



July 28, 2020

Members, House Appropriations Committee
Members, Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee
General Assembly Building
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Restoration of previously approved Natural Resources funding
to the 2020-2022 biennial budget

Dear Members of the Committees:

VIRGINIAforever remains grateful to Governor Northam for the emphasis he placed on natural resources in his proposed 2020-2022 biennial budget – and we appreciate your having included some of these increased natural resources investments in the final budget in March.

We understand the Governor’s and General Assembly’s actions at the Reconvened Session – in the early, unfolding weeks of the pandemic – to “unallot” certain new spending proposals in the budget.

We also are heartened by Secretary Layne’s recent report to the budget committees that the pandemic’s impact on state revenues may be significantly less than initially projected. We hope such remains the case and that the General Assembly will be able to re-allot much needed new investments.

As you know, VIRGINIAforever is comprised of many of Virginia’s leading businesses and environmental organizations, and we advocate for natural resources investment in only two areas – water quality and land conservation. We stand arm-in-arm in our advocacy.

(continued on page 2)



Individual Members: Elizabeth Andrews • Robert Burnley • Pamela Faggert • Adrienne Kotula • Maureen Matsen

Emeritus Members: Robert Dunn • Johnny C. Finch • Henry P. Long • Carol Wampler

The biennial budget revised in April during the Reconvened Session unallotted a few key natural resources investments, which we strongly encourage you to “re-appropriate” during the August special session.

Water Quality

- Agricultural BMPs \$29 million please re-appropriate

Land Conservation

- Virginia Land Conservation Fund \$11 million please re-appropriate
- State Parks / Dam Repair \$20.6 million please re-appropriate

In addition to improving Virginia’s environment and quality of life for our citizens, water quality and land conservation investments create and sustain jobs. We recognize the immediate needs that many citizens face as a result of the pandemic, and we urge you to also consider that future generations are relying on our stewardship of natural resources today.

Over the years, VIRGINIA*forever* has strived to put forward strategic, reasoned, consensus-based, and realistic suggestions for natural resources investments that will help meet broad policy goals. We believe the above investments do this, and we urge you to restore these funds.

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Wells
WestRock
Board Chair
VIRGINIA*forever*



Kendall E. Tyree, Ph.D.
Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts
Board Vice-Chair
VIRGINIA*forever*