

2025 Legislative Session

TNC in Virginia



Executive Summary

The Nature Conservancy in Virginia works with policymakers on both sides of the aisle and all stakeholders on legislative priorities that benefit both people and nature. Our non-partisan, science-based, solutions-oriented approach focuses on what brings us together, not on what divides us. In the upcoming 2025 Legislative Session, TNC in Virginia is well-positioned to build upon achievements in past legislative sessions where we have affected state policy and secured funding for conservation priorities and local communities across the Commonwealth.

TNC's successful government relations work in Virginia is critical to maintaining our status as a trusted voice on conservation and related issues in the Commonwealth —a voice that state government leaders, the public, and other organizations turn to.

TNC's policy and government relations work is critical for our conservation success. Our work builds support among key constituencies, including elected officials, which can unlock funding opportunities, build strong partnerships and networks, lead to positive policies and regulations, and create a sense of urgency for our work.

Legislative Priorities



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Advancing Conservation

- TNC VA is advocating for Virginia's Great Outdoors Act, a \$230 M annual dedicated funding bill to increase funding for conservation grant programs, state parks, trail development, and land acquisitions by Virginia's natural resources state agencies.
- TNC VA is advocating for a bill to establish a statewide land conservation goal of protecting 20% of Virginia's land by 2035.

Securing Public Funding for Nature

TNC in Virginia is advocating for budget amendments to:

- Secure state funding that will enable placing over 62,000 acres of the Cumberland Forest under public access easement - this would be the largest conservation easement in Virginia history.
- Fund an engineering study of costs to renovate the Aquatic Wildlife Conservation Center, where TNC scientists work closely with state wildlife biologists to breed freshwater mussels and restore aquatic biodiversity in the Clinch River.
- Increase funding for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation.

Climate and Energy

- We are working with partners to advance bills that support increased distributed energy generation by increasing the quota for small-scale solar projects, expanding long and short-term utility energy storage requirements, and pilot virtual power plants to balance supply and demand of power on the electrical grid.
- TNC VA expects one or more solar bills to be introduced this legislative session impacting the ability of localities to approve and site solar projects. We will be monitoring this legislation and weigh in where there are opportunities to provide our policy, public administration or scientific expertise.
- We are supporting legislation and a budget amendment to fully fund the Virginia Brownfield and Coal Mine Renewable Energy Grant Program and increase the per KW reimbursement rate for projects build on brownfield sites.