

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

FY26 Grant Round Workshop

June 17, 2025

VLCF Grant Workshop Agenda

1:00 PM Overview & Additional Scoring Criteria

Suzan Bulbulkaya, Gina DiCicco, and Damian Martin, Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, and Becky Gwynn, Dept. Wildlife Resources

Grant Categories and Interagency Task Force Members

1:15 PM Farmland Preservation

Genny Harris, Dept. of Forestry

1:30 PM Forest Preservation

Amanda Scheps, Dept. of Forestry

1:45 PM Historic Area Preservation

Karri Richardson, Dept. of Historic Resources

2:00 PM Natural Areas Preservation

Rob Evans, Division of Natural Heritage, DCR

2:15 PM Open Spaces and Parks

Kristal McKelvey and Kellie Seaton, Planning & Recreation Resources Division, DCR

2:30 PM Questions from the audience

VLCF Program Information

- Another year with record funding for FY26 land conservation grants: **\$15.3M**
\$12M budget + \$750K interest + \$2.57M in returned grants
- Five categories of funding:
 - \$2.55M for Farmland Preservation
 - \$3.93M for Forestland Preservation
 - \$2.56M for Historic Resources Preservation
 - \$2.84M for Natural Area Preservation
 - \$3.44M for Open Spaces & Parks



Program Information

- Who can apply?
 - State & local governmental bodies, Virginia Indian Tribes, and qualified nonprofits (“holder” VA Cons. Easement Act).
- Match Requirement:
 - Applicants can seek up to 50% of the purchase price + due diligence costs, unless a state agency or Virginia Indian Tribe (100%).
 - Eligible expenses are listed in Appendix A of the grant manual.
 - A list of additional potential grant sources:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/federal-state-grants>

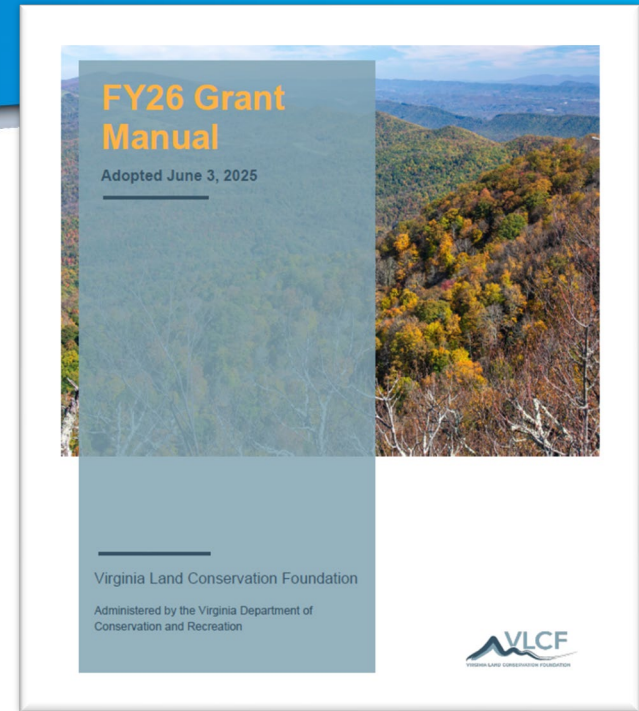
General Program Requirements

- Project must protect a specific site, with the boundaries clearly identified in the application.
- Projects by nonprofits must have an open-space easement held by a public body.
- Project should be completed within two years; a one-year extension may be granted.
- Grant payments made as a reimbursement at closing, or afterwards; land must be conserved prior to grant payment.



More About the Program

- All program information is in the Grant Manual, including links to helpful websites and databases.
- Note the important information in the Appendices:
 - A. Required application information, eligible expenses, and required due diligence documents
 - B. Scoring sheets for the five categories and the Additional Scoring Criteria
 - Category: 100 points; and the Additional Scoring: 91 points
 - C. Example match letter if 100% of funds are not yet identified
 - D. Required resource protections for all projects



Online Application: WebGrants

- Register for an account and fill out your application:
<https://vadcr.webgrantscloud.com>
- Follow application directions, attach requested files and adhere to page limitations, then submit your application
- See VLCF webpage for instructions and guides:
<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/vlcf>
- Contact us and the experts listed in each category with questions!

Grant Application and Scoring

- Choose a secondary category if appropriate
- Contact agency staff to make sure the project is eligible
- Include information about how the project supports the second category
- *May be critical to receive funding if none is available in the primary category!*
- **Be sure to address all criteria!**

Interagency Taskforce:

- Dept. of Ag. & Consumer Services
- Dept. of Forestry
- Dept. of Historic Resources
- Dept. of Conservation & Rec.
 - Natural Heritage
 - Planning & Rec. Resources
- Dept. of Wildlife Resources
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Applications are **due by 5 p.m. on August 12, 2025**

Grant Application and Scoring

Score your application! Be sure all pertinent info is included in your application to get maximum points.

All resource protections stated in the application must be included in the project's final deed language.



E.g., promised 100-foot forested riparian buffers get extra points and must be protected in perpetuity.

Additional Scoring Criteria: 11 questions totaling 91 points (see page 35+ of the Grant Manual)

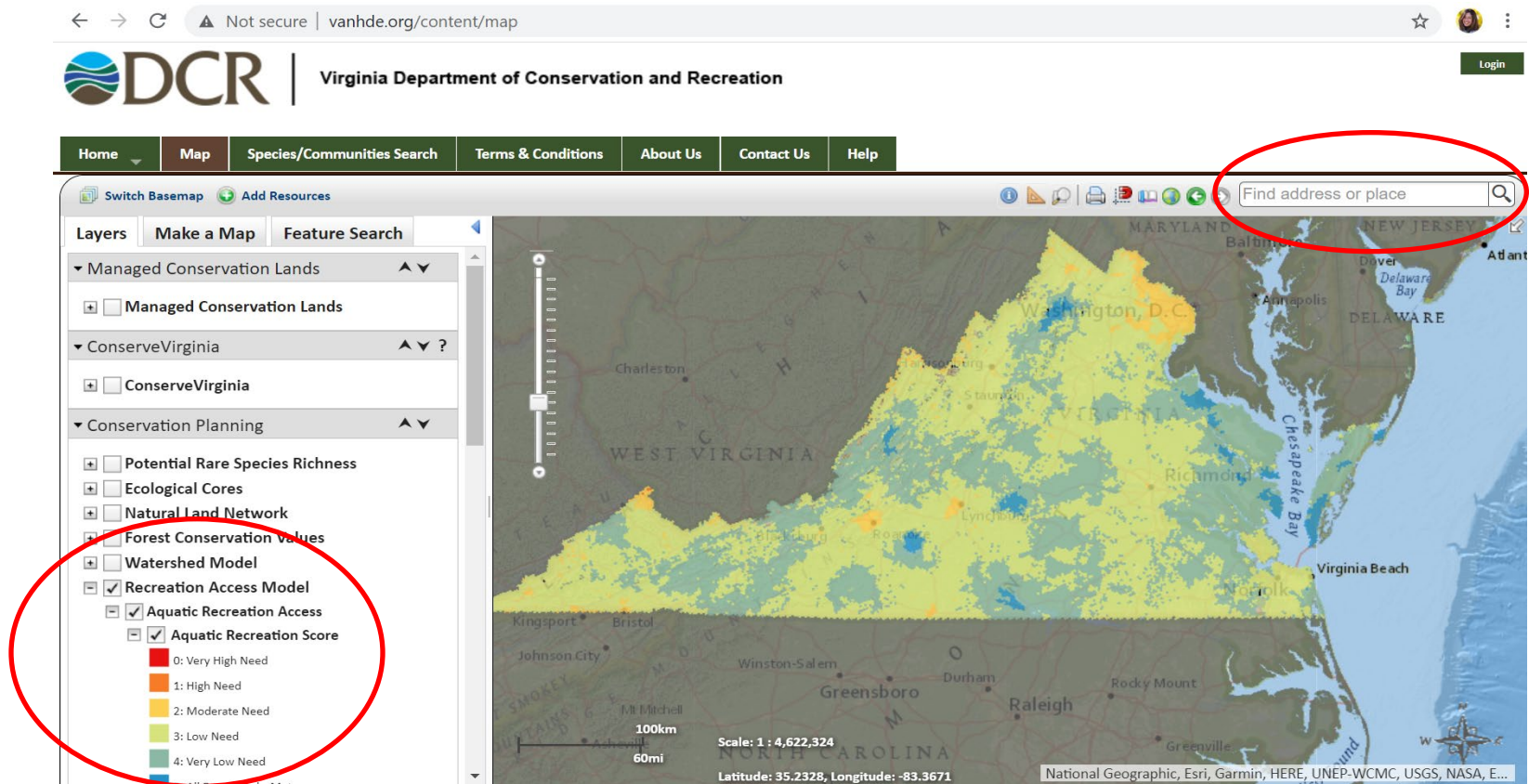
1. **Public Access** - Does the project provide public access?
2. **VOP Identified Need** - Does the project provide resource conservation needs as identified in the *Virginia Outdoors Plan* or a local comprehensive plan?

Find the VOP at: www.dcr.virginia.gov/vop



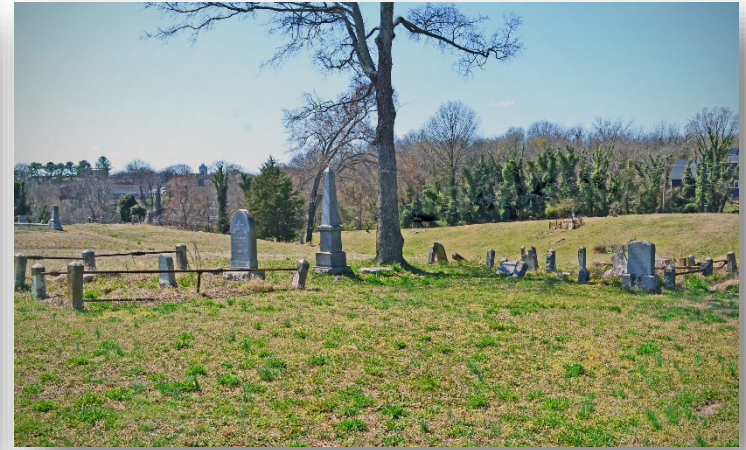
3. Virginia Nature Based Recreation Access Model Identified Need - For parcels that will provide public access, does the project demonstrate a need for land or water access based on the Nature Based Recreation Access Model?

Find the Rec Access Model at: <https://vanhde.org/>

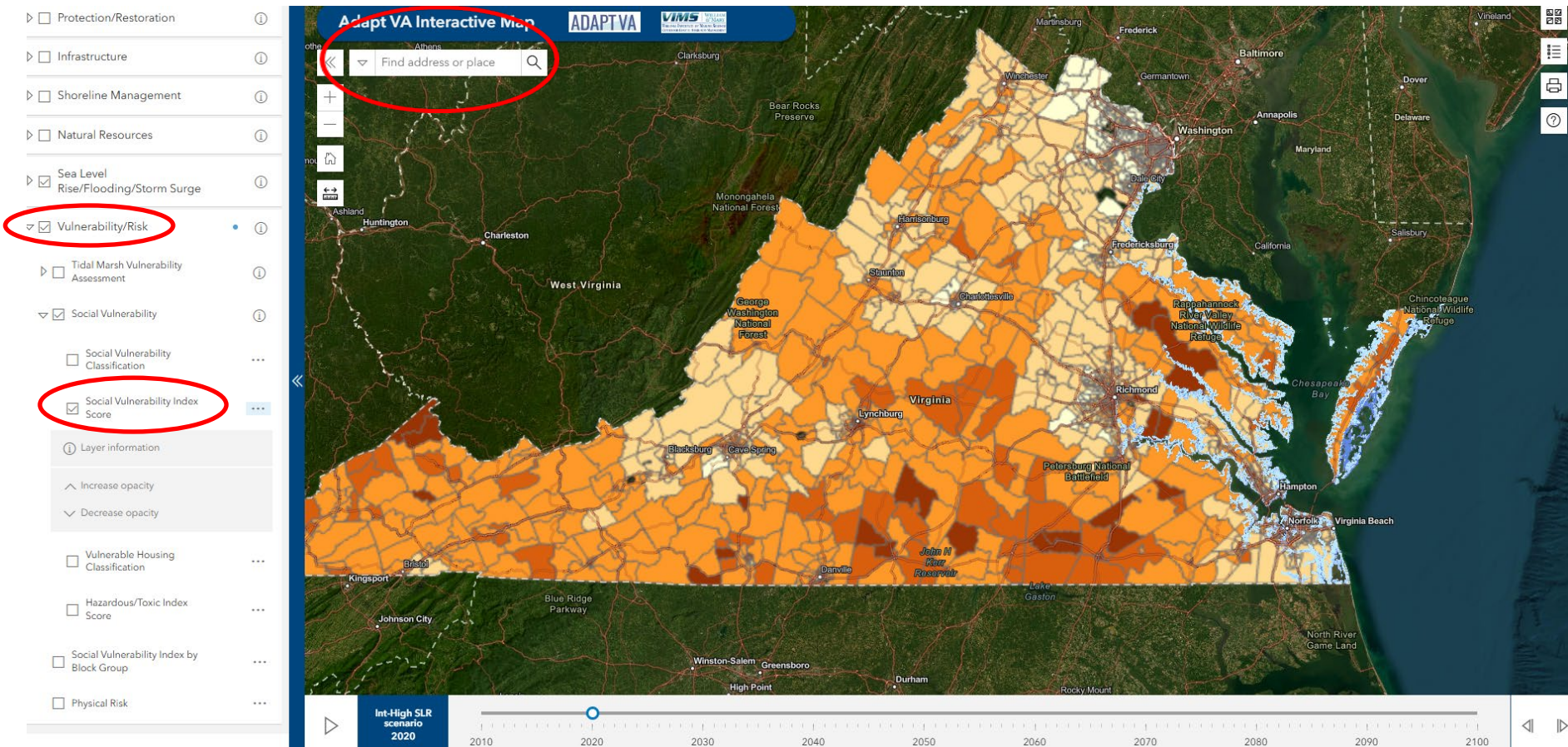


4. Protection of Cultural Resources - Is there a local cultural resource on the property that will be protected by this project?

- Examples: remnants of prior settlements or burial sites of enslaved or indigenous people, former segregated schoolhouses, or sites of early racial integration, historic roadbeds or railbed systems.
- Provide photos and documentation. Tell us about the cultural importance of the site and how it will be protected.
- Provide educational opportunities open to the public.
- Provide draft language to be used in the deed to protect the resources



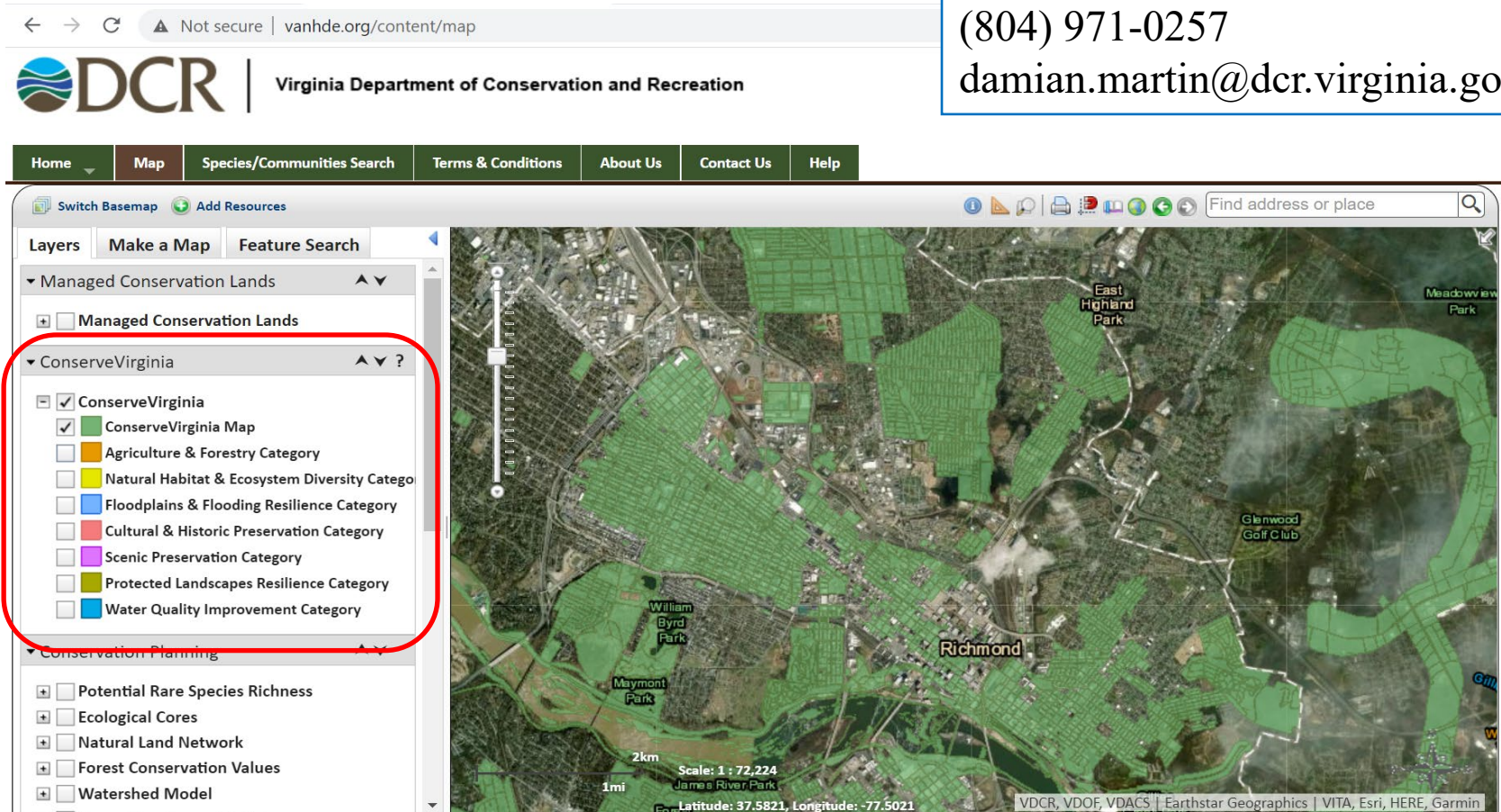
5. Underserved Communities – Does the project benefit an underserved or socially vulnerable community? VIMS Social Vulnerability Index: https://cmap22.vims.edu/AdaptVA/AdaptVA_viewer.html



6. Additional ConserveVirginia Values - Does the project protect additional ConserveVirginia values in perpetuity?

Find ConserveVirginia at: <https://vanhde.org/>

Questions: Damian Martin
Land Conservation Specialist
VA DCR
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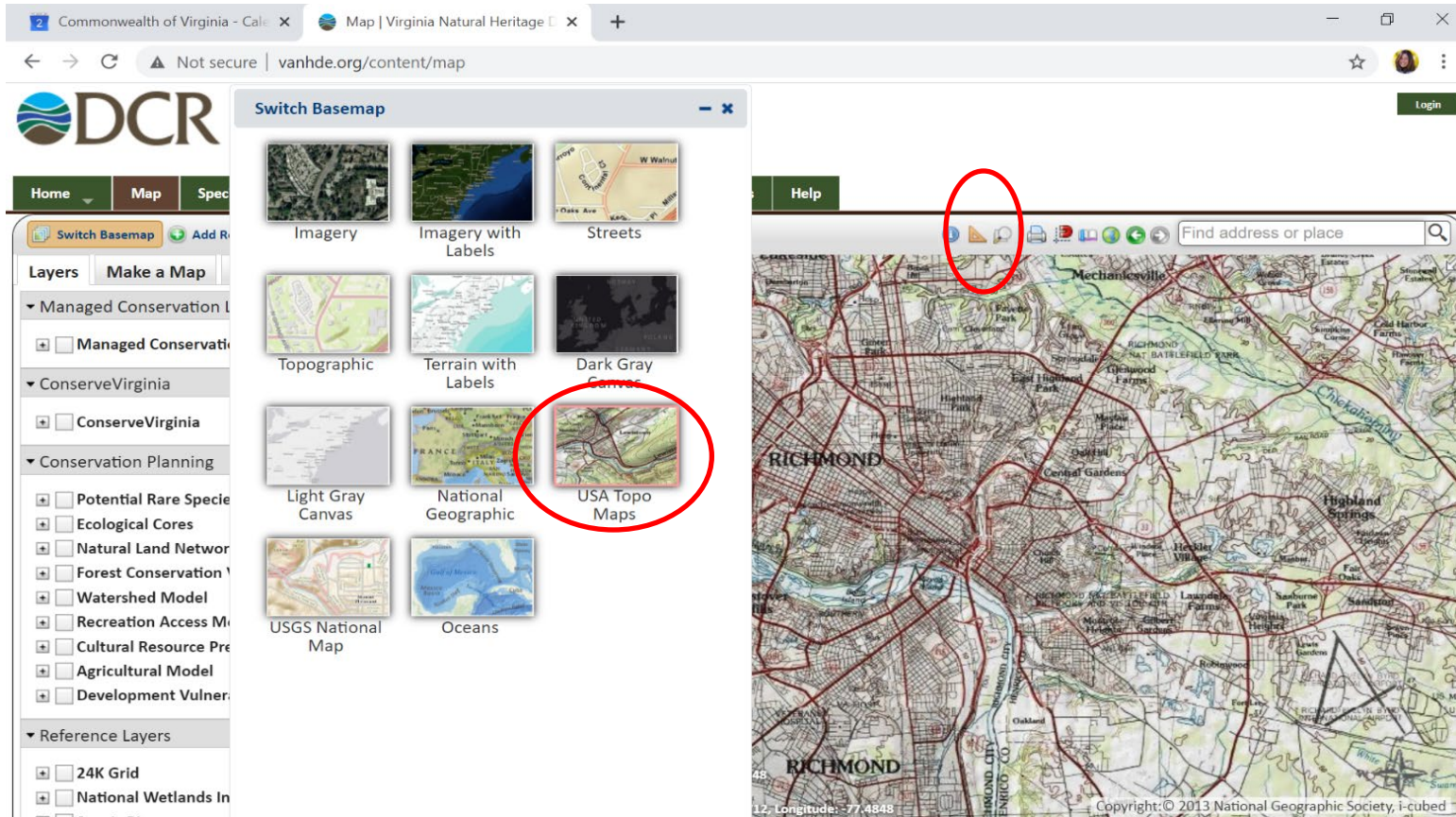
The screenshot displays the ConserveVirginia web application interface. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Map, Species/Communities Search, Terms & Conditions, About Us, Contact Us, and Help. The main content area features a map of Richmond, Virginia, with various conservation layers overlaid. The 'ConserveVirginia' layer is selected and highlighted with a red box. The 'ConserveVirginia' layer includes the following categories:

- ☒ ConserveVirginia
- ☒ ConserveVirginia Map
- ☐ Agriculture & Forestry Category
- ☐ Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity Category
- ☐ Floodplains & Flooding Resilience Category
- ☐ Cultural & Historic Preservation Category
- ☐ Scenic Preservation Category
- ☐ Protected Landscapes Resilience Category
- ☐ Water Quality Improvement Category

The map shows various parks and landmarks, including East Highland Park, Meadowview Park, Glenwood Golf Club, William Byrd Park, Maymont Park, and Jamez River Park. The map scale is 1:72,224, and the coordinates are Latitude: 37.5821, Longitude: -77.5021. The map is powered by VDCR, VDOF, VDACS, Earthstar Geographics, VITA, Esri, HERE, and Garmin.

7. Water Quality Benefit - Does the project protect water quality beyond the minimum 35'-wide permanent vegetated riparian buffer on perennial streams, rivers, shorelines, and waterbodies with perennial outflow?

Find USA Topo maps at: <https://vanhde.org/>



8. Fish and Wildlife Values - Does the project benefit wildlife, habitat, and human/wildlife interaction? **Max. 10 points.**

- Identify wildlife presence = 1 point; if DWR Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed T&E is present = additional 3 points
- Protect wildlife habitat = 1 point; If DWR Species of Greatest Conservation Need or State or Federally listed T&E is protected = additional 4 points
- Public access to view, hunt, or fish wildlife = 1 point

<https://services.dwr.virginia.gov/fwis/>

Questions: Becky Gwynn,

Deputy Director

VA Dept. of Wildlife Resources

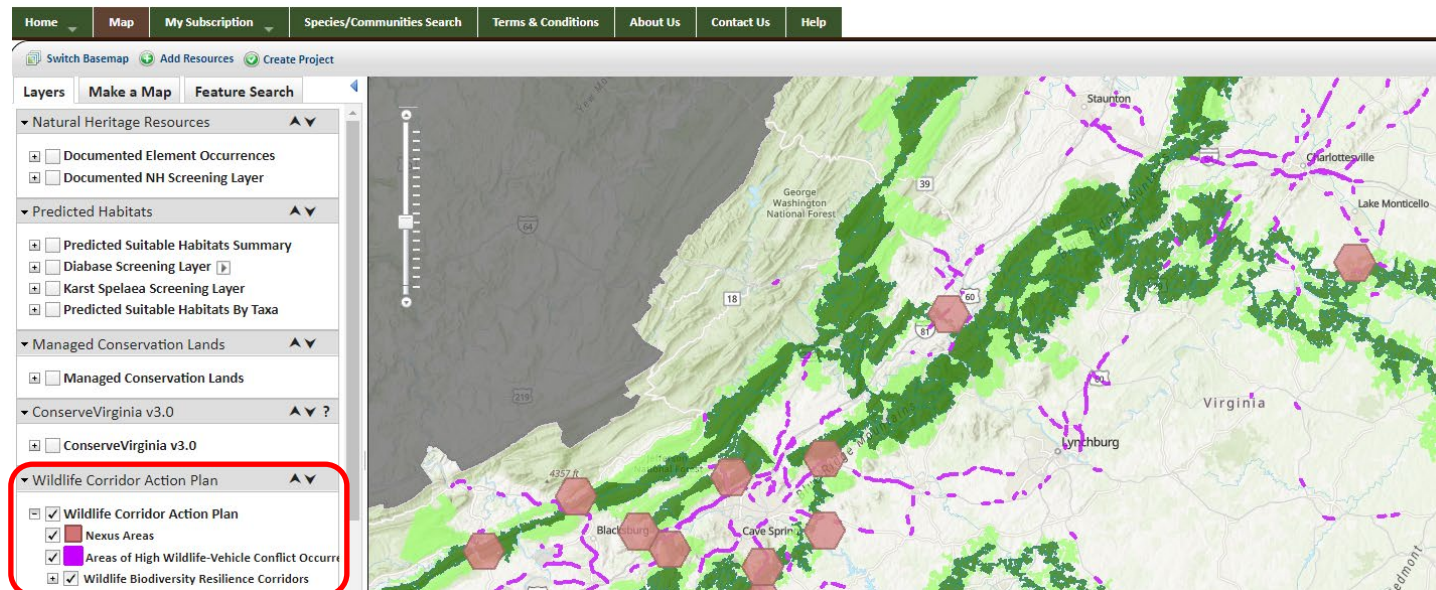
Becky.Gwynn@dwr.virginia.gov

(804) 593-2043



9. Protection of Identified Wildlife Corridors - Does the project fall within an area designated as a wildlife corridor buffer or actual corridor in the Virginia Wildlife Corridor Action Plan? To receive points, the deed must include language to maintain the integrity of the corridor or corridor buffer.

Max. 10 points.



Learn more about the 2023 plan: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/corridors/>

Wildlife corridors and their buffers are mapped and accessible to the public on the Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer: www.vanhde.org.

10. Ratio of Match to Total Project Cost – Is the applicant providing 60% or more of the funding and did they include an appraisal?

11. Progress Reports – Is the applicant up-to-date on all required semi-annual progress reports for their previously awarded grants?





VLCF Grant Manual & Application:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/vlcf>

<https://vadcr.webgrantscloud.com>

Questions?

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