

# Our Common Agenda: Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Policy Suggestion Priorities for 2023 General Assembly

## **Water**

### **Primary**

- Tackling Toxic Pollutants: PFAS- Require industrial users to disclose and control all chemicals released in their discharges through Virginia's wastewater permit and industrial pretreatment programs.
- Tackling Toxic Pollutants: Coal Tar Sealants- Provide a local option to regulate or prohibit coal tar sealants.

### **Secondary**

- Sequestering Carbon Through Our Natural Resources- Virginia should develop and adopt carbon sequestration targets for the Commonwealth's forests, wetlands, and agricultural lands based upon the best available science.
- Reducing Plastic Pollution- Ban the use of single-use expanded polystyrene by food vendors by 2024 rather than having a 7-year phase-out period.

## **Environmental justice**

### **Secondary**

- Require agencies to consult with members of affected communities early in environmental permitting and to provide them with meaningful involvement throughout the permitting process, through pre-application notice, public meetings, and communication using methods tailored to the affected communities.

## **Land and Wildlife Conservation**

### **Primary**

- Protecting Historical and Cultural Resources: Develop a state policy which requires state approval of datacenter developments over a certain size or within a certain proximity to sensitive sites. (See BOOSTING SMART GROWTH, page 59)
- Increasing Investment in Trees: Reenact SB537, which would provide additional authority to localities to replace lost canopy.
- Increasing Investment in Trees: Accelerate DEQ's efforts to establish a 4th landcover type and stormwater best management practices for tree planting to enable developers to preserve trees onsite and receive stormwater credits for trees beyond the minimum required by state code.
- Increasing Investment in Trees: Direct VDOT to offset tree canopy losses due to road expansion projects by providing tree planting grants to communities adjacent to construction activities, and to replace lost tree canopy in the VDOT right-of-way.
- Investing in Wildlife Crossing & Habitat Connectivity: Ensure a state funding mechanism and a \$5 million budget allocation in 2023 to, in part, support crossing implementation in areas identified by Virginia's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan, as well as to leverage federal dollars available for wildlife crossings and habitat connectivity projects.
- Investing in Wildlife Crossing & Habitat Connectivity: Provide additional staffing capacity

and support for the state agencies charged with developing and advancing the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan by funding and hiring at least 1 FTE in 2023.

- Investing in Wildlife Crossing & Habitat Connectivity: Direct VDOT to determine the Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) status of a road-stream crossing prior to replacement/repair projects and update design standards to ensure habitat connectivity and resiliency for all road stream-crossing projects.

### Secondary

- Parks and trails- Establish a State Trail Designation Program and direct resources toward planning and constructing state trails through the Office of Trails.
- SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES: Direct DEQ to promptly enforce federal regulations implementing § 316(b) of the Clean Water Act for cooling water intakes at power plants to reduce impacts on fish populations.
- Heritage and future- Virginia's Land Conservation Grant Programs:
  - \$20 million per year for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation