



Forest CORE Fund Project Review Criteria

Project Evaluation Criteria

The overall objective of projects executed pursuant to the Agreement is to mitigate the adverse impact of forest fragmentation. A project scoring sheet reflecting the weighted value of the following criteria will be used to evaluate each proposal (see scoring sheet).

Primary Criteria:

- Ecological Integrity of forest to be protected (as demonstrated by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Division's 2017 Virginia Natural Landscape Assessment Ecological Cores) or the Forest Conservation Value of forest to be protected (as demonstrated by the Virginia Department of Forestry's 2018 Forest Conservation Value Model, FCV).
- Proximity of land to be protected to forested land with a high ecological integrity or high forest conservation value, proximity to pipeline, and/or proximity to conserved land.
- Acreage of forest to be protected or established.
- Protection of resources of equivalent usefulness and location as the resources impacted by the pipeline.
- Protection or enhancement of water quality or protection of threatened or endangered species, rare communities, or other natural resources.

Secondary Criteria:

- Planned forest restoration or enhancement activities.
- Inclusion of an educational or research focus.
- Availability of grant-funded land for public use, including, but not limited to, hiking, hunting, fishing, nature study, photography, and bird watching. Activities incompatible with natural resource protection and management are not allowed.
- Location within an impacted watershed (8-digit hydrologic unit).
- The protection of:
 - Locally significant viewsheds.
 - Federally designated Wild and Scenic River or American Heritage River in or bordering Virginia.
 - Virginia's Scenic Rivers, Virginia Scenic Highways, Virginia Byways.
 - Nationally designated scenic lands or recreational trails, including greenways or blueways
- Demonstrated community support for the proposed project through letters from local governments, planning district commissions, local conservation groups, businesses, and/or community organizations.
- Documentation of the community, cultural, or historical significance of a project site.
- Support of local and/or regional comprehensive plans for parks, open space, or outdoor recreational facilities.
- Contributes to the protection of a wildlife corridor or wildlife corridor buffer as designated by the Virginia Wildlife Corridor Action Plan.
- Addresses a priority identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan or other state, regional, or local plans.
- Geographic/regional diversity of project type and award distribution.
- Likelihood of success (experienced applicant, site selection has been well-considered, and the project is ready for implementation).
- Provision of matching partner funding.