

Call to Action

Critical Virginia state budget amendments for statewide positions

What: Critical Virginia state budget amendments to fund Department of Natural Heritage staff, including one Natural Areas Botanist, one State Invasive Species Biologist/Coordinator, and one State Pollinator Biologist are up for a vote right now.

Why: Division of Natural Heritage needs additional funds to adequately protect and manage Virginia's biodiversity, allow for public access to Natural Area Preserves, successfully execute Governor Northam's *ConserveVirginia* initiative, and update their biological data to make good decisions for environmental reviews.

Synopsis (Identical for House and Senate Versions):

These amendments would provide the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Program with \$2,062,352 in salary and operating expenses for twenty two full time positions. Positions include: two Regional Stewards, seven Stewardship Technicians, one State Invasive Species Biologist/Coordinator, one State Invasive Species/GIS Field Technician, one Prescribed Fire Manager, one Natural Areas GIS/Information Specialist, one State Pollinator Biologist, one Natural Areas Botanist, one Natural Areas Zoologist, one Environmental Review Specialist, one Grants and Contracts Coordinator, two Land Protection Specialists, one Conservation Planner/Landscape Ecologist, and one Healthy Waters Coordinator.

These positions will enable staff to provide public access to some Natural Area Preserves (NAP) in accordance with adequate resource management while boosting efforts to manage the natural heritage resources that NAPs are established and managed to protect. Also positions added will provide data analysis and consultation to support environmentally responsible solar and pipeline energy development; strategic application of Governor Northam's *ConserveVirginia* land conservation strategy; the Commonwealth's Pollinator Protection Strategy; invasive species information and coordination and land protection and restoration projects under the South-River DuPont settlement and Skiffes Creek Settlement.

Official names of Amendments:

House of Delegates:

- Critical Staffing Needs for DCR: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA ([Item 373 #10h](#), Chief Patron: Delegate Plum, Co-Patron: Carr and Gooditis)
- Critical Staffing Needs for DCR: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA ([Item 373 #3h](#), Chief Patron: Delegate Willett, Co-Patron: Sickles)

State Senate:

- Critical Staffing: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA ([Item 373 #2s](#), Chief Patron: Hanger)

What can I do?

Natural Resources Subcommittees on the Virginia House Appropriations Committee and Virginia Senate Finance Committee need to see support from their constituents.

The time to act is now. It is best if they can hear from you by **Wednesday, January 29, 2020**. This is a short deadline. Still send in your support ASAP if you miss Wednesday's deadline, but for greatest impact aim for Wednesday, January 29.

1. Find the contact information for your state senator AND delegate at:

<https://whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov/>

2. Send them both an email, write, call, or visit with their staff expressing your support for this amendment. **Since the deadline on this is short, we recommend that you CALL or EMAIL your representative.**

Subject line (Emails):

For Delegates:

Support Item 373 #2H and Item 373 #10H Budget Amendment for Critical Staffing Needs for DCR: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA

For Senators:

Support Item 373 #2S Budget Amendment for Critical Staffing: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA

First line (Email/Phone Call):

For Delegates:

I'm writing/calling in support of item 373 #2H and item 373 #10H Budget Amendment for Critical Staffing Needs for DCR: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA introduced by Delegates Plum and Willett.

For Senators:

I'm writing/calling in support of item 373 #2S Budget Amendment for Critical Staffing: Public Access, Natural Areas Stewardship, and Conserve VA introduced by Senator Hanger.

Email Content Suggestions/Phone Call Talking Points (Note: we recommend writing your own letter – form letters are not as persuasive:)

- Virginia has a well-developed Invasive Species Management Plan, but very little funding for its implementation.
- Since 2002 the number and acreage of Virginia's preserves has doubled, while the number of full time staff to manage them has decreased from 48 to 43. As a result North Landing NAP has been closed for lack of staffing. Difficult Creek, Crow's Nest, and many other preserves have not had adequate public access facilities put in place.
- Not funding will delay progress in restoration activities on NAPs and lead to loss of natural heritage resources across Shenandoah Valley and Southeast regions. Maintenance of public access facilities, monitoring and management of rare species populations and natural communities, prescribed burning, and invasive species management will all be deferred in these regions as well.
- Without funding there will continue to be missed opportunities to interface with the public and assure safe public access to existing and new preserves. There will also be missed opportunities to collaborate with partner agency staff towards the conservation and management of all natural resources and public lands.

- Without funding there will be the lost opportunity of gathering the science and data towards better understanding Virginia’s native pollinators their habitat needs and developing and implementing pollinator management strategies.

3. The following Delegates and Senators are of particular importance, as they determine whether the amendments reach the floor. If you are their constituent, your opinion could make a large impact in seeing that these amendments are properly considered. However, expressing support to representatives not on these committees can’t hurt.

House of Delegates Appropriations Committee (Chair in Bold)

First Name	Last Name	District #	Room #	P	Capitol Phone	District Phone	Email	Represents
Lashrecse D.	Aird	63rd	E318	D	(804) 698-1063	(804) 452-7076	DelLAird@house.virginia.gov	Dinwiddie, Petersburg, part of Chesterfield
Terry L.	Austin	19th	E405	R	(804) 698-1019	(540) 254-1500	DelTAustin@house.virginia.gov	Alleghany, Bedford City, Covington, part of Bedford County and Botetourt
Robert S.	Bloxom Jr.	100th	E403	R	(804) 698-1000	(757) 824-3456	DelRBloxom@house.virginia.gov	Eastern Shore, part of Norfolk and Virginia Beach
Emily M.	Brewer	64th	E414	R	(804) 698-1064	(757) 239-1213	DelEBrewer@house.virginia.gov	Isle of Wight, Surry, part of Prince George and Suffolk
David L.	Bulova	37th	E204	D	(804) 698-1037	(703) 310-6752	DelDBulova@house.virginia.gov	Part of Fairfax County, City of Fairfax
Betsy B.	Carr	69th	E408	D	(804) 698-1069	(804) 698-1069	DelBCarr@house.virginia.gov	Part of Richmond City
M. Kirkland	Cox	66th	E419	R	(804) 698-1066	(804) 526-5135	DelKCox@house.virginia.gov	Part of Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights
Glenn R.	Davis Jr.	84th	W439	R	(804) 698-1084	(757) 802-4982	DelGDavis@house.virginia.gov	Part of Virginia Beach
C. Matthew	Fariss	59th	E214	R	(804) 698-1059	(434) 821-5929	DelMFariss@house.virginia.gov	Appomattox, Buckingham, Nelson, Campbell, part of albemarle
C. E. (Cliff)	Hayes Jr.	77th	E416	D	(804) 698-1077	(757) 364-0272	DelCHayes@house.virginia.gov	Part of Chesapeake
Chris L.	Hurst	12th	E426	D	(804) 698-1012	(540) 739-2553	DelCHurst@house.virginia.gov	Giles, Radford, part of

First Name	Last Name	District #	Room #	P	Capitol Phone	District Phone	Email	Represents
								Montgomery and Pulaski
Jerrauld C. (Jay)	Jones	89th	E420	D	(804) 698-1089	(757) 625-8989	DelJJones@house.virginia.gov	Part of Norfolk
Barry D.	Knight	81st	W434	R	(804) 698-1081	(757) 426-6387	DelBKnight@house.virginia.gov	Part of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach
Paul E.	Krizek	44th	E206	D	(804) 698-1044	(703) 688-2983	DelPKrizek@house.virginia.gov	Part of Fairfax County
Delores L.	McQuinn	70th	E324	D	(804) 698-1070	(804) 698-1070	DelDMcQuinn@house.virginia.gov	Charles City, part of Chesterfield, Henrico and Richmond City
James W. (Will)	Morefield	3rd	W228	R	(804) 698-1003	(276) 345-4300	DelJMorefield@house.virginia.gov	Bland, Buchanan, Tazewell
Kenneth R.	Plum	36th	E207	D	(804) 698-1036	(703) 758-9733	DelKPlum@house.virginia.gov	Part of Fairfax County
David A.	Reid	32nd	E305	D	(804) 698-1032	(703) 662-1395	DelDReid@house.virginia.gov	Part of Loudoun
L. Nick	Rush	7th	W232	R	(804) 698-1007	(540) 382-7731	DelNRush@house.virginia.gov	Floyd, part of Montgomery and Pulaski
Mark D.	Sickles (Vice Chair)	43rd	W1312	D	(804) 698-1043	(703) 922-6440	DelMSickles@house.virginia.gov	Part of Fairfax County
Luke E.	Torian (Chair)	52nd	W1304	D	(804) 698-1052	(703) 785-2224	DelLTorian@house.virginia.gov	Part of Prince William County
Roslyn C.	Tyler	75th	E306	D	(804) 698-1075	(434) 336-1710	DelRTyler@house.virginia.gov	Southside Virginia

Senate Finance Committee (Chair in Bold)

First Name	Last Name	District #	Party	Capitol Phone	District Phone	Email
GEORGE	BARKER	39	D	804 698 7539	703 303 1426	district39@senate.virginia.gov
CREIGH	DEEDS	25	D	804 698 7525	434 296 5491	district25@senate.virginia.gov
ADAM	EBBIN	30	D	804 698 7530	571 384 8957	district30@senate.virginia.gov
JOHN	EDWARDS	21	D	804 698 7521	540 985 8690	district21@senate.virginia.gov
EMMETT	HANGER	24	R	804 698 7524	540 885 6898	district24@senate.virginia.gov
JANET	HOWELL	32	D	804 698 7532	703 709 8283	district32@senate.virginia.gov
MAMIE	LOCKE	2	D	804 698 7502	757 825 5880	district02@senate.virginia.gov

LOUISE	LUCAS	18	D	804 698 7518	757 397 8209	district18@senate.virginia.gov
DAVE	MARSDEN	37	D	804 698 7537	571 249 3037	district37@senate.virginia.gov
JENNIFER	MCCLELLAN	9	D	804 698 7509		district09@senate.virginia.gov
STEVE	NEWMAN	23	R	804 698 7523	434 385 1065	district23@senate.virginia.gov
THOMAS	NORMENT	3	R	804 698 7503	757 259 7810	district03@senate.virginia.gov
CHAP	PETERSEN	34	D	804 698 7534	703 349 3361	district34@senate.virginia.gov
FRANK	RUFF	15	R	804 698 7515	434 374 5129	district15@senate.virginia.gov
RICHARD	SASLAW	35	D	804 698 7535	703 978 0200	district35@senate.virginia.gov
JILL HOLTZMAN	VOGEL	36	R	804 698 7527	540 270 7055	district27@senate.virginia.gov

If you have any questions, please contact:

Alex Fisher

Conservation Chair

Virginia Native Plant Society

arf2483@gmail.com