

**Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation
Scenic Resources Subcommittee
Friday, July 12, 2019
Richmond, Virginia**

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Patricia A. Jackson, Subcommittee Chair
Vincent M. Burgess
Danielle Heisler
Esther Nizer

DCR STAFF PRESENT

Rochelle Altholz, Deputy Director of Administration and Finance
Lynn Crump, Scenic Resources Coordinator
Danette Poole, Director, Division of Planning and Recreation Resources
Michael Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison
Kimberly Freiberger, Policy Analyst
Bernadette Lemasters, Virginia Management Fellow

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Jackson called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and noted that a quorum of the subcommittee was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 27, 2019

Mr. Burgess moved that the minutes from the February 27, 2019 meeting of the Scenic Resources Subcommittee be approved as submitted. Ms. Heisler seconded and the motion carried.

UPDATE ON RESOURCES WORK

Chesapeake RFP – Ms. Crump noted that the intent had been to work with the Chesapeake Bay Conservancy, however, the grant was awarded to a Mr. James Palmer, of T. J. Boyle Associates, from Burlington, Vermont. A meeting of the interested parties will be scheduled. Ms. Crump will represent the Commonwealth. The scope of work is to be determined, but will include a literature review already underway by Scenic Virginia, as well as a protocol for analyzing scenic impacts within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Skiffes Creek Transmission Research – A recent review of the Skiffes Creek Transmission line facilitated by the National Park Service determined that there were significant scenic impacts from the installation of the towers and lines. This includes visual impact from Jamestown, Colonial Parkway, the Jamestown Ferry, and from Carter's Grove historic site. There is also night impact from the lights on the towers at those sites and it is anticipated that there will be impacts at Chippokes Plantation State Park. While it is unlikely that any ruling would require the towers to be taken down, the study will help to develop scenic impact protocol for future projects. Other aspects of the field investigation included new research on the level of impact, accuracy of the simulations used in the review process and impacts on night skies.

Virginia Byways Report – There have been two new requests for Virginia Byway designation within the last year. Ms. Crump has been working with Synthia Waymack at the Virginia Department of Transportation. Ms. Waymack previously worked for DCR. VDOT is developing a protocol to determine whether designated Scenic Byways still qualify for the designation. This effort includes the need to establish a base line for existing designations. And a more quantifiable designation evaluation process.

Review of conferences where Va Scenic Resources are being presented.

- o VRS Argonne (10-27 to 10-30) - a national stewardship conference in Illinois.
- o VRPS 9/8 Tysons Corner
- o VAASLA (9-20 to 9/21) Virginia Beach

SCENIC RIVERS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. Crump reviewed the updated website for the 50th Anniversary and showed a video of a prior river evaluation. The website includes an interactive map showing the scenic river segments and eventually events that will help commemorate the 50th anniversary.

The letter from the Board of Conservation and Recreation requesting support for the 50th anniversary has been sent. It was suggested that a follow up be done in August and again in September. Ms. Crump will coordinate that effort. As of July 11, 17 people/groups have responded via the form at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/sr50>. Many have told us how they'd like to be a part of the celebration. She's working on a toolkit of sample posts/verbiage for social media, and she's reaching out to DGIF. Additionally, PCO is working on a toolkit of sample posts/verbiage for social media, and she's reaching out to DGIF.

The subcommittee discussed a kick-off event for the 50th Anniversary in 2020. Multiple venues were discussed. The 40th Anniversary event was held at Tredegar Iron Works along the James River. Discussion regarding this event will continue with the 50th Anniversary Steering Committee. It was suggested that there be larger regional events around the state with one kick-off event in Richmond. The April-May timeframe was discussed. Possible locations suggested included: Dominion offices on the James, VCU Rice Center, War Memorial, and Brown's Isle. Ms. Poole will discuss location options with Director Cristman. Wednesday, April 22, Earth Day, was suggested for the day for the Richmond event. Mr. Burgess suggested we use \$5,000 as a target for the Richmond based event. Regions suggested were NoVA with PEC, Southern VA w/ Southern Va Blueways &/or the Friends of the Blackwater, SW VA with Clinch River Valley Initiative, and something in the Upper James w/ James River Assoc.

Ms. Jackson inquired about the possibility of a display in the General Assembly Building. Staff will investigate this. It was noted that, due to the construction of a new General Assembly Building, display space was currently limited in the Pocahontas Building.

RIVER MANAGEMENT SOCIETY CONFERENCE

The River Management Society conference will be held in Richmond May 12 – 15, 2020 at VCU. Requests for presenters were sent out.

RIVER EVALUATIONS

Ms. Crump distributed a list of pending or potential river evaluations. Formal requests have been received for the Pound, Appomattox, Maury, Broad Run, Middle James, Roanoke, and South Rivers. Inquiries for other rivers include the Hazel, Hyco, Shenandoah, Hardware and several others.

Ms. Crump noted that legislation would probably move forward in the 2020 General Assembly Session for the Clinch, Pound, Maury and Staunton Rivers, as well as the Middle James in Albemarle and Buckingham Counties.

Concerns were noted for projects affecting Goose Creek and Catoctin Creek in Loudoun County. A data center is being developed along the Goose Creek. There is no impact to buffers, but there will be visual impact and light pollution as well as additional wire crossings. Concern was stated over a VDOT project on the Catoctin River that used non-local riprap. These are not issues that DCR can address.

Additionally at the confluence of James and Rivanna Rivers, there is a water intake project that originally went through the review process in 2004. The Rivanna, is a designated Va Scenic River at that location. Since the water intake project was approved in 2014, DCR cannot comment again.

Ms. Jackson expressed a concern that the proper reviews were not always considered with regard to projects along designated scenic rivers. She requested that the committee and the Board have additional time to discuss this to work towards ways to increase awareness.

NEXT MEETING

The committee will meet again prior to the next full Board meeting. Dates for both the committee meeting and the Board meeting are to be determined.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.