

**Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees
September 14, 2016
Richmond, Virginia**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation took place at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 14, 2016 in Senate Room 3 in the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

The Honorable Molly Ward, Secretary of Natural Resources, Chair
Robert Lazaro, Jr., Vice Chair
Deputy Secretary Sam Towell, for The Honorable Todd Haymore

Byron M. Adkins, Jr.
Steven L. Apicella
R. Brian Ball
Glenda Booth
Susan E. Donner
Joan Fenton
Jay C. Ford

The Honorable Emmett Hanger, Jr.
Valerie D. Hubbard
Anna Lawson
Paul V. Milde
Julian Ottley
The Honorable John Paul Woodley, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT

The Honorable Albert C. Pollard, Jr.
Russell Vern Presley

The Honorable Jill Holtzman Vogel

STATE AGENCY STAFF PRESENT

Clyde E. Cristman, DCR, Executive Secretary
Rochelle Altholz, DCR
Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR
Jason Bulluck, DCR
Rob Evans, DCR
Michael Fletcher, DCR
Melissa Jackson, DCR
Martha Little, VOF
Lisa McGee, DCR
John Mitchell, DCR

Sharon Partee, DCR
Danette Poole, DCR
Jason Powell, Senate Finance Committee
Sarah Richardson, DCR
Mike Santucci, DOF
Andy Sorrell, VDACS
Tom Smith, DCR
Elizabeth Tune, DHR
Deb Van Duzee, DGIF

OTHERS PRESENT

Parker Agelasto, Capital Region Land Conservancy
Kathy Baker, Stafford County
Bill Dickinson, Alexandria
J. Lance Mallamo, City of Alexandria

Heather Richards, The Conservation Fund
Peggy Stevens, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust
Brian Van Eerden, The Nature Conservancy

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

With sixteen (16) members present, a quorum was established.

CALL TO ORDER

Secretary Ward called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 18, 2016

Mr. Lazaro moved that the minutes of the May 18, 2016 meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees be approved as submitted. Ms. Lawson seconded and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF DISTRIBUTION OF THE 2016 VLCF STEWARDSHIP FUNDS – Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR Land Conservation Analyst

Ms. Bulbulkaya presented the proposed distribution of the 2016 VLCF Stewardship Funds. She advised that the funds are collected by the Department of Taxation and then sent to DCR. Funds are distributed via the formula provided in statute, § 58.1-513 of the Code of Virginia.

2016 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Stewardship Fund				
	AGENCY NAME	NUMBER OF DONATIONS	% OF TOTAL DONATIONS	AMOUNT OF FUNDS
1	American Conservation Legacy Fund, Inc.	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
2	Archaeological Conservancy	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
3	Blue Ridge Land Conservancy	3	0.58%	\$6,030.05
4	Capital Region Land Conservancy, Inc.	0.5	0.10%	\$1,005.01
5	Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
6	Central Virginia Battlefields Trust Inc.	3	0.58%	\$6,030.05
7	Chesapeake Airport Authority	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
8	City of Danville	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
9	Civil War Preservation Trust	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
10	County of Albemarle	20	3.85%	\$40,200.31
11	County of Clarke	6	1.16%	\$12,060.09
12	County of Fauquier	13	2.50%	\$26,130.20
13	County of Fluvanna	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
14	County of Henrico	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
15	County of King William	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
16	County of Northumberland	0.5	0.10%	\$1,005.01
17	County of Stafford	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
18	County of Warren	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
19	Eastern Shore Land Trust	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
20	Henricopolis Soil & Water Conservation District	0.5	0.10%	\$1005.21
21	Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc.	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
22	Historic Green Springs, Inc.	3	0.58%	\$6,030.05
23	Historic Virginia Land Conservancy	7	1.35%	\$14,070.11
24	Jefferson Soil & Water Conservation District	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
25	Land Trust of Virginia	19	3.66%	\$38,190.29
26	Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
27	Middle Peninsula Land Trust	3	0.58%	\$6,030.05
28	The Nature Conservancy	4	0.77%	\$8,040.06
29	New River Land Trust	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
30	New River Soil & Water Conservation District	0.5	0.10%	\$1,005.01
31	North American Land Trust (NALT)	2	0.38%	\$4,020.03
32	Northern Neck Land Conservancy	1.5	0.29%	\$3,015.02

33	Northern Virginia Conservation Trust	5	0.96%	\$10,050.08
34	Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
35	Old Dominion Land Conservancy, Inc.	16	3.08%	\$32,160.25
36	Piedmont Environmental Council	4	0.77%	\$8,040.06
37	Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Inc.	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
38	Potomac Conservancy	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
39	Shenandoah County Conservation Easement Authority	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
40	Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation	1.5	0.29%	\$3,015.02
41	Town of Strasburg	0.5	0.10%	\$1,005.01
42	Town of Tangier	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
43	Virginia Conservation Legacy Fund, Inc.	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
44	Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
45	Virginia Department of Forestry	35	6.74%	\$70,350.54
46	Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries	2	0.39%	\$4,020.03
47	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	15	2.89%	\$30,150.23
48	Virginia Outdoors Foundation	333.5	62.14%	\$648,229.97
49	Wildlife Foundation of Virginia	1	0.19%	\$2,010.02
	TOTALS	519	100.00%	\$1,043,198.00
Federal agencies are ineligible to receive VLCF funds; the one donation held by NPS was not counted.				

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Apicella moved that the Distribution of 2016 VLCF Stewardship Funds be approved as submitted by staff. Ms. Lawson seconded and the motion was approved.

UPDATE ON PRIOR VLCF GRANT PROJECTS – Sarah Richardson, DCR Land Conservation and Real Property Manager

Ms. Richardson reviewed the VLCF projects that were completed since the May, 2016 meeting and provided a spreadsheet that showed the status of projects from the last two grant rounds.

The Nature Conservancy – Clinch River: Cleveland to Artrip Conservation Area (From the FY13 grant round; closed June 2016).

This project protects close to 1.8 miles of river frontage along the Clinch River, within the “Clinch River – Little Stream Conservation Unit,” which has been designated as having outstanding biological significance by DCR’s Division of Natural Heritage.

VLCF Grant Award: \$120,000

Final amount: \$84,448

Match: \$90,448

Potomac Appalachian Trail Conservancy – Huntley Tract (Closed July 2016)

The Potomac Appalachian Trail Conservancy (PATC) purchased 102 acres adjacent to Shenandoah National Park to expand the park, protect wildlife habitat, protect the viewsheds for hikers on the Appalachian Trail near the Jewell Hollow Overlook and Tutwiler Hollow; and allow for the extension of Crusher Ridge Trail for public use.

VLCF Grant amount: \$75,000

Match: \$425,000

Stafford County Purchase of Development Rights Program – Jones Farm (Closed August 2016)

Awards from two different grant rounds enabled the purchase of a conservation easement of 43 acres of farmland in Stafford County. The Jones Farm consists of 13 acres of active farmland (producing hay) and 24 acres of mixed timber forest land. 68 percent of the property is prime farmland and statewide important soils.

VLCF Grant amount: \$180,000

Match: \$503,426

FINANCIAL UPDATE ON AVAILABLE GRANT FUNDS – Sharon Partee, DCR Finance Director

Ms. Partee presented the Board with the following financial update of the fund balance to include income and disbursements.

INCOME	
FY14 Stewardship Funds	\$1,088,822
FY15 Stewardship Funds	\$ 855,400
FY16 Stewardship Funds	\$1,043,198
FY14 Appropriation – Chapter 3	\$1,000,000
FY15 Appropriation – Chapter 806	\$1,000,000
FY16 Appropriation – Chapter 665	\$4,000,000
FY17 Appropriation – Chapter 780	\$8,000,000
FY16 Excess City of Chesapeake project money returned	\$ 50,000
FY16 Interest	\$ 30,138
TOTAL INCOME	\$17,067,558
DISBURSEMENTS	
FY15 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$1,088,822
FY16 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$ 855,400
FY17 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$ 0
FY14 Grant Payments	\$ 834,978
FY15 Grant Payments	\$ 556,937
FY16 Grant Payments	\$ 981,730
FY17 Grant Payments	\$ 339,449
FY14 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$ 250,000
FY15 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$ 250,000
FY16 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$1,000,000
FY17 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$ 500,000
FY15 Appropriation Reversion – Part 3, 1.01 ZZ.1 CH665	\$ 300,000
TOTAL DISBURSEMENT	\$7,029,816
OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE – August 31, 2016	\$11,550,816

2017 GRANT ROUND OVERVIEW - Sarah Richardson, DCR Land Conservation and Real Property Manager

Ms. Richardson presented the following overview of the 2016 Grant Round.

- The FY2017 grant round opened May 18, 2016, and closed July 28, 2016.

- Announcements were sent to every county or city and all land trusts and conservation organizations in Virginia.
- A grant workshop was held on June 28 in Charlottesville.
- 36 applications were received:
 - 10 in Farms and Forestlands
 - 8 in Historic Areas
 - 8 in Natural Areas
 - 10 in Parks and Open Spaces
- More eligible projects were received than the VCLF allocation could fund.
- Total amount authorized by the Board for this grant round is \$6,337,500.
- Additional prior awarded grant funds were returned: \$50,000 for Parks and Open Spaces and \$35,511 for Natural Areas.
- Total amount of funding requested was \$10.9 million, with total project costs exceeding \$42 million.
- If all projects could be funded, they would protect 8,525 acres.
- Interagency task force met twice to discuss the grant applications and projects.
- 22 projects are recommended for funding
 - These 22 will help protect 6,538 acres
- 10 of the recommendations projects (38% of funding) will have open-space easements.
- 15 of the recommended projects (76% of funding) will provide some level of public access.
- Interagency Task Force Recommendations:
 - 7 projects in Farm and Forestlands
 - 2 projects in Historic Areas
 - 5 in Natural Areas
 - 8 in Open Space and Parks

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDED GRANT ROUND PROJECTS FOR AUTHORIZATION

The Interagency Task Force representatives present the list of recommended projects.

Farmlands and Forest Preservation – Andrew Sorrell, VDACS, and Mike Santucci, DOF

Mr. Sorrell presented the following Farmlands project recommendations:

1. Piedmont Environmental Council – Farmland Protection Along the Rapidan River

This grant request is to fund partial purchase of a conservation easement on Glenmary Farm, a 367.7-acre grain, turkey, and beef farm that includes 166 acres of prime or statewide important soils and 80 acres of forest located in Rapidan in Orange County. The project is a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) co-held by The Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) and the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District. Protection of this property will: enhance water quality with approximately 12,772 linear feet (2.4 miles) of permanent vegetated riparian buffers along the Rapidan and several tributaries; conserve the scenic rural context of the Mount Pleasant / Lessland, a historic site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and Clark Mountain, a strategic signal post and command headquarters used during the Civil War; and provide visual access to the property from 1.4 miles of frontage along Rapidan River and River Road (State Route 636). The property is contiguous with a block of over 3,200 acres of previously conserved land along the Rapidan River as it sweeps around the base of Clark Mountain.

Total Project Cost: \$1,120,115 **Match:** NRCS ACEP-ALE, Partial donation of easement value, PEC. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$262,790. **Recommended amount:** \$250,000.

2. The Conservation Fund – Flintshire Farm (Phase II)

This grant request is to fund partial purchase of a conservation easement on Flintshire Farm, 353 acres of active farmland, scenic riverfront and wetlands in Caroline County. The property has been under the same family ownership since 1666 and has been identified locally by Fort A.P. Hill Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program as a priority for conservation due to its close proximity to army facility. Protection of Flintshire Farm will protect nearly 160 acres of prime farmland with an active agricultural operation that grows corn and soybeans, more than two miles of frontage on the Rappahannock River and its tributaries, 70 acres of forested wetlands and scenic views from designated scenic byways and the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail. Water quality will be protected with approximately 11,000 linear feet of permanent vegetative buffer along the Rappahannock River and other tributaries.

Total Project Cost: \$2,734,500 **Match:** Fort AP Hill ACUB program. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$400,000. **Recommended amount:** \$400,000.

3. Valley Conservation Council – Valley Pike Farm

The grant request is for the purchase of development rights and placement of a conservation easement on a 151-acre family farm with productive agricultural soils, wildlife habitat, and scenic views from U.S. Highway 11 and Interstate 81 to be held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Valley Pike Farm, Inc. is located in Rockingham County and is a Virginia Century Farm that has been in continuous ownership and operation by the same family for over 100 years. Protection of Valley Pike Farm will protect nearly 100 acres of prime and statewide important soils that is currently producing soybeans, barley, corn, sweet corn and hay along with grazing beef cattle on pasture lands.

Total Project Cost: \$542,300 **Match:** Partial donation of easement value. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$271,150. **Recommended amount:** \$200,000.

Mr. Santucci presented the Forest Preservation project recommendations:

1. Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) – Pleasant Grove Easement

The grant request is to fund the partial purchase of an open-space easement on 1,005 acres of land, 1,000 of which is in working forest and farmland, located west of South Boston in Halifax County. Ninety-one percent of the forestland is classified as having high forest conservation value, and all of the soils currently in agriculture are classified as either Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide

Importance. The easement will protect over 4.5 miles of watercourses with permanent forested buffers, including the wetlands present on the property. A quarter of the property and a number of structures on it are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Total Project Cost: \$1,329,600. **Match:** Partial donation of easement value. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$250,000. **Recommended amount:** \$230,000.

2. Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) – Flowers Easement

The grant request is to fund partial purchase of a conservation easement that will protect 845 acres of forest and farmland in Southampton County. The property contains over a mile and a half of frontage along the Nottoway River, this stretch of which is a State-designated Scenic River. The project contains 690 acres of forestland under active management and 155 acres of land currently in agricultural use. The easement will protect over three miles of watercourses with permanent forested buffers, with 286 acres of predominantly tupelo/cypress wetlands along the river. The property will contribute significantly to the corridor of connected, interagency conserved lands that continue to be protected along the river in this area, as it lies within the larger DCR Natural Heritage-designated Nottoway River – Three Creek Stream Conservation Unit (SCU), and is immediately downstream of the DGIF Cary's Bridge public boat ramp.

Total Project Cost: \$1,002,100. **Match:** Partial donation of easement value. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$300,000. **Recommended amount:** \$250,000.

3. Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) – Wingfield-Cosby Acquisition

The grant request is to support the fee-simple purchase of 572 acres of forestland in Louisa County as a new State Forest. In addition to providing local outdoor recreational opportunities, the property is located within an hour of the population centers of Richmond, Charlottesville, and Fredericksburg. Once initial basic infrastructure improvements are made, the property will be fully available to the public for all forms of outdoor recreation, meeting the “most-needed goals” identified for this area in the Virginia Outdoors Plan. The property is entirely forested, 94% of which is considered high forest conservation value and all of which will be protected as a State Forest. In total, the property contains approximately one mile of streams that flow into the Long Creek-Little River SCU, and will be protected by permanent forested buffers.

Total Project Cost: \$1,467,300. **Match:** \$357,500 bargain sale from owners and \$537,800 from VDOF. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$572,000. **Recommended amount:** \$170,412.

4. Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) – Goosepond Easement

The grant request is to support the partial purchase of an open-space easement on 955 acres of primarily forested land in Dinwiddie County. The 931 acres that are currently forested are classified by VDOF as having high forest conservation value and are under active management. Seventeen acres are in agricultural use, the majority containing soils classified as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The easement will protect nearly two miles of streams with permanent forested buffers, including approximately 40 acres of wetlands present on the property. DCR Natural Heritage has confirmed the presence of the State-threatened barking tree frog (*Hyla gratiosa*) and its habitat on the property, which will be protected by habitat protection areas. The project will support the Virginia Outdoors Plan by protecting DCR-NH resources in “the most biologically diverse region along the fall line.”

Total Project Cost: \$1,157,250. **Match:** Partial donation of easement value. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$150,000. **Recommended amount:** \$125,000.

5. Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) – Bucks Elbow Mountain Easement

The grant request is to support the partial purchase of an open space easement on 263 acres of forested land near Crozet in western Albemarle County. All of the forestland is classified as having high forest conservation value by VDOP, and two globally rare natural communities occur on site. It contains approximately 1,700 linear feet of headwater streams of Powell Creek. The property is highly visible from publicly-owned parks in the area.

Total Project Cost: \$497,000. **Match:** Partial donation of easement value. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$150,000. **Recommended amount:** \$125,000.

Historic Areas Preservation – Elizabeth Tune, DHR

Ms. Tune presented the Historic Areas Preservation project recommendations. Mr. Cristman recused himself from the discussion due to a personal interest in one of the recommended properties.

1. Capital Region Land Conservancy – Malvern Hill Farm

Capital Region Land Conservancy is requesting \$1,000,000 for the fee simple acquisition of approximately 524 acres in Henrico County containing prime farmland, forested cover with a high level of forest conservation value, roughly 7,000 linear feet of streams, and a portion of the James River-Turkey Island Creek Stream Conservation Unit. The property lies within the core and study area of the Civil War Battle of Malvern Hill (1862) and is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places, primarily for the archaeological and architectural significance of the brick ruins of the late 17th century manor house present during the 1862 battle, but burned in a 1905 fire. Union Army Commander George B. McClellan also occupied this house as his headquarters and signal station during the Battle of Malvern Hill. Malvern Hill also witnessed the encampment of General Marquis D. Lafayette in 1781 as well as the Virginia Militia during the War of 1812. A 10-acre portion of the property will become a canoe/kayak launch into Turkey Island Creek, which will not only provide public access to this estuary of the James River, but also to the adjacent Virginia Capital Trail, Presquile National Wildlife Refuge and Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The entire property is currently listed on the market for sale.

Total Project Cost: \$3,690,000. **Match:** Civil War Trust, James River Association, state and federal battlefield preservation grants, and other grants. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$1,000,000. **Recommended amount:** \$687,500.

2. City of Alexandria – Historic Murray-Dick Fawcett House

The City of Alexandria is requesting \$1,250,000 for the fee simple acquisition of a 0.30-acre lot on Prince Street in Old Town Alexandria, containing an historically significant 18th century timber frame and brick dwelling distinguished by its relatively unaltered state of preservation and high degree of integrity. The property is a contributing resource to the Alexandria Historic District, which is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior in 1966. The Murray-Dick Fawcett House is also adjacent to the Washington-Rochambeau Route and was one of the few buildings in existence in the area during the time of the American Revolution. The Office of Historic Alexandria currently manages eight museums and historic sites and plans to incorporate the house into its system as a public museum and educational center. As one of the largest open space/garden areas in Old Town Alexandria, the lot will become public open space. Protection of the property will preserve a nationally significant architectural and cultural resource while promoting heritage tourism and providing full public access to an urban green space in the downtown core.

Total Project Cost: \$2,500,000. **Match:** donated property value. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$1,250,000. **Recommended amount:** \$900,000.

Natural Area Protection – Jason Bulluck, DCR Division of Natural Heritage

Mr. Bulluck presented the Natural Area Protection project recommendations.

1. Department of Conservation and Recreation – **The Cedars Natural Area Preserve Addition**

DCR's Natural Heritage Program seeks to purchase in fee approximately 504 acres as an addition to The Cedars Natural Area Preserve in Lee County. The Cedars region is a focal area for DCR due to the extraordinary biodiversity significance of the region's natural heritage resources. The subject parcel is the largest remaining unprotected tract identified as a conservation priority in the region. The tract includes 6,170 feet of frontage on the Powell River, which supports the most significant freshwater diversity in North America. In addition, recent surveys by DCR personnel confirm the property supports several rare plant species, natural communities, and cave and karst features. The outstanding conservation values of the property are at risk from impending logging and potentially expanded agricultural uses.

Total Project Cost: \$1,064,000. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$1,064,000. **Recommended amount:** \$317,711; or \$501,511 (contingent on alternative funding for Cowbane).

2. The Nature Conservancy – **North Landing River Sawgrass Marsh**

The Nature Conservancy is seeking a grant to assist with the purchase of an easement on approximately 1,275 acres of wetlands on the North Landing River within the city of Virginia Beach. If successful, this project will close the last unprotected gap along more than 13 miles on the western side of the river. Since the earliest days of the Natural Heritage Program, this watery landscape – which is home to four globally rare natural communities and more than a dozen rare plant and animal species – has been a target for conservation by both The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and DCR. The property has approximately 700 acres of open marsh and 575 acres of tidal cypress/water tupelo swamp. If the project is successful, the easement will be held jointly by TNC and DCR and will be dedicated as part of North Landing River Natural Area Preserve.

Total Project Cost: \$320,000. **Match:** \$170,000. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$150,000. **Recommended amount:** \$150,000.

3. Department of Conservation and Recreation – **Redrock Mountain Natural Area Preserve Addition**

DCR's Natural Heritage Program seeks to purchase in fee 98 acres in Smyth County as an addition to Redrock Mountain Natural Area Preserve. This project will connect the Preserve with the nearby Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area and secure an inholding in one of Virginia's most significant contiguous forested landscapes. In addition, the project will protect a portion of the red siltstone cliff for which the mountain – and the preserve – are named, as well as four associated rare plant species and two rare natural communities.

Total Project Cost: \$151,200. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$151,200. **Recommended amount:** \$151,200.

4. Department of Conservation and Recreation – **Cowbane Wet Prairie Natural Area Preserve Addition**

DCR's Natural Heritage Program proposes to acquire in fee approximately 84 acres along the South River and adjacent to Cowbane Prairie Natural Area Preserve in Augusta County. The subject property is within a mapped Conservation Site, which has the highest possible biodiversity ranking of B1. This high ranking is due to the high number of rare species and significant natural communities found there, as

well as the high viability and the extreme rarity of some of those elements. Fifteen rare plants and five globally rare communities are found within the preserve and most of these populations require periodic burning to remain healthy. Protecting the property will serve as a smoke buffer for the prescribed burning necessary on the adjacent preserve, as well as prevent further degradation of water quality to the South River by securing the riparian zone along more than 4,100 feet of the river and tributary streams.

Total Project Cost: \$877,050. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$877,050. **Recommended amount:** \$877,050.

5. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve Addition

DCR's Natural Heritage Program seeks to purchase in fee six acres in Floyd County as an addition to Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve. Although a relatively small acquisition, this tract will nonetheless be an important addition to the preserve, which is an increasingly popular public recreation destination and one of the most important scenic resources in the region (according the Virginia Outdoors Plan). Visiting natural areas and hiking are among the fastest growing sectors of nature-based outdoor recreation across Virginia. Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve accommodates both, as well as two of the top three "most-needed outdoor recreation" types in the New River region. By acquiring this key tract of private land with frontage on the Buffalo Mountain access road, multiple conservation, recreation, and visual goals can be met. The proposed acquisition will support continued public access to the existing Natural Area Preserve, help maintain a scenic entrance into the Preserve, and further protect more of the outstanding biodiversity which epitomizes Buffalo Mountain.

Total Project Cost: \$39,550. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$39,550. **Recommended amount:** \$39,550.

6. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Antioch Pines Natural Area Preserve Addition

DCR's Natural Heritage Program seeks to purchase in fee 75 acres in Southampton County along the Blackwater River as an addition to Antioch Pines Natural Area Preserve. This region once supported frequently burned, open stands of upland longleaf pine and old growth hardwood forests and cypress swamps on river bottoms. Although this landscape was nearly obliterated over the centuries, the Natural Heritage Program's protection and stewardship activities here aim to reclaim a substantial vestige of this landscape for future generations. Upland pine-oak woodlands are being restored with prescribed burning and native longleaf pines are being returned, while adjacent bottomland hardwood forests and swamps are being protected from timber harvest and slowly growing into maturity. This tract will add to the overall Preserve goal by providing permanent protection of additional bottomland hardwood as well as mesic hardwoods along the steep east-facing bluff.

Total Project Cost: \$118,650. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$118,650. **Recommended amount:** \$118,650 (contingent on alternative funding for Cowbane).

7. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve Addition

DCR proposes to acquire all or part of an approximately 110-acre parcel that lies along the west flank of Shenandoah National Park, within a portion of the Port Republic Battlefield Study Area, and adjoins the Deep Run Ponds Natural Area Preserve (NAP). The NAP is designed to protect outstanding biodiversity, namely a concentration of isolated depression wetlands and at least two globally rare and federally listed plant species. Protection of these isolated wetlands requires conserving surrounding upland forests and local hydrological patterns. Proximity of the National Park, near the eastern flank of the NAP provides an excellent opportunity to forge a landscape connection between the two protected areas and eliminate the possibility of incompatible development on the connecting lands. Such development is moving into the edges of the project area and the subject tract along existing roads, especially along the

southern boundary. As home development proceeds, increasing demands for water pose more threat to the integrity of these susceptible wetlands and their component rare species, creates problems for Park managers, and potentially risks damage to cultural resources that may be present.

Total Project Cost: \$801,250. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$801,250. **Recommended amount:** \$574,600 (contingent on alternative funding for Cowbane).

Open Spaces and Parks Category – Danette Poole, DCR Division of Parks and Recreation Planning

Ms. Poole presented the Open Spaces and Parks project recommendations:

1. Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks) – Springdale II Acquisition

NOVA Parks is requesting VLCF assistance to acquire a 128.65-acre tract along the Potomac River in Loudoun County for development into a regional park. Proposed recreational plans for the park include hiking, wildlife observation, picnicking and fishing. Acquiring the property will protect land in a regionally significant conservation corridor as the property lies within the Cactoctin Rural Historic District and along Route 15 in the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area. In addition, the property contains calcareous conglomerate rock outcrops and potential habitat for the St. Croix Snaketail (Virginia's rarest dragonfly) and the threatened wood turtle. The acquisition of this land will help preserve an adjacent Native American rock shelter and village site owned by the Archaeological Conservancy.

2. **Total Project Cost:** \$2,000,000. **Match:** Cash \$1,500,000. (Applicant has identified \$675,000 in matching cash funds and has indicated \$825,000 in match will be available through NOVA Parks Cash or other combination of grant funding). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$500,000. **Recommended**

Amount: \$0 APPLICATION WITHDRAWN Living River Restoration Trust – Eastern Branch Restoration Park

The Living River Restoration Trust (LRRT) seeks VLCF funding to acquire an 8.8-acre tract on the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. Located in Virginia's most populated city, Virginia Beach, the site is threatened by development. In partnership with Virginia Beach, the property will become a nature park with kayak launch and hiking trail. The kayak launch will provide direct access onto the Eastern Branch Elizabeth River Water Trail, part of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network. Protecting this parcel from development ensures the integrity of the scenic view along the water trail and from Carolanne Farms Park, located just across the river. Once the property is developed as a park, LRRT will donate the property to the City of Virginia Beach.

Total Project Cost: \$283,050. **Match:** Cash from LRRT and bargain sale from property owner (\$107,275), City of Virginia Beach legal fees and appraisal (\$12,200) and LRRT contributions (\$22,050). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$141,525. **Recommended Amount:** \$141,525.

3. City of Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation Department – Cypress Locks

The City of Virginia Beach is seeking VLCF funding to complete acquisition of a 17-acre tract of land situated along the North Landing River. The tract will be developed by the City as a gateway park for canoe and kayak access to the North Landing River, a state-designated scenic waterway with over 10,000 acres of conserved lands encompassing 15 miles of river shoreline. The project will help meet public recreation and resource conservation needs identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan and 2016 City of Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan. Over one million people live within 20 miles of the property.

Total Project Cost: \$480,000. **Match:** Virginia Beach (\$150,000) and The Nature Conservancy / North American Wetland Conservation grant (\$165,000) to be awarded in early 2017. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$165,000. **Recommended Amount:** \$165,000.

4. Botetourt County – Eagle Rock Park

Botetourt County is requesting VLCF assistance in the purchase of a six-acre parcel along the James River near the town of Eagle Rock. Once acquired, the County intends to provide a loop trail, camping facilities, swimming, fishing and boating access. The County intends to purchase the property within six months of receiving notice of VLCF funding.

Total Project Cost: \$144,000.00. **Match:** Cash (\$72,000). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$72,000. **Recommended Amount:** \$72,000.

5. Stafford County – Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve III

Stafford County proposes to purchase four parcels totaling 127.72 acres located on the Crow’s Nest peninsula adjacent to the Potomac Creek heron rookery and approximately 1,800 feet from Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve. Once acquired, the property will be conveyed to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation for inclusion in the natural area preserve. Acquiring this property will result in the protection of 121 acres of forest land, 6,400 feet of streams and wetlands, 12 historic resource sites, wildlife habit, the federally listed Small Whorled Pogonia and the Potomac Creek heron rookery. It will also allow for the expansion of the hiking trail network developed within the existing natural area preserve.

Total Project Cost: \$866,000. **Match:** Cash (\$433,000). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$433,000. **Recommended Amount:** \$433,000.

6. City of Charlottesville – Charley Close Land Acquisition

VLCF assistance is being requested to acquire a 2.783-acre parcel along Moore’s Creek near Jordan Park (1607 Sixth St S.E.) in Charlottesville. The property represents one of the last undeveloped parcels in this area of the city and is currently divided into six buildable lots. Surrounding properties have been developed into subdivisions. The City desires to purchase the property because it will allow for a key link in the City’s developing trail network and includes a link to the existing Rivanna Trails which is a designated National Recreational Trail

Total Project Cost: \$207,600. **Match:** Cash (\$125,000). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$82,600. **Recommended Amount:** \$82,600.

7. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation/Division of Natural Heritage (DCR-DNH) – Pigg River Water Trail Viewshed Protection, Public Access, and Riparian Buffer

DCR-DNH is requesting VLCF assistance to acquire a 36 acre tract adjacent to the Pigg River and Bald Knob Natural Area Preserve. Once acquired, DCR-DNH in partnership with the Town of Rocky Mount plans to develop the property for nature-based outdoor recreation, with a small parking area and walking trail through grassland and forest. In addition to recreational, the purchase of the property will ensure scenic integrity of the Pigg River, a potential Scenic River and the designated Pigg River Water Trail.

Total Project Cost: \$449,650. **Match:** \$0. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$449,650. **Recommended Amount:** \$449,650.

8. City of Chesapeake – Indian River Watershed Project

The City of Chesapeake’s proposal involves the fee simple acquisition of a 2.023-acre parcel in the Indian River Watershed to be developed as a public park. An urgent need identified by numerous local plans is for open space and water access for the public in the Indian River Watershed. Currently there is no public access in the watershed. Other proposed developments for the new park are facilities for fishing, picnicking and wildlife observation.

Total Project Cost: \$365,000. **Match:** Cash (\$182,500). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$182,500. **Recommended Amount:** \$182,500.

9. Town of Altavista – Dalton’s Landing Canoe Launch Site

VLCF assistance is requested to obtain a recreation easement on a 1.50-acre property to provide a public water access site for fishing and canoeing. Once acquired the site, which will be known as Dalton’s Landing, will serve as the beginning point of an approximate seven-mile water trail on the Staunton River (Roanoke River) and end at the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries boat ramp located at Altavista’s English Park. The need for public access to the Staunton River has been an identified need in the 2002, 2007 and 2013 Virginia Outdoors Plans.

Total Project Cost: \$46,625. **Match:** Cash (\$23,313). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$23,313. **Recommended Amount:** \$23,313.

PUBLIC COMMENT FROM GRANT APPLICANTS

Secretary Ward opened the floor for comment from grant applicants. There were no comments.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF GRANT AWARDS

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Lazaro moved that the list of project recommendations be approved as presented by the Interagency Task Force with the exception of the following projects:

- Valley Pike Farm
- Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve
- North Landing River Sawgrass Marsh
- Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve

Mr. Apicella seconded.

Ms. Fenton offered a friendly amendment to specify that staff have the authorization to move \$25,000 from the Goosepond Easement project in the event that the Bucks Elbow Mountain Easement could not move forward without the full requested amount of \$150,000.

The amendment was accepted and the motion was approved.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Lazaro moved that the Board approve the projects for Valley Pike Farm, Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve, North Landing River Sawgrass Marsh, and Crow’s Nest Natural Area Preserve as presented by the Interagency Task Force. Mr. Apicella seconded. The motion carried with Ms. Lawson, Mr. Ball, and Mr. Milde abstaining from the vote.

REPORT OF THE JUNE 21, 2016 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Ball reported that the Subcommittee met on June 21, 2016, with Mr. Pollard, Ms. Booth, and Mr. Ball attending the meeting. Draft minutes of the meeting were provided in member packets and are available at the following link:

http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=C:\TownHall\docroot\Meeting\49\24527\Minutes_DCR_24527_v2.pdf

Mr. Ball reported that the subcommittee reviewed all of the sections of the VLCF Act, Chapter 10.2 of Title 10.1 of the Code of Virginia. With regard to the provision that the VLCF Board of Trustees is authorized to be a land owner, the subcommittee believes this is not needed and recommends that the General Assembly consider removing this provision.

Mr. Ball noted that the subcommittee discussed the provision that allows for up to 20 percent of project funding to be used for the development of infrastructure. The subcommittee recommends a full Board discussion of whether applicants should be able to specify that a portion of funding would be used for interpretive, infrastructure, trails or other improvements.

The subcommittee recommended that the following items be placed on the agenda for discussion at a future Board meeting:

- Update/overview of the land conservation plan in the VOP with information on how the Board can provide input.
- Section F – discussion of infrastructure. Recommend to delay conversation but be this provision provides the option for minimal funding.
- Look at the needs assessment based on dollars needed vs. land to conserve.
- How Board members can be ambassadors for the program.
- Recommend cleanup bill to address VLCF land owning responsibilities (recommend remove).
- What are the deadlines for introduction of legislation?
- Five-year review of successful and unsuccessful grant applications.

Ms. Booth noted that she had received a letter from the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust which said that the requirement for a public co-holder of an easement can be an obstacle for projects. She requested that the Board consider the merit of this requirement.

Mr. Ball reported that Mr. Pollard asked that the Board be briefed on the grant criteria. The subcommittee would like to review the history of what projects have been applied for and what projects have been funded.

Secretary Ward asked that the subcommittee meet again prior to the next full Board meeting to further refine some of these considerations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honorable Molly Ward
Secretary of Natural Resources, Chair

Clyde E. Cristman
DCR Director, Executive Secretary