

**Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees
Friday, November 22, 2019 – 10:00am**

**East Reading Room, Patrick Henry Building
1111 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219**

MINUTES

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees took place at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 22, 2019 in the East Reading Room of the Patrick Henry Building, Richmond, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

The Honorable Matthew J. Strickler, Secretary of Natural Resources, Chair
Brad Copenhaver, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, for Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring
Robert W. Lazaro, Jr. Vice Chair
Glenda C. Booth
James F. Casey
Jay C. Ford
Andrew C. Jennison
Russell Vern Presley III
Mary-Carson Stiff
Bruce Vlck
The Honorable John Paul Woodley, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT

James W. Beamer
The Honorable Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
Susan E. Donner
Kat Imhoff
The Honorable Albert C. Pollard, Jr.
Julian T. Ottley
The Honorable Jill Holtzman Vogel

STATE AGENCY STAFF PRESENT

Josh Saks, SNR
Clyde E. Cristman, DCR
Rochelle Altholz, DCR
Ryan Brown, DGIF
Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR
Jason Bulluck, DCR
Sherry Buttrick, VOF
Linda Crowe, DCR
Gina DiCicco, DCR
Rob Evans, DCR
Kimberly Freiberger, DCR
Brian Fuller, DCR
Terry Lasher, DOF
Kelly McClary, DCR
Larry Mikkelson, DCR
Wendy Musumeci, DHR
Sharon Partee, DCR
Jen Perkins, VDACS
Sarah Richardson, DCR
Mike Santucci, DOF
Isaac Sarver, DCR
Tom Smith, DCR
Elizabeth Tune, DHR
Deb Van Duzee, DGIF

OTHERS PRESENT

Parker Agelasto, CRLC
Kathy Baker, Stafford County
Aaron Baumgartner, Longleaf Conservation
Justin Doyle, James River Association
Tom Gilmore, American Battlefield Capital Trust

Ron Horn, VLCF
 Peter Hujik, Piedmont Environmental Council
 Kelli Iddings, Conservation Partners
 John Lester
 Margie Lippard, Camp Kum Ba Yah
 Andrea Reese, NOVA Parks
 Nikki Rovner, The Nature Conservancy
 Alan Rowsome, NVCT
 Zachary Shelton, The Nature Conservancy
 Ellen Shepard, VAULT
 Natasha Skelton, TCF

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

With eleven (11) members of the Board of Trustees present, a quorum was established.

CALL TO ORDER

Secretary Strickler called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. He welcomed new members and asked for member introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 19, 2019 BOARD MEETING

Ms. Booth moved that the minutes from the June 19, 2019 meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) Board of Trustees be approved as submitted. Mr. Vlk seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

VLCF FINANCIAL UPDATE – Sharon Partee, Director of Finance, DCR

Ms. Partee provided the following financial update.

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
 Fund Statement
 As of October 31, 2019

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE – June 30, 2017 \$7,197,007

INCOME

FY17 Stewardship Funds	\$872,836
FY18 Stewardship Funds	\$1,418,289
FY19 Stewardship Funds	\$1,507,831
FY18 Appropriation – Chapter 836	\$4,500,000
FY19 Appropriation – Chapter 2	\$0
FY20 Appropriation – Chapter 854	\$4,500,000
FY18 Interest	\$108,526
FY19 Interest	\$129,997
FY20 Interest	<u>\$59,670</u>

TOTAL INCOME	\$13,097,149
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DISBURSEMENTS

FY18 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$872,836
FY19 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$1,418,289
FY20 Stewardship Fund Disbursements	\$0
FY18 Grant Payments	\$3,719,811
FY19 Grant Payments	\$2,278,176
FY20 Grant Payments	\$1,152,397
FY18 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$900,000
FY19 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$0
FY20 Open Space Preservation (VOF) Payments	\$562,500
FY18 Administrative Expenses	\$40,743
FY19 Administrative Expenses	\$94,588
FY20 Administrative Expenses	\$28,943
TOTAL DISBURSEMENT	\$11,168,283

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE – October 31, 2019	\$9,125,873
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VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Restricted Fund Statement

As of October 31, 2019

Obligated Fund Balance – June 30, 2017	\$0
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INCOME

FY18 Mitigation Funds Received – Dominion (Skiffes Creek)	\$12,500,000
FY18 Mitigation Administrative Funds Received – Dominion (Skiffes Creek)	\$625,000
FY18 Interest	\$147,674
FY19 Interest	\$204,884
FY20 Interest	\$40,616
TOTAL INCOME	\$13,518,174

DISBURSEMENTS

FY16 Grant Payments	\$200,000
FY19 Grant Payments	\$7,014,191
FY20 Grant Payments	\$0
FY18 Administrative Expenses	\$15,193
FY19 Administrative Expenses	\$8,254
FY20 Administrative Expenses	\$5,555
TOTAL DISBURSEMENT	\$7,243,193

OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE – October 31, 2019	\$6,274,981
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LAND PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT ITEMS – Suzan Bulbulkaya, Land Conservation Manager, DCR*Update on LPTC Program and Transfer Fee Revenues – Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR*

Ms. Bulbulkaya shared the donations history data for the land preservation tax credit from tax years 2000 to 2019, with credit amounts issued. Ms. Bulbulkaya noted that the *Code of Virginia* has been amended in Section 58.1-512 (D)(4). This change notes that the tax credit had been extended in the code to allow landowners a greater length of time in which to collect the credit. Ms. Bulbulkaya shared a table indicating Land Preservation Transfer fee revenues and expenses, and the total that goes into the Stewardship Fund. The total transfer to the Stewardship Fund for 2019 was \$1,507,831.

Mr. Jennison inquired about surplus demand for the land preservation tax credit in excess of the \$75 million cap, and if DCR or TAX could calculate if and when, they might hit the cap. Ms. Bulbulkaya shared that it was difficult to predict with any certainty.

Approval of Distribution of the 2019 VLCF Stewardship Fund - Gina Diccico, DCR

Ms. DiCicco reviewed the recommended distribution for the 2019 VLCF Stewardship Fund as follows:

2019 Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Stewardship Fund				
	AGENCY NAME	NUMBER OF DONATIONS	% OF TOTAL DONATIONS	AMOUNT OF FUNDS
1	American Battlefield Trust (formerly Civil War Trust)	5	0.95%	\$14,360.30
2	Blue Ridge Foothills Conservancy	2	0.38%	\$5,744.12
3	Blue Ridge Land Conservancy	20	3.81%	\$57,441.18
4	Capital Region Land Conservancy Inc	7.5	1.43%	\$21,540.44
5	County of Albemarle	20	3.81%	\$57,441.18
6	County of Amherst	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
7	County of Chesterfield	3	0.57%	\$8,616.18
8	County of Clarke	14	2.67%	\$40,208.83
9	County of Culpeper	0.5	0.10%	\$1,436.03
10	County of Fauquier	31	5.90%	\$89,033.83
11	County of Fluvanna	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
12	County of Northumberland	0.5	0.10%	\$1,436.03
13	County of Shenandoah	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
14	County of Stafford	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
15	County of Warren	1.5	0.29%	\$4,308.09
16	Eastern Shore Land Trust	4	0.76%	\$11,488.24
17	Ever Green Team	10	1.90%	\$28,720.59

18	Henricopolis Soil & Water Conservation District	1.5	0.29%	\$4,308.09
19	Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc.	2	0.38%	\$5,744.12
20	Historic Green Springs	2	0.38%	\$5,744.12
21	Historic Virginia Land Conservancy	9	1.71%	\$25,848.53
22	Land Trust of Virginia	29	5.52%	\$83,289.71
23	Living River Restoration Trust	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
24	New River Land Trust	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
25	Northern Neck Land Conservancy	13.5	2.57%	\$38,772.80
26	Northern Virginia Conservation Trust	5	0.95%	\$14,360.30
27	Old Dominion Land Conservancy, Inc.	30	5.71%	\$86,161.77
28	Piedmont Environmental Council	3.5	0.67%	\$10,052.21
29	Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation	1.5	0.29%	\$4,308.09
30	The 500-Year Forest Foundation	2	0.38%	\$5,744.12
31	The Conservation Fund	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
32	The Nature Conservancy	2	0.38%	\$5,744.12
33	Totopotomoy Battlefield at Rural Plains Foundation	2	0.38%	\$5,744.12
34	Valley Conservation Council	7	1.33%	\$20,104.41
35	Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation	6	1.14%	\$17,232.35
36	Virginia Department of Forestry	52	9.90%	\$149,347.07
37	Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
38	Virginia Department of Historic Resources	5	0.95%	\$14,360.30
39	Virginia Outdoors Foundation	223	42.48%	\$640,469.17
40	Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
41	Wildrock Inc.	1	0.19%	\$2,872.06
	TOTALS	525	100.00%	\$1,507,831.00

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Lazaro moved that the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees approve the distribution of the 2019 VLCF Stewardship Fund as presented by staff. Mr. Ford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

New Code of Virginia Requirement for VLCF Request of Pre-Proposals Grant Manual and Report – Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR

Ms. Bulbulkaya noted that the Land Conservation office at DCR had simplified and streamlined the grant manual for this new process due to a new reporting requirement in the Code of Virginia. Members were provided with a copy of the draft. Ms. Bulbulkaya noted that a copy of the draft grant manual had been sent out to the Virginia United Land Trust listserv, and that they had received about a request to include the floodplains and flooding resilience layer of ConserveVirginia in the new grant round.

Mr. Cristman noted that one of the reasons the specific layers used in the draft manual were chosen is that they were statutorily required. The water quality scoring criteria used in the scoring is reflective of the floodplains and flooding resilience layer.

Mr. Cristman offered a recommendation to add an extra 10 points to the water quality section of the grant manual, which currently reflected 20 points. The extra 10 points could be added to that category explicitly reflecting the floodplains and flooding resilience layer of ConserveVirginia.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Ford moved that the VLCF Board of Trustees approve the addition of ten extra points specific to floodplains and flooding resilience in the water quality category of the template scorecard. Mr. Woodley seconded, and the motion carried.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Woodley moved that the 2019 Special Pre-Application Grant Manual be approved as amended. Mr. Presley seconded and the motion carried.

DOMINION SURRY-SKIFFES CREEK PROJECT

Director Cristman offered an update regarding DCR's Surry-Skiffes Creek grant project. He advised that the intent had been to bring a request to amend the grant for the Yorktown Battlefield project. However, he noted that recent information has indicated that this project could go to a higher level and that the adjustment of some parcels may increase the actual acreage. The project is historical in nature and exhibits significant biodiversity. DCR has been granted a one-year extension to complete the project and will come back to the board to request an amendment if necessary.

With regard to other projects, four Natural Area grants closed under budget with funds remaining, and one application was withdrawn. This provided a balance of \$405,479 to be reallocated to the current grant round in the Natural Areas Category. One project closed under budget in the Open Spaces and Parks category leaving a balance of \$209,331 to be reallocated to that category for the current grant round.

RECENTLY COMPLETED VLCF GRANT AWARDS AND UPDATES TO THE FY20 GRANT EXPENDITURE PLAN

– *Suzan Bulbulkaya, DCR*

Ms. Bulbulkaya presented the following proposed funding plan.

VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION PROPOSED FUNDING PLAN FOR 2019 (FY20) GRANT ROUND

FUNDING CATEGORIES	FY20 Budget Bill Chapter 854, Item 363 (\$4.5 M)	Approved June 19, 2019 Reallocation of Unspent Grants	Subtotal	Additional Unspent Grant Funds to be Approved & Reallocated	TOTAL
<i>I. VOF Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund</i>	\$1,125,000				\$1,125,000
II. VLCF Grant Program					
(i) Farmland and Forest Preservation	\$843,750	\$170,412*	\$1,014,162		\$1,014,162
(ii) Historic Area Preservation	\$843,750	\$200,000	\$1,043,750		\$1,043,750
(iii) Natural Area Protection	\$843,750	\$880,159	\$1,723,909	\$405,479	\$2,129,388
(iv) Open Space and Parks	\$843,750	\$650,553	\$1,494,303	\$209,331	\$1,703,634
TOTAL GRANT FUNDS	\$3,375,000	\$1,901,124	\$5,276,124	\$614,810	\$5,890,934

* = Forest Preservation Category

Summary of Additional Unspent Grant Funds

Farmland & Forest Preservation	-0-	
Historic Area Preservation	-0-	
Natural Area Protection	\$405,479	Unexpended: FY17 Buffalo Mountain NAP Add. for \$1,765; FY17 Deep Run NAP Add. for \$174,000; FY18 Antioch Pines NAP Add. for \$66,448; FY18 Magothy Bay NAP Add. for \$12,666. Withdrawn: FY17 North Landing River Sawgrass Marsh for \$150,000.
Open Spaces & Parks	\$209,331	Unexpended: FY17 Pigg River for \$209,331.

Ms. Bulbulkaya advised that staff was requesting that the Board move the \$405,979 from Natural Area Protection and the \$209,331 from Open Spaces and Parks to the respective category in the current grant round.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Ford moved that the VLCF approve the proposed funding plan to include moving the unspent funds forward to their respective categories in the current grant round. Ms. Booth seconded and the motion carried.

FY20 GRANT ROUND OVERVIEW - *Larry Mikkelson, Land Conservation Specialist, DCR*

Mr. Mikkelson presented an overview of the FY20 Grant Round.

- The FY20 Budget provided \$4.5 M for this VLCF round (\$3.375 M after VOF funding provision)
- The FY20 grant round was open from June 19th through August 29th, 2019.
- Announcements were emailed to counties, cities, land trusts and conservation organizations.
- A grant workshop was held on July 10th.
- The Interagency Task Force met twice for scoring.
- A total of 34 applications were received:
 - 4 in Farmland and 2 in Forestland
 - 8 in Historic Areas
 - 7 in Natural Areas
 - 13 in Open Spaces & Parks
- Total amount of funding requested: \$16.5 M, with total project costs exceeding \$54.1M.
- If all projects could be funded, they would protect 18,248 acres.
- 31 Applications were scored and ranked:
 - 4 in Farmland and 2 in Forestland
 - 7 in Historic Areas
 - 6 in Natural Areas
 - 12 in Open Spaces & Parks
- 84% (17,381 acres) of the applications are located within ConserveVirginia.
- 19 Projects are recommended for funding:
 - 2 in Farmland and 2 in Forestland
 - 2 in Historic Areas
 - 8 in Natural Areas
 - 5 in Open Spaces & Parks
- The total acreage of the recommended projects is 17,575.
- Of the recommended projects, 89% are located within ConserveVirginia.
- 10 of the recommended projects (58% of FY20 funding) will have open-space easements.
- 18 of the recommended projects (95% of FY20 funding) will provide public access.

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDED GRANT PROJECTS FOR AUTHORIZATION

Farmland Preservation - Jen Perkins, Coordinator, Office of Farmland Preservation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Ms. Perkins presented the following recommendations in the Farmland Preservation Category.

Piedmont Environmental Council

Farmland Conservation at the Crossroads of Old Fredericksburg Road

This project will permanently protect the conservation values of 348-acre Madden Farm, located in the Chancellorsville Battlefield Study Area in eastern Culpeper County, with an NRCS Agricultural Land Easement co-held by The Piedmont Environmental Council and Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District. VLFC funding will leverage over 70% of the total project cost in matching funds. The specific objectives of the project are: (a) to conserve quality farmland and forestland; (b) to protect and improve water quality with 12,000 linear feet (2.3 miles) of permanent vegetated riparian buffers; (c) to conserve nearly 40 acres of the Chancellorsville Battlefield Study Area and its scenic rural context; and (d) to provide visual access to the property from 1.4 miles of frontage along Young's Lane (State Route 724).

Total Project Cost: \$1,040,000. **Match:** NRCS-ALE and PEC. **VLFC Grant Request:** \$300,000. **Recommended amount:** \$300,000.

Clark County Conservation Easement Authority

Smithfield Farm

Smithfield Farm is located adjacent to the West Virginia state line in Clarke County and consists of 215 acres with three existing dwellings. The primary use is for grazing, livestock, poultry and hay production. The applicant proposes to prohibit future subdivision. A permanent conservation easement on the farm will protect: 73 acres of soils identified as Prime; 1.2 acres of unique farmland; and 121 acres of important farmland (statewide and local); totaling 195 acres. In addition, the easement will protect: 6/10 of a mile of riparian area along an EPA designated impaired waterway (Long Marsh Run). The property is a certified Century Farm with structures listed on the Virginia and National Register of Historic Places, with several structures listed as contributing in the Long Marsh Rural Historic District, and public views from a state designated Virginia Scenic Byway Wickliffe Road (State Route 603).

Total Project Cost: \$647,000. **Match:** NRCS ACEP-ALE and landowner donation. **VLFC Grant Request:** \$150,000. **Recommended amount:** \$121,875

Forestland Preservation - Michael Santucci, Forestland Conservation Manager, Department of Forestry

Mr. Santucci presented the following recommendations in the Forestland Preservation Category.

The Conservation Fund

Stanley Land and Lumber

Located at the confluence of Roanoke and Wards Ford Creeks, the Stanley Land and Lumber project will protect 4,944 acres of unparalleled forest habitat in Charlotte County through the creation of a new State Forest. The Conservation Fund recently acquired the property and is holding it until funding becomes available to transfer the land to the Virginia Department of Forestry for long-term stewardship and management as Virginia's 26th sustainably managed state forest. The property provides a unique snapshot of Virginia forest types and includes loblolly pine plantings, significant mature hardwood stands, and native mixed-pine stands with Virginia pine and shortleaf pine, as well as over 900 acres of forested wetlands that provide waterfowl habitat. The proposed new state forest will be augmented by the additional protection of nearly 3,000 additional acres owned by Stanley that will have conservation easements placed on them.

Total Project Cost: \$12,878,500. **Match:** VDOF, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and other grant sources including Forest CORE and Forest Legacy. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$1,000,000. **Recommended amount:** \$300,000.

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
Eastern Shore Forest Conservation Initiative

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) seeks a grant to assist in acquiring, conserving and improving ±8,654 acres of forestland located in Accomack and Northampton counties through its Eastern Shore Forest Conservation initiative. This proposed multi-tract fee-simple acquisition presents outstanding opportunities to expand existing Wildlife Management Areas, facilitate natural marsh migration, support coastal resiliency, provide new public lands for wildlife-related recreation, and, most importantly, improve habitat for migratory birds and species of greatest conservation need in an area of hemispheric importance. The Delmarva Peninsula, including Accomack and Northampton counties, supports 7-10 million birds in fall migration annually. The lack of sufficient food and shelter in the Virginia portion creates an energy deficit for birds attempting to cross the Chesapeake Bay; this project could double the food resources available to migrating birds in this region. Virginia's Eastern Shore continues to be a destination for outdoor recreation, and the addition of this acreage to the public land portfolio would substantially expand opportunities for wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, hiking, and more. The parcels are industrial timberlands that were sold to The Conservation Fund in 1999. Project partners include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and The Conservation Fund.

Total Project Cost: \$11,895,250. **Match:** Several DGIF funding sources and Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$1,000,000. **Recommended amount:** \$292,287.

Historic Area Preservation- Elizabeth Tune, Director, Division of Preservation Incentives, Department of Historic Resources.

Ms. Tune shared that there were two projects recommended in the Historic Area Preservation category.

Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation
Red Hill

The Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation is seeking a grant to place an open-space easement on 596 acres at Red Hill Plantation located in Charlotte and Campbell Counties. Red Hill, the home of Patrick Henry, first Governor of the Commonwealth, is open to the public 362 days per year, providing substantial outreach and education to both youth and adults. It is the site of an annual U.S. Naturalization ceremony held on Patrick Henry's birthday (May 29th), as well as a public July 4th celebration. The property contains high value prime farmland, first generation hardwoods, a slave cemetery containing 147 identified graves, and structures that include the former Governor's original law office, original restored slave quarters, and a reconstructed blacksmith shop present on the plantation at the time of Patrick Henry's death. Red Hill fronts on the State Scenic Staunton River as well as the Potential State Scenic Falling River. Red Hill is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, the National Historic Register, and was named a National Memorial in 1986 by then President Ronald W. Reagan.

Total Project Cost: \$1,245,500. **Match:** Landowner bargain sale and landowner payment of due diligence costs. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$600,000. **Recommended amount:** \$600,000.

American Battlefield Trust

Cedar Run Tract at the Cedar Mountain Battlefield

The American Battlefield Trust seeks to preserve the 86-acre Cedar Run Tract at the Cedar Mountain Battlefield, located in Culpeper County. This project will protect the rural character of the Cedar Mountain Battlefield (a Priority I.2, Class B battlefield), scenic James Madison Highway, and associated farmland, all of which are prioritized in the ConserveVirginia initiative. In addition, the project will preserve 52 acres of open and agricultural fields, 34 acres of forest lands, 2,600 feet of streams (including frontage on Cedar Run), over two acres of wetlands, and a half-acre pond. The Trust intends to record an open-space easement on the property to be held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, and subsequently work with the Friends of Cedar Mountain to steward the property.

Total Project Cost: \$858,000. **Match:** ABPP (application submitted). **VLCF Grant Request:** \$412,500. **Recommended amount:** \$412,500.

The balance of \$31,250 remaining in Historic Preservation was not awarded to a project and will be carried over to be awarded in the next VLCF grant round.

Natural Area Protection - Jason Bulluck, Director, Natural Heritage Program, DCR

Mr. Bulluck presented the eight recommended projects in the Natural Areas Protection category.

Northern Virginia Conservation Trust

Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Southern Boundary Addition

In coordination with Stafford County and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), NVCT has been working to preserve land on Crow's Nest peninsula for over 20 years, starting with the acquisition of NVCT's flagship 70-acre Potomac Creek Heronry property in 1995. The Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve (Crow's Nest NAP) now protects 2,942 acres. In 2018, NVCT dedicated the Heronry property to DCR as an addition to the NAP. NVCT's objective now is to further protect the heronry from encroaching development pressure. NVCT intends to purchase the 110-acre parcel immediately adjacent to the heronry within the preserve and to likewise dedicate it to DCR as an addition to the NAP. Once acquired, the property will be managed by DCR as part of Crow's Nest NAP, which would allow public use. The size and condition of the property is adequate to fully protect and manage natural heritage resources.

Total Project Cost: \$512,000. **Match:** NVCT. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$256,000. **Recommended amount:** \$256,000.

The Nature Conservancy

Piney Grove Vernal Pools Project

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) hopes to acquire 350 acres of forestland (the Landco tract) in Sussex County and grant an open-space easement over +/- 115 acres of adjacent land on TNC's Piney Grove Preserve to DCR to establish a new, 465-acre state Natural Area Preserve. TNC's Piney Grove Preserve

comprises one of the largest blocks of fire-maintained southern pine savanna in Virginia and supports one of just two breeding populations of the federally endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) in the state. TNC and state conservation agency partners will restore pine savanna habitat on the Landco tract to facilitate growth of the RCW population in support of range-wide recovery efforts for the species. This acquisition will ensure permanent protection of four vernal pools on the Landco tract which support populations of several state rare amphibian species. Establishing a DCR Natural Heritage presence through Natural Area Preserve designation will facilitate more comprehensive and collaborative management of heritage trust resources among TNC and other state agency partners in the nearly 10,000-acre Piney Grove/Big Woods conservation area.

Total Project Cost: \$802,000. **Match:** TNC, U.S. FWS North American Wetlands Conservation Act. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$367,000. **Recommended amount:** \$367,000.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Bush Mill Stream Natural Area Preserve Addition

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Program intends to purchase 39 acres as an addition to Bush Mill Stream Natural Area Preserve (BMSNAP) in Northumberland County. The tract is included in ConserveVirginia under the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity and Protected Landscapes Resilience categories. The project and preserve are located in one of Virginia's essential conservation sites. The property fills a critical biodiversity conservation need by protecting one of the top two highest quality examples of Bog Fern known in Virginia. In addition, the parcel lies directly upstream and shares a contiguous boundary with the preserve, providing a protected riparian buffer to the wetlands within the preserve and to the tidal wetlands of the Wicomico River, a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. The tract lies along Route 201, providing visual buffer to recreational visitors who visit the public access preserve from the north.

Total Project Cost: \$130,500. **Match:** none. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$130,500. **Recommended amount:** \$130,500.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Additions

DCR's Natural Heritage Division seeks to acquire in fee simple two adjacent parcels to Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve (CNNAP) in Stafford County. The tracts total 1.6 acres and fall within two categories of Conserve Virginia (Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity and Protected Landscapes Resilience). The property is located within one of Virginia's essential conservation sites and a mapped ecological core with the highest ranking possible in Virginia. The property will contribute to resource protection goals for the larger preserve; both parcels are vulnerable points that allow uncontrolled and illegal access to the NAP. Acquiring these lots enhances DCR's ability to control and eliminate active and ongoing threats that include poaching, drug-related activity, off-road vehicle use, and littering.

Total Project Cost: \$186,000. **Match:** none. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$186,000. **Recommended amount:** \$186,000.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Cypress Bridge Swamp Natural Area Preserve Addition

This DCR project proposes acquisition in fee simple of 18 acres to be added to the Cypress Bridge Swamp Natural Area Preserve (CBSNAP) in Southampton County. The tract falls within four categories of ConserveVirginia: Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Protected Landscapes Resilience, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience, and Scenic Preservation. The project and preserve are located in one of Virginia's essential conservation sites, encompassing five different natural heritage resources deemed critical for biodiversity conservation in Virginia, including one irreplaceable element found nowhere else in the Commonwealth. The parcel is a key inholding at CBSNAP.

Total Project Cost: \$52,000. **Match:** none. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$52,000. **Recommended amount:** \$52,000.

Capital Region Land Conservancy

Bluebell Tract

The Bluebell Tract encompasses approximately 1,410 acres in western Powhatan County and has been an actively managed forest for more than a half century. It was purchased in early 2019 by Longleaf Conservation Capital for the purpose of preserving forest land, implementing carbon sequestration, and establishing outdoor recreation and public access to the river. Plans are for an affiliated business, Outsyde, to manage the recreational opportunities of the property for public access to the river. Given the scale of the project and significant inclusion of managed forests, CRLC sought the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) as the easement holder. Approximately 565 acres of forestland on the Bluebell Tract are rated as having high conservation value by DOF. A natural area deed of dedication will be placed on approximately 270 acres along the Appomattox River to be held by DCR's Natural Heritage. This acreage falls almost entirely within the Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity category of ConserveVirginia, has a C2 Very High score for Ecological Cores, and falls within the Virginia Natural Land Network.

Total Project Cost: \$1,633,745. **Match:** Value of the easement donation on the entire property. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$500,000. **Recommended amount:** \$500,000.

City of Suffolk Parks and Recreation*Blackwater River Park and South Quay Sandhills Natural Area Preserve*

The City of Suffolk Department of Parks and Recreation proposes to acquire an undeveloped 338-acre property along the Blackwater River. The property is adjacent to the 3,753-acre South Quay Sandhills Natural Area Preserve owned by DCR. Upon acquisition, the City intends to transfer 200 acres to DCR to expand the Natural Area Preserve. The City intends to develop the remaining 138 acres of property into a public park with paddle craft access to the Blackwater River.

Total Project Cost: \$800,000. **Match:** \$400,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$400,000. **Recommended amount:** \$400,000.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Gateway to Cape Charles - Public Access Project

This proposal will support the purchase of 16-acres with existing improvements to provide permanent public access to a wheelchair-accessible boardwalk to the Cape Charles Natural Area Preserve (CCNAP) in the town of Cape Charles in Northampton County. An existing parking area and entrance trail, including several hundred feet of boardwalk, was constructed prior to the establishment of CCNAP. These amenities have become a well-used visitor entrance, associated by the public with DCR, even though they are on private land. The property directly adjoins CCNAP and is listed for sale, making protection of the site urgent. Federal matching funds will provide 50% of the cost of this project.

Total Project Cost: \$528,500. Match: Coastal Zone Management funds. VLCF Grant Request: \$264,250. Recommended amount: \$237,888.

Open Spaces and Parks - Kelly McClary, Acting Director, Planning and Recreation Resources Division, DCR.

Ms. McClary shared the five Open Space and Park projects recommended for VLCF Funding, totaling approximately \$1.7 million in funding.

Capital Region Land Conservancy

Dock Street

In the 1730's William Byrd gave the City of Richmond its name due to the distinct appearance of the city along the James River, reminiscent of Richmond on Thames in England. The city purchased Libby Hill Park in 1851 to preserve open space and public access to this important view, which has remained largely unimpeded. The 5-acre Dock Street property, intended recently for an intensive development that would harm one of the most recognizable viewsheds in Virginia, is proposed for acquisition with the help of a VLCF grant. This acquisition would conserve the view from Libby Hill Park, enhance the well-used Virginia Capital Trail, complete the Richmond Riverfront Plan, and connect with two city-owned parks. The plan is for DCR to hold an easement on the property and to ultimately transfer ownership to the City of Richmond.

Total Project Cost: \$8,120,000. Match: CRLC (cash and real property donations). VLCF Grant Request: \$4,060,000. Recommended amount: \$500,000.

Virginia Outdoors Foundation

McThenia

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation proposes to purchase an easement on 39 acres in the City of Lexington to allow public access along a trail to the Maury River. The property fronts the Maury for over 5,700 feet and has a natural 'beach' area at the foot of the trail. It is across the river from the Chessie Trail, a heavily used public trail linking Lexington to the Buena Vista area. The bluffs are also visible from State Route 631, which is part of U.S. Bike Route 76. The river at this location is a designated Blueway and provides habitat for several endangered mollusk species. The property lies within the Lexington Barrens and Bluffs conservation site due to the limestone cliffs, sinkholes and barrens, and also contains areas where a rare

plant, the ThreeFlower Melic Grass (*Melica nitens*), has been found. The property contains several sinkholes that serve to capture most of the surface-water runoff in the upland portion of the property.

Total Project Cost: \$185,000. **Match:** Cash from additional funding source. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$185,000. **Recommended amount:** \$180,000.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Wilderness Road Connectivity Property

This grant to acquire the a 242-acre addition to Wilderness Road State Park will enhance environmental education, outdoor recreation, wildlife viewing, hiking and natural and cultural history opportunities for visitors to the state park located in Lee County. This project will also create an opportunity to develop connectivity with the Chadwell Gap Trail on the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, because the Property is contiguous to both of the current park property boundaries. DCR identified connectivity from the state park to the trail system of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park as a priority in Wilderness Road State Park's 2014 Master Plan Update.

Total Project Cost: \$681,500. **Match:** Cash from additional funding source. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$681,500. **Recommended amount:** \$500,000.

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks)

Pohick Bay Regional Park Inholding Acquisition

NOVA Parks is seeking to acquire three acres of land adjacent to the Potomac River in southern Fairfax County that is part of a regionally significant conservation corridor. The land is the last inholding within an existing 1,007-acre park that is protected under Land and Water Conservation Fund. The acquisition will: provide public access to land that is currently privately owned and not protected, provide needed open space and passive park facilities in a densely populated area, conserve natural and historic resources, and help to protect the region's watershed. The property has 250 linear feet of Potomac River shoreline with a forested riparian buffer. Thirty percent of the property is within a Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area and fifteen percent is within the Potomac River floodplain. The property has mature forest containing Northern Red Oak, White Oak, American Beech, Tulip Poplar, Sycamore, Maple, American Beech, and Sweetgum. Proposed park uses include hiking, picnicking, fishing, boating, equestrian trails, and natural and cultural resource interpretation.

Total Project Cost: \$1,290,000. **Match:** applied for LWCF grant \$645,000. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$645,000. **Recommended amount:** \$322,500.

Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Camp Kum-Ba-Yah

Camp Kum-Ba-Yah, Inc. intends to use a VLCF grant to help purchase from Lynchburg Covenant Fellowship, Inc. the 44-acre urban forest where its summer nature day camp is located and place it in an open-space easement held by VOF. Dense commercial and residential development are imminent if Camp Kum-Ba-Yah fails to purchase the property, which is currently for sale. The VLCF grant would help to save the urban

forest, expand public access, and enhance the outdoor recreational and environmental programming that Camp Kum-Ba-Yah offers to thousands in Central Virginia. This area of the city is identified in the city's Comprehensive Plan as a park desert. Camp Kum-Ba-Yah has a rich civil rights history from the 1960s, when Lynchburg closed its public pools to African-American citizens. Camp Kum-Ba-Yah continued to welcome both black and white citizens to swim in its pools. Today, Camp Kum-Ba-Yah offers scholarships to nearly 50% of its campers, fulfilling its motto that no child will be denied the gift of camp due to financial need.

Total Project Cost: \$1,040,950. **Match:** Other grants being sought and private donations. **VLCF Grant Request:** \$532,200. **Recommended amount:** \$201,134.

PUBLIC COMMENT FROM GRANT APPLICANTS

Eric Baumgartner with Longleaf Pine Restoration Partners, LLC shared that the Bluebell tract project is a very exciting project locally. He noted that the public access component was another significant component.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Lazaro moved that the VLCF approve the recommended grant awards for the 2020 Fiscal Year as presented by staff. Mr. Ford seconded and the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.