

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees

**Thursday, November 21, 2024
East Reading Room, Patrick Henry Building
Richmond, Virginia**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, Board of Trustees took place at 9:30 a.m. on November 21, 2024, in the East Reading Room of the Patrick Henry Building in Richmond, Virginia.

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS PRESENT

The Honorable Travis Voyles, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, Chair
Deputy Secretary Beth Green, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry
Morgan Slaven, Vice Chair
Chief Frank Adams
Elizabeth Andrews
James Beamer
Leslie Cockburn
Jay C. Ford
Colonel Brian Hallberg
Gabiella Hoffman
Kathleen Kilpatrick
Stewart Leeth
Michael Molina
Sonya Powell
Lisa Kestner Quigley
The Honorable Ed Scott
Matthew Wells, Director, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Executive Secretary

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Samantha Vargas Poppe
The Honorable David W. Marsden
The Honorable Richard H. Stuart
William "Bear" Lloyd
One Vacancy, 1st Congressional District

AGENCY STAFF PRESENT

Jason Bulluck, DCR
Whitten Cluff, DCR
Linda Crowe, DCR
Rob Evans, DCR
Brian Fuller, DCR
Rebecca Gwynn, DWR
Emi Endo, DCR
Lore DeAstra, VATax
Karri Richards, DHR
Genny Harris, DOF
Charles Marston, DCR
Lisa McGee, DCR
Paul Saunders, DCR
Andrew Smith, DCR
Frank Stovall, DCR
Kristal McKelvey, DCR
Kellie Seaton, DCR
Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR
Larry Mikkelson, DCR
Damian Martin, DCR

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherry Buttrick, VOF
Christy Everett, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Heather Richards, The Conservation Fund
Parker Agelasto, Capital Region Land Conservancy
Rachel Henley, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation
Andrea Reese

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

With fifteen (15) members of the Board present, a quorum was established.

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Secretary Voyles called the meeting to order at 09:33 a.m.

Secretary Voyles welcomed new Board members called for member and staff introductions.

INTRODUCTION TO VLCF

Board Membership - Lisa McGee, DCR Director of Policy, Planning and Legislative Affairs

Ms. McGee presented an overview of the Freedom of Information Act and how it pertains to Board members as well as an overview of pertinent administrative procedures.

VLCF Grant Program and Land Preservation Tax Credit Program – Suzan Bulbulkaya, Land Conservation Manager

Ms. Bulbulkaya presented the Board with an overview of the history of the grant program and information on the programs for which the Board is responsible.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 13, 2023, BOARD MEETING

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Ford moved that the minutes of the June 5, 2024, meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees be approved as submitted. Ms. Slaven seconded, and the motion carried.

RESOLUTION HONORING MICHAEL FLETCHER UPON HIS RETIREMENT – *Lisa McGee, DCR, Director of Policy, Planning and Legislative Affairs*

Ms. McGee presented the following resolution for adoption by the Board:

Honoring Michael Fletcher On His Retirement

WHEREAS, Michael Fletcher has dedicated 30 years of service to the Commonwealth of Virginia, with 27 years specifically at the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); and

WHEREAS, Michael Fletcher began his career with the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1994 during the Administration of Governor George Allen; and WHEREAS, in 1997, he began his tenure at DCR as the Director of Development, showcasing his leadership and dedication to the Department; and

WHEREAS, Michael Fletcher has served as the Freedom of Information Officer for DCR, ensuring transparency and accountability within the Department; and

WHEREAS, since 1998, he has been the DCR Board Liaison, overseeing various Boards and Special Committees, including the Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Cave Board, Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, and numerous ad hoc committees; and

WHEREAS, on September 1, 2024, Michael Fletcher retired as the Board and Constituent Services Liaison, as well as the FOIA Officer for the Department of Conservation and Recreation, leaving behind a legacy of dedication and service to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the chairs of each Board, and the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, commend Michael Fletcher for his outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be presented to Michael Fletcher in recognition of his contributions and achievements during his esteemed career with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Beamer moved the resolution be adopted as presented. Ms. Andrews seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

SELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Secretary Voyles called for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Board.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Leeth nominated Ms. Slaven. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Beamer, and the motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF A SUBCOMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE FY26 GRANT MANUAL

Prior to the development of the FY26 VLCF Grant Manual, certain areas were identified as requiring additional review which include PDR's, applications that result in multiple easements, and integrating the new Virginia Outdoors Plan into scoring criteria. A subcommittee will be tasked with this review and will work closely with the Inter-Agency Task Force to address how these issues are managed in the next VLCF grant manual.

The Board's current bylaws allow the Board's Chair to appoint a committee.

The committee will meet in the winter to develop recommendations to bring before the Board in the spring of 2025.

Secretary Voyles announced the members of the subcommittee:

- Ed Scott
- Stewart Leeth
- Elizabeth Andrews

FINANCIAL UPDATE: VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FUND – *Frank Stovall, DCR, Deputy Director for Operations*

Mr. Stovall presented the following financial information:

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
Fund Statement
As of October 31, 2024

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE - June 30, 2022 **\$16,287,778**

INCOME

FY22 Stewardship Funds	\$2,124,370
FY23 Stewardship Funds	\$1,667,123
FY24 Stewardship Funds*	\$2,222,606
FY23 Appropriation - Chapter 2	\$16,000,000
FY24 Appropriation - Chapter 1	\$16,000,000
FY25 Appropriation - Chapter 2*	\$16,000,000
FY23 Interest	\$506,071
FY24 Interest*	\$1,485,359
FY25 Interest*	\$486,596
TOTAL INCOME	\$56,492,125

DISBURSEMENTS

FY23 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$2,124,370
FY24 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$1,667,123
FY25 Stewardship Fund Disbursements*	\$0
FY23 Grant Payments	\$5,507,148
FY24 Grant Payments*	\$7,980,536
FY25 Grant Payments*	\$1,034,415
FY23 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,000,000
FY24 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$4,000,000
FY25 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments*	\$2,000,000
FY23 Administrative Expenses	\$122,897
FY24 Administrative Expenses*	\$54,947
FY25 Administrative Expenses*	\$9,480
TOTAL DISBURSEMENT	\$28,500,916

* Changes since last report

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE - October 31, 2024 **\$44,278,987**

UPDATE ON THE LAND PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM – Lore DeAstra, Department of Taxation, Land Preservation Tax Credit Analyst

Ms. DeAstra provided an update on the Land Preservation Tax Credit Program.

UPDATE ON LPTC TRANSFER FEE REVENUES – Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR, Land Conservation Manager

Ms. Bulbulkaya presented the Board with the following information regarding fund payments:

2024 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Stewardship Fund				
	AGENCY NAME	NUMBER OF DONATIONS	% OF TOTAL DONATIONS	AMOUNT OF FUNDS
1	500-Year Forest Foundation	7	1.61%	\$35,684.04
2	Blue Ridge Foothills Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
3	Broad Water Innovations	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
4	Capital Region Land Conservancy Inc	9.5	2.18%	\$48,428.34
5	Central Virginia Battlefields Trust	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
6	Chesapeake Conservancy	2	0.46%	\$10,195.44
7	City of Chesapeake	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
8	City of Franklin	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
9	Coastal Virginia Conservancy	2	0.46%	\$10,195.44
10	County of Albemarle	16	3.67%	\$81,563.52
11	County of Chesterfield	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
12	County of Clarke	7	1.61%	\$35,684.04
13	County of Fauquier	4	0.92%	\$20,390.88
14	County of Shenandoah	0.5	0.11%	\$2,548.86
15	County of Warren	3	0.69%	\$15,293.16
16	Ever Green Team	85	19.50%	\$433,306.22
17	Historic Virginia Land Conservancy	5	1.15%	\$25,488.60
18	Land Savers United	17	3.90%	\$86,661.24
19	Land Trust of Virginia	52.5	12.04%	\$267,630.31
20	Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
21	Monacan Soil & Water Conservation District	0.5	0.11%	\$2,548.86
22	New River Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
23	New River Land Trust	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
24	Northern Neck Land Conservancy	10	2.29%	\$50,977.20
25	Northern Virginia Conservation Trust	5	1.15%	\$25,488.60
26	Old Dominion Land Conservancy, Inc.	45	10.32%	\$229,397.41
27	Outdoors Preservation Foundation	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
28	Piedmont Environmental Council	8	1.83%	\$40,781.76
29	Potomac Conservancy	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
30	Shenandoah National Park Trust	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
31	Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation	2.5	0.57%	\$12,744.30
32	The Nature Conservancy	6	1.38%	\$30,586.32
33	The Town of Lovettsville	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
34	Shenandoah Valley Conservancy (formerly Valley Conservation Council)	24.5	5.62%	\$124,894.14
35	Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation	1	0.23%	\$5,097.72
36	Virginia Department of Forestry	7	1.61%	\$35,684.04
37	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	2	0.46%	\$10,195.44
38	Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources	3	0.69%	\$15,293.16
39	Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust	4	0.92%	\$20,390.88
40	Virginia Outdoors Foundation	94	21.56%	\$479,185.70
	TOTALS	436	100.00%	\$2,222,606.00

BOARD ACTION

Vice Chair Slaven moved to approve the Stewardship Fund Payments as presented. Ms. Hoffman seconded, and the motion carried.

VLCF GRANT PROGRAM – FY25 GRANT ROUND

Ms. Bulbulkaya presented the Board with the following overview of the FY25 Grant Round:

FY25 GRANT ROUND OVERVIEW

The FY25 Grant Round was open to accept applications from June 5 through August 28, 2024.
 Funding provided in state budget: \$16 million appropriation –
 \$4 million to VOF Preservation Trust Fund, per Va. Code =
 \$12 million

Interest through 04/30/2024: \$1,020,910
 Returned grant funds: \$1,419,724

TOTAL available grant funding: \$14,440,634

- Grant round announcements were emailed to localities, land trusts, interest groups, past applicants, conservation organizations and agencies.
- A virtual grant workshop was held on June 27 and posted to the VLCF webpage.
- The Interagency Taskforce met on September 20 and October 11 to discuss applications and make recommendations for each category.

Applications Received: 40	Recommended for Funding to Board: 28
10 in Farmland Preservation	6 in Farmland Preservation
8 in Forest Preservation	7 in Forest Preservation
8 in Historic Preservation	4 in Historic Preservation
5 in Natural Area Preservation	5 in Natural Area Preservation
9 in Open Spaces and Parks	6 in Open Spaces and Parks
Total requested funding: \$24,497,108	Total recommended funding: \$14,440,634
Total requested acreage: 12,301.93	Total recommended acreage: 11,219.78
	ConserveVirginia: 93% (26/28) are within

VLCF Grant Requirements are met:

1. The state budget requires at least 50% of funds be used for projects that provide public access; and
 2. The Code requires at least 1/3 of funds be used for projects that secure easements to be held or co-held by a public body.
- 13 of the recommended projects (50% of total funds) would provide public access
 - 16 of the recommended projects (56% of total funds) would have open-space easements

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDED GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM THE INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE

FARMLAND PRESERVATION – Genette Harris, Department of Forestry, Working Lands Conservations Specialist

Ms. Harris presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

FARMLAND PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$2,604,182

1. Project: Hazelwood Farm; Applicant: The Conservation Fund
Easement on 339 acres along the Rappahannock River in Caroline County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,906,500; Grant Request: \$440,750; **Recommend:** \$440,750
2. Project: Jatt Farm - Musapatike; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 353.56 acres along Finneywood Creek in Mecklenburg County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,234,000; Grant Request: \$480,715; **Recommend:** \$480,715
3. Project: Greg & Kyli Waddle Property; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 850 acres in Smyth and Washington Counties.
Total Project Cost: \$2,731,500; Grant Request: \$989,300; **Recommend:** \$914,017
4. Project: Beaver Dam Legacy, LLC; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 138.32 acres in Loudoun County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,000,000; Grant Request: \$125,000; **Recommend:** \$125,000
5. Project: William Long Farm; Applicant: Stafford County
Easement on 69.25 acres in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$508,000; Grant Request: \$254,000; **Recommend:** \$254,000
6. Project: Panamint Farm; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 533 acres in Louisa County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,017,500; Grant Request: \$389,700; **Recommend:** \$389,700
7. Project: Daniel & Pamela Bell Farm; Applicant: Stafford County
Easement on 20 acres in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$208,000; Grant Request: \$104,000; **Recommend:** \$0
8. Project: Fansler Farm; Applicant: Clarke County
Easement on 88.95 acres in Clarke County.
Total Project Cost: \$407,500; Grant Request: \$100,000; **Recommend:** \$0
9. Project: Pagnotta Property; Applicant: Stafford County
Easement on 35.40 acres in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$308,000; Grant Request: \$154,000; **Recommend:** \$0
10. Project: Schenemann Property; Applicant: Stafford County
Easement on 20 acres in Stafford County.

Total Project Cost: \$208,000; Grant Request: \$104,000; **Recommend: \$0**

Farmland Preservation Totals:

Acres: 2,447.48

Requested: \$3,141,465

Project Costs: \$10,529,000

Recommended: \$2,604,182

FORESTLAND PRESERVATION – Genette Harris, Department of Forestry, Working Lands Conservations Specialist

Ms. Harris presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

FOREST PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS

Amount of Funding Available: \$2,897,117

1. Project: Huff Rock; Applicant: Land Trust of Virginia
Easement on 647 acres on Powell Mountain in Wise County.
Total Project Cost: \$454,000; Grant Request: \$182,000; **Recommend: \$45,000**
2. Project: Shooting Creek; Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on 674.68 acres in Patrick County.
Total Project Cost: \$592,500; Grant Request: \$337,500; **Recommend: \$286,875**
3. Project: Working Forests Between Battlefields;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on 797.80 acres in Dinwiddie County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,851,000; Grant Request: \$925,500; **Recommend: \$775,000**
4. Project: Tank Hill; Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on 1,491.54 acres in Dinwiddie County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,751,000; Grant Request: \$952,720; **Recommend: \$810,000**
5. Project: Richard Rolan Property; Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation
Easement on 697 acres along the North Fork Holston River in Washington County.
Total Project Cost: \$868,500; Grant Request: \$417,500; **Recommend: \$354,875**
6. Project: Southampton 900; Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on 900 acres along Blackwater River in Southampton County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,613,500; Grant Request: \$400,000; **Recommend: \$340,000**
7. Project: Monacan Indian Nation – Daisy Adcock Property;
Applicant: Monacan Indian Nation
Fee acquisition of 100.40 acres in Amherst County.
Total Project Cost: \$434,600; Grant Request: \$434,600; **Recommend: \$285,367**
8. Project: Camp Shenandoah;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Forestry
Easement on 458 acres in Augusta County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,523,500; Grant Request: \$375,000; **Recommend: \$0**

Forestland Conservation Totals:**Acres: 5,766.42****Requested: \$4,024,820****Project Costs: \$10,088,600****Recommended: \$2,897,117**

HISTORIC AREAS PRESERVATION – Karri Richardson, Department of Historic Resources, Easement Program Specialist

Ms. Richardson presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS**Amount of Funding Available: \$2,849,430**

1. Project: Oak Hill; Applicant: The Conservation Fund
Fee acquisition of 86 acres in Loudoun County.
Total Project Cost: \$7,578,000; Grant Request: \$3,000,000; **Recommend: \$2,000,000**
2. Project: Seven Pines at Broad Water Creek;
Applicant: Capital Region Land Conservancy
Easement on 23.99 acres in Henrico County.
Total Project Cost: \$543,500; Grant Request: \$271,750; **Recommend: \$271,750**
3. Project: Funk Tract at Cedar Creek;
Applicant: Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
Fee acquisition of 45.56 acres in Warren County.
Total Project Cost: \$830,548; Grant Request: \$415,274; **Recommend: \$415,274**
4. Project: Jackson at Wilderness; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Easement on 36.17 acres in Orange County.
Total Project Cost: \$409,475; Grant Request: \$204,238; **Recommend: \$162,406**
5. Project: Robinson at Manassas; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Fee acquisition of 1.75 acres in Fairfax County.
Total Project Cost: \$480,410; Grant Request: \$240,205; **Recommend: \$0**
6. Project: Brandy Rock Farm II at Brandy Station;
Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Easement on 225.80 acres in Culpeper County.
Total Project Cost: \$2,473,110; Grant Request: \$630,155; **Recommend: \$0**
7. Project: Massad Tract at Fredericksburg; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Fee acquisition of 5.42 acres in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,722,993; Grant Request: \$859,446; **Recommend: \$0**
8. Project: Goddard at Eltham's Landing; Applicant: American Battlefield Trust
Easement on 51.98 acres in New Kent County.
Total Project Cost: \$366,805; Grant Request: \$182,528; **Recommend: \$0**

Historic Preservation Totals:**Acres: 476.67****Requested: \$5,803,594****Project Costs: \$14,404,841****Recommended: \$2,849,430**

NATURAL AREA PROTECTION – Jason Bulluck, DCR, Director, Virginia Natural Heritage Program

Mr. Bulluck presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

Natural Area Preservation Applications**Amount of Funding Available: \$3,393,973**

1. Project: Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve – Crow's Nest Harbor Partnership Phase 1;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 262 acres in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$254,500; Grant Request: \$153,500; **Recommend: \$153,500**

2. Project: South Quay Sandhills Natural Area Preserve – Biodiversity, Climate Resilience,
And Public Access in Chowan River Basin;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 1,900 acres in Suffolk County.
Total Project Cost: \$6,100,000; Grant Request: \$1,300,000; **Recommend: \$1,300,000**

3. Project: Ellett Escarpment – Eastern Divide South;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 84 acres in Montgomery County.
Total Project Cost: \$3,000,000; Grant Request: \$3,000,000; **Recommend: \$975,219**

4. Project: Ellett Escarpment Natural Area Preserve – Supplemental Funding;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 34.38 acres in Montgomery County.
Total Project Cost: \$165,254; Grant Request: \$165,254; **Recommend: \$165,254**

5. Project: Ellett Escarpment – Eastern Divide North;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 36 acres in Montgomery County.
Total Project Cost: \$800,000; Grant Request: \$800,000; **Recommend: \$800,000**

Natural Areas Protection Totals:**Acres: 2,316.38****Requested: \$5,418,754****Project Costs: \$10,319,754****Recommended: \$3,393,973**

Mr. Bulluck noted that full funding was not being requested for Ellett Escarpment – Eastern Divide North.

There was discussion about the options the Board has for awarding the grant or choosing to instruct the Inter Agency Task Force to make a further recommendation after review.

OPEN SPACE AND PARKS – Kristal McKelvey, DCR, Chief Recreation Grants Manager, Planning & Recreation Resources

Ms. McKelvey presented the Board with a description of each of the projects and the following overview of applications and the resulting recommendations:

Open Spaces and Parks Applications

Amount of Funding Available: \$2,965,932

1. Project: Hanock North Landing Open Space FY25; Applicant: City of Virginia Beach
Fee acquisition of 28 acres along the North Landing River in Virginia Beach.
Total Project Cost: \$1,529,000; Grant Request: \$675,000; **Recommend:** \$650,000
2. Project: City of Chesapeake Open Spaces and Parks Application;
Applicant: City of Chesapeake
Fee acquisition of 96 acres along the Elizabeth River in the City of Chesapeake.
Total Project Cost: \$3,008,795; Grant Request: \$1,465,000; **Recommend:** \$800,000
3. Project: Lake Caledon – Caledon State Park Expansion;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 468 acres in King George County.
Total Project Cost: \$6,000,000; Grant Request: \$1,000,000; **Recommend:** \$500,000
4. Project: Robinson-Baker's Creek Acquisition;
Applicant: Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority
Fee acquisition of 513.32 acres along the York River in King and Queen County.
Total Project Cost: \$607,950; Grant Request: \$303,975; **Recommend:** \$255,000
5. Project: Patawomek Tribe Land Grant;
Applicant: Patawomek Indian Tribe of Virginia
Fee acquisition of 14.24 acres along the Rappahannock River in Stafford County.
Total Project Cost: \$500,000; Grant Request: \$500,000; **Recommend:** \$390,932
6. Project: Pleasure House Point Access/Waterfront Area;
Applicant: City of Virginia Beach
Fee acquisition of 0.57 acres on Crab Creek in Virginia Beach.
Total Project Cost: \$600,000; Grant Request: \$300,000; **Recommend:** \$100,000
7. Project: Cole's Point Water Access – Additional Funding;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources
Fee acquisition of 2.60 acres at Branson's Cove on the Potomac River in Westmoreland County.
Total Project Cost: \$1,012,025; Grant Request: \$230,000; **Recommend:** \$0
8. Project: New River Trail State Park: Draper Viewshed Protection & Recreation Access;
Applicant: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Fee acquisition of 97.25 acres in Pulaski County.

Total Project Cost: \$1,112,500; Grant Request: \$1,112,500; **Recommend:** \$0

9. Project: Arlington Outdoor Education Association;

Applicant: Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Fee acquisition of 75 acres in Fauquier County.

Total Project Cost: \$847,000; Grant Request: \$522,000; **Recommend:** \$0

Open Spaces & Parks Totals:

Acres: 1,294.98

Requested: \$6,108,475

Project Costs: \$15,217,270

Recommended: \$2,695,932

COMMENTS FROM GRANT APPLICANTS AND THE PUBLIC

There was no comment from members of the public or grant applicants.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF FY25 GRANT AWARDS

Secretary Voyles opened the floor for discussion.

There was additional discussion regarding the options the Board has for awarding grant funds to the Ellett Escarpment – Eastern Divide North project.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Ford moved that the Board approve the grants as presented, and instruct the Inter Agency Task Force to present an update on the Ellett Escarpment – Eastern Divide North Project at the spring meeting, and if necessary, a proposed reallocation of the fund for this project within the FY25 Round.

Vice Chair Slaven seconded, and the motion carried.

BOARD MEMBER DEPARTURE

Secretary Voyles left the meeting at 11:56 a.m.

RECENTLY COMPLETED VLCF GRANT PROJECTS – *Larry Mikkelson, DCR, Land Conservation Specialist*

Vice Chair Slaven introduced Mr. Mikkelson and announced his retirement and thanked him for his service and assistance to the Board.

Mr. Mikkelson provided the following update:

Report on VLCF Grant Projects – November 21, 2024

I. Recently Closed Projects

The following seven VLCF grants have successfully closed since the June 5, 2024, VLCF Board meeting:

1. American Battlefield Trust – Rollins Tract at Bristoe Station Battlefield (FY2021 Round II)

The American Battlefield Trust, utilizing a VLCF grant of \$285,000, was able to acquire the 22-acre Rollins Tract, located in Prince William County, and record an open-space easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, protecting the property's historic and natural

resources. The tract intersects the Cultural and Historic Preservation layer of ConserveVirginia and is in the Core Areas of the Bristoe Station Battlefield and the Manassas Station Operations Battlefield. Preservation of this property was a priority for the county and the Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park. In addition to its historic significance, the property includes a perennial stream, which is protected with 35-foot vegetated buffers. The Trust plans to transfer the parcel to the county for incorporation into the Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park.

Grant Award: \$285,000. Payment amount: \$285,000. Match: \$743,752. Grant closed: July 2024.

2. Department of Conservation and Recreation – The Cedars Natural Area Preserve – Kinzer Hollow Cave (FY2021 Round II)

DCR's Natural Heritage Division received VLCF grant funding to acquire 55 acres as an addition to the Cedars Natural Area Preserve in Lee County. The property supports several rare plants, foraging habitat for endangered Gray Bats, and Kinzer Hollow Cave, which is home to a globally rare isopod. An underground stream within the cave drains to the Powell River supporting a host of Species of Greatest Conservation Need. For over 25 years, DCR has been stitching together small parcels to protect these resources and build a functional and resilient natural area. This tract is within two categories of ConserveVirginia: Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity and Protected Landscapes Resilience.

Grant Award: \$204,000. Payment amount: \$136,315. Match: \$15,000. Project closed: June 2024.

Amount to be returned to Natural Area Preservation Category: \$67,685

3. The Conservation Fund – Nottoway River Wildlife and Recreation Area (FY2021 Round II and FY2023)

Two grants from FY2021 Round II and FY2023 awarded to The Conservation Fund, enabled the Department of Wildlife Resources to acquire 1,596 acres in Sussex County. This new Wildlife Management Area now provides public access to the Nottoway River and protects land for hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife watching. The property contains 2.5 miles of frontage on the Virginia designated Scenic Nottoway River, 2.5 miles along Black Branch Swamp, 220 acres of forested wetlands and 400 acres of bottomland hardwoods. The property is identified as a priority in ConserveVirginia in three categories: Agriculture and Forestry, Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, and Scenic Preservation. Plans are to restore the property to native longleaf pine and hardwoods to better support water quality and habitat for endangered species, such as the federally threatened red-cockaded woodpecker. Federally endangered Roanoke logperch and dwarf wedgemussel are also found in this section of the Nottoway.

Grant Awards: FY2021 Round II: \$264,500; FY2023: \$450,000. Payment amount: \$714,500. Match: \$3,204,555. Project closed: May 2024.

4. The Nature Conservancy – Pinnacle State Natural Area Expansion – Weaver Creek (FY2022)

The Nature Conservancy received a VLCF grant to purchase 121 acres in Russell County, including a large riparian corridor along Weaver Creek, a significant tributary to the Clinch River. This acquisition protects the viewshed of the Clinch River State Park and potentially

provides hiking opportunities for park visitors. Protection of this forested acreage complements both the Pinnacle and Cleveland Barrens State Natural Area Preserves, increasing the Commonwealth's conservation footprint in a biologically critical section of the Clinch River, designated as having "outstanding biological significance" by DCR's Division of Natural Heritage. The property is within the ConserveVirginia Protected Landscapes Resilience, Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity, and Floodplains & Flooding Resilience layers. Partners include the Department of Wildlife Resources, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Clinch River Valley Initiative.

Grant Award: \$133,000. Payment amount: \$79,473. Match: \$79,473. Project closed: September 2024. Amount to be returned to Natural Area Preservation Category: \$53,528.

5. Department of Wildlife Resources – Copper Creek Initiative (FY2022)

The Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) utilized an FY2022 VLCF grant to acquire and conserve a six-acre parcel located at the confluence of Copper Creek and the Clinch River in Scott County. The shoreline along the Clinch River now provides a new fishing and boating access point for the public. Companion public boating access sites are located 2.5 miles upstream and 9.5 miles downstream. DWR will protect the shorelines of Copper Creek that transect the property, removing threats of sedimentation and nutrient-loading. Many rare and endangered fish are known near the mouth of Copper Creek, including several Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Twenty-eight mussel species, including 19 federally endangered, have been reported from Copper Creek, which is by far the most of any tributary on the Virginia side of the Clinch River. This parcel is within three categories of ConserveVirginia: Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, and Scenic Preservation.

Grant Award: \$100,000. Payment amount: \$99,046. Match: \$0. Project closed: August 2024. Amount to be returned to Open Spaces and Parks Category: \$954.

6. Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition (FY2023)

Virginia Outdoors Foundation partnered with Natural Heritage to acquire 56 acres as an addition to Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve in Floyd County using an FY2023 VLCF grant. The property includes forested wetlands and riparian areas along Camp Branch as well as habitat for numerous species of greatest conservation need, and two significant natural heritage resources, including a Tier 1 (Critical Conservation Need) species. The entire natural Virginia range of this species is restricted to an approximately 10-mile radius in Floyd County, where it requires very specialized habitat conditions and active management. Additionally, the property shares a long boundary with the existing preserve and creates a contiguous connected stream corridor. The property is within two layers of ConserveVirginia: Protected Landscapes Resilience and Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity.

Grant Award: \$365,000. Payment amount: \$291,936. Match: \$0. Project closed: August 2024.

Amount to be returned to Natural Area Preservation Category: \$73,064.

7. City of Charlottesville – Moores Creek Land Acquisition (FY2023)

The City of Charlottesville purchased 80 acres of land with the assistance of an FY23 VLCF grant. The property will become a city park with daily public access and is located across Moores Creek from Azalea Park. This recent purchase protects the site from development, thus retaining the scenic view of open space and natural area from Azalea Park. The property also helps to complete the greenbelt around Charlottesville. The City plans to continue the use of a community garden as well as incorporate a bicycle pump track, trails and bridges on the property. Plans are also in place for stream restoration along Moores Creek, improved public fishing, swimming access, and wildlife viewing. The property is within three layers of ConserveVirginia: Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, and Scenic Preservation.

Grant Award: \$175,000. Payment amount: \$171,704. Match: \$171,704. Project closed: August 2024. Amount to be returned to Open Spaces and Parks Category: \$3,296.

II. Change of Scope

1. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Pedlar Hills Glades Natural Area Preserve Addition (FY2022)

The DCR Division of Natural Heritage received an FY22 grant for \$515,000 to acquire 156 acres adjacent to the Pedlar Hills Glades Natural Area Preserve in Montgomery County. In July 2024 Natural Heritage requested a change of scope for the project due to unanticipated title issues with two of the three tracts originally proposed in their application. The tracts were inherited by two sisters, each owning a single parcel with one jointly owned. Title issues with two of the tracts, 76 acres, were unable to be cured within the three-year VLCF grant cycle. Natural Heritage returned \$335,000 of the original grant, retaining \$180,000 to acquire the remaining 80-acre parcel. The parcel lies adjacent to the preserve and within the Pedlar Hills Conservation Site with a biodiversity rank of B1, the highest rank possible due to a suite of highly viable rare species habitats and rare woodland communities. This acquisition will improve access to the preserve and protect federally endangered plants and a large swath of forest. The property intersects the Protected Landscapes Resilience, Natural Habitat Ecosystem Diversity, and Floodplains & Flooding Resilience layers of ConserveVirginia.

Grant Award: \$515,000. Remaining grant amount: \$180,000. Amount to be returned to Natural Area Preservation Category: \$335,000; Date of Change of Scope: August 2024.

III. Withdrawn Grants

Three grants have been withdrawn since the Board's last meeting.

1. Department of Conservation and Recreation – Pedlar Hills Addition – Supplemental Funding (FY2024)

This project sought additional funds needed to complete the acquisition of 156 acres as an addition to Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve in Montgomery County. When the scope of the

project was reduced, these supplemental funds were no longer needed.

Grant Award: \$65,000. Note: Funds will be returned to the Natural Area Preservation Category.

2. Meadowview Biological Research Station – Caroline Diamonds – The Oak Barrens and Barrel Springs (FY2022) and (FY2023)

The Meadowview Biological Research Station received two VLCF grants in consecutive grant rounds totaling \$292,935. Meadowview sought to acquire and protect 96 acres of a globally rare gravel bog and the surrounding oak barren uplands in Caroline County adjacent to an existing 17-acre preserve. However, after much negotiation over the three-year grant cycle, the landowner of a significant portion of the property remained unwilling to sell the property for the appraised value, demanding a far excessive amount. The plan to acquire the property did not come to fruition and the two grants were withdrawn.

Grant Awards: \$292,935 (FY2022: \$161,000; FY2023: \$131,935). Note: Funds will be returned to the Forest Preservation Category

Summary of Open VLCF Grants

- There are six open grants from the FY22 grant round.
- For the FY23 grant round, 21 of the 40 grants awarded are open.
- 28 of the 29 grants awarded in the FY24 grant round remain open.
- Currently, we are managing a total of 55 open grants with a total value of \$24,554,262.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.