

Proposed Conservation Projects



| Map | VOF ID | Grantor/Project Name |
|-----|--------|--|
| A | 5 | Eastern Divide Unique Karst Resources New Preserve |
| B | 7 | Tugghland, LLC |
| C | 5015 | Grassy Hill Preserve Rare Forest Core Protection |
| D | 5023 | Fee Acquisition of Mays and Purgatory Mountains |
| E | 5035 | ND Ponics - Short Hills |
| F | 10 | Latifundia De Miceli Trust |
| G | 4910 | Vercellotti |
| H | 4919 | Newwest Farm, LLC |
| I | 4957 | Alpine 96, LLC |
| J | 4999 | Quaker Hill Farm, LLC |

Project Type

VOF Easement

Deed of Dedication

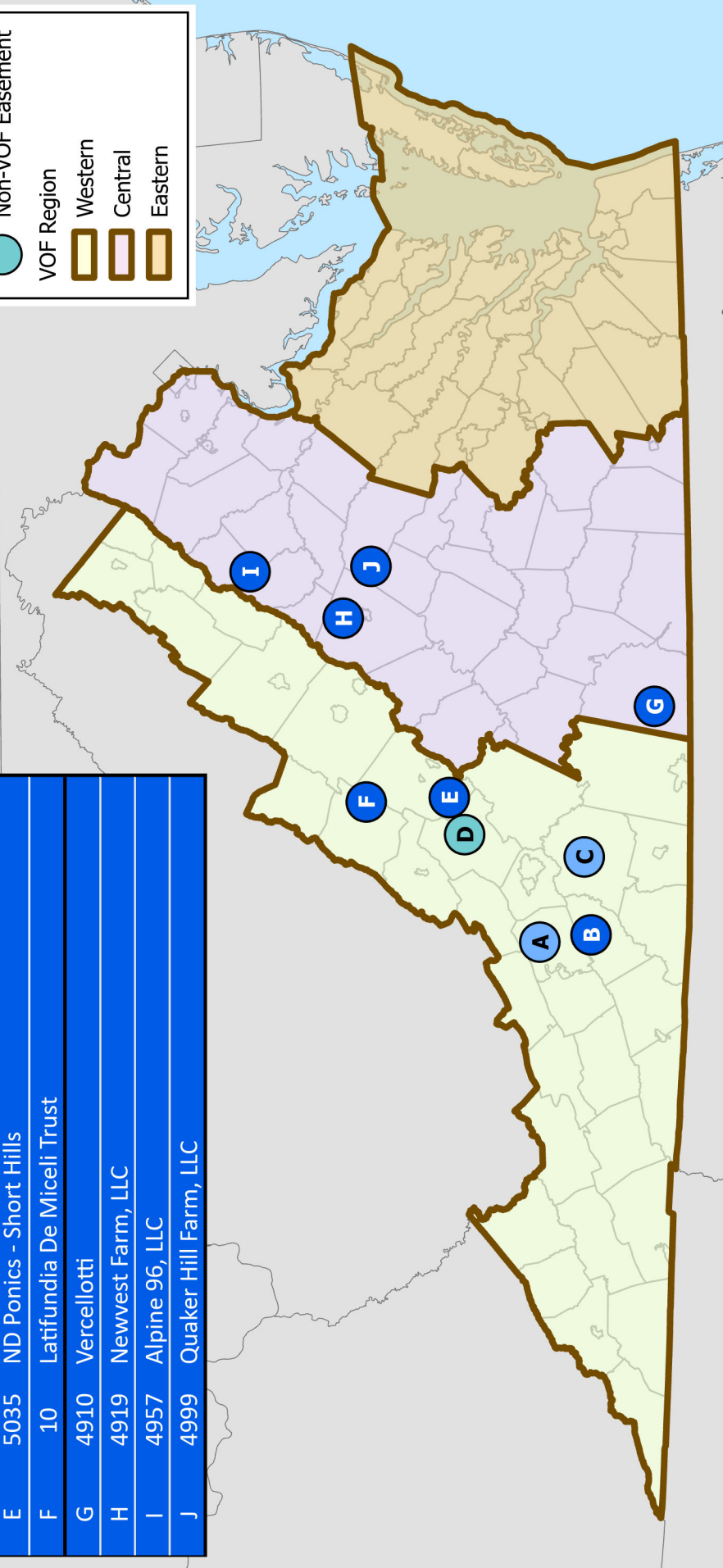
Non-VOF Easement

VOF Region

Western

Central

Eastern



Board of Trustees Meeting

March 13, 2025

Map created: 2/14/2025 by VOF-LV
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Miles 0 25 50
1:3,172,621

Source data: Source data provided by County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; all else - VOF.

This map is for general reference and display purposes only. Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries, are solely for general information and should not be used or relied upon in the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for resource protection area or flood plain determination.

Forest CORE Fund Grant Funding Applications



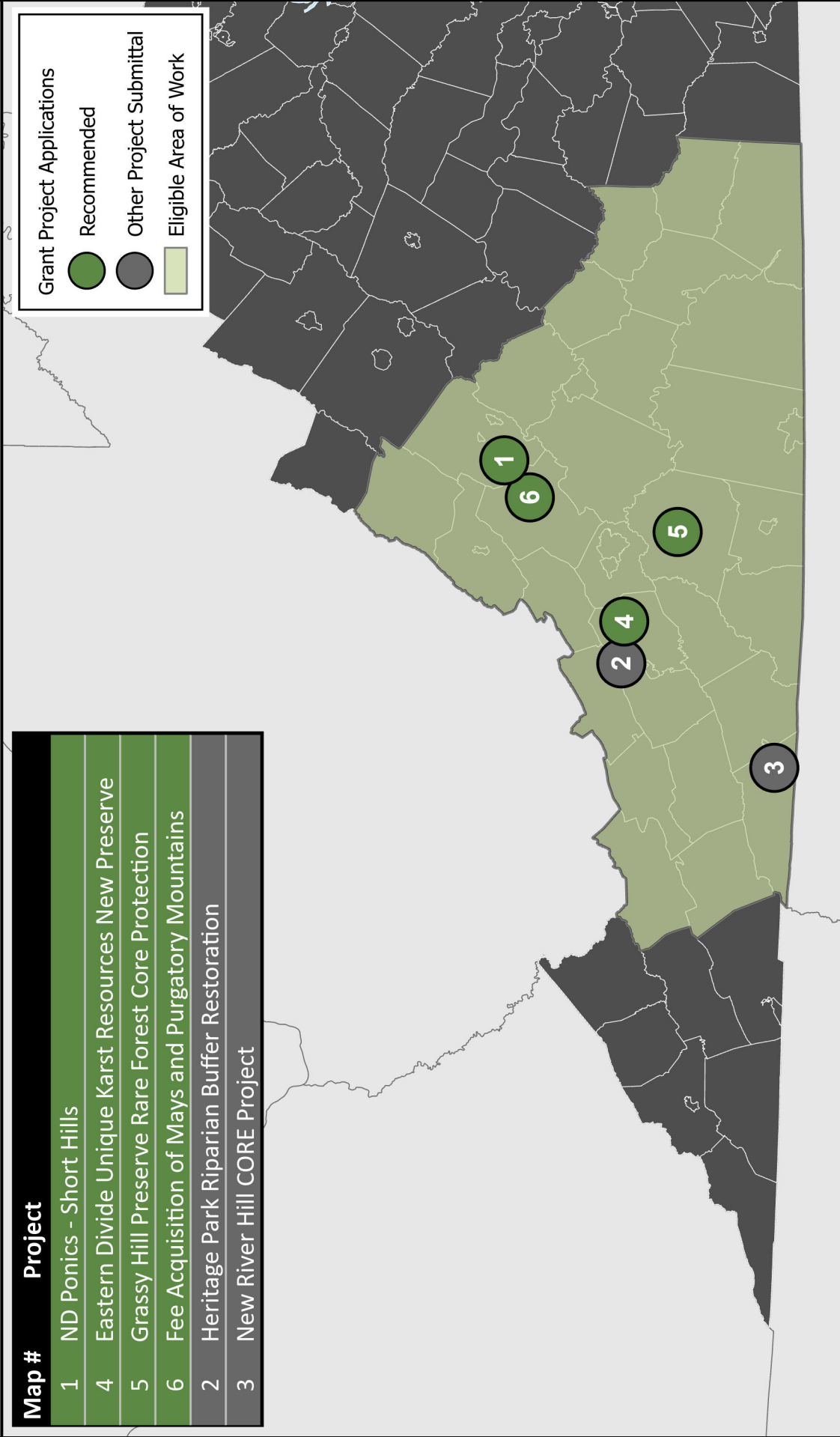
| Map # | Project |
|-------|--|
| 1 | ND Ponics - Short Hills |
| 4 | Eastern Divide Unique Karst Resources New Preserve |
| 5 | Grassy Hill Preserve Rare Forest Core Protection |
| 6 | Fee Acquisition of Mays and Purgatory Mountains |
| 2 | Heritage Park Riparian Buffer Restoration |
| 3 | New River Hill CORE Project |

Grant Project Applications

Recommended

Other Project Submittal

Eligible Area of Work



Board of Trustees Meeting

March 13, 2025

Map created: 2/14/2025 by VOF-LV
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: Source data provided by County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; all else - VOF.

Miles 0 25 50
1:2,407,959

N

This map is for general reference and display purposes only. Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries, are solely for general information and should not be used or relied upon in the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for resource protection area or flood plain determination.

Forest CORE Fund

Program Report

Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) Board of Trustees, March 13, 2025

Background

The Commonwealth of Virginia (Commonwealth) and the Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC (MVP, LLC) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in connection with the construction of the Mountain Valley Pipeline project, an approximately 303.4-mile, 42-inch diameter natural gas pipeline to be constructed in 17 counties in West Virginia and Virginia, crossing six counties in the Commonwealth specifically.

The Commonwealth developed a methodology for assessing the total impact of linear development projects to forest cores and the habitat and ecosystem services they provide. This methodology was used to analyze how the gas pipeline development project changed the sizes, depths, and shapes of forest cores identified by the Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment and to estimate the reductions in interior habitats and ecosystem services resulting from the pipeline.

The MOA establishes commitments related to forest conservation based on consideration of the impacts from forest fragmentation as described above. Pursuant to the MOA, certain funds were allocated by the Commonwealth to VOF, which was tasked with the administration of a grant program to help mitigate such impacts.

Along with partner conservation agencies and oversight by the Secretary of Natural Resources, VOF developed project selection criteria as well as a process for evaluating appropriate sites based on the goals and objectives from the MOA and in accordance with the Commonwealth's policy to conserve its natural resources. Program requirements ensure these forests are protected in perpetuity, incorporating timber management for the health of the forest ecosystem including restrictions on timber harvesting.

Overview

The Forest CORE (Community Opportunities for Restoration and Enhancement) Fund for the Mountain Valley Pipeline region was established under VOF's TERRA Program in June 2018 using \$15 million from the mitigation agreement between the Commonwealth of Virginia and MVP, LLC. The Fund's purpose is to mitigate forest fragmentation that results from the installation of the MVP pipeline through Virginia. Funds are available for projects that mitigate for forest fragmentation by preserving, connecting and enhancing forest resources.

Achievements

To date, VOF has completed three grant rounds (FY19, FY20, and FY21), with the amount of funding made available tied directly with the clearing and grubbing of the pipeline right of way. In total, VOF has expended \$7,497,112.48 protecting 4,417 acres in 10 counties. Grant recipients include six localities, four non-profits, two state agencies, one regional commission, and a water authority. Two projects are still underway, with an estimated completion date of December, 2025.

FY25 Grant Round Summary

VOF opened a \$4 million grant round on November 20, 2024, and staff hosted a webinar for 29 attendees. Six applications for over \$4.9 million were submitted, proposing the protection of 7,887 acres in five counties.

All applications have been provided to the VOF Board, with four proposals to protect 7,732 acres in 4 counties being recommended for a total funding amount of \$4 million. The recommended projects are listed on the agenda.

PROJECT SUMMARY

**Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation,
Eastern Divide Unique Karst Resources New Preserve
Montgomery County 158 acres**

Board Meeting Date: 03/13/25

Staff lead: Emily White

Region: Western

VOF Project #: n/a

VOF Instrument #: n/a

VOF Property #: n/a

VOF Grant Application# 25-03-04

Project Description/Property Features

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) seeks \$592,217 as match to over \$1.7 million in secured funding to acquire the largest remaining forest core on the edge of Blacksburg, Virginia. Unique karst features support two state listed species, one confined to the Ellet Escarpment region. Extreme development pressures limit conservation options and increase land costs; all properties are either listed for-sale or undergoing subdivision. The Conservation Fund will bundle these parcels for transfer to DCR. The area will be dedicated and managed as a Natural Area Preserve.

Project Type

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of Owned Land |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Enhancement for Passive Public Use |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple Acquisition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Instrument Type

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Conveyance/Acquisition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Dedication to Open Space | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Deed of Dedication, Natural Area Preserve</u> |

Land Protection Agent

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VOF | <input type="checkbox"/> Locality: _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other State Agency: <u>Department of Conservation & Recreation</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Funding Source & Amount

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VOF Grant Program(s): <u>Forest CORE Fund</u> Amount Requested: <u>\$592,217.00</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Grant Program(s): <u>Virginia Land Conservation Foundation</u> Amount Secured: <u>\$1,775,219.00</u> |
|--|--|

☐ Tax Benefits (Sought by Applicant)

☐ Not Applicable

Staff Recommendation

Conservation Project:

- ☒ Approve project as presented.
- ☐ Approve project, contingent upon satisfaction of the following: _____
- ☐ Approve project, final VOF easement terms to be approved at subsequent Board of Trustees Meeting.

Conservation Funding:

- ☐ Not applicable
- ☐ Approve requested funding: \$ _____
- ☒ Approve recommended funding: \$528,201.00
- ☐ Approved administratively, PTF-Easement Assistance: \$ _____

Notes:

Conservation Purposes

Forestal Use:

- The entire property is forested, ranked as High Forest Conservation Value, with the forest in the riparian area ranked as Very High Forest Conservation Value. The Forest Conservation Value (FCV) model is a tool designed by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) to strategically identify the highest priority forestland for conservation in Virginia. The intent is to maximize the efficiency of limited resources by focusing conservation efforts on the highest quality, most productive, and most vulnerable forestland statewide.

Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity:

- The entire property is ranked as having an ecological core rating of C3 (High) by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Landscape Assessment (VaNLA), indicating the property probably supports numerous habitat and ecosystem values.
- The property contains a DCR-Division of Natural Heritage dedicated Natural Heritage Conservation Site, indicating the property contains habitat for one or more natural heritage resources (rare plants, animals, communities, or geologic features).
- The Nature Conservancy has identified the property as part of an area of importance for climate & biodiversity resilience.
- The property was identified as a significant site for protection in the ConserveVA Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity category.
- The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources' ("DWR") Wildlife Corridor Action Plan indicates the Property is within a "Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridor Buffer." Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors represent relatively intact, representative, and biologically diverse habitat connections designed to provide refuge and facilitate species distribution shifts as the climate changes and the landscape becomes more developed.

Scenic/Open Space:

- The property lays within the viewshed of several trails and outlooks within the George Washington & Jefferson National Forest.

Water Resource Protection:

- The entirely wooded property contains 0.6 miles of streams, which are all tributaries to the North Fork of the Roanoke River.
- Lies in an area of limestone geology with karst features; riparian buffers, and prevention of intensive development on the Property will help minimize soil erosion and contribute to the protection of water quality.
- The property is located in an area identified as important for the protection of floodplains and flooding resilience as well as water quality by the ConserveVA model.
- The National Wetlands Inventory ("NWI") maintained by the USFWS shows the Property contains 1.4 acres of riverine wetland areas.

Outdoor Recreation, Education, or Research:

- After delineating sensitive areas, portions of the property may be made available to the public on a limited basis.
- Proximity to the Virginia Tech campus makes potential research and educational opportunities likely.

Project Details

The Governing Document: *The primary terms contained in the deed or instrument are listed below in a condensed form. The complete terms, conditions, and restrictions are in the recorded deed.*

- 1. Divisions permitted:** None **Maximum Properties:** One
- 2. Impervious Coverage Limitations:** Total impervious coverage, including that of both existing and future improvement will be minimal and only to accommodate public access.
- 3. Buildings and Structures:**
Only buildings and structures allowed are those that support public use of the Property for recreational purposes.
- 4. Management of Forest:**
The Forest CORE Fund Forest Management Provision states:
No timbering shall be permitted other than for the following purposes:
 - i) Cutting of trees for maintenance of existing cleared areas used for parking, roads, utilities, buildings, and structures allowed by deed terms;
 - ii) Cutting of trees for creation and maintenance of trails;
 - iii) Cutting of trees, with prior written approval of Grantee for wildlife habitat management, for the protection or enhancement of the natural heritage resources, for conversion of monoculture plantations to natural forest conditions, which approval or disapproval shall take into consideration the ecological importance of tree cover and avoidance of forest fragmentation;
 - iv) removal of trees posing an imminent hazard to the health or safety of persons or to property;
 - v) removal of invasive trees or other invasive species or
 - vi) removal of trees that are diseased, storm-damaged, or have died naturally.

In general, the forest shall be maintained in its natural state. Forest management practices conducted shall comply with an approved forest stewardship plan with the intent of restoring the ecological health and function of the forest and such practices may not be employed primarily for commercial purposes.

Best Management Practices (BMPs), as defined by the Virginia Department of Forestry, shall be used to control erosion and protect water quality when any allowable forest management activity is undertaken, such as may be required for (iii), (v), or (vi) above. A plan shall be submitted for approval no later than fourteen days before the proposed date of activity, and such plan must be consistent with the terms of the easement on the property. The plan shall describe the BMPs to be used in sufficient detail to ensure that water quality will be protected.
- 5. Water Quality Protection Areas:** As no trees may be cut, the entire property will be an RPZ.
- 6. Unique Deed Provisions:** Natural Area Preserve deed terms will be included, which are extremely protective and require active management to steward the unique species and habitat on the Property.
- 7. Public Access:** ☒ NO ☐ YES
- 8. Sign Required:** ☐ NO ☒ YES
- 9. Consolidation of Tax Parcels:** ☐ NO ☒ YES ☐ N/A
Summarize: The Property consists of seven tax map parcels. Should a grant award be made, consolidation will be encouraged.

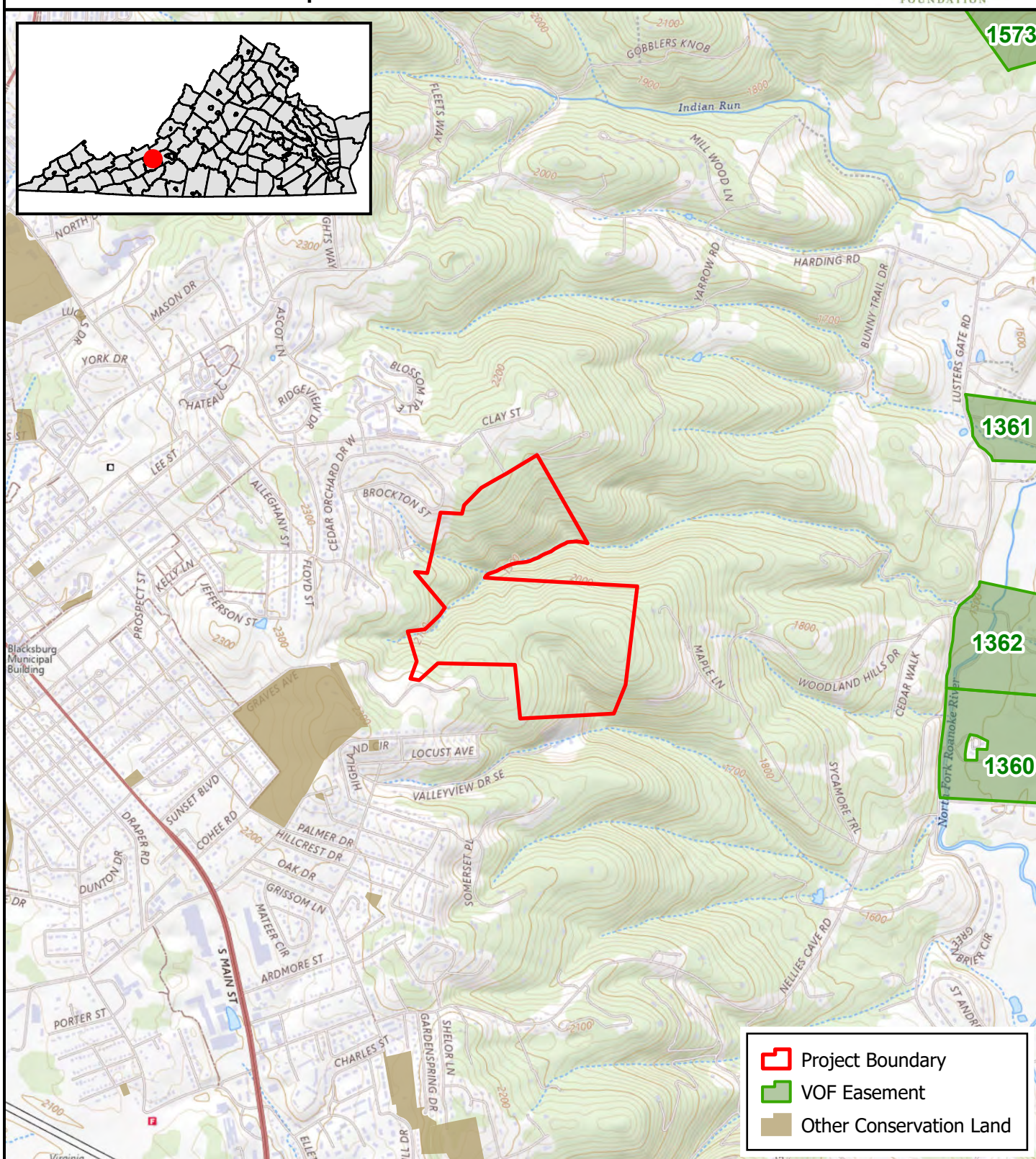
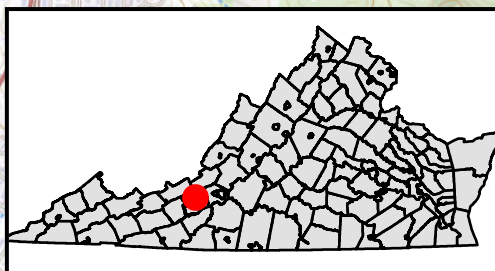
Further Discussion

| |
|---|
| Comprehensive Plan |
| <p>Is the project in compliance with the locality's comprehensive plan?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>DETAILS: Documented in FCF grant application. Confirmation from locality to be obtained if grant award is made.</p> |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Public Infrastructure Information | Conflicts with published plans | Yes | No |
| Roads: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rail: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Utilities: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notes: To be determined if grant award is made. | | | |

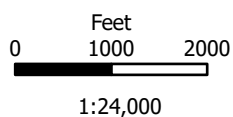
Location

Eastern Divide Unique Karst Resources New Preserve



Montgomery County

158 ± Acres

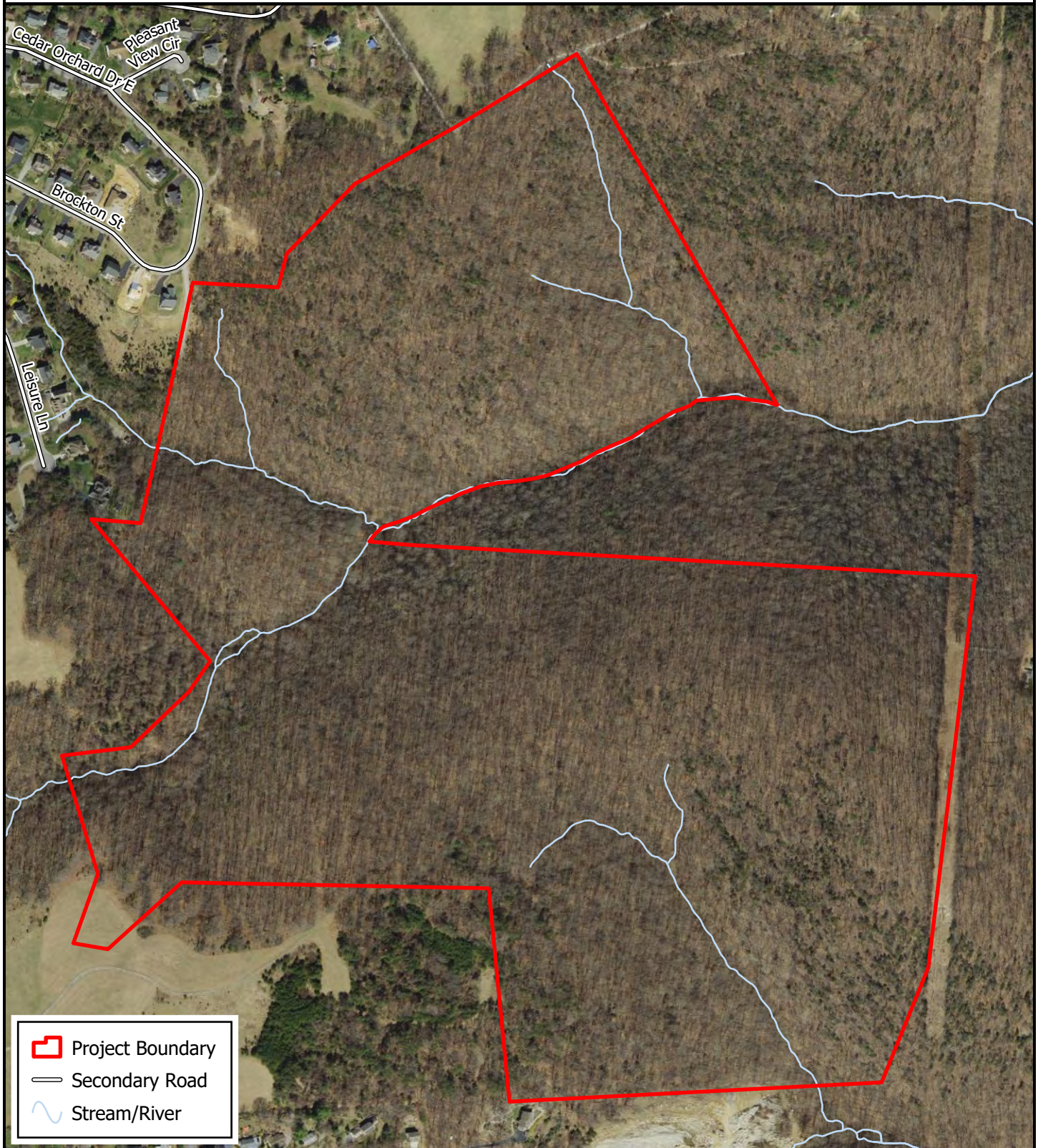


Map created: 2/18/2025 by Emma Weaver
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: USGS Topo Quad Name: Blacksburg; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; Other Conservation Land - VA DCR; all else - VOF.

Aerial Imagery

Eastern Divide Unique Karst Resources New Preserve



Montgomery County

158 ± Acres

Feet
0 250 500
1:6,000



Map created: 2/18/2025 by Emma Weaver
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: Aerial Imagery - VGIN/VBMP acquired 3/5/2023; Rivers/Streams - VGIN-VBMP; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; all else - VOF.



PROJECT SUMMARY

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Grassy Hill Preserve Rare Forest Core Protection Franklin County 301.07 acres

Board Meeting Date: 03/13/25

Staff lead: Emily White

Region: Western

VOF Project #: n/a

VOF Instrument #: n/a

VOF Property #: n/a

VOF Grant Application# 25-03-05

Project Description/Property Features

The Department of Conservation and Recreation, in partnership with the Town of Rocky Mount, seeks \$1,232,828 to protect and enhance one of Virginia's most significant remaining cores. Slated for development, this is a critically time sensitive opportunity to protect a large patch of rare geology, as well as a globally rare plant species and forest type, located adjacent to a premier protected land. DCR will transfer 30-40 acres to the Town of Rocky Mount for a hiking trail and parking lot, should on-the-ground conditions prove acceptable.

Project Type

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of Owned Land |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Enhancement for Passive Public Use |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple Acquisition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Instrument Type

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Conveyance/Acquisition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Dedication to Open Space | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Deed of Dedication, Natural Area Preserve</u> |

Land Protection Agent

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VOF | <input type="checkbox"/> Locality: _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other State Agency: <u>Department of Conservation & Recreation</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Funding Source & Amount

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VOF Grant Program(s): <u>Forest CORE Fund</u> Amount Requested: \$ <u>1,232,828.00</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Grant Program(s): <u>Virginia Land Conservation Foundation</u> Amount Secured: \$ <u>1,775,219.00</u> |
|---|---|

☐ Tax Benefits (Sought by Applicant)☐ Not Applicable

Staff Recommendation

Conservation Project:

- ☒ Approve project as presented.
☐ Approve project, contingent upon satisfaction of the following: _____
☐ Approve project, final VOF easement terms to be approved at subsequent Board of Trustees Meeting.

Conservation Funding:

- ☐ Not applicable
☐ Approve requested funding: \$ _____
☒ Approve recommended funding: \$1,157,049.00
☐ Approved administratively, PTF-Easement Assistance: \$ _____

Notes:

Conservation Purposes

Forestral Use:

- The property is approximately 90% forested, with 50% of the forest ranked as the High, Very High, and Outstanding Forest Conservation Value. The Forest Conservation Value (FCV) model is a tool designed by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) to strategically identify the highest priority forestland for conservation in Virginia. The intent is to maximize the efficiency of limited resources by focusing conservation efforts on the highest quality, most productive, and most vulnerable forestland statewide.

Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity:

- Ranked as having an ecological core rating of C4 (Moderate) by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Landscape Assessment (VaNLA).
- The property contains a DCR-Division of Natural Heritage dedicated Natural Heritage Conservation Site, indicating the property contains habitat for one or more natural heritage resources (rare plants, animals, communities, or geologic features).
- The Nature Conservancy has identified the property as part of an area of importance for climate & biodiversity resilience.
- The property was identified as a significant site for protection in the ConserveVA Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity and the Protected Landscapes Resilience categories.

Scenic/Open Space:

- The property is visible from the Rocky Mount Historic District, and from hiking trails in both the Grassy Hills and Bald Knob Natural Area Preserves.
- Adjacent to Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve, this property will enlarge the area of land that will never be disturbed by development.

Water Resource Protection:

- The wooded property contains 1,860 feet of perennial streams which flow to the Blackwater River.
- The property is located in an area targeted for Water Quality Improvement as identified by ConserveVA.
- The National Wetlands Inventory ("NWI") maintained by the USFWS shows the Property contains 0.66 acres of riverine wetland areas.

Outdoor Recreation, Education, or Research:

- The property will enlarge the Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve, which is currently open to and used by the public, with a 6-mile trail and informational kiosk in place.

Project Details

The Governing Document: *The primary terms contained in the deed or instrument are listed below in a condensed form. The complete terms, conditions, and restrictions are in the recorded deed.*

- 1. Divisions permitted:** None **Maximum Properties:** One
- 2. Impervious Coverage Limitations:** Total impervious coverage, including that of both existing and future improvements, will be minimal and only to accommodate public access.
- 3. Buildings and Structures:**
Only buildings and structures allowed are those that support public use of the Property for recreational purposes.

4. Management of Forest:

The Forest CORE Fund Forest Management Provision states:

No timbering shall be permitted other than for the following purposes:

- i) Cutting of trees for maintenance of existing cleared areas used for parking, roads, utilities, buildings, and structures allowed by deed terms;
- ii) Cutting of trees for creation and maintenance of trails;
- iii) Cutting of trees, with prior written approval of Grantee for wildlife habitat management, for the protection or enhancement of the natural heritage resources, for conversion of monoculture plantations to natural forest conditions, which approval or disapproval shall take into consideration the ecological importance of tree cover and avoidance of forest fragmentation;
- iv) removal of trees posing an imminent hazard to the health or safety of persons or to property;
- v) removal of invasive trees or other invasive species or
- vi) removal of trees that are diseased, storm-damaged, or have died naturally.

In general, the forest shall be maintained in its natural state. Forest management practices conducted shall comply with an approved forest stewardship plan with the intent of restoring the ecological health and function of the forest and such practices may not be employed primarily for commercial purposes.

Best Management Practices (BMPs), as defined by the Virginia Department of Forestry, shall be used to control erosion and protect water quality when any allowable forest management activity is undertaken, such as may be required for (iii), (v), or (vi) above. A plan shall be submitted for approval no later than fourteen days before the proposed date of activity, and such plan must be consistent with the terms of the easement on the property. The plan shall describe the BMPs to be used in sufficient detail to ensure that water quality will be protected.

5. Water Quality Protection Areas: The streams flow through the wooded area of the property. As no trees may be cut, the entire wooded area will be an RPZ.

6. Unique Deed Provisions: Natural Area Preserve deed terms will be included, which are extremely protective and require active management to steward the unique species and habitat on the Property.

7. Public Access: ☐ NO ☒ YES

8. Sign Required: ☐ NO ☒ YES

9. Consolidation of Tax Parcels: ☒ NO ☐ YES ☐ N/A

Summarize: The Property consists of two contiguous tax map parcels. A boundary line adjustment will be used to delineate the Natural Area Preserve area from the Town Park area.

Further Discussion

Comprehensive Plan

Is the project in compliance with the locality's comprehensive plan?

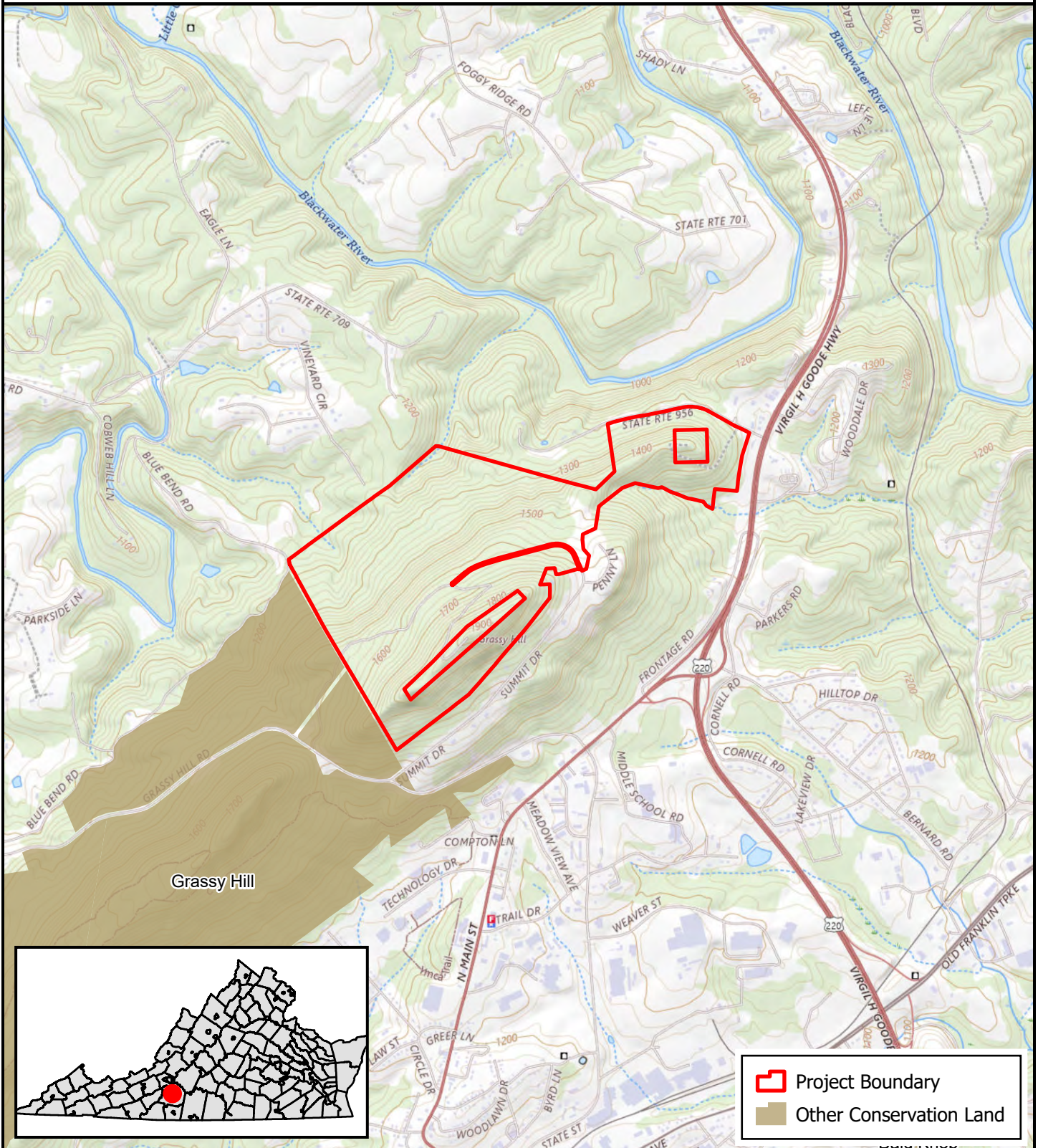
☒ YES ☐ NO

DETAILS: Documented in FCF grant application. Confirmation from locality to be obtained if grant award is made.

| Public Infrastructure Information | Conflicts with published plans | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Roads: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rail: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Utilities: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notes: To be determined if a grant award is made. | | | | |

Location

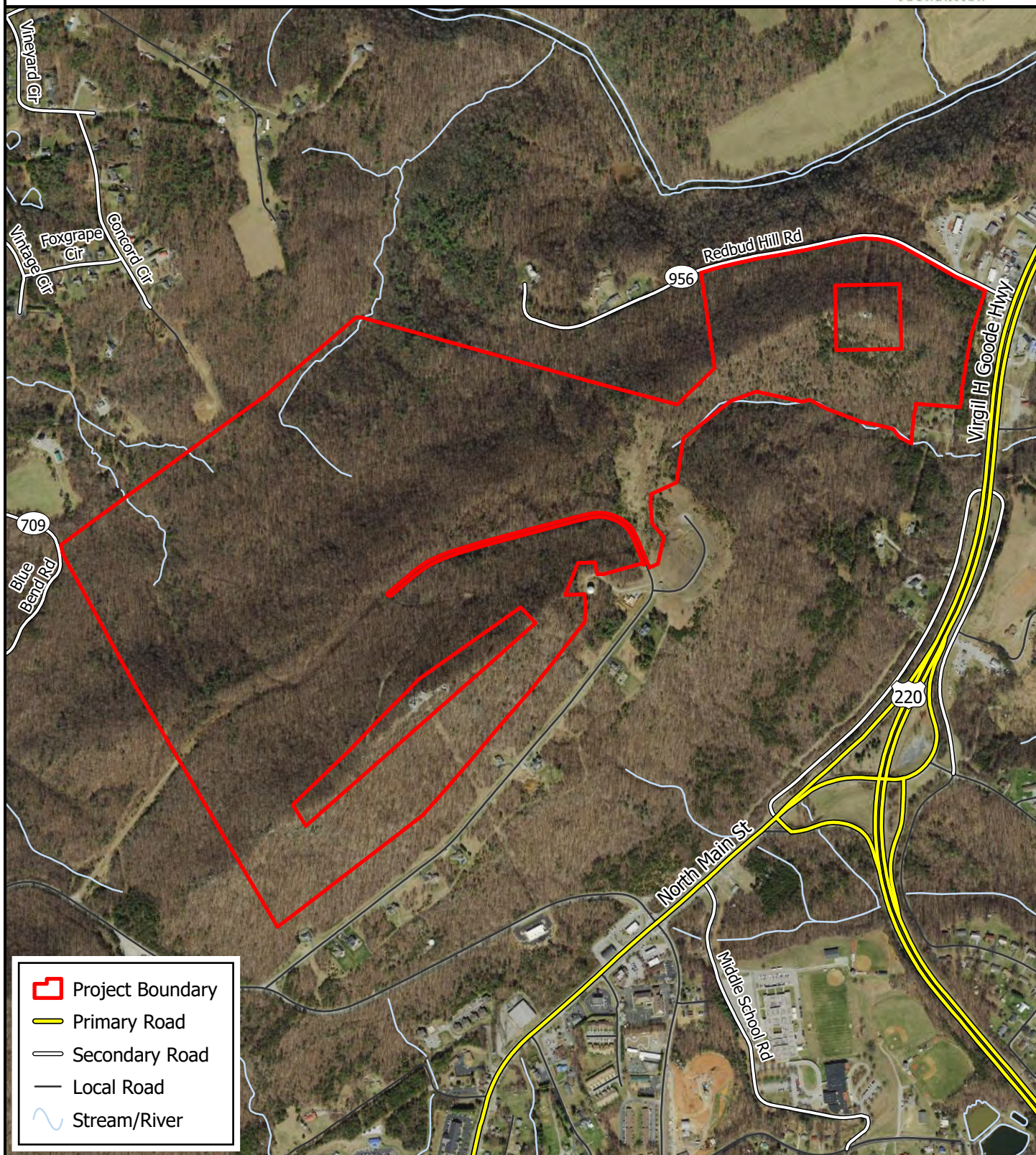
Grassy Hill Preserve Rare Forest Core Protection



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Franklin County</p> <p>301.07 ± Acres</p> | <p>0 Feet 2000</p> <p>1:24,000</p> <p>N</p> | <p>Map created: 2/17/2025 by Emma Weaver Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert</p> <p>Source data: USGS Topo Quad Name: Boones Mill; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; Other Conservation Land - VA DCR; all else - VOF.</p> |
|--|---|--|

Aerial Imagery

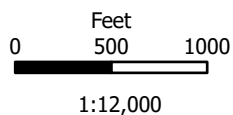
Grassy Hill Preserve Rare Forest Core Protection



| | |
|--|------------------|
| | Project Boundary |
| | Primary Road |
| | Secondary Road |
| | Local Road |
| | Stream/River |

Franklin County

301.07 ± Acres



Map created: 2/18/2025 by Emma Weaver
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: Aerial Imagery - VGIN/VBMP acquired 2/28/2023; Rivers/Streams - VGIN-VBMP; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; all else - VOF.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Wildlife Foundation of Virginia Fee Acquisition of Mays and Purgatory Mountains Botetourt County 6,486 acres

Board Meeting Date: 03/13/25

Staff lead: Emily White

Region: Western

VOF Project #: n/a

VOF Instrument #: n/a

VOF Property #: n/a

VOF Grant Application# 25-03-06

Project Description/Property Features

The Wildlife Foundation of Virginia (WV) proposes to acquire two (2) large tracts of land located in Botetourt County, currently owned by the same private landowners. Mays Mountain and Purgatory Mountain are adjacent to each other and collectively comprise 6,486+/- acres of largely upland hardwoods. Both properties will be protected in perpetuity and will be managed for endangered bat and other wildlife habitat and public use for hunting, fishing, wildlife watching and outdoor recreation.

Project Type

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of Owned Land |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Enhancement for Passive Public Use |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple Acquisition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Instrument Type

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deed of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Conveyance/Acquisition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Dedication to Open Space | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Land Protection Agent

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VOF | <input type="checkbox"/> Locality: _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other State Agency: <u>Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR)</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Funding Source & Amount

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VOF Grant Program(s): <u>Forest CORE Fund</u> Amount Requested: <u>\$1,714,750.00</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Grant Program(s), All secured funding: <u>The Nature Conservancy, \$684,000;</u> <u>The Conservation Fund, \$2,748,457.00;</u> <u>Valley Conservation Council, \$30,000</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Benefits (Sought by Applicant) | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |

Staff Recommendation

Conservation Project:

- ☒ Approve project as presented.
- ☐ Approve project, contingent upon satisfaction of the following: _____
- ☐ Approve project, final VOF easement terms to be approved at subsequent Board of Trustees Meeting.

Conservation Funding:

- ☐ Not applicable
- ☒ Approve requested funding: \$1,714,750.00
- ☐ Approve recommended funding: \$ _____
- ☐ Approved administratively, PTF-Easement Assistance: \$ _____

Notes:

Conservation Purposes

Forestral Use:

- 97% of the property is forested, with the forest being ranked as the Highest and High Forest Conservation Value. The Forest Conservation Value (FCV) model is a tool designed by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) to strategically identify the highest priority forestland for conservation in Virginia. The intent is to maximize the efficiency of limited resources by focusing conservation efforts on the highest quality, most productive, and most vulnerable forestland statewide.
- The property was identified as a significant site for protection in the ConserveVA Agriculture & Forestry category.

Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity:

- Approximately 60% of the property ranked as having an ecological core rating of C3 (High) by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Landscape Assessment (VaNLA) indicate the property may support numerous habitat and ecosystem values.
- The property contains one federally-listed endangered species and numerous state-listed endangered species.
- The Nature Conservancy has identified the property as part of an area of importance for climate & biodiversity resilience.
- The property was identified as a significant site for protection in the ConserveVA Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity category.
- The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources' ("DWR") Wildlife Corridor Action Plan indicates the Property is within a "Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridor." Wildlife Biodiversity Resilience Corridors represent relatively intact, representative, and biologically diverse habitat connections designed to provide refuge and facilitate species distribution shifts as the climate changes and the landscape becomes more developed.

Scenic/Open Space:

- The site is located in a Scenic Preservation area identified for protection through ConserveVA.
- One section of the property is bordered by the Upper James River, a designated Scenic River. Purgatory Mountain is visible to and from much of the River throughout its course through Botetourt County.
- Purgatory Mountain is visible from the Blue Ridge Parkway, with a specific overlook specifically named for it.
- Adjacent to other conserved properties, creating a vast area of land that will never be disturbed by development.

Water Resource Protection:

- Located within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the predominantly wooded property contains almost 14 miles of perennial streams.
- The property is located in an area targeted for Water Quality Improvement as identified by ConserveVA.
- The National Wetlands Inventory ("NWI") maintained by the USFWS shows the Property contains estuarine and marine deepwater (0.54 acre), freshwater emergent (9.92 acres), freshwater/forested shrub (47.57 acres), and riverine (4.07 acres) wetland areas.

Historic Preservation:

- Portions of the properties are covered by the Cultural Resource Preservation Index, indicating those portions of the sites are listed on, contributing to, or eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

Outdoor Recreation, Education, or Research:

- The property will be open to and used by the public year-round.
- A kiosk with educational information about the importance of forest ecosystems will be built on-site.

Project Details

The Governing Document: *The primary terms contained in the deed or instrument are listed below in a condensed form. The complete terms, conditions, and restrictions are in the recorded deed.*

- 1. Divisions permitted:** None **Maximum Properties:** One
- 2. Impervious Coverage Limitations:** Total impervious coverage, including that of both existing and future improvements, may not exceed 10,000 square feet.
- 3. Buildings and Structures:**
Only buildings and structures allowed are those that support public use of the Property for recreational purposes.
- 4. Management of Forest:**
The Forest CORE Fund Forest Management Provision states:
No timbering shall be permitted other than for the following purposes:
 - i) Cutting of trees for maintenance of existing cleared areas used for parking, roads, utilities, buildings, and structures allowed by deed terms;
 - ii) Cutting of trees for creation and maintenance of trails;
 - iii) Cutting of trees, with prior written approval of Grantee for wildlife habitat management, for the protection or enhancement of the natural heritage resources, for conversion of monoculture plantations to natural forest conditions, which approval or disapproval shall take into consideration the ecological importance of tree cover and avoidance of forest fragmentation;
 - iv) removal of trees posing an imminent hazard to the health or safety of persons or to property;
 - v) removal of invasive trees or other invasive species or
 - vi) removal of trees that are diseased, storm-damaged, or have died naturally.

In general, the forest shall be maintained in its natural state. Forest management practices conducted shall comply with an approved forest stewardship plan with the intent of restoring the ecological health and function of the forest and such practices may not be employed primarily for commercial purposes.

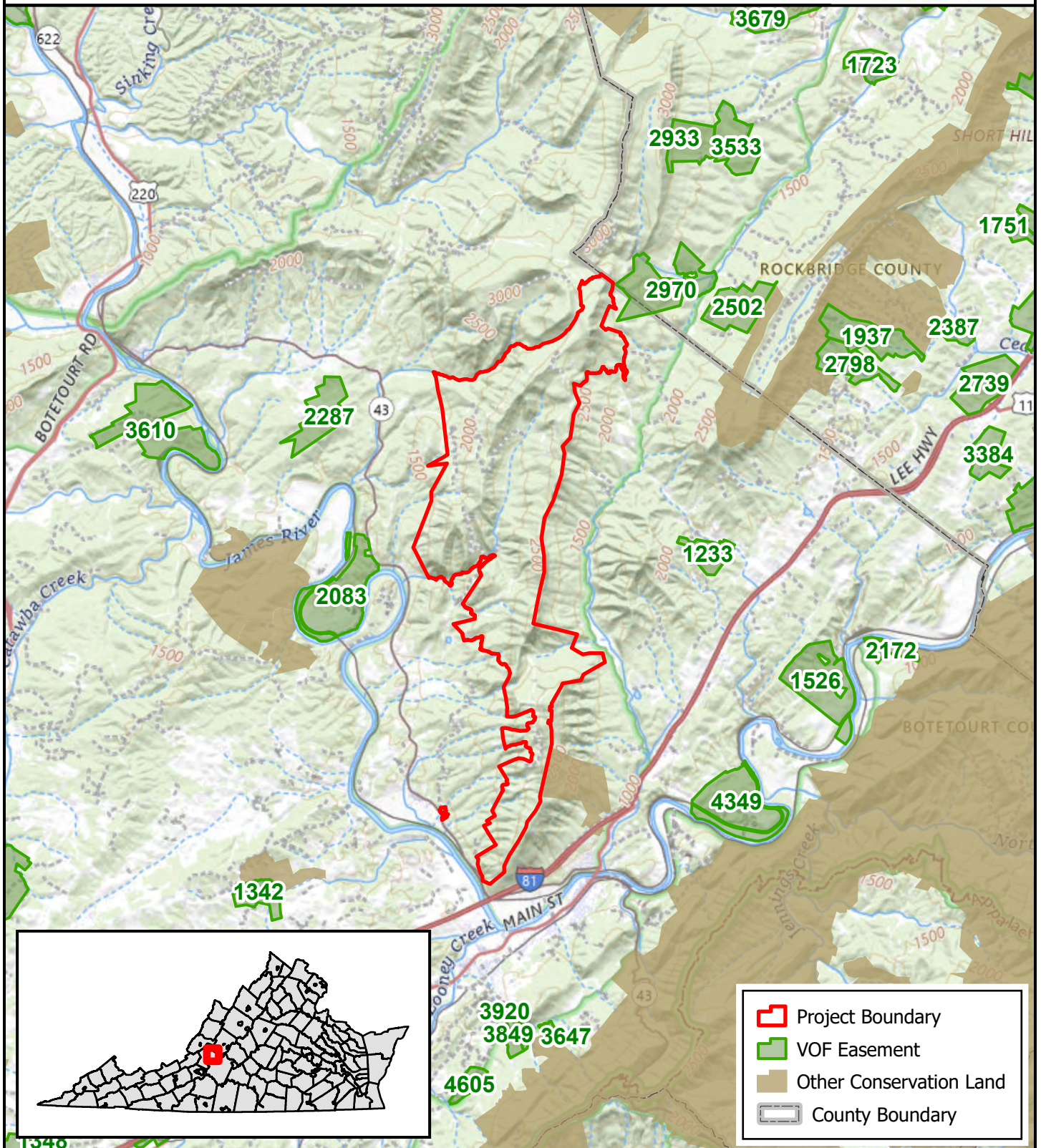
Best Management Practices (BMPs), as defined by the Virginia Department of Forestry, shall be used to control erosion and protect water quality when any allowable forest management activity is undertaken, such as may be required for (iii), (v), or (vi) above. A plan shall be submitted for approval no later than fourteen days before the proposed date of activity, and such plan must be consistent with the terms of the easement on the property. The plan shall describe the BMPs to be used in sufficient detail to ensure that water quality will be protected.
- 5. Water Quality Protection Areas:** All waterways will have 100-ft riparian buffers at a minimum. Current forested conditions along waterways may not be altered, so most buffers are much wider.
- 6. Unique Deed Provisions:** N/A
- 7. Public Access:** ☐ NO ☒ YES
- 8. Sign Required:** ☐ NO ☒ YES
- 9. Consolidation of Tax Parcels:** ☐ NO ☐ YES ☒ N/A
Summarize: The two subject properties are each one tax map parcel. The properties are not contiguous.

Further Discussion

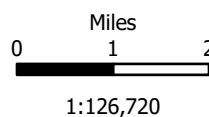
| |
|---|
| Comprehensive Plan |
| <p>Is the project in compliance with the locality's comprehensive plan?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>DETAILS: Documented in FCF grant application. Confirmation from locality to be obtained if grant award is made.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Public Infrastructure Information | Conflicts with published plans | Yes | No |
| Roads: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rail: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Utilities: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notes: To be determined if grant award is made. | | | |

Fee Acquisition of Mays and Purgatory Mountains



6486 ± Acres



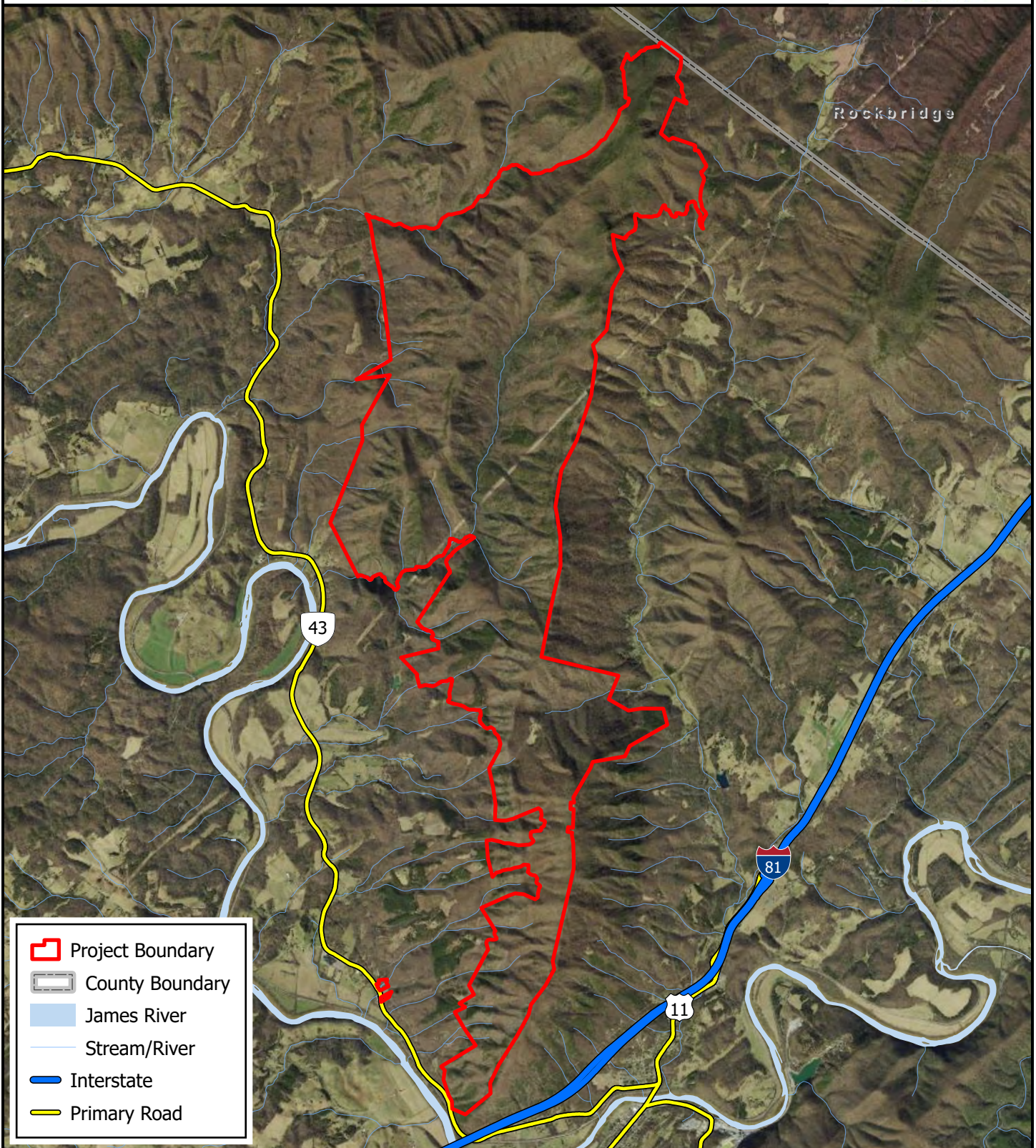
Source data: USGS Topo Quad Name: Sugarloaf Mountain & Buchanan; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; Other Conservation Land - VA DCR; all else - VOF.

This map is for general reference and display purposes only. Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries, are solely for general information and should not be used or relied upon in the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for resource protection area or flood plain determination.

VOF BOT 3/13/25 Forest Core Projects 16 of 23

Aerial Imagery

Fee Acquisition of Mays and Purgatory Mountains



Botetourt County

6486 ± Acres

Feet
0 3000 6000
1:72,000



Map created: 2/11/2025 by Emma Weaver
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: Aerial Imagery - VGIN/VBMP acquired 2/18/2023; Rivers/Streams - USGS-NHD; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; all else - VOF.



PROJECT SUMMARY

NDPonics Short Hills Rockbridge County 786.78 acres

Board Meeting Date: 03/13/25
VOF Project # 4925

Staff lead: Laura Thurman
VOF Instrument # 7482

Region: Western
VOF Property # 5721

Project Description/Property Features

This project will protect 786 acres of great significance to Yessàh people of VA in perpetuity through an easement held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. This property includes rare, nearly undisturbed forest ecosystems, extensive connectivity with Short Hills Wildlife Management Area, many natural heritage resources including Virginia's largest and best example of Glade Spurge, additional globally rare natural community types, as well as 2.5 miles of designated Brook Trout stream and habitat for the golden winged warbler, a Tier 1 species indicating critical need for conservation.

Project Type

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of Owned Land |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchase of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Enhancement for Passive Public Use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple Acquisition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Instrument Type

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deed of Open-Space Easement | <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Conveyance/Acquisition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deed of Dedication to Open Space | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Land Protection Agent

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VOF | <input type="checkbox"/> Locality: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other State Agency: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Funding Source & Amount

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VOF Grant Programs: <u>Forest CORE Fund</u> Amount Requested: <u>\$600,000</u> <u>PTF</u> Amount Approved, 10/10/24: <u>\$200,000</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Grant Programs: <u>National Fish and Wildlife Foundation via</u> <u>Shenandoah Valley Conservancy, Amount</u> <u>Secured: \$419,000</u> <u>The Nature Conservancy – Resilient and</u> <u>Connected Appalachians Grant Program,</u> <u>Requesting \$100,000</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tax Benefits (Sought by Applicant) | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |

Staff Recommendation

Conservation Project:

- ☒ Approve project as presented.
☐ Approve project, contingent upon satisfaction of the following: _____
☐ Approve project, final VOF easement terms to be approved at subsequent Board of Trustees Meeting.

Conservation Funding:

- ☐ Not applicable
☒ Approve requested funding: \$600,000
☐ Approve recommended funding: \$ _____
☐ Approved administratively, PTF-Easement Assistance: \$ _____

Notes:

Conservation Purposes

Forestal Use:

- All but 30 acres of the property is forested and the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) designates all the forest as having Outstanding Forest Conservation Value.

Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity:

- Ranked as having an ecological core rating of C1 (Outstanding) by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Landscape Assessment (VaNLA) indicating the property supports numerous habitat and ecosystem values.
- The Property contains the Cedar Creek Headwaters Conservation Site, which protects a population of Glade Spurge (*Euphorbia purpurea*), a perennial plant considered imperiled in Virginia. Threats to this species include logging activities, invasive weeds, recreational activities, and road development. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) identifies the property as containing habitat essential for the success of the Golden-winged warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*).
- The 2015 Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) Virginia Wildlife Action Plan, states that the watershed containing the Property has 19 "Priority Species." In addition to the Golden-winged warbler, the list includes Marsh wren (*Cistothorus palustris*), Alleghany woodrat (*Neotomo magister*) and the Northern saw-whet own (*Aegolius acadicus*).
- The Nature Conservancy has identified the property as part of an area of importance for climate & biodiversity resilience.
- The property was identified as a significant site for protection in the ConserveVA Natural Habitat and Ecosystem Diversity, Agriculture & Forestry, Floodplains and Flooding Resilience and Protected Landscapes Resilience categories.

Scenic/Open Space:

- The Property is almost entirely surrounded by the Short Hills Wildlife Management Area, 4,232 acres of public land containing a high percentage of karst topography that contributes to cave habitat. This WMA has 3,482 acres of forest and approximately 750 acres of open land that had been previously farmed. The site is located in a Scenic Preservation area identified for protection through ConserveVA.

Water Resource Protection:

- Located within the Chesapeake Bay watershed the Property contains 16 acres of Freshwater emergent wetlands, 38 acres of Freshwater Forested Shrub wetland and the headwaters of Cedar Creek, which flows through the Property for 2.6 miles. Cedar Creek is designated as habitat for native brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) by Virginia's Department of Wildlife Resources. In 2024 a forester who did an on-site timber cruise estimated that the wetlands encompassed 100 acres of this property.
- According to the Virginia Conservation Vision Watershed Model, the Property contains land that is listed as important to protect for watershed integrity. This model incorporates topographic and edaphic characteristics, position in the landscape relative to hydrological features and drinking water sources and sub watershed integrity.
- Cedar Creek is a TMDL creek – the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation identified this stream as having failed to meet Water Quality Standards by virtue of exceeding the Total Maximum Daily Load of pollutants. From the headwaters downstream 6.4 miles is listed as impaired on the 2014 Impaired Waters list.

Project Details

The Governing Document: *The primary terms contained in the deed or instrument are listed below in a condensed form. The complete terms, conditions, and restrictions are in the recorded deed.*

1. Divisions permitted: None **Maximum Properties:** One

2. Impervious Coverage Limitations: Total impervious coverage, including that of both existing and future improvements, may not exceed 8,000 square feet.

3. Buildings and Structures:

Any new building or structure exceeding 5,000 square feet in ground area, must have Grantee's prior review and written approval. No building may exceed 35 feet in height. Other than renewable energy facilities, all new buildings and structures exceeding 500 square feet in ground area must be located in designated Building Envelopes. Any freestanding dwelling must be located in a Building Envelope.

4. Management of Forest:

The Forest CORE Fund Forest Management Provision states:

No timbering shall be permitted other than for the following purposes:

- i) Cutting of trees for maintenance of existing cleared areas used for parking, roads, utilities, buildings, and structures allowed by deed terms;
- ii) Cutting of trees for creation and maintenance of trails;
- iii) Cutting of trees, with prior written approval of Grantee for wildlife habitat management, for the protection or enhancement of the natural heritage resources, for conversion of monoculture plantations to natural forest conditions, which approval or disapproval shall take into consideration the ecological importance of tree cover and avoidance of forest fragmentation;
- iv) removal of trees posing an imminent hazard to the health or safety of persons or to property;
- v) removal of invasive trees or other invasive species or
- vi) removal of trees that are diseased, storm-damaged, or have died naturally.

In general, the forest shall be maintained in its natural state. Forest management practices conducted shall comply with an approved forest stewardship plan with the intent of restoring the ecological health and function of the forest and such practices may not be employed primarily for commercial purposes.

Best Management Practices (BMPs), as defined by the Virginia Department of Forestry, shall be used to control erosion and protect water quality when any allowable forest management activity is undertaken, such as may be required for (iii), (v), or (vi) above. A plan shall be submitted for approval no later than fourteen days before the proposed date of activity, and such plan must be consistent with the terms of the easement on the property. The plan shall describe the BMPs to be used in sufficient detail to ensure that water quality will be protected.

5. Water Quality Protection Areas: 100-foot buffers on Cedar Creek and an RPZ (100 feet from the edges of the wetlands) to protect the wetlands on the property.

6. Public Access: ☒ NO ☐ YES

7. Sign Required: ☒ NO ☐ YES

8. Consolidation of Tax Parcels: ☒ NO ☐ YES ☐ N/A

Summarize: It is two tax parcels currently and the county requires a new survey to consolidate tax parcels.

Further Discussion

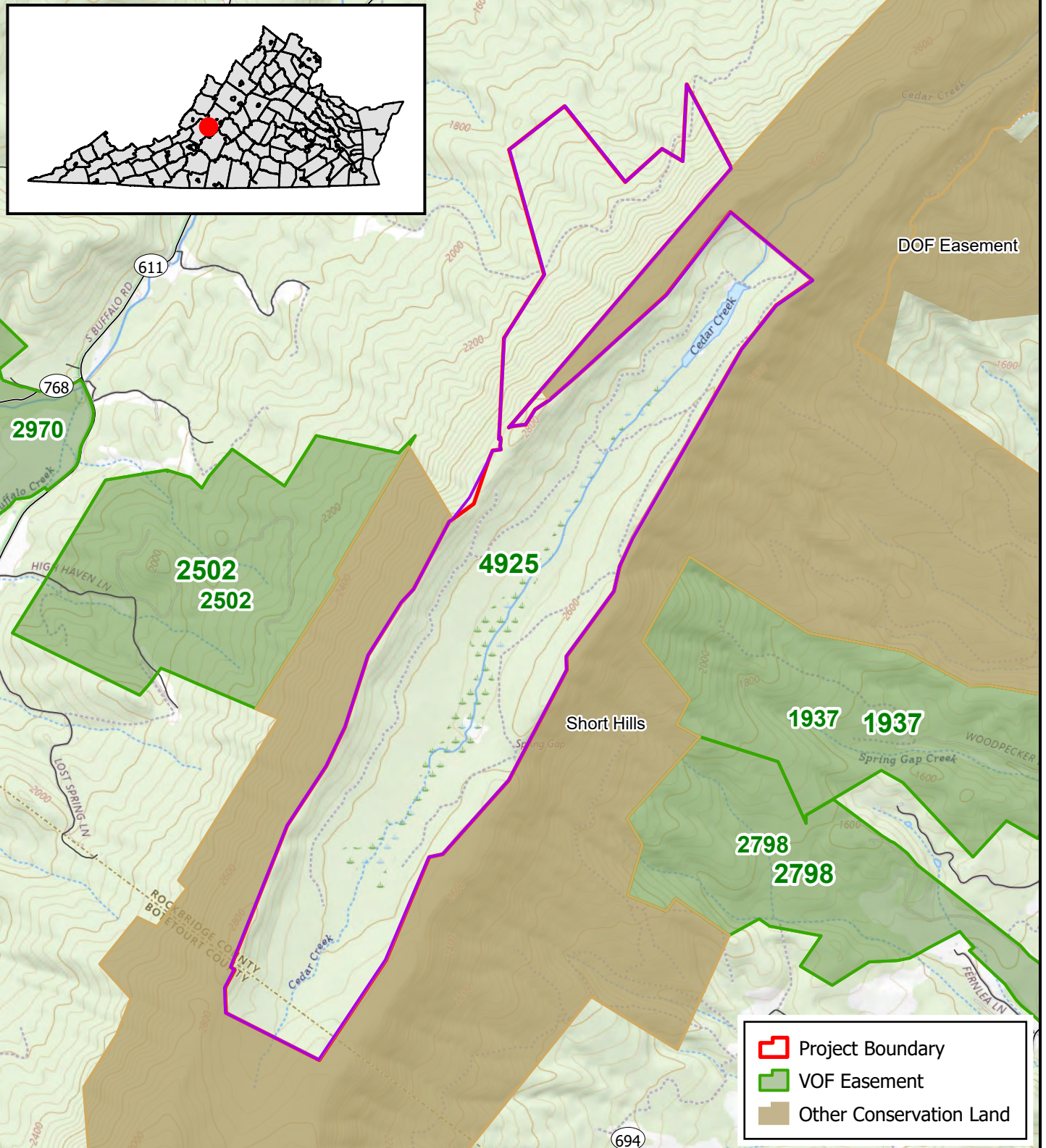
Access to the property is via a deeded ROW from South Buffalo Road (Rte 611) and/or through DWR property from Plank Road (Rte 610) via a maintenance road. The landowner is in litigation over a long-used ROW from Plank Road through private property.

| |
|---|
| Comprehensive Plan |
| <p>Is the project in compliance with the locality's comprehensive plan?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>DETAILS: Letter from Chris Slaydon, Office of Community Development, Director, dated December 19, 2024.</p> |

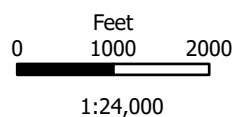
| Public Infrastructure Information | Conflicts with published plans | Yes | No |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Roads: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Rail: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Utilities: | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Notes: N/A | | | |

Location

ND Ponics, Inc.



Rockbridge and
Botetourt Counties
786.78 ± Acres

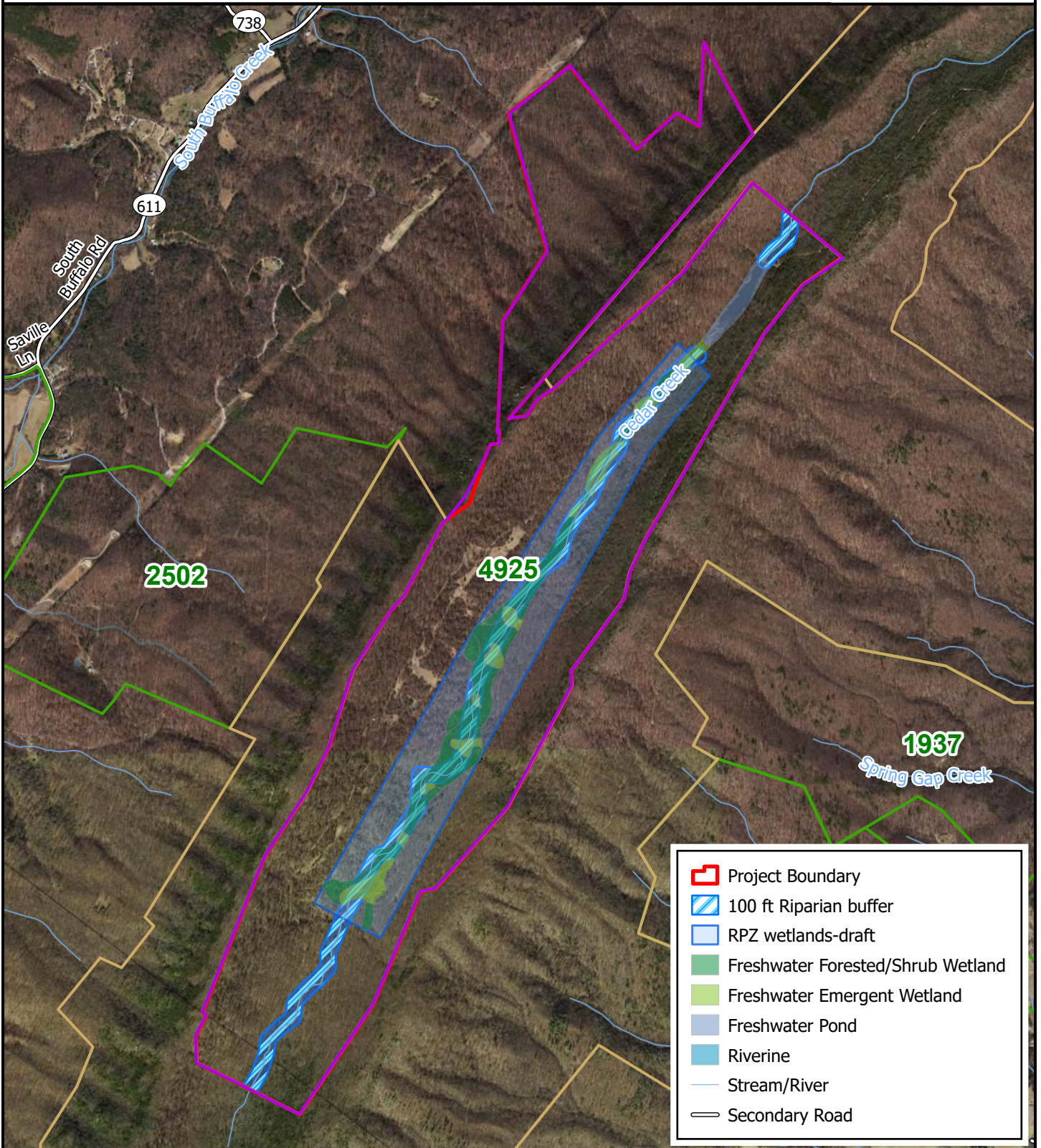


Map created: 2/11/2025 by Laura Thurman
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: USGS Topo Quad Name: Natural Bridge, Sugarloaf Mountain; County Boundaries - US Census Bureau/VOF; Roads - VDOT; Other Conservation Land - VA DCR; all else - VOF.

Special Conditions

ND Ponics, Inc.



Rockbridge and
Botetourt Counties
786.78 ± Acres

Feet
0 900 1800
1:21,600



Map created: 2/11/2025 by Laura Thurman
Projection: NAD 1983 Virginia Lambert

Source data: Aerial Imagery - VGIN/VBMP acquired 3/4/2022; Rivers/Streams - USGS-NHD/VGIN-VBMP; Roads - VDOT; all else - VOF. iPhone 14 internal GPS/VBMP aerial imagery used to determine points.