

# Protecting Virginia's Natural Resources

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Secretary of Natural Resources



# Brief remarks

- I. Overview of Agencies
- II. Legislation
- III. Budget Items
- IV. Policy Initiatives



# Department of Historic Resources: A Small Agency with a Complex, Statewide Mission & Impact

- Partners with citizens & localities to locate & evaluate historic properties for education, community identity, & balanced public decisions
- Stimulates economic opportunity—redevelopment, revitalization, & tourism
- Works with the full range of federal partners—who own, manage, or undertake publicly funded projects—to help them meet their federal legal historic resource responsibilities



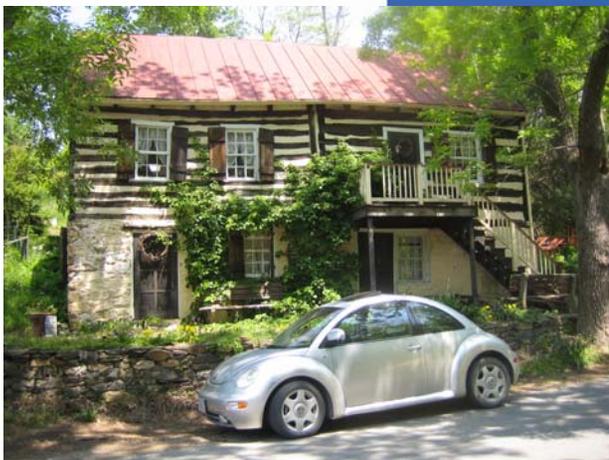
Abingdon



Fort Monroe



# DHR: Nationally Recognized Leader



- Consistently ranked #2 nationally for registering historic properties and for rehabilitation projects—\$172 million private investment in FFY 2006
- A recent study documents nearly \$1.6 billion in economic impact from ten years of the Virginia rehabilitation tax credit
- Nationally recognized easement program protects neighborhoods and unique Virginia treasures—tourist attractions, battlefields, homes, farms, & businesses throughout the state—441 easements to date
- Considered model State Historic Preservation Office by the US military departments and FEMA for response time and value of assistance

# Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries ~ Mission



## The Commonwealth's Wildlife and Boating Agency

- To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth;
- to provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation; and
- to promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing.



# Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries ~ Vision



- To be recognized as the national innovative leader in fish and wildlife management, recreational boating and the provision of wildlife related recreation.
- The overall quality of life benefits derived from healthy, diverse wildlife populations and habitats that sustain them will be recognized and appreciated by all citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia.





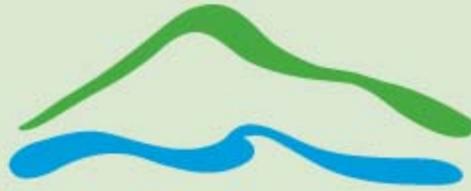
Virginia Museum of  
**NATURAL HISTORY**  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

## Research and Collections

Scientific research and natural history collections make VMNH outstanding.

- The collections of the Virginia Museum of Natural History total approximately 21,616,717 specimens.
- The success of the VMNH research program is reflected in worldwide recognition of its scientific curators as leaders in their respective fields.
- VMNH scientists publish extensively in national and international journals, including *Science and Nature* and receive grants from outside organizations including the National Science Foundation and the National Geographic Society.
- The new museum facility that opened in March 2007 meets current museum collections standards, enabling VMNH to preserve and protect the collections for the benefit of future generations.





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## Education and Economic Impact



- VMNH educators work directly with the Museum's scientists to develop a broad range of educational offerings including exhibits, publications, and outreach programming for audiences of all ages.
- The Virginia Museum of Natural History draws visitors from across the Commonwealth and from other states for family festivals, special exhibits, lectures, and educational programs. This visitation directly benefits area hotels, restaurants, and other businesses and visitor destinations.
- VMNH serves a population of more than 1.5 million within a 50-mile radius of Martinsville, and more than 27 million reside within 250 miles.

# Virginia Marine Resources Commission

- VMRC is the steward of our marine and aquatic resources, and protector of our tidal waters and tidal wetlands.
- Regulates our important commercial fishing and shellfish industry, a \$1.2 billion economic dynamo that employs more than 20,000 Virginians and is growing through new oyster and clam farming operations.
- Sets the seasons and catch limits for our roughly 750,000 saltwater anglers, and runs the highly popular Saltwater Fishing Tournament that recognizes extraordinary catches.



# Virginia Marine Resources Commission

- Enforces our fishing and boating laws through a fully-certified Marine Police force that also conducts search and rescue as well as homeland security operations.
- Protects our environmentally sensitive tidal wetlands and manages 1.5 million acres of submerged lands statewide, as well as an ever-increasing number of docks, piers, bulkheads, boathouses and marinas.
- Operates with a small staff that enjoys 10 years of completely problem-free audits.



# Department of Conservation and Recreation

- Lead nonpoint source agency
  - Erosion and Sediment Control Law, Virginia Stormwater Management Act and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act
  - Agricultural Cost-Share BMP Program
  - Work with local soil and water conservation districts
- Operate award-winning State Park System
  - Currently 34 state parks
  - Additional land acquired for 5 new state parks
- Protect public safety through the implementation of the Dam Safety Act and Floodplain Management
- Operate internationally recognized Natural Area Preserve System
  - Currently 52 natural area preserves, over 40,000 acres
  - System doubled in acreage since 2001



# Department of Conservation and Recreation

- Lead outdoor recreation planning agency
  - Responsible for Virginia Outdoors Plan (the outdoor recreation plan for the state)
  - Outdoor trails, greenways, blueways, scenic rivers
- Integral part of Virginia's land conservation goals
  - Office of Land Conservation
  - Serve as staff for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation
  - Reporting on monthly progress made to achieve goals
  - Among largest state owners of land (100,000 acres; 91 properties)
  - Responsible for conducting reviews of the conservation value of Land Preservation Tax requests of \$1 million or more



# DEQ

*Mission: To protect and improve the environment*

*for the well-being of all Virginians*

- Specialize in air quality, waste management, water quality, wetlands and water supply
- Issue permits that protect Virginia's air, water and land
- Inspect permit holders (facilities, local governments, businesses) for compliance
- Develop and enforce air, water and waste regulations



# DEQ

- Implement a comprehensive water supply planning program
- Reduce nutrient pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries
- Monitor and assess the quality of the state's waters, and monitor and forecast air quality
- Help ensure the safe management of wastes
- Provide technical assistance to local governments, small businesses, facilities
- Respond to pollution incidents such as fuel spills
- Promote recycling and prevention of litter
- Develop environmental education programs



# Legislation

## Governor's Initiative: Greenhouse Gas Reporting

- Recommendation of the Virginia Energy Plan
- For stationary sources, applies only to those already reporting other air emissions
- Also addresses mobile sources



# Legislation

## Agency Initiative: Dam Safety

- Requires that consideration be given to the effects of development on nearby dams if the development would raise the hazard potential requirements of a dam. Such consideration may include a contribution by the developer for 50% of the necessary upgrade.
- Provides localities with additional authorities related to dam break inundation zones.
- Requires various levels of notification to persons that may be affected by dam break inundation zones.



# Legislation

## Agency initiative: Waste Tire Recycling

- Extends the \$1 tire recycling fee from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2011, to provide \$7.5 million so that DEQ can clean up known tire piles.
- Fee will revert to original \$.50 level beginning July 1, 2011, to continue to support the recycling of the 7.5 million “current flow” waste tires generated annually.
- Assistance provided to innocent property owners that are a victims of illegal dumping or that placed tires on their property before it was prohibited (1993).



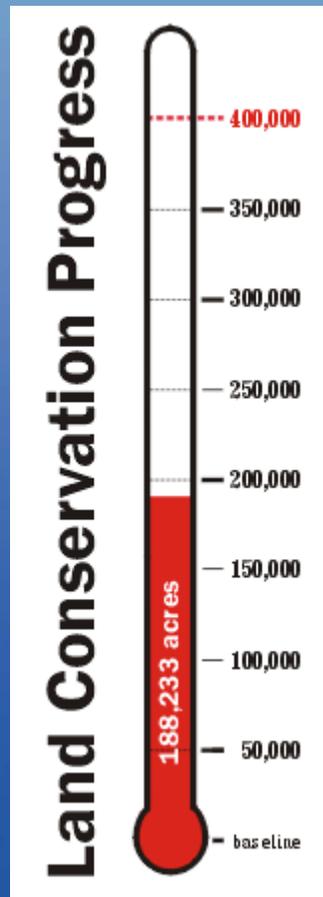
# Budget items

## Land conservation

- Of all the land developed since Capt. John Smith's arrival in 1607, more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  has occurred in the last 15 years.
- Approximately 100 forest acres per day are lost in the Bay watershed.
- Only a fraction of Civil War battlefield lands in Virginia are protected.



# Budget items



- Goal: 400,000 acres by 2010
- Awaiting CY 2007 totals
- If current pace continues, we'll have an 80,000-acre gap

# Budget Items

\$50 M in VBPA bonds for land conservation

- State agency acquisitions
  - DCR
  - DOF
  - DHR
  - VOF
- Public access



# Budget Items

\$20 M VBPA bonds for dam safety

- Will upgrade dams owned by DCR and SWCDs

\$20 M for WQIF nonpoint source reductions

- Ag BMPs



# Policy Initiatives

## Governor's Commission on Climate Change

- Broad stakeholder representation
- 5 legislators
- Will identify steps required to meet goal of 30% reduction of GHG emissions by 2025 (back to 2000 levels)
- Monthly meeting will begin in February



# Policy Initiatives

## Enhanced State Programmatic General Permit

- Regulated community raised concerns about federal/state duplication
- MOU signed in 2007
- DEQ will now handle 90% of all permitting for wetland impacts.

