvement Fund – Total \$201 million	\$138,076,028	\$63,000,000	---	---

WQIF Funding Breakdown

- Total \$166 million for ag BMPs
 - \$116.2 million for BMPs within Bay Watershed
 - \$49.8 million for BMPs in Southern Rivers
- \$15.8 million for Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Assistance
- \$19.2 million for specific program carve-outs

Proposed Funding – Dam Safety, Flooding, and Resilience

	General FY2025	Nongeneral FY2025	General FY2026	Nongeneral FY2026
Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund	\$100,000,000	---	---	---
Resilient Virginia Revolving Loan Fund	\$25,000,000	---	---	---
Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund	\$5,000,000	---	---	---
Dam Safety Program *including 6 FTEs	\$642,446	\$642,446	\$522,446	\$522,446
Assist the Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management Project	\$73,850,000	---	---	---
Support Auditing Services to Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Fees of the Office of the Attorney General	\$97,000	---	\$97,000	---

Questions?

