



www.loudounwildlife.org

Delegate Gooditis:

Thank you for being a champion and supporter of the environment. We deeply appreciate the hard work you and your staff are doing on a number of legislative items. We would like to highlight a few other bills that we support, in addition to other budget items.

Support– Native plant species; state agencies to prioritize use on state properties. HB1998

Sponsors: David Bulova, Paul Krizek, Suhas Subramanyam

- This bill amends the existing invasive species legislation to direct the Secretaries of Natural and Historic Resources, Agriculture and Forestry, and Administration to coordinate the development of strategic actions to be taken by state agencies to prioritize the use of native plants.

Support – Noxious weeds; invasive plant species. HB2096

Sponsors: David Bulova, Betsy Carr, Kaye Kory, Suhas Subramanyam

- Removes the provision in current law that prohibits the movement, transportation, delivery, shipment, or offering for shipment of any noxious weed into or within the Commonwealth without a permit from the Commissioner of VDACS and grants the Board of Agriculture and Consumer Services the authority to adopt regulations governing the conditions under which a permit will be required for such actions.
- This bill also adds requirements related to invasive plant species, including directing VA DCR to update the current invasive plant species list by 2024 and every four years thereafter.

Support– PFAS; requirements to test, publicly owned treatment works, discharges into state waters. HB2189

Sponsors: Sam Rasoul, Kaye Kory

- This bill requires industrial users of publicly owned treatment works to test waste streams for PFAS prior to and after cleaning, repairing, refurbishing or processing items that contain PFAS.
- Legislation also requires prompt testing for PFAS following the discharge of certain toxic agents into state waters and requires the results of tests to be submitted to the coordinator of emergency services.

Support– High polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon; prohibits pavement sealants that contain, civil penalty. HB2209

Sponsor: Kathy Tran

- This bill gives localities authority to adopt ordinances prohibiting the sale, distribution, or use of pavement sealants containing high levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. High levels are defined as those above 1% of the product by weight. Allows retailers to sell inventory in stock as of July 1, 2023, and delays any prohibition until on or after July 1, 2024.

Support– Data center development; DOE to study impacts on Virginia's environment, etc. HJR522

Sponsor: Danaca Roem

- Virginia hosts the largest concentration of data centers in the world. We need to understand the impacts. SJ240 and HJ522 direct the Department of Energy to study the effects of the huge and rapidly-growing data center industry on Virginia's environment, economy, energy resources, and ability to meet carbon-reduction goals.

PO Box 1892, Leesburg, VA 20177

We support more funding for the Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund, Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, wildlife corridors, and invasive species management. We've detailed the specific amendments in the list of budget items below. These would provide critical funding to support conservation and environmental education that would inspire and engage people to protect and conserve wildlife habitat.

Support – Farmland Preservation Fund: 98 #2h

- This amendment allocates \$5M in FY24 to the Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund, a mechanism vital to preserving our natural landscapes and retaining Loudoun's rural character.

Support – Invasive Species Management: 100 #1h, 108 #1h, 374#4h

- These amendments provide staff to implement the Virginia Invasive Species Management Plan.

Support – Natural Heritage Program: 374 #11h

- This amendment would allocate \$593K in FY24 and five positions for the Natural Heritage Program

Support – Virginia Land Conservation Foundation: 375#8h & 375#15h

- This amendment will help the efforts of the Virginia Land Conservation Fund to better keep pace with the rising cost of lands to be preserved and allow for more projects to be funded each year.
- This amendment also brings more certainty and much needed support to a proven program that is returning an incredible investment to Virginia's agricultural and forest industry.

Support– Wildlife Corridors: 382 #2h & 452 #1h

- Amendment 382 #2h provides funding in FY24 for wildlife corridors that would play a key role in increasing and maintaining habitat connectivity.
- Amendment 452 #1h provides funding for the establishment of a wildlife crossing to limit motor vehicle crashes that imperil both wildlife and humans.

Support– Statewide Study of Forests and Tree Canopy Relative to Chesapeake Bay Commitments: 108#5h

- This amendment would allocate \$500K to the Department of Forestry to conduct a technical study of changes to forest and tree canopy coverage.

Support– DCR Assistance to SWCDs for VACS Program and Engineering Design: 374#16h

- This amendment includes two positions to enhance training and technical assistance provided by the department to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Thank you for your time and your continued dedication towards protecting the environment.

Sincerely,

Trinity Mills
Conservation Advocacy Specialist
Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy