

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation

2019 Special Pre-Application Grant Manual

Adoption Date: November 22, 2019

Administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

I. PRE-APPLICATION GRANT ROUND OVERVIEW

Chapter 539 of the Virginia Acts of Assembly set out a new process for conducting land conservation grant rounds offered by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (the “Foundation” or “VLCF” intermittently) established in 1999 under Va. Code §§ 10.1-1017 through 10.1-1026.

This Pre-application Grant Round is being conducted to generate a ranked list of potential land conservation projects to be provided by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance by December 15, 2019.

This Pre-application Grant Manual and the process described herein, is intended to generate project proposals that will be ranked and form the required list to be reported to the General Assembly.

Should grant funding be provided in the state budget for fiscal year 2021, the VLCF Board will hold a full grant round to award those funds during calendar year 2020. The request for proposals will be open to all eligible applicants, including those who submit pre-applications for this process and those who did not.

II. SUBMITTING POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Applicants are requested to submit potential land conservation projects for consideration by submitting the Pre-application Information Packet (PIP) and requested information as described below.

Pre-application Information Packet (PIP)

The following items make up the PIP. *Only these listed items* should be submitted.

- 1) The **Pre-application Information Form** and requested information (found at the end of this grant manual)
- 2) An **aerial map** depicting the boundaries of the proposed project
- 3) A USGS 7.5' **topographic map** showing the boundaries of the proposed project and any perennial streams or rivers as depicted by a solid blue line
- 4) Pictures of the property, including photographs of the primary conservation values and resources to be protected

Pre-application Submission and Deadline

A valid pre-application submission includes a searchable **electronic version of the entire Pre-application Information Packet** (in searchable PDF format). This must be delivered to the Department of Conservation and Recreation **no later than 4 p.m. on Friday, December 13, 2019**. Please either deliver a CD or USB drive containing the PDF to the address below or email the PDF to larry.mikkelson@dcr.virginia.gov before the deadline.

Address:

**Department of Conservation and Recreation
Attention: Virginia Land Conservation Fund Grant Program
Office of Land Conservation
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219**

General Inquiry: contact the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Land Conservation, (804) 371-5218 or (804) 225-3010.

Important Program Information

- Pre-applications may be submitted by state agencies, localities, other public bodies, and registered (tax-exempt) nonprofit organizations that qualify as a holder under Va. Code § 10.1-1009. Projects may be either acquisitions of property in fee simple or conservation or open-space easements.
- Pre-applications must be for land conservation projects whereby the landowner has already been engaged and for which specific properties (tax parcels) are being sought for acquisition or conservation or open-space easements.

- Proposals must be for a minimum of \$20,000 in total expense or a possible grant request of no less than \$10,000.
- When preparing a pre-application the following should be considered:
 - ◆ VLCF can fund the purchase of property in fee, or the purchase of a conservation easement to protect the property's conservation values
 - ◆ VLCF can pay up to 50% of costs associated with the project (100% for state agencies)
 - ◆ The pre-application must be for **specific property** and clearly identified in the proposal
 - ◆ VLCF requires 35' permanent vegetated buffers on all perennial streams, rivers, shorelines, or bodies of water with perennial outflow
 - ◆ Properties in a proposal submitted by a non-profit entity must be protected by an easement held or co-held by a public body
 - ◆ If match property is being considered rather than a cash match, the property must be geographically or ecologically connected to the subject property

Pre-application Scoring Categories

Pre-applications may be submitted under one of the five following scoring categories.

1. Farmlands Preservation
2. Forest Preservation
3. Historic Area Preservation
4. Natural Area Preservation
5. Open Spaces and Parks

As set out in Va. Code § 10.1-1020 (C)(2), farmlands and forest preservation share a funding category if less than \$10 million is appropriated for a regular VLCF grant round. While this is usually a single funding category, separate criteria have been developed for agricultural lands and for forestal lands. The applicant should use the set of criteria that is most appropriate for the project being submitted.

Pre-application Review and Scoring

Pre-applications will be reviewed and evaluated under the chosen category as indicated on the application. The scores in this interim process are predominantly based on mapped data and information available on the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Data Explorer: <https://vanhde.org/>. This site includes the publicly accessible ConserveVirginia Map and the Virginia Conservation Vision map layers. Other project information will also be considered as specified under each category.

Please be sure to answer all of the questions in the Pre-application Information Form for your chosen category **and the additional water quality points on page 7.**

Scoring for each category will be based on the criteria below. The maximum score for a project is 90 points (60 points for the chosen category plus 30 additional points for water quality criteria). Project boundaries submitted by applicants will be reviewed using maps of conservation priority resources to score the applications.

Farmlands Preservation (60 points max)

- ConserveVirginia: Agriculture and Forestry Category [20 points]
- Soil Productivity: Percent of soils classified as Prime, Unique and Important multiplied by 25 [up to 25 points]
- Adjacent to Conserved Lands [5 points]
- Best Management Practices: Are BMPs being implemented on the subject property [10 points]

Forest Preservation (60 points max)

- ConserveVirginia: Agriculture and Forestry Category [20 points]
- Acreage: 0.5 point for every 50 acres [up to 10 points]
- Percent Forested: percent forested multiplied by 10 [up to 10 points]
- Percent High Conservation Value: FCV 4 and 5 percentage multiplied by 15 [up to 15 points]
- Adjacent to Conserved Land [5 points]

Historic Area Preservation (60 points max)

- ConserveVirginia: Cultural and Historic Preservation Category [20 points]
- Historic Significance: Listed or determined by DHR to be eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register (25 points); battlefield property identified with a priority rating in one of the following reports issued by the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program: 'Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields' (1993, as amended), or "Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States," (2007, as amended) (25 points); and designated as a National Historic Landmark (10 points) [up to 35 points]
- Adjacent to Conserved Lands [up to 5 points]

Natural Area Preservation (60 points max)

- ConserveVirginia: Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity Category [20 points]
- Biodiversity Significance: Within a Natural Heritage Conservation Site (20 points); Natural Heritage elements present (e.g. rare plant or animal species populations, exemplary natural communities, or unique geologic features) (10 points); Biodiversity rank of Conservation Site indicating global significance (5 points) [up to 35 points]
- Adjacent to Conserved Lands/Connectivity: Is the parcel adjacent to other conservation lands with Biodiversity Management Intent (BMI)? [5 points]

Open Spaces and Parks (60 points max)

- ConserveVirginia: Scenic Category and Protected Landscapes Resilience Category 10 points each [20 points]
- Public Access to State Waters [15 points]
- Scenic Resources Identified and Protected [10 points]
- Densely Populated or Developing Areas: Locality with a population of 90,000 or more, or a Class V in the Development Vulnerability Model [5 points]
- Adjacent to Parks and Conserved Lands [10 points]

Additional Water Quality Points for all Categories (30 points max)

- Is the project within the Floodplains and Floodplain Resilience Category of ConserveVirginia? [10 points]
- Are there perennial streams, rivers, shoreline, or bodies of water on the property that will have permanent vegetated buffers excluding livestock that are 100 feet in width? [10 points]
- Will the permanent vegetated buffers be forested? [10 points]

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Grant Program
Office of the Secretary of Natural Resources
Pre-application Information Form 2019

Entity submitting the proposal: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Type of Entity: ☐ Locality ☐ State Agency ☐ Nonprofit

Project Name: _____

(Note: do not use landowner's name without their permission as the project names will be widely distributed)

Street address of the property (No P.O. Boxes): _____

Tax Parcel Number(s): _____

Project Specifics: *(click to place an X in the box for **all** statements below that apply)*

- ☐ Fee-simple acquisition by the grant applicant
☐ Fee-simple acquisition by entity other than the grant applicant

Name of entity acquiring land: _____

- ☐ Easement to be held by the grant applicant
☐ Easement to be held by an entity other than the grant applicant

Name of entity holding easement: _____

- ☐ Other *(describe briefly here) (additional info can be provided later in the application):*

Total acres to be protected: _____ Project location (county/city/town): _____

Virginia House District #: _____ Virginia Senate District #: _____ Congressional District #: _____

Scoring Category: *(choose only one)*

- ☐ Farmlands
☐ Forest
☐ Historic
☐ Natural Area
☐ Open Space & Parks

Total Project Cost (\$\$): _____ Total VLCF Grant Request (\$\$): _____

Brief Project Narrative (no more than 250 words)

For Farmlands Preservation

- Is the project in the Agriculture and Forestry Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- What percentage of soils are classified as Prime, Unique and Important? _____
- Are BMPs being implemented on the subject property? _____
- Is the property adjacent to other conserved lands? _____

For Forest Preservation

- Is the project in the Agriculture and Forestry Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- What is the acreage of the property? _____
- What percentage of the property is in forested condition? _____
- What percent of the property is high forest conservation value (FCV 4 and 5)? _____
- Is the property adjacent to other conserved lands? _____

For Historic Area Preservation

- Is the project in the Cultural and Historic Preservation Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- Is the property listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register? _____ If not, has DHR determined the property is eligible to be listed on the VLR? _____
- Is the property a battlefield property identified with a priority rating by the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program? _____
- Has the property been designated as a National Historic Landmark? _____
- Is the property adjacent to other conserved lands? _____

For Natural Area Preservation

- Is the project in the Natural Habitat and Biological Diversity Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- Is the project located within a conservation site? _____
- Are there heritage elements present on the property? _____
- Does the project have global significance? _____
- What is the biodiversity rank of the conservation site? _____
- Is the parcel adjacent to other conservation lands with Biodiversity Management Intent (BMI)? _____

For Open Spaces and Parks

- Is the project in the Scenic Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- Is the project in the Protected Landscapes Resilience Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- Does the project provide public access to state waters? _____
- Does the project identify scenic resources and protect those scenic resources? _____
- Is the property located in a densely populated or rapidly developing area? _____
- Is the property adjacent to another park or other conserved lands? _____

***** Additional Water Quality Points for All Categories *****

- Is the project within the Floodplains and Floodplain Resilience Category of ConserveVirginia? _____
- Are there perennial streams, rivers, shoreline, or bodies of water on the property that will have permanent vegetated buffers that exclude livestock and are 100 feet in width? _____
- Will the permanent vegetated buffers be forested? _____