

# Natural Resources

Proposed amendments to the budget for the 2008-10 biennium for the Natural Resources secretariat include general fund reductions of \$24.0 million, offset by general fund increases of \$11.8 million. Net recommended general fund spending for the biennium is \$219.6 million or a 5.3 percent reduction from the budget approved in Chapter 879 (2008). Total nongeneral fund spending for the biennium is \$633.7 million or 5.1 percent more than in Chapter 879.

Additional spending items for the biennium include \$10.0 million GF and \$10.0 million NGF, for a total of \$20.0 for the Natural Resources Commitment Fund, is used to support agricultural best management practices designed to improve water quality. An additional \$1.5 million GF is included to provide the statutorily required deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund, of which \$1.1 million is provided to the Department of Conservation for nonpoint source pollution control and \$0.4 million is provided to the Department of Environmental Quality for point source projects.

- **Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation**

- *Eliminate Marketing and Fundraising Contract.* Reduces general fund support for the Foundation by \$24,325 each year, which represents an 18 percent reduction. The Foundation will cancel a contract with a professional marketing and fundraising firm to meet the reduction.

- **Department of Conservation and Recreation**

- *Natural Resources Commitment Fund.* Proposes \$20.0 million the second year, including \$10.0 million GF and \$10.0 million NGF, for deposit into the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund established by Chapters 643 and 701 of the 2008 Acts of Assembly (HB 1335 and SB 511). The source of the nongeneral funds is \$4.8 million from interest earnings on WQIF nonpoint source funds and \$5.2 million from the WQIF Reserve Fund. These funds will be distributed to support agricultural best management practices and provide technical assistance through the soil and water conservation districts.
- *Water Quality Improvement Fund.* Provides \$1.1 million GF in the first year, representing the nonpoint source portion of the statutorily required deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund.
- *Reduce State Park Operating Support.* Proposes a general fund reduction for State Park operations of approximately \$2.2 million each year or 12 percent. Reduction strategies include holding 25 vacant positions open, deferring maintenance and equipment purchases and cutting marketing efforts. However, none of Virginia's 35 State Parks is proposed to be closed.

- ***Eliminate General Fund Support for Repairs to Soil and Water Conservation District-Owned Dams.*** Eliminates \$866,000 GF each year for repairs to SWCD owned dams. Bond funding for dam repairs in the amount of \$20.0 million was provided by the 2008 General Assembly and can be used to meet needed repairs.
- ***Reduce Operating Support for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.*** Reduces general fund support for the 47 local soil and water conservation districts by \$203,697 the first year and \$407,394 the second year. This represents a 5 percent cut in the first year in general fund support for the districts and an 8 percent cut in the second year.
- ***Reduce Matching Funds for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.*** Funds provided for matching federal CREP funds are proposed to be reduced by \$685,473 the first year and \$435,473 the second year. The agency has stated it can use balances in this program to meet its obligations.
- ***Reduce Water Quality Implementation Support.*** Reduces general fund support by \$200,000 each year for total maximum daily load (TMDL) implementation in the Chesapeake Bay and Southern rivers watersheds. This reduction will apply to ten soil and water conservation districts that had previously been provided TMDL implementation funding.
- ***Reduce Operating Support for the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.*** Reduces support for the operations of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) by \$102,500 GF in the second year. This represents a 5 percent reduction in funding for VOF.
- ***Reduce Funding for the Natural Heritage Program.*** Reduces general funds for the Natural Heritage Program by \$111,786 the first year and \$138,618 the second year and eliminates two full-time and one wage position in the program.
- ***Increase Fees for Land Disturber Permits.*** Reduces general funding for review of construction and development permits by \$60,000 the first year and \$125,000 the second year. The reduction in general funds is to be made up by an increase in the permit fee from \$95 to \$125 for each permit application.

- **Department of Environmental Quality**

- ***Water Quality Improvement Fund.*** Provides \$476,700 GF in the first year, representing the point source portion of the statutorily required deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund.
- ***Reduce Match for Wastewater Revolving Loan Fund.*** Proposes reducing the state match for the revolving loan fund for wastewater treatment plant upgrades by nearly \$3.0 million GF in the first year due to declining federal support for state wastewater revolving loan funds.

- ***Reduced General Fund Support.*** Combined general fund reductions for the Department of Environmental Quality total \$10.1 million for the biennium and result in the loss of 59.0 FTE positions, including 35 layoffs. There is no change proposed to nongeneral fund appropriations. The individual strategies composing these reductions are discussed below.
- ***Reduce Administrative Staff.*** Eliminates 16.0 FTE positions, resulting in nine layoffs in management and administrative staff by reorganizing regional offices and realigning staff. This will result in savings of \$185,855 GF in the first year and \$1.3 million GF in the second year (after severance benefits have been paid).
- ***Reduce Staff in the Hazardous Waste Program.*** Reduces staff in the hazardous waste program by 6.0 FTE positions, including three layoffs, resulting in savings of \$92,096 GF the first year and \$416,503 GF the second year (after severance benefits have been paid).
- ***Reduce Staff in the Air Inspection Program.*** Reduces staff in the air inspection program by 16.0 FTE positions, including ten layoffs, resulting in savings of \$342,774 GF the first year and \$1.0 GF million the second year (after severance benefits have been paid).
- ***Reduce Staff in the Water Permitting Program.*** Reduces staff in the water permitting program by 8.0 FTE positions, including three layoffs, resulting in savings of \$67,592 GF the first year and \$560,402 GF the second year (after severance benefits have been paid).
- ***Reduce Staff in the Wastewater Engineering Program.*** Reduces staff in the wastewater engineering program by 8.0 FTE positions, including eight layoffs, resulting in savings of \$84,597 GF the first year and \$736,377 GF the second year (after severance benefits have been paid).
- ***Waste Tire Fund Balances.*** Transfers \$500,000 each year from the waste tire fund to the general fund.
- ***Transfer Balances from the Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund.*** Proposes transferring \$300,000 each year to the general fund from the VEERF.

- **Department of Historic Resources**

- ***Montpelier Matching Grant Program.*** Provides an additional \$134,196 GF the second year for the restoration of Montpelier, President James Madison’s home. Section 10.1-2213.1 of the Code of Virginia requires that the Commonwealth provide \$0.20 for each \$1 raised by the Montpelier Foundation and spent on restoration of Madison’s home. However, this action is offset by a 15 percent reduction applied to the currently authorized funding for the Montpelier

Foundation. This reduction, totaling \$94,729 each year, means the net effect of the second year funding is an increase of \$39,467.

- ***Eliminate Various Positions.*** Proposes reductions of 4.0 FTE and one wage position, including one layoff, resulting in savings of \$184,650 GF the first year and \$240,286 GF the second year. Positions eliminated include accounts payable, procurement officer, project reviewer and an administrative position.
- ***Reduce Funding for Cost Share Program.*** Produces savings of \$120,000 GF each year by reducing the state match for local historic preservation and community revitalization projects.

- **Marine Resources Commission**

- ***Reduce Funding for Oyster Replenishment.*** Proposes reducing funding for oyster replenishment work by \$386,833 GF the first year and \$481,933 GF the second year.
- ***Supplant General Fund Spending with Nongeneral Fund License Revenue.*** Supplants \$243,416 the first year and \$255,966 the second year in general fund support for the agency's marine law enforcement functions with like amounts in nongeneral fund revenue. The nongeneral fund revenue is derived from saltwater fishing license revenue collected by the agency.
- ***Revert Maintenance Reserve Funds.*** Reduces maintenance reserve funding by \$70,000 GF the first year. These funds were for a parking lot renovation that will not be completed.

- **Virginia Museum of Natural History**

- ***Close Museum on Sundays, Mondays and Holidays.*** Proposes savings of \$152,953 GF in the first year by closing the museum two days or more per week. The proposed reduction also includes a furlough for all full-time Museum employees one day per week for 21 weeks.
- ***Eliminate Discretionary Spending.*** Proposes savings of \$139,956 GF the first year and \$118,576 GF the second year by reducing spending on supplies, travel, training and equipment purchases.
- ***Eliminate Positions.*** Proposes general fund savings of \$13,940 the first year and \$201,584 the second year by eliminating a vacant collections manager position, and laying off a publications administrative and supervisory position.