

# House Appropriations Committee Meeting

Virginia State Parks

Joe Elton, Director

May 16, 2011



# Natural, Cultural, and Recreational Treasures





# 2010 Statistics

- 8.1 million visits
- 1 million overnight visits
- \$189+ million economic impact
- 75,000+ Reservations
- 2,039 Jobs (public and private sector)
- \$15 Million in Revenues
- 13,359 interpretive programs presented to 338,764 guests
- 256,418 volunteer hours/6,000+ volunteers
- 22 Youth Conservation Corps programs/207 crewmembers
- 101 ReserveAmerica Awards, 7 VRPS Awards and Take Pride in America Award
- 17,170 Facebook Fans
- 11,141 Twitter followers
- 19,674 Enewsletter subscribers



# Your Comments Count Survey

- 97% of respondents would recommend the park they visited to a friend
- 69.1% of respondents reside in Virginia (NC – 9.5%, Tenn -2.7% and Maryland – 2.7%)
- 60% of reservations are made by Virginia residents
- 26.3% of respondents found out about the park by internet and 26.5% through friends and family
- Hiking, camping and nature observation are the most frequently reported activities

# Desired Amenities and Facilities

## Top Rated State Park activities from the Virginia Outdoors Survey

1. Hiking Trails
2. Visitor Centers
3. Camping
4. Bike Trails
5. Nature Programs
6. Education Programs
7. Multi-Use Trails
8. Cultural/History Programs
9. Playgrounds
10. Swimming
11. Cabins
12. Boat/Canoe/Kayak Rentals
13. Boating Access
14. Fishing
15. Food Service
16. Equestrian Trails
17. Gifts/Souvenirs/Camp Stores
18. Hotels
19. Hunting
20. Golf



## Top Park Improvement Priorities from Our 2010 Customer Comments Survey

1. Nature/Hiking Trails
2. Restrooms
3. Swimming Areas
4. Bathhouses
5. Campsites
6. Local Information
7. Bike Trails
8. Nature Programs
9. Special Events
10. Snack Bar
11. Security/Law Enforcement
12. Playgrounds
13. Cultural/Historical Programs
14. Educational Programs
15. Visitor/Nature Center
16. Equestrian Facilities
17. Boating/Boat Launch
18. Information about Parks/Programs
19. Picnic Areas
20. Staff Availability
21. Staff Performance

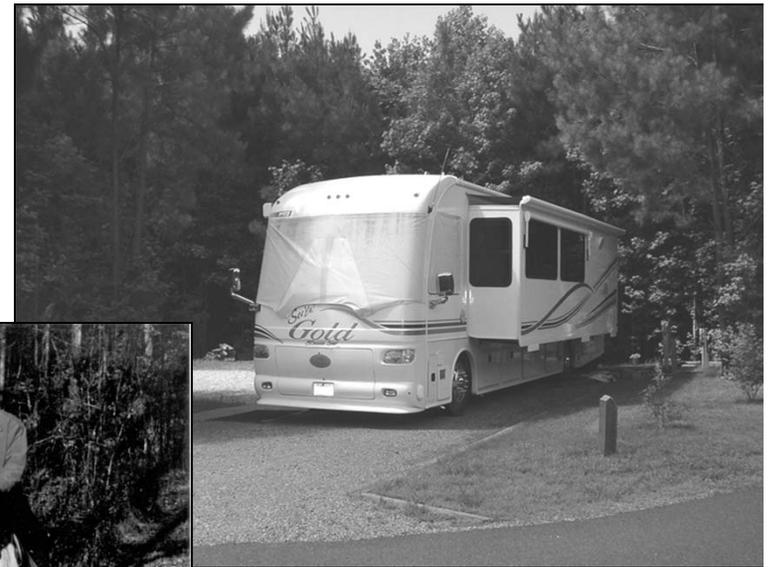
# 2002 GOB Facilities

88 new cabins & lodges in 10 parks – 318 in 20 parks

16 new camping cabins in 4 parks – 21 in 5 parks

318 new campsites in 8 parks – 1773 in 25 parks

55 new equestrian campsites in 5 parks



Kiptopeke – 6 bedroom family lodge



Claytor Lake – 3 bedroom



Bear Creek Lake – 2 bedroom



Occonechee – 2 bedroom





# High Bridge Trail State Park

Appomattox, Prince Edward, Farmville, Cumberland & Nottoway

Upgrade existing 32 mile railroad bed to trail for hiking, biking and horseback riding – 29.5 miles completed and open to public under MOU with VDOT

Renovate 4 railroad bridges – completed

Renovation of historic High Bridge to connect trail –under construction completion expected late 2011

78,919 visitors in 2010



# Raymond R. "Andy" Guest Shenandoah River State Park

Warren County

Construction of 11 cabins, 4  
camping cabins, 2.5 miles  
of roads and utilities, 33  
campsite campground,  
sewage treatment plant,  
bridge and a bathhouse  
Completed

New 4000 sq. ft. LEED Silver  
certified visitor center with  
exhibit and meeting space



# Powhatan State Park on the Historic James

Development of new park including 2.5 miles of road and utilities, office and contact station, maintenance area, 3 bathrooms, picnic areas, equestrian area, boat slides, canoe in campground, 2 ranger residences

Completion estimate  
March 2012

Partnership underway with Powhatan Public Schools, Virginia Commonwealth University and the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory on wildlife mapping



# 2010 Revenue New Cabins

Bear Creek Lake, Cumberland County 12 cabins, 1 family lodge	\$258,236
Lake Anna, Spotsylvania County 10 cabins	\$234,877
James River, Buckingham County 14 cabins, 2 family lodges	\$218,172
Occoneechee, Mecklenburg County 11 cabins, 2 family lodges	\$268,710
Kiptopeke, Northampton County 5 family lodges	\$142,672
Claytor Lake, Pulaski County 1 cabin, 3 family lodges	\$176,089
Shenandoah River, Warren County 10 cabins, 1 family lodge – opened July 15, 2010	\$20,759
Natural Tunnel 9 cabins, 1 family lodge – opened Oct. 1, 2010	\$ 765
Douthat 2 cabins, 1 lodge – opened Oct. 1, 2010	\$ 0

# 2010 Revenues

## New and Renovated Campgrounds and Camping Cabins

Belle Isle, Lancaster – campground	\$ 51,319
Lake Anna, Spotsylvania campground	\$136,404
6 camping cabins	\$ 24,365
James River, Buckingham - campground	\$114,695
Chippokes Plantation, Surry - campground	\$ 71,944
Pocahontas, Chesterfield campground	\$260,469
6 camping cabins	\$ 23,218
Hungry Mother, Smyth - campground	\$203,813
First Landing, Virginia Beach - campground	\$583,307
Natural Tunnel, Scott County campground – opened April 2010	\$ 49,711
Shenandoah River, Warren County campground – opened July 15, 2010	\$ 39,453
4 camping cabins – opened July 15, 2010	\$ 0

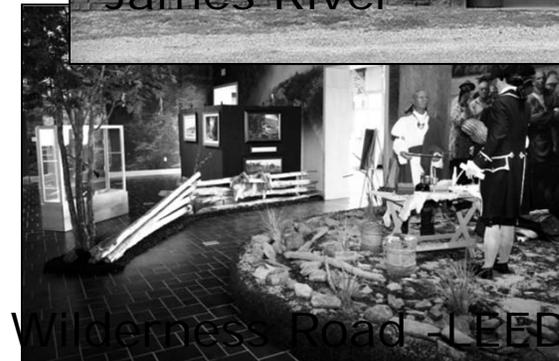
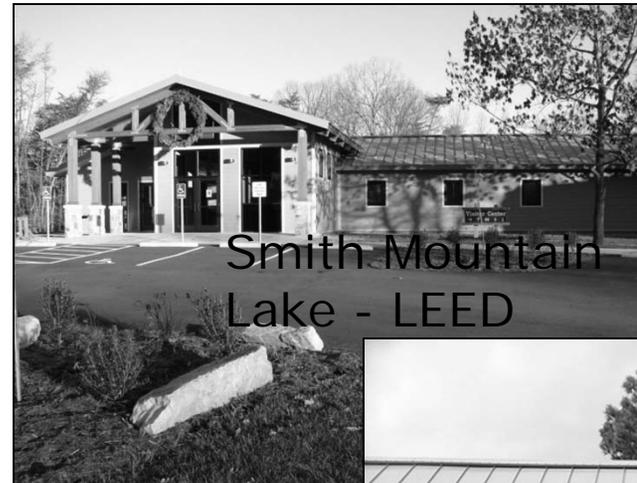
# New Campgrounds Under Development August 2011 Anticipated Completion

Douthat (Whispering Pines)  
campground



# 9 New & 2 Renovated Visitor Centers

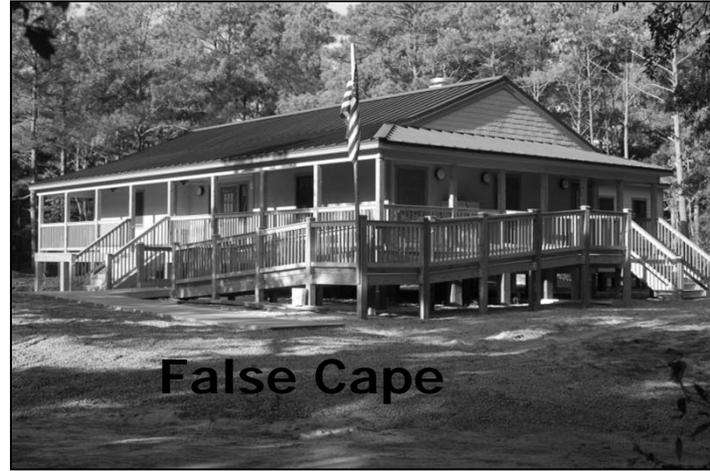
## 28 Visitor Centers in 26 Parks



**Belle Isle**



**False Cape**



**Staunton River**



**First Landing**



**Mason Neck**



# Lee Trinkle – Governor of Virginia 1922-1926



During Lee Trinkle's term as Governor, the idea of Virginia developing a State Park System and Shenandoah National Park was born



**DREAM**

**BIG**

# Harry Byrd – Governor of Virginia 1926-1930



In 1925, the plight of the middle Class, or the "Common Man," was paramount as Harry Byrd and his campaign manager W. E. "Will" Carson campaigned across Virginia. After winning the election, Governor Byrd appointed Carson Chairman of the newly-created Commission on Conservation and Development.

# Will Carson

Chairman of Virginia's Conservation  
and Development Commission  
1926-1934

“I would rather build a park where the plain people of Virginia can spend a pleasant outing and find pleasure and recreation close to nature, than to build a great church or endow a cathedral.”



# Governor George Peery, 1934-1938

“Our new state park system has been built to serve the working man. The working man is entitled to more than a bare existence, and so it is the duty of government, either state or national, to help bring to him some of the pleasures the world has to offer. The state parks are for all people, and not only will they afford recreation for our own people, but will attract tourists from other states.”

“A movement of this kind is the answer to those who argue that we are going backward. There is no place for Communism, Nazism, or Fascism in this country; but there must be recreational opportunities available to the rich and poor alike. I believe these parks will contribute greatly to the national good as we go forward to the splendid destiny that awaits in the future.”



# 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Promotions



Anniversary theme in publications,  
commercials, etc.

75 Days of Summer...daily prizes

Promotional items for events, shows, etc.

Visitor Photo Contest

“Happy Birthday from VSP Staff” video

Blue Ridge Public Television Documentary

Social Media push

Lottery Scratch Off Game

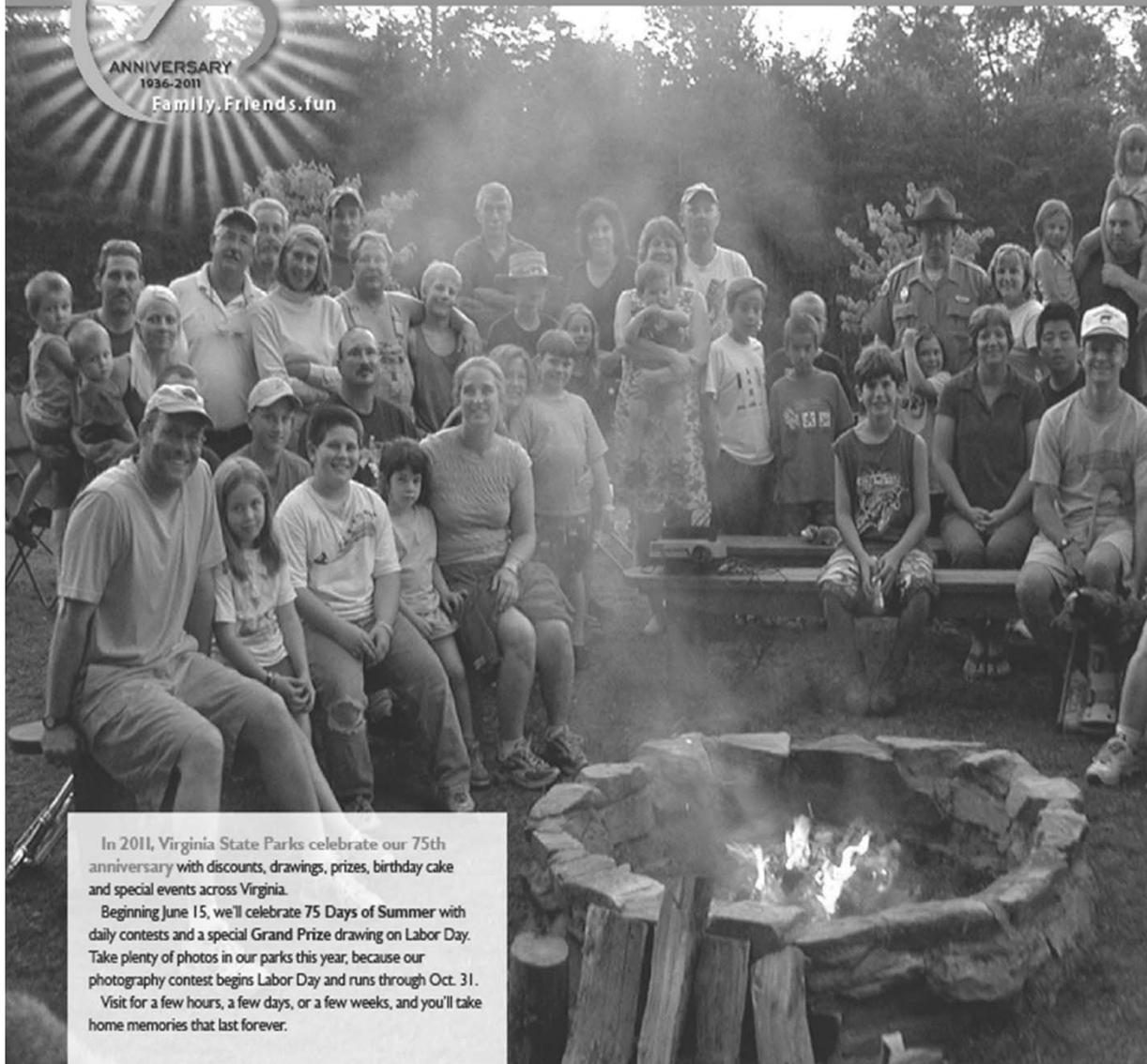
Free Parking June 13-19

Birthday Cake at all Parks June 18

Special Event at Hungry Mother State Park



We're having a party, and you're invited!



In 2011, Virginia State Parks celebrate our 75th anniversary with discounts, drawings, prizes, birthday cake and special events across Virginia.

Beginning June 15, we'll celebrate 75 Days of Summer with daily contests and a special Grand Prize drawing on Labor Day. Take plenty of photos in our parks this year, because our photography contest begins Labor Day and runs through Oct. 31.

Visit for a few hours, a few days, or a few weeks, and you'll take home memories that last forever.

Virginia State Parks | 800-933-PARK (7275) | www.virginiastateparks.gov

## Virginia State Parks



Virginia State Parks Amenities chart		Boat Launching	Boat Rentals	Fishing	Cabins	Camping	Nature/Cultural Programs	Picnicking	Playgrounds	Swimming	Trails
ESTABLISHED 1936	Kiptopeke (KP)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	Chippokes Plantation (CP)			*	*	*	*	*	*	P	B,E,H,U
HISTORIC LANDMARKS	Fake Cape (FC)			*		FC	*	*	*	*	H,W
	First Landing (FL)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,H,U
	York River (YR)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H,U
POTOMAC RIVER	Bella Isle (BI)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H,W
	Calodon Natural Area (CNI)						*	*	*	*	H
POTOMAC RIVER	Westmorland (WE)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	P	B,H,U
	Lake Anna (LA)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H,W
NORTH RIVER	Leesylvania (LE)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	Mason Neck (MN)	CT	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,H,U
NORTH RIVER	Boar Creek Lake (BC)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	High Bridge Trail (HB)						*	*	*	*	B,E,H,W
	Holiday Lake (HL)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	James River (JR)	CT	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H,U
	Pocahontas (PO)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	B,H,W
NORTH RIVER	Sailor's Creek Battlefield (SC)						*	*	*	*	H
	Smith Mountain Lake (SIA)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	H
	Twain Lakes (TL)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H
	Fairy Stone (FS)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H,W
SOUTH RIVER	Ocoonechee (OC)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	Staunton River Battlefield (SB)			*			*	*	*	*	B,E,H,W
	Staunton River (SR)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	B,E,H
SOUTH RIVER	Deuther (DO)	T	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,H,U
	Raymond R. "Andy" Guss Jr. Shenandoah River (SH)	CT	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H
	Sky Meadows (SK)			*		FC	*	*	*	*	L,H,W
	Clayton Lake (CL)	*	*	*FP	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
BLUE RIDGE	Grayson Highlands (GH)			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	Hungry Mother (HM)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,H,U
	New River Trail (NR)	CT	*	*		FC	*	*	*	*	B,H,W
BLUE RIDGE	Shenandoah (ST)						*	*	*	*	H
	Breaks Interstate (BR)	T	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	H,W
	Natural Tunnel (NT)			*	*	*	*	*	*	P	B,H,U
	Southwest Virginia Museum Historical (SW)			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	H,W
	Wilderness Road (WR)			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	B,E,H

\*ASIN 11 1101

LEGENDS: B Boating CT Camps Boat Launch H Interpretation PP Fishing Pier H 16-yr P Picnic Swimming PC Picnicking Camping T Toilet Restrooms Oly O Universal Access Bk

# 75 Days Of



- Daily web/social media based contests
- Day of the week themes like: Guess which Park; Native Virginia Plants (show a picture, they guess what it is); Show a picture with maximum zoom (they guess what it is); Fish species in Virginia State Parks; Park Trivia; Jumble of park names; Wildlife trivia
- Begins June 15<sup>th</sup>
- Ends right before Labor Day
- Every park visitor can enter the grand prize drawing
- Each park will pick one winner on Labor Day
- Out of all of the park winners, a grand prize winner will be selected

[http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state\\_parks/75th.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/75th.shtml)



# Photography Contest

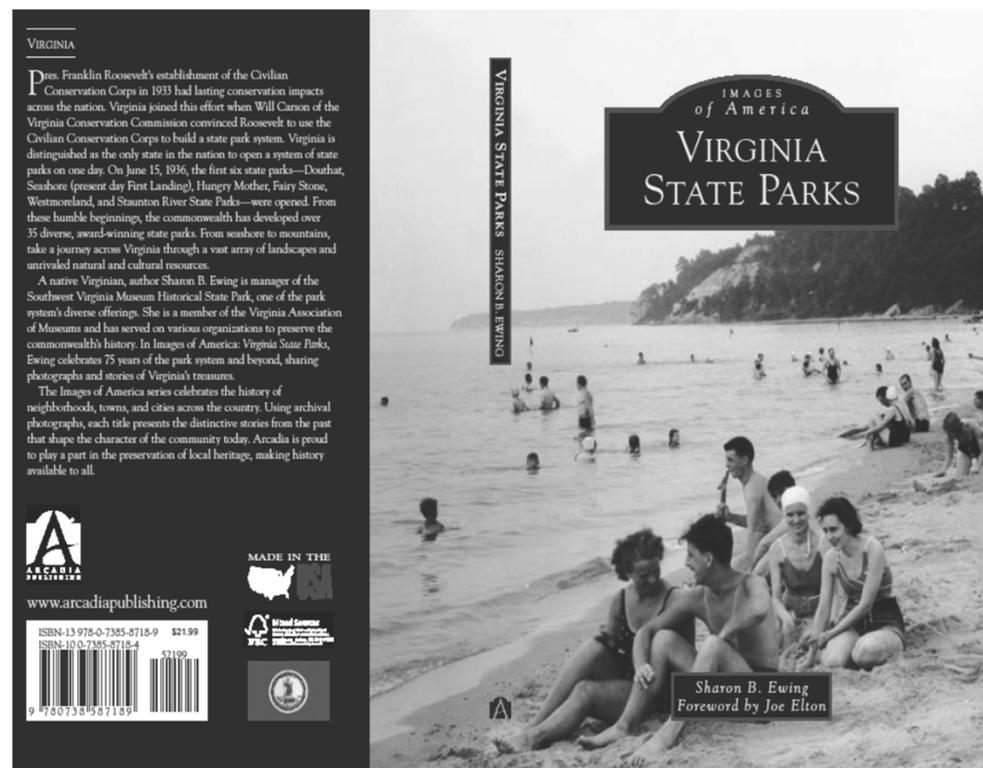
- Photos will be submitted Labor Day through October 31
- Youth contest and categories: People and nature; Flora; Fauna; Seasons (with a Kids 15 and under contest in each of these categories)
- Winners featured in #1 brochure + prizes
- All photos submitted digitally through VirginiaOutdoors site

# Staff Pride – Park “Happy Birthday” videos competition

- All parks will submit a “Happy Birthday” video which we will feature on [VirginiaOutdoors.com](http://VirginiaOutdoors.com)
- Winning video gives Park bragging rights and a Pizza Party



# Southwest Virginia Museum State Park Manager Sharon Ewing's book





# Virginia State Parks: A Chance of a Lifetime

75 Years of Serving the Commonwealth

I would rather build a park where the plain people of Virginia can spend a pleasant outing and find pleasure and recreation close to nature, than build a church or endow a cathedral.

-Will Carson



# Park Histories



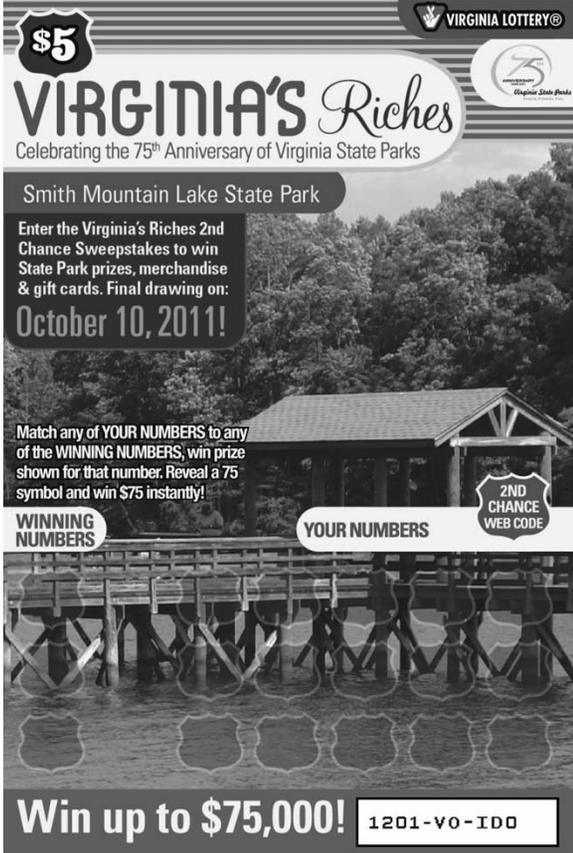
# All interpretive events

- Will speak to VSP history
  - Standard language has been developed to be conveyed with programs
- Will feature things people can do at home to be green



# Lottery

- Lottery scratch off game for the 75th Anniversary launches April 5
- Will include “second chance” feature...internet supported



**\$5** VIRGINIA LOTTERY®

**VIRGINIA'S Riches**  
Celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Virginia State Parks

Smith Mountain Lake State Park

Enter the Virginia's Riches 2nd Chance Sweepstakes to win State Park prizes, merchandise & gift cards. Final drawing on:  
**October 10, 2011!**

Match any of YOUR NUMBERS to any of the WINNING NUMBERS, win prize shown for that number. Reveal a 75 symbol and win \$75 instantly!

WINNING NUMBERS YOUR NUMBERS 2ND CHANCE WEB CODE

**Win up to \$75,000!** 1201-VO-ID0

# Partnerships Sponsorships Fundraising

- We are seeking donations for the 75 Days of Summer promo...good stuff already coming in.
- Parks will seek local support for on-site celebrations



The banner features a portrait of Governor Bob McDonnell on the left, with the text "75 Days of Summer" in large, stylized font. Below the portrait, it says "Governor Bob McDonnell welcomes you to Virginia State Parks". The central text reads "June 15 - Sept. 5 Daily prizes proudly sponsored by:". To the right are logos for "McGeorge's Rolling Hills" (www.McGeorgeRV.com), "COASTAL RV" (Where the Journey Begins), and "RoadTrip RENTALS" (OUR RENTERS ARE HAPPY CAMPERS!). The bottom of the banner includes the website "www.virginiastateparks.gov" and the slogan "Family. Friends. Fun." along with a "75th ANNIVERSARY 1936-2011" logo.

**75 Days of Summer**

June 15 - Sept. 5  
Daily prizes proudly sponsored by:

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www.McGeorgeRV.com

**COASTAL RV**  
Where the Journey Begins

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[www.virginiastateparks.gov](http://www.virginiastateparks.gov) | Family. Friends. Fun.

75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
1936-2011

# Thank Community and Visitors for 75 years of support – Birthday Celebration

- June 18, 2011 at all Parks
- Birthday Cake
- Special programs and events
- Local dignitaries, Delegates  
and State Senators invited
- Special Hungry Mother  
Events

