



# Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

## Land and Water Conservation Fund



## 2022 Application Manual

The following documents, available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>, should be referenced along with this guide:

- [NPS LWCF State Assistance Program Federal Financial Assistance Manual](#) (March 2021)
- [Virginia's LWCF Open Project Selection Process](#)
- [Virginia Outdoors Plan](#) (2018)
- DCR LWCF [Environmental Review and Public Comment Requirements](#)
- DCR LWCF Scoring Criteria 2022

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## II. LWCF Grant Round Overview

The Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program (LWCF) is a 50%-50% matching reimbursement grant program for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities. A key feature of the program is that sites assisted with LWCF funding must be open, operated, and maintained **in perpetuity** as ***public outdoor recreation areas*** and may not be converted to other uses without suitable replacement and approval by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

The LWCF is operated by the National Park Service (NPS) in partnership with designated lead agencies in individual states. The agency responsible for administering LWCF in Virginia is the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

LWCF monies are apportioned to the states by the Secretary of the Interior each federal fiscal year. The state (DCR) is responsible for submitting eligible project proposals to NPS. DCR is selecting projects through this competitive call for proposals, in accord with Virginia's Open Project Selection Process (OPSP). The full OPSP text can be found at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>.

Eligible grant recipients, referred to as project sponsors, include local units of government (state political subdivisions such as cities, counties, and Virginia recognized park authorities), state agencies, and federal or state recognized Indian Tribes. Non-profit organizations, associations, and other private entities are not eligible.

The minimum award amount for the 2022 grant cycle is \$250,000 and the maximum award amount is \$2,000,000 depending on available funding at the time of award and total requests. An estimated \$11,000,000 in LWCF funding is available in this grant round.

The application deadline for the 2022 VA LWCF grant cycle is **4:00PM on Tuesday, March 15, 2022**. All applications must be submitted electronically by this deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.

After selection, project sponsors will work with DCR in the subsequent months to complete the necessary documentation for submission to NPS. Sponsors must complete a project review in accord with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) **prior** to DCR submission of the project to NPS. DCR is targeting the NPS grant acceptance period ending in July 2022 for submission of this grant round's projects via Grants.gov. If projects cannot be submitted by July, they must be held until NPS announces and opens another grant acceptance period (projected to be in the winter of 2022/23). The more details and documentation completed for the proposed project, the sooner it can be submitted for NPS authorization.

This application manual provides an overview of the LWCF program in Virginia and is designed to assist in application submission. Full program details and requirements are subject to the most recent NPS LWCF manual, which currently is the [\*\*NPS LWCF State Assistance Program Federal Financial Assistance Manual\*\*](#), Volume 71, Effective March 11, 2021.

This opportunity may be a good fit for your entity if:

- For **acquisition**: you have a willing seller who is patient and willing to allow appraisals and other research to occur during the application and authorization process. The full process minimally takes approximately one year but can take up to three years.
- For **development**: your development project is nearly ready for construction, or can move quickly to construction once awarded. Projects still in the conceptual phase of project design but with approval to move through the design phase could still fit but may not be ready for NPS submission until later in 2022 or 2023.
- You have already started or are ready to move quickly with a NEPA-level environmental review. DCR encourages you to coordinate with state agencies sooner rather than later to allow for their windows of response time (typically 30 days).
- You already have significant source/s of non-federal funds (or donated/ in-kind value) to leverage 1:1 with a LWCF grant award. For development projects, pre-approval project planning and design expenses may be eligible towards the project match with appropriate documentation and if expressed clearly in the application budget form.
- You are both responsive and patient. LWCF is often a “hurry up and wait” process, with tight pushes for deadlines and long periods of waiting on NPS action.

### III. LWCF Program Requirements

To be eligible for either an acquisition or a development grant, the project must be on publicly owned land, or plan to acquire publicly owned land, and the project sponsor must possess sufficient legal title and control of the property to ensure that it can be managed and maintained for outdoor recreation in perpetuity and otherwise remain compliant with the conversion provisions of the LWCF Act (see [54 U.S.C. 200305\(f\)\(3\)](#)).

Outdoor recreation areas and facilities assisted by the LWCF must be open to the general public and not limited to special groups. All new parkland acquired with LWCF funds must be open to the public within three years of purchase, including provision of public access amenities (such as parking and general access). For development projects, construction must begin within one year of authorization and be completed and open to the public by the end of the three year project period.

To be eligible for the funding, States must have a current State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) in place that assesses demand and need for outdoor recreation resources within its borders and sets priorities for the use of LWCF funds. The most recent SCORP in Virginia is the 2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) which can be found at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vop>. The proposed project must align with priorities within the VOP.

***This manual provides a brief overview of the LWCF program, please refer to NPS Manual for additional information and guidance.***

## IV. Eligibility

### A. Eligible Project Sponsors – The following are eligible to apply for LWCF funding:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, counties)
- Tribes (federal or state recognized)
- State agencies (Dept. of Forestry, Wildlife Resources, etc.)
- Regional park authorities identified in the [Code of Virginia](#)

Land trusts, non-profit organizations, planning district commissions, associations, educational institutions, and private individuals **are not** eligible to receive LWCF funding.

### B. Eligible Projects - Eligible project types fall into three categories: acquisition, development, and combination acquisition and development. The [NPS LWCF Manual](#) describes project eligibility requirements (Ch. 3) and eligible costs (Ch. 5) in detail.

#### 1. Acquisition

Acquisition of lands, wetlands, and waters for public outdoor recreation, including new areas or additions to existing parks, forests, wildlife management areas, beaches, and other similar areas dedicated to outdoor recreation, as well as physical connections among them (e.g., trails, waterways, land between recreation areas, wildlife habitat corridors) are eligible for assistance in this category.

Acquisition of land must be in fee simple and may be accomplished through purchase, transfer, or by donation. The property must be opened for public use within 3 years of project authorization.

NPS authorizes federal funding for acquisitions based on the appraised value; all appraisals must be completed by a certified UASFLA appraiser. The appraisal must be within one year of project submission and it must have a full review from a separate UASFLA certified appraiser.

In very limited circumstances, a lesser interest, such as a perpetual easement, may be authorized if sufficient rights allowing the public to access and recreate on the site would be provided and the project sponsor's ability to enforce the provisions of the LWCF Act in perpetuity must be ensured.

Areas acquired may serve a wide variety of public outdoor recreation activities including but not limited to:

- walking and driving for pleasure
- sightseeing or nature study
- swimming and other water sports
- fishing
- picnicking
- boating and water access
- hunting and shooting
- camping
- horseback riding
- bicycling
- snowmobiling and skiing
- other outdoor sports and activities.

## 2. Development

LWCF assistance is available for the development of a wide range of outdoor recreation uses and the recreation facilities needed to support the use and enjoyment of these areas. NPS authorizes federal funding for development projects based on the detailed budget provided by the project sponsor that provides a realistic and fair valuation of all amenities to be constructed in the project scope.

A development project may consist of one improvement or a group of related improvements designed to provide basic facilities for outdoor recreation, including facilities for access, safety, security, health, and protection of the area, as well as those required for the outdoor recreation use of the area.

A project may consist of the complete or partial development of one area, such as a state park or a city playground, or it may consist of multiple sites such as a series of developments on a number of geographically separated areas under the same project sponsor such as picnic facilities in a number of parks. If your project is part of a larger scope, please clearly identify the specific portion of the project you are seeking LWCF funding for.

Development projects eligible for assistance, with certain exceptions, include but are not limited to the following facility types:

- Sports and playfields
- Picnic facilities
- Land or water-based trails and trailheads
- Swimming facilities
- Boating facilities
- Fishing/hunting facilities
- Public target range facilities
- Winter sports facilities
- Camping facilities
- Outdoor exhibit facilities
- Community gardens
- Renovations to eligible facility types
- Support facilities such as parking areas, restrooms, simple cabins, trail hostels
- Operations and maintenance facilities
- Erosion control/ shoreline stabilization

For development projects, the non-construction planning expenses such as site investigation and selection, site planning, feasibility studies, preliminary design, environmental review and other federal and State compliance, preparation of cost estimates, preparation of construction drawings and specifications, and similar items necessary for project proposal preparation **may** be eligible for assistance, if incurred up to 3 years prior to final project submission to NPS. Proper documentation and justification must be provided including the funding source; these expenses can be applied to the project only if clearly described in the applications budget narrative specific to the project scope and subsequently authorized by NPS.

### 3. Combination Acquisition and Development

Projects that include both acquisition as described above *and* development of outdoor recreation resources on the acquired site are eligible for funding. Please note that combination projects must comply with the individual requirements of acquisition and development projects, and that both the acquisition and all development must be completed within the three year LWCF project period.

#### **C. Ineligible Projects and Project Costs** - LWCF funds may not be used for (not inclusive):

- Indoor facilities such as recreation centers or facilities that support primarily non-outdoor purposes like dining facilities or overnight accommodations (such as a lodges or hotels, however simple lodging facilities that support outdoor recreation experiences may be eligible)
- Facilities for professional or semi-professional arts or athletics
- Acquisition of or restoration of historic sites and structures
- Acquisition of lands, or interests in lands, that completely restrict access to specific persons (e.g., non-residents of a community)
- Operation and maintenance activities
- Renovations necessary due to neglect or lack of proper maintenance
- Condemnation of any kind of interest in property
- Incidental costs related to land acquisition such as appraisals, surveys, or title work
- Indirect costs/ administrative fees, including in-house project administration
- Equipment to be used for maintenance including, but not limited to, automotive equipment, tractors, mowers, etc.
- Interest expenses, contingency reserves, and charges in excess of the lowest responsive bid when competitive bidding is required.

Acquisition project expenses that are **not** reimbursable include those relating to appraisals, surveys, and other incidental costs to the purchaser that are precluded by the LWCF Act.

**\*\*The NPS LWCF Manual describes project eligibility requirements (Chapter 3) and eligible costs (Chapters 5) in detail. Final eligibility determination is at the discretion of NPS. \*\***



## V. Cost Share Requirement

The LWCF grant program aims to aid localities and states in leveraging funds for outdoor recreation, thus the program mandates a minimum 1:1 cost share (match reimbursement) from the project sponsor. This results in a maximum grant award of 50% of the total eligible project costs.

For example, if the purchase price of a new park property is \$800,000.00, the maximum LWCF grant award amount for acquiring the property is \$400,000.00. Please note that when factoring in ineligible costs such as appraisals, title work, and/or administrative expenses, LWCF grants often end up covering less than 50% of the total cost to complete the project.

Matching funds may be derived from state, local, non-governmental, or private sources in the form of cash or in-kind contributions of land, services, materials, etc. Eligible match items can be found in Chapter 5 of NPS LWCF Manual.

There are strict limitations on the use of federal funds as sponsor match. The only federal funds allowed as match are the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trail Program Grants and Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Block Grants. **CARES Act, ARPA, and other pandemic-related federal relief funds cannot be used as match.**

LWCF is a reimbursement program, thus project sponsors must be able to finance the project upfront while receiving periodic 50% reimbursements on expended costs. Acquisition projects are typically reimbursed as a one-time payment. All documentation related to fiscal transactions, proof of payment(s), final deeds, and other related documents must be submitted to DCR to be sent to NPS on behalf of the subrecipient/project sponsor. Final authorization of drawdowns and reimbursements is the responsibility of the National Park Service. The project sponsor, upon project authorization, must provide DCR with financial documents including Virginia W9 and Federal SAMS number to ensure accurate transfer of funds can be completed successfully.

## VI. Perpetuity Requirements

As a condition of LWCF, the **entire park** in which the project is located must be put under permanent protection to be used for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. This protection is recorded in the property deed. In the past, properties assisted with LWCF funds have been referred to as "**6(f)(3)c**" or "**6(f)**" **properties**, in reference to Section 6(f)(3)c of the LWCF Act, but now are referred to as "**LWCF-assisted areas**" and/or "**LWCF boundary areas**."

Conversion of these properties to any uses other than public outdoor recreation is a lengthy process that must be approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, and equivalent replacement property must be provided as a result of any conversions. Both DCR and NPS strongly discourage LWCF conversions.



The perpetuity requirement is applied to the assisted park or other recreation area as a whole. Exceptions for boundaries that would apply to a lesser unit of a park will be considered only if the unit is a stand-alone (i.e., its borders do not include other areas of the park), self-sustaining (i.e., it does not rely on adjoining park area for access, utilities, support facilities, etc.) recreation area. DCR and the NPS must agree to any boundary that does not comprise the whole park, and the NPS may eliminate from consideration proposals that are not consistent with this policy. Applicants who wish to propose a project with a boundary that would not include the whole park are urged to contact DCR prior to completing an application for a determination on whether the boundary *may* be accepted. DCR may coordinate with NPS to determine project eligibility and/or boundary discrepancies.

### **Restrictive Deed Wording**

The following language is to be incorporated into the property deed of LWCF-assisted areas and recorded in the city, town, or county court house of the project area. The deed with Tax ID Parcel information as well as attached plats or maps must be submitted to DCR to process the final drawdown and project closeout for authorized projects:

*The property identified below has been acquired or developed with federal assistance provided by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior in accordance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 4601-5 et seq. (170 ed.). Pursuant to a requirement of that law, this property may not be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses (whether by transfer, sale, or in any other manner) without the express written approval of the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation and the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, or their designee. By law, the Secretary shall approve such conversion only if it is in accord with the then existing Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and only upon such condition as the substitution of other recreation properties that are of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location.*

## **VII. Maps**

Applicants must submit three maps with their application:

### **1. LWCF Boundary Area Map**

The purpose of the LWCF Boundary Area map (formerly called the Section 6(f)(3) map) is to legally define the area being developed or acquired with federal LWCF grant money. This area will be given the protection of Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act, which states that property acquired or developed with LWCF money shall not be converted to uses other than public outdoor recreation. The project area within the LWCF Boundary Area will become encumbered as an outdoor recreational site in perpetuity.

Both acquisition and development projects must submit a boundary area map. It is preferred that development applications include a metes and bounds map of the LWCF Boundary Area.

Acquisition projects must submit an *anticipated* LWCF Boundary Area map. All authorized projects will be required to submit a signed, accurate metes and bounds map prior to project closeout. Also identify the tax ID parcel and ensure the full acreage is accurately recorded on the map.

At a minimum, the LWCF Boundary Area map (for development or acquisition) should include:

- **Title** of Map.
- **Date** Map was prepared.
- **Scale** in feet.
- A **north compass point**.
- The **LWCF Boundary Area metes and bounds line** should be distinct from all other lines on the map.
  - The words “LWCF Boundary Area” should be written on the map with an arrow pointing to the line.
  - Boundary lines should be shown by dotted or bold lines and distinct from all other lines on the map.
- Match lines should be distinguishable and easily matched among parcels.
- Whenever possible, maps should include some **permanent locator**, natural landmarks, public roadways etc. to aid in determining boundaries in the field.
- The **number of acres** being placed under LWCF protection **must** be noted.
- Applicants should consider any existing or potential non-recreational uses of the park property that should be excluded (“carved out” and/or “setback”) from the LWCF Boundary Area protection. These areas should be clearly marked on the map and identified as being excluded from the LWCF Boundary Area.
- Applicants must consult with the Virginia Department of Transportation to determine if any planned road construction or improvement projects might impact the proposed LWCF Boundary Area. If any impacts are identified, a discussion is needed with DCR to determine possible adjustments to the LWCF Boundary Area to avoid creating future conversion of use issues.
- Any **easements** (utility, conservation, wetland, etc.) must be clearly shown on the map.
- Maps should be as high a **quality** as possible.
- DCR may need to print the electronic map in the future. The submitted map should be of high enough resolution to be legible on ledger size paper (11 x 17). If using this size paper compromises legibility please prepare the document for printing on a larger size.
- **Signed and dated** copies of the map are required. Signature should be of local representative authorized to submit the application request.

## 2. Site Plan

The Site Plan should be a plan of the existing *and* proposed site features that identifies the location of planned recreational developments, improvements, and other use features such as where the public will access the site, adjacent roads, parking, etc. Development projects

are expected to have more detailed site plans (site development plan) than acquisition projects (conceptual site plan). Also include the title of the project and a north arrow.

Development projects that are authorized will be required to present a final as-built certified site plan prior to project closeout.

### **3. Location Map**

The location map should be a zoomed out aerial view that identifies the subject property(ies), and location of entrance to the site/outdoor recreation/park area. If applicable, note any other recreational parks and conserved lands in the general area.

## **VIII. Stewardship and Post-Completion Requirements**

LWCF-assisted properties must be maintained to ensure safe public access. Properties shall be kept reasonably open, accessible, and in sanitary condition. For further details, review *Chapter 8 – Post-Completion and Stewardship* of the [NPS LWCF Manual](#).

### **LWCF Acknowledgment Sign**

Permanent signs shall be installed on the property to acknowledge the federal-state-local partnership role in providing new high quality outdoor recreation areas and facilities and to facilitate continued awareness of the LWCF Act obligations by recipients/subrecipients as well as the public. A sign must be continuously maintained at the site. The cost of manufacturing the sign is the responsibility of the project sponsor.

### **Inspections**

Inspections are regularly performed on LWCF assisted areas to monitor the project sponsor compliance with program and stewardship requirements. Recreation areas found in non-compliance will be notified in writing of the problems and a time frame for remediation. In cases where inspections discover conversions of use, DCR, in consultation with NPS, will provide direction to the subrecipient/project sponsor on the Conversion of Use process and a time frame for initiating it.

### **Conversions**

LWCF assisted areas cannot be converted to any use other than public outdoor recreation use without the written approval of the Secretary of the Interior. This approval is contingent upon the conversion being found consistent with the state's SCORP and the project sponsor replacing the area to be converted with a new recreation area involving land of at least equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent recreational utility.

Project sponsors considering conversions of use **must coordinate with DCR**. The conversion process can take upwards of several years and NPS approval is not guaranteed.

Documentation must be compiled for both the proposed conversion and replacement property including UASFLA appraisals and NEPA correspondence. The project sponsor would be responsible for all costs of the studies as well as the replacement property. LWCF funding is not available for conversions.

## IX. Environmental Review and Documentation Requirements

Projects selected by DCR will have until June 2022 to complete a series of required actions and documentation for DCR to submit their complete application package to NPS. Projects that have all required documentation at time of application will be prioritized for submission to NPS for their pre-application review process in April 2022.

This includes demonstrating compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, through the completion of the necessary agency correspondence and reviews. See ***Environmental Review and Public Comment Procedures*** document available on the [DCR LWCF website](#) for general guidance on the review procedures. This process must be complete, and documentation of the process submitted to DCR as promptly as possible. DCR will review all documentation and submit projects to NPS for pre-review in April 2022. Applications that are missing significant required documentation may not get the 'go ahead' from NPS to be submitted into Grants.gov in the July 2022 window. In those instances, DCR will provide guidance to the project sponsor to encourage the completion of said documentation in time for the next, to be determined, Grants.gov window.

***Potential project sponsors are strongly encouraged to begin the process of agency correspondence as soon as possible.*** It may be necessary to conduct cultural and/or ecological surveys at the request of corresponding agencies; if this is known early then the expense of required surveys in the application budget can be included for NPS approval. Additional expenses incurred after project authorization would have to be filed as project amendments, which is the authority of NPS to approve.

Note that NPS will complete required Tribal consult for Section 106 requirements. Please provide correspondence, if any, already completed by the project sponsor with tribal contacts.

Projects unable to complete NEPA review and other NPS submission requirements by July must be held until NPS announces and opens another grant acceptance period at an unknown future date (approximately Winter 2022 or Spring 2023).

Projects also require a site inspection to be completed by DCR Recreation Grants staff. Please ensure the accurate contact information is provided so DCR can schedule the visit in a timely manner upon project selection. This site inspection will cover a view of the property, discussion of any eligibility concerns, and discussion of the process. If the property is under different ownership, please inform the property owner that this access will be needed in approximately early April to mid-June.

Please reference the **LWCF Checklist for New Projects** posted on the [DCR LWCF website](#) for a checklist of documentation required before DCR-selected project can be submitted to NPS.

## **X. Available Funding**

An estimated \$11,000,000 is available during this grant round.

- Minimum grant award request is \$250,000. (total project cost \$500K)
- Maximum grant award request is \$2,000,000. (total project cost \$4 million)

Depending on the quantity and quality of applications received, awarded amounts may be less than full request.

## **XI. Award Timeline**

The anticipated timeline for the 2022 LWCF grant round is as follows:

January 2022	DCR announces grant round
February 1, 2022	DCR posts application guide and application documents
February 9, 2022 10:00am	DCR application webinar
March 15, 2022 4:00pm	Application submission deadline to DCR
April 2022	DCR informs sponsors of projects selected for NPS submission
April 15, 2022	DCR submits selected applications to NPS for preliminary review
April-June 2022	Sponsors finalize/ complete NEPA review and/or other necessary documentation; DCR conducts site inspections; Sponsors and DCR complete NPS paperwork
July 15, 2022	DCR submits projects to NPS by this date
September 2022	Projects authorized by NPS (estimated, subject to NPS processing time, project start date may be October or later)
December 2022	Submission of projects unable to meet July deadline to NPS (estimated, subject to NPS opening of grant acceptance window)

All projects will have a three (3) year project period from NPS authorized project period start date. For development projects, physical work on the project site must begin within one year of the NPS project start date. **It is essential that no purchases nor any physical construction begin on the project until there is written notification of NPS authorization**, otherwise those costs incurred may be ineligible for reimbursement.

## **XII. Application Procedures and Selection Process**

The LWCF Act requires that project selections be made through an open project selection process. For full details on the OPSP in Virginia and to review the 2022 LWCF Scoring Criteria, view the **Virginia's Open Project Selection Process** document and LWCF 2022 Scoring Criteria documents found at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>.

### **Application Procedures**

1. Read this guide in its entirety, referencing the NPS LWCF Manual, and other documents listed on page one as necessary.
2. Download the application forms from the DCR website at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>. The application consists of a checklist and multiple Microsoft Word documents.

Guidance on how to complete the forms and a checklist of additional documentation required are included as an appendix at the end of this manual.

If you are unable to download or use the Microsoft Word documents, please contact [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) or 804-786-1119 to obtain an alternative format of the application.

3. Complete the application. All questions should be answered in the space available. Be clear and concise. Only include photographs, maps, and attachments where instructed to do so.
4. Submit the application as separate attachments or as a zipped file attached to one email (maximum email size 25 MB) to [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) by **Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 4:00 pm**.

If your application documents will exceed 25 MB, please contact DCR at least two business days prior to the submission deadline to discuss using an alternative submission method.

If you do not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of your electronic submission within one business day of submission, please contact DCR at the email or phone number listed above to ensure your application was received.



## **Selection Process for NPS Submittal and Award**

1. Applications received by the deadline undergo a preliminary review by DCR Recreation Grants staff to verify application completeness and project eligibility.
2. All eligible and complete applications are scored by a panel of DCR and other state agency staff members, as a committee, in alignment with the 2022 LWCF Scoring Criteria.
3. Project sponsors of the highest scoring projects will be contacted to review program requirements and confirm their desire to proceed with NPS submittal.
4. DCR Recreation Grants staff will submit application documents to NPS for mandatory preliminary review by April 15, 2022.
5. DCR Recreation Grants staff may perform a site inspection of the proposed project location.
6. DCR Recreation Grants staff will work with the project sponsor(s) to update and finalize documents for NPS Grants.gov submittal by target date of July 15, 2022.

NEPA review must be completed and submitted to DCR by June 15, 2022. DCR will submit these documents to NPS for review and confirmation of findings.

Projects unable to complete NEPA review and other NPS submission requirements by July must be held until NPS announces and opens another grant acceptance period at an unknown future date (approximately Winter 2022 or Spring 2023).

7. NPS issues award authorizations for projects (estimated Fall 2022). **Do not proceed with acquisition or construction until project authorization date is confirmed.**

## **XIII. Contact Information**

For technical questions on the linked reference documents, application forms, and submission methods contact [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) or call Recreation Grants Coordinator Kellie Seaton at 804-786-1119.

For questions on applicant and project eligibility, eligible costs, and administration requirements contact [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) or call Recreation Grants Manager Kristal McKelvey at 804-508-8896.



# Appendix A: Application Guidance

The following pages outline requirements and recommendations on how to complete the application forms and required attachments. This guidance follows the document order listed in the **LWCF-00-Application Checklist.docx** file. Templates are provided for some documents as indicated. Please name all files by adding “-(Project Sponsor Name)” to the end of the template name. For example, *LWCF-01-DCR Application-City of Richmond*.

## DCR Application Form

Template provided (LWCF-01-DCR Application.docx)

### Question 26

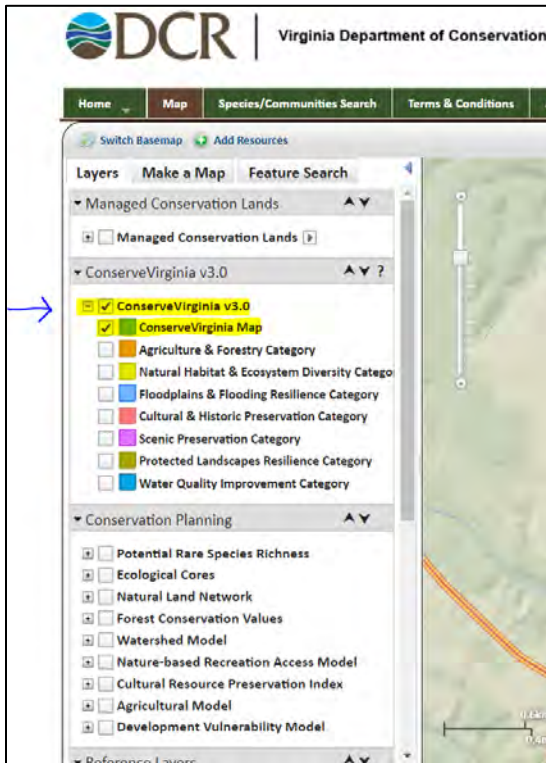
The ConserveVirginia map can be accessed through DCR’s Natural Heritage Data Explorer.

1. To access the Natural Heritage Data Explorer, visit: <https://vanhde.org/> and click on the “Map” tab. A separate browser tab will open. Please read and accept the Terms of Use.

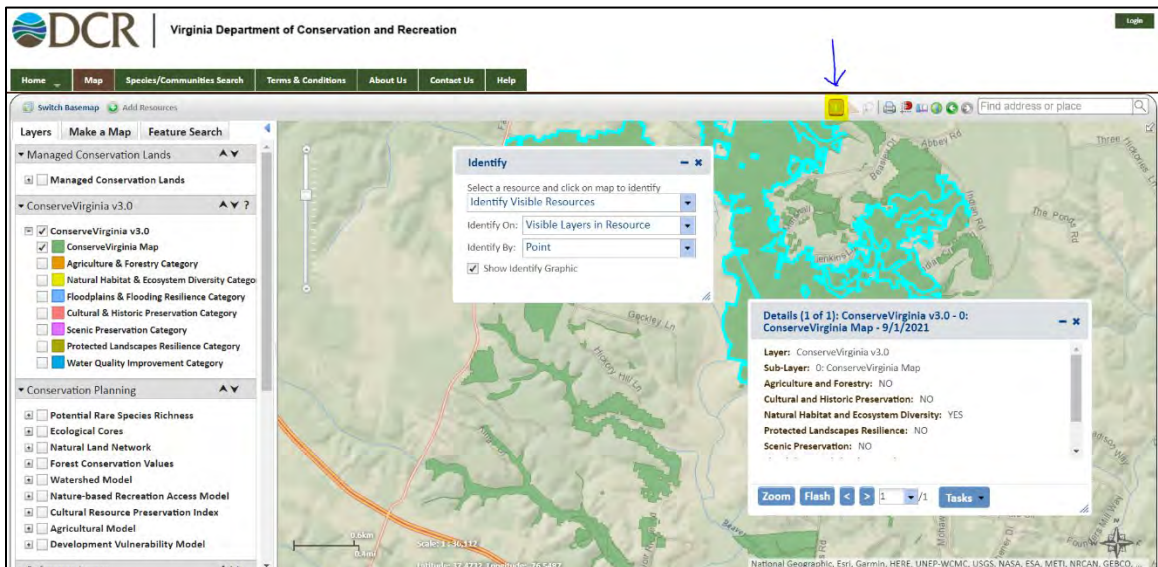


2. Navigate to your location by either using the map’s zoom feature, or entering an address into the box in the upper right side of the screen labeled “find address or place”

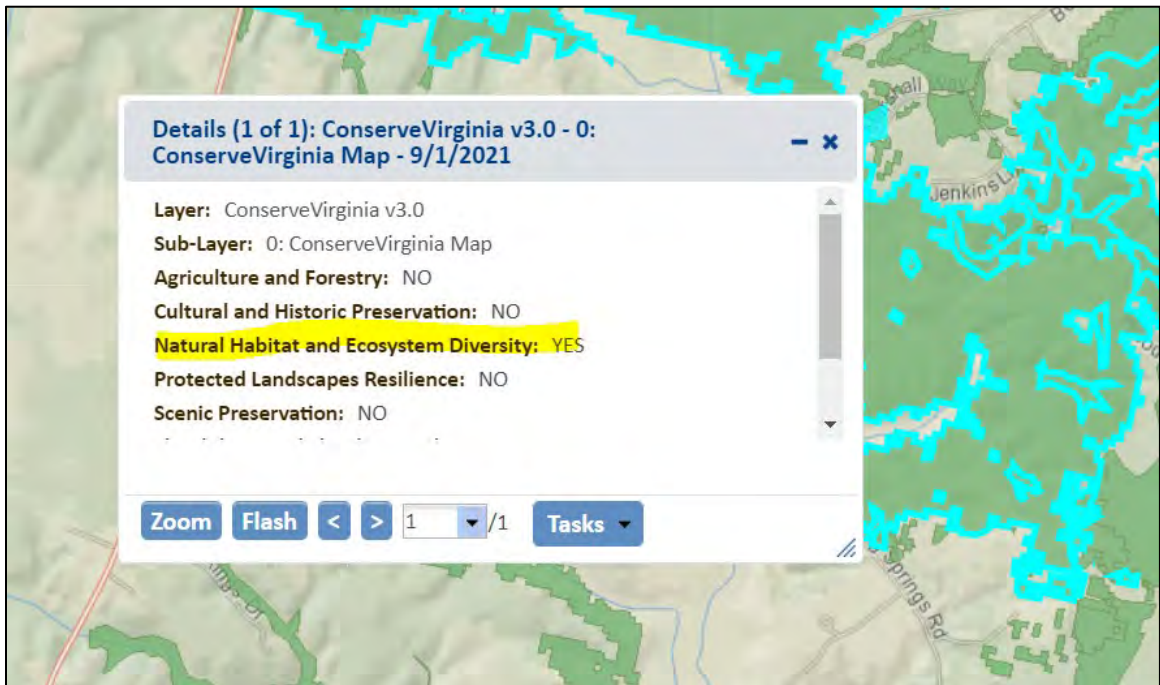
- Under the ConserveVirginia Category on the left side of the screen, check the box next to “ConserveVirginia v3.0”
- Expand that drop down and check the box next to “ConserveVirginia Map.”



- To find whether your parcel is within ConserveVirginia, click the “identify” icon in the top right of the map, next to the triangle and the magnifying glass.



- Two windows will pop up. Within the “Detail” window, it will say “Yes” next to any sub-layer/ category that is within ConserveVirginia. In this case, the identified location is within the Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity layer.



7. Approximate the percentage of your subject parcel that is within the ConserveVirginia boundaries and indicate the percentage on the application.

### Questions 27 and 28

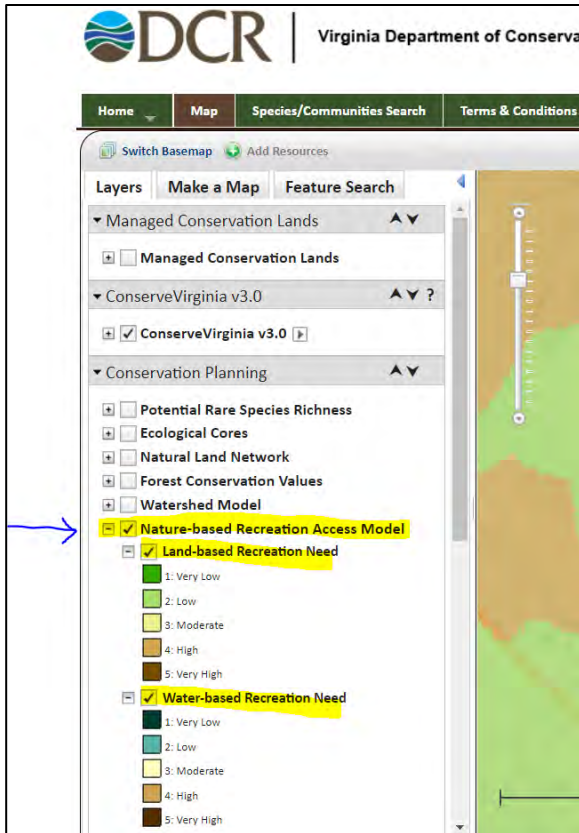
The project will be evaluated based on the demonstrated recreation need of its location based on the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model (2021) and the Trust for Public Lands ParkServe Model. Projects offering land-based recreation opportunities will be scored on whichever model demonstrates a greater need. Projects offering water-based recreation opportunities will be scored on the Nature-based Recreation Access Model’s water-based recreation need rating.

ParkServe can be found at: <https://www.tpl.org/parkserve>.

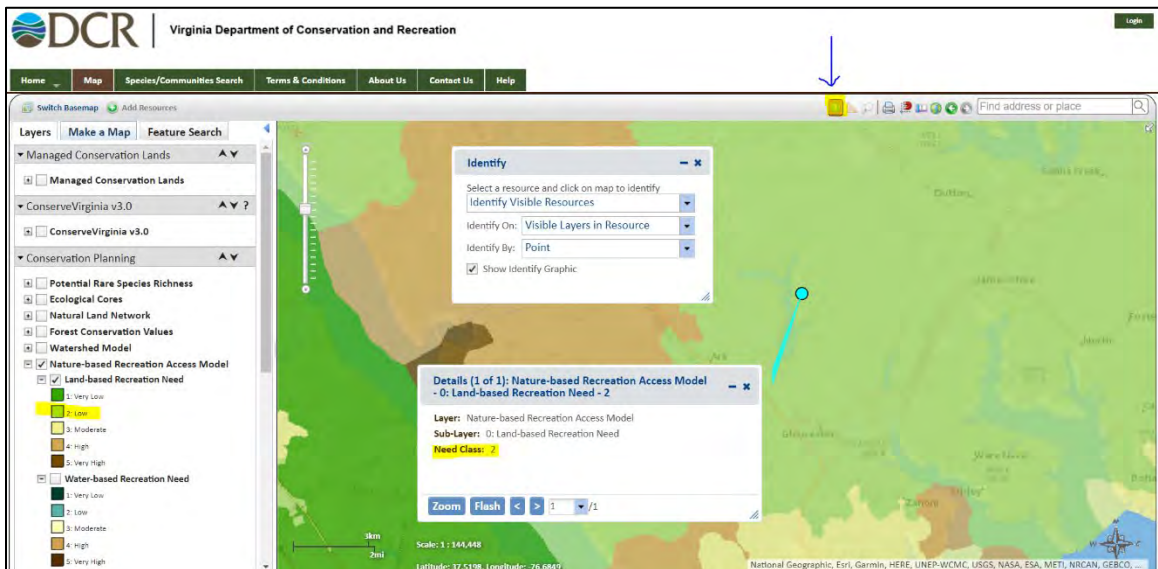
The Nature-based Recreation Access Model maps can be accessed through DCR’s Natural Heritage Data Explorer. Follow steps 1 and 2 outlined for Question 26 above to access the mapper. Once you have located your area on the map, follow these steps to view the Nature-based Recreation Access Model need rating:

1. Under the Conservation Planning Category on the left side of the screen, check the box next to “Nature-based Recreation Access Model”
2. Expand that drop down and check the box next to “Land-based Recreation Need” (Question 26) or “Water-based Recreation Need” (Question 27)





- To find the score you have selected, click the “identify” icon in the top right of the map, next to the triangle and the magnifying glass.



- Two windows will pop up. Within the “Details” window, the “Need Class” will be listed. This corresponds to one of the five need classes listed in the legend.

### Question 31

If you answer “yes” to this question, please explain and provide a website address to verify data source or attach source documents to your application. Due to discrepancies in data collection and reporting, there are no one-stop locations to access this data for the entire state. Some links are provided below, but they may not include data for your community. If you can provide a different reputable source indicating the prevalence of one of the diseases listed, it will be accepted. While there are most likely overlaps between the prevalence rates of these diseases, points will be awarded for this item as long as the prevalence of one of the diseases is greater than the state-wide average. The following sources may provide data for your community:

- Cancer data by health district <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/data/virginia-cancer-dashboards/cancer-incidence-and-mortality-in-virginia/>.
- CDC Data Explorer <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/DataExplorer/>
- VDH Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/brfss/data/>.
- VDH data website <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/healthy-communities/data/>

### Question 32

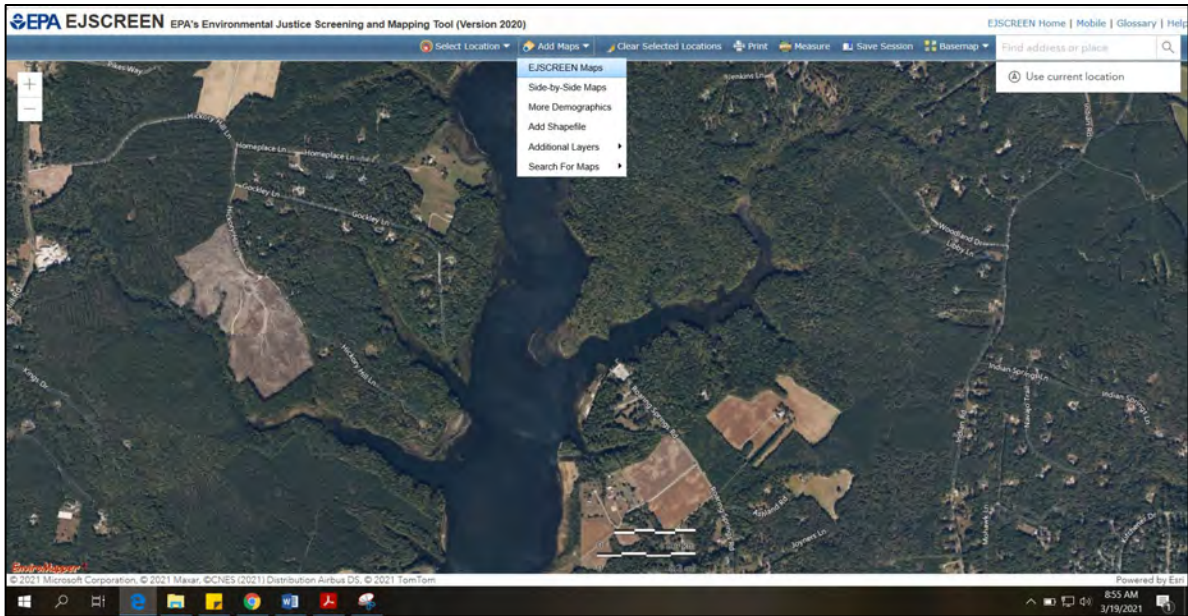
The Social Vulnerability Index created by the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences may be used to identify underserved areas of the state:

[http://cmap2.vims.edu/SocialVulnerability/SocioVul\\_SS.html](http://cmap2.vims.edu/SocialVulnerability/SocioVul_SS.html). Please check the “Social Vulnerability Index Score” option. Data from other sources will also be considered for this criterion if the applicant provides the source reference.

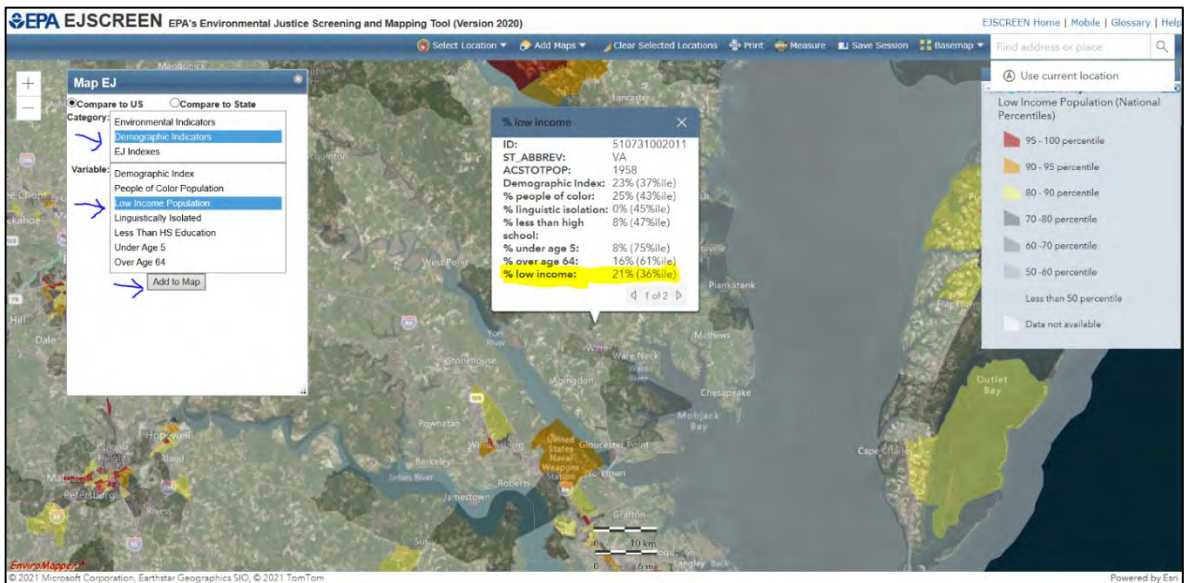
### Question 33

One resource that can be used to identify the percentage of local population considered low income is the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN) found at <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>. If you use other sources, please provide a website link, if available, or attach source documents to your application. To use the EJSCREEN tool:

1. Navigate to your trail location using either the zoom tools or the “Find address or place” search bar in the top right corner of the screen. Note you can adjust the basemap by clicking on the “Basemap” button to the left of the search bar.
2. Click “Add Maps” and then select “EJSCREEN Maps” from the drop-down menu.



3. A pop-up window will appear. Note you can select either “Compare to US” or “Compare to State.” Either value will be accepted.
4. In the Category box, select “Demographic Indicators.” In the Variable box, select “Low Income Population” and then click “Add to Map.”
5. Click on the location of your trail. A second pop up labeled “% low income” will appear. Highlighted in the screen capture below shows that 21% of residents in the area of this trail are considered low income.



### Question 35

Historically underrepresented groups could include, but are not limited to: people with disabilities, people of color, indigenous peoples and tribes, LGBTQ people,

immigrants, youth organizations or representatives, senior organizations or representatives, neighborhood groups.

### **Question 38**

DCR has not verified all past projects on the map, but the Trust for Public Land's Land and Water Conservation Fund Past Project Mapper can be used to identify nearby LWCF properties if local records are not available (be sure to zoom in):

<https://lwcf.tplgis.org/mappast/>.

### **Question 39**

Review the Environmental Review and Public Comment Procedures guidance document available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf> for overview of agency correspondence required.

### **Project Budget Form**

Template provided (LWCF-02-Project Budget.docx)

The project budget form includes a table to provide itemized budget information and questions to provide a narrative of the how the budget was created and matching fund source details.

A simplified sample budget table is provided. Add rows to the table as necessary to provide detailed information on all cost categories and to clearly identify all estimated project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients.

Budget information should reflect only costs related to work/acquisition that will completed under an LWCF grant if selected. A total budget for the entire project (including work beyond what would be funded under a grant) may be provided separately.

### **Revised A&R Form**

Template provided (LWCF-03-Revised A&R Form.docx)

This form is the pertinent questions for new projects on the NPS provided A&R Form. These questions are the specific items NPS must know when reviewing the project prior to authorization. Complete this form as thoroughly as possible to provide a full view of the proposed project details. Note that there are separate sections for Acquisition and Development.



### **Project Timeline**

Template provided (LWCF-04-Project Timeline.docx)

The timeline must clearly show all tasks necessary to complete the proposed work including dates for discrete benchmarks of significant work elements. Note that the required environmental review will need to be complete by the time of full application submission to NPS. The timeline must include the date that park/resource will be open to the public.

### **Location Map**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-05-Location Map

See Section **VII. Maps** of this manual for required contents.

### **LWCF Boundary Area Map**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-06-Boundary Map

See Section **VII. Maps** of this manual for required contents.

The Boundary Map should be a map or aerial photo delineating the project area and proposed boundary to be permanently protected for outdoor recreation use. The annotated map/photo must clearly indicate the area to be acquired or developed, as well as the proposed boundary of the larger park/recreation area that would be subject to the perpetual protection provisions of the LWCF Act. The boundary map should be signed by a primary contact that can represent the project sponsor.

### **Site Development Plan or Conceptual Site Plan**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-05-Site Plan

See Section **VII. Maps** of this manual for required contents.

### **Proof of ownership**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-Ownership

For development projects, please provide proof of ownership by an eligible project sponsor that has the ability to protect the property in perpetuity for the purpose of outdoor recreation. Prior to project completion, the deed will need to be modified or amended to insert the clause found in **Section VI. Perpetuity Requirements** of the Manual. Also indicate any easements or shared interests on the property, including but not limited to electric power lines or conservation easements if applicable.

### **Construction drawings**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-CDs

If detailed construction drawings are complete or nearly complete for development projects, please include relevant pages from them to show project readiness.

### **Letter of intent to sell/purchase/donate**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-Letter of Intent

Letters of intent to sell, purchase, or donate property from current property owners should be attached for projects requiring acquisition.

### **Appraisal summary**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-Appraisal

For acquisition projects, if an appraisal has already been conducted, attach only the summary sheet and cover page of the appraisal report. If project is selected, a full UASFLA (yellow book) appraisal report must be submitted to DCR before project submission to NPS. The appraisal must be within one year of project submission and it must have a full review from a separate UASFLA certified appraiser.

### **Relevant pages from local and/or regional plans**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-Local Plan

Please provide a link to online version of the plan. If plan is not available online, please include only the most relevant pages from the plan, with the references to the project highlighted.

### **NEPA and NHPA Review Documents**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-NEPA

Please include all agency correspondence to date.

### **Project Photos (optional)**

Template provided (LWCF-08-Project Photos.docx)

If desired, include photos to provide context and help the review committees understand the current site conditions, the surrounding environment, etc. Please provide a caption, date taken, and credit for each image. Resize images as necessary and delete any unused pages.

**General Letter(s) of Support (optional)**

Template n/a, use file name: LWCF-##-Letters of Support

General letters of support from Congress and/or the local community should be addressed to the State Liaison Officer (DCR Director).

Letters should be addressed to:

DCR Director, State Liaison Officer  
Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation Director's Office  
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

## Appendix B: Accessibility Resources

All facilities developed with assistance from the Fund must be designed in conformance with the appropriate current design standards for the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-480); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The following resources may aid entities in planning for inclusive outdoor recreation experiences and understanding legal obligations. As you plan your project, consider how your entity will provide equitable experiences for all users, including people with mobility, sensory, cognitive, and mental health disabilities.

### **2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design** <https://www.access-board.gov/ada/>

Full text of the technical standards that apply to state and local governments, non-profits, and businesses.

### **ABA Accessibility Standards** <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/>

Full text of the technical standards that apply to federal government agencies and some recipients of federal funds.

### **U.S. Access Board Guide to the ABA Accessibility Standards (Outdoor)**

<https://www.access-board.gov/aba/guides/chapter-10-outdoor/>

Illustrated guide to the technical requirements of the ABA Outdoor Developed Area standards, which include trails, viewing areas, picnic areas and camping areas.

### **U.S. Forest Service Accessibility Resources Website**

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/national-forests-grasslands/accessibility/resources>

Contains links to numerous documents, including the Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines, and other guides, summaries, and best practices.

### **American Trails Accessible Trail Resources Library**

<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/query/?trails%5B%5D=665>

Summary collection of accessible land and water trail articles, webinars, guides, bulletins from a variety of sources.

### **AccessibilityOnline Webinar Archives**

<https://www.accessibilityonline.org/ao/archives/>

Archive of recorded webinars presented by the U.S. Access Board on ADA and ABA standards, including Recreation Facilities and Outdoor Developed Areas.

### **Massachusetts Audubon Accessible Trails Manual**

<https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/accessibility/accessible-projects-and-partners/accessible-trails-manual>

Summary and recommendations from Mass Audubon detailing their experiences in creating multisensory and inclusive trail environments.

### **Trails for All People: Guidance for Accessibility and Inclusive Design**

<https://conservationtools.org/guides/115>

Guide from WeConservePA with overview of legal requirements and summary of best practices.