

Natural Resources

Proposed Adjustments as Introduced				
(\$ in millions)				
	FY 2017 Proposed		FY 2018 Proposed	
	<u>GF</u>	<u>NGF</u>	<u>GF</u>	<u>NGF</u>
2016-18 Base Budget, Ch. 665	\$123.4	\$285.7	\$123.4	\$285.7
Proposed Increases	81.9	7.1	19.4	6.9
Proposed Decreases	(18.9)	(30.1)	(18.9)	(30.1)
\$ Net Change	62.8	(23.0)	0.5	(23.3)
HB/SB 30, as Introduced	\$186.2	\$262.7	\$123.9	\$262.4
% Change	50.9%	(8.1%)	(0.0%)	(8.2%)
FTEs	1,020.50	1,162.5	1,020.50	1,162.5
# Change	(2.00)	2.00	(2.00)	2.00

- **Department of Conservation and Recreation**

- *Provide Water Quality Improvement Fund Deposit.* Includes \$61.7 million GF in FY 2017, representing the statutory deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund (WQIF) based on the FY 2015 revenue surplus and unexpended balances. Out of this deposit, a series of designations are made, including: (1) the required deposit of 15 percent, or about \$8.2 million, to the WQIF reserve fund, (2) the transfer of \$51.8 million to the Virginia Natural Resource Commitment Fund of which \$26.0 million is agricultural best management practices, and \$19.6 million for implementation of previously approved livestock stream exclusion practices, (3) the provision of \$6.2 million to soil and water conservation districts for technical assistance, and (4) the use of \$1.65 million to provide \$500,000 to develop a tracking and reporting module for the Ag BMPs database; \$100,000 for nutrient management on golf courses; \$250,000 for the Department of Forestry to provide water quality grants; and \$800,000 to be used as match for the federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).
- *Financial Assistance for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.* From the Water Quality Improvement Fund deposit, includes \$6.8 million GF each year for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Of this amount, \$6.2 million each year is for

core operations and administrative expenses, \$312,000 GF annually representing \$3,000 each for maintenance of the 104 soil and water conservation district-owned dams, and \$170,000 GF annually to perform small repairs on known or suspected dam deficiencies.

- ***Recognize Additional Recordation Fee Revenue.*** Increases the recordation fee proceeds dedicated to the implementation of agricultural best management practices by \$10.0 million NGF each year. Pursuant to language found in § 3-6.01 of the budget, a fee of \$20 is imposed on every deed recorded in the Commonwealth, of which \$10 is dedicated to the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund (VNRCF) for implementation of agricultural best management practices. This appropriation includes the reversal of action in Chapter 665 which retained \$1.0 million each year from this fee to help balance the general fund budget.

These funds are used to supplement SWCD technical assistance with an additional \$1.2 million, and provides an additional \$8.8 million of agricultural best management practices (Ag BMP) cost share assistance. The total funding provided for technical assistance to farmers and other land users by soil and water conservation districts is \$7.4 million (all funds) the first year. The total for Ag BMP cost share is \$33.4 million (all funds).

- ***Virginia Land Conservation Fund.*** Proposes \$16.0 million GF each for the Virginia Land Conservation Fund. This one of three amendments in the Natural Resources and Agriculture & Forestry Secretariat that dedicate \$20.0 million GF in each year for land conservation activities. Also included is \$2.0 million of nongeneral fund resources each year from the fee assessed on the transfer of land preservation tax credits.
- ***Natural Heritage Program.*** Provides \$500,000 GF each year to support active preserve management within DCR's 61 natural area preserves.
- ***Dam Safety Fund.*** Provides \$464,294 GF each year for the Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund. Also includes funding to hire an additional position to manage the program, bringing total funding for dam safety to \$546,080 GF each year.
- ***Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail Interpretive Center.*** Includes language authorizing DCR to accept transfer of the Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail Interpretive Center to the division of state parks upon completion of its construction. This would include 153 acres of land and \$450,000 for maintenance. The facility would be a satellite of the Natural Tunnel State Park. If such a transfer

were approved, language stipulates that it is the intent of the General Assembly to provide positions and ongoing funding for the operation of the Center.

- *Seven Bends State Recreation Area.* Provides \$291,635 GF the second year to support limited opening of the Seven Bends state recreation area in Shenandoah County. Authorization was provided by the 2015 Session for construction to allow public access. The funding will support personnel and equipment needed to operate the facility.
- *Natural Bridge State Park.* Includes \$120,000 GF each year to continue the transition of Natural Bridge to a state park. The funds will support 2 positions, a chief ranger and a park ranger.
- *Wi-Fi Connectivity in State Parks.* Includes \$250,000 GF the first year to coordinate a plan regarding Wi-Fi internet connectivity in state parks. Also proposes \$655,800 GF the first year and \$48,000 GF the second year to install Wi-Fi connections at visitor centers and contact stations at about 20 state parks.
- *Shoreline Erosion Advisory Services.* Provides \$150,000 GF each year to provide technical assistance to support Shoreline Erosion Advisory Services.
- *Chesapeake Bay Field Studies.* Provides \$80,000 GF each year for a grant to provide field studies on the Chesapeake Bay.

- **Department of Environmental Quality**

- *Fund DGS Lab Testing Fee Increases.* Provides \$442,000 GF in each year to support price increases for testing and analytical services provided to DEQ by DGS's Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS). DEQ uses DCLS for water and air quality monitoring as well as groundwater programs.
- *Fund Nutrient Removal Grants.* Includes language referencing a bond authorization in Item C-47 of HB/SB 30 as introduced which authorizes \$59.0 million in bonds to finance reimbursement for the state share of costs associated with the design and installation of nutrient removal technology to eligible wastewater treatment facilities.

- **Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

- *Increase Transfer to Game Protection Fund.* Increases the transfer from the general fund to the Game Protection fund by \$5.0 million each year based on revenue collected from the sales of hunting equipment, auxiliary hunting equipment, fishing equipment, auxiliary fishing equipment, wildlife-watching equipment, and auxiliary wildlife-watching equipment in Virginia, as estimated

by the most recent U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, pursuant to § 58.1-638 E., *Code of Virginia*. During the 2014-16 biennium, this portion of revenue was retained by the general fund.

- ***Increase Watercraft Sales Tax Revenues.*** Increases the transfer from the general fund to the Game Protection Fund by \$2.7 million each year based on increased watercraft sales activity. During the 2014-16 biennium, this portion of revenue was retained by the general fund.

- **Department of Historic Resources**

- ***Easement Coordinator.*** Provides \$94,311 GF each year to support an additional easement coordinator to assist with negotiating conservation easements. Current staffing levels only support the process of approximately 50 percent of the 30 easements proposed each year.
- ***Virginia Battlefields Preservation Fund.*** Proposes to provide \$2.0 million GF each year for land acquisition and preservation of battlefields across the Commonwealth. This is one of three amendments in the Natural Resources and Agriculture & Forestry Secretariat that dedicate \$20.0 million GF each year for land conservation activities.

- **Marine Resources Commission**

- ***Fisheries Management Division.*** Provides \$318,000 GF the first year and \$262,000 GF the second year to fund three vacant data and quota management positions. Also provides \$140,000 GF the first year and \$135,000 GF the second year to fill a second chief deputy position to focus on shellfish management and consolidate shellfish management, including oyster replenishment and oyster ground leasing and surveying which currently are split between two divisions.
- ***Tangier Island Seawall Project.*** Provides \$233,000 GF the first year and \$2,933 GF the second year for the state share of the federally funded Tangier Island Seawall Project.
- ***Oyster Replenishment.*** Increases from \$100,000 NGF to \$200,000 NGF each year the amounts appropriated for oyster replenishment. The additional funding is proposed to be utilized for research activities.
- ***Sturgeon Observer Program.*** Provides authorization for 2 additional NGF FTE positions to support the sturgeon observer program. Sufficient appropriations exist, but they did not have MEL available to fill the positions.

- **Virginia Museum of Natural History**
 - *Museum Security Funding.* Provides an increase of \$57,000 GF the first year to support replacement and improvement of the museum’s security equipment, including new closed circuit cameras, security key pads, and a new “weather bug” monitor.