

Natural Resources

The Governor's recommended amendments in Natural Resources result in a net decrease of \$13.6 million for the 2000-02 biennium when compared to the original appropriation. This total reflects proposed new spending of \$3.4 million, of which \$2.7 million is the statutorily required Water Quality Improvement Fund deposit, offset by \$17.0 million in reductions.

Nearly \$3.2 million of the reductions proposed for Natural Resources relate to productivity savings authorized in the Central Appropriations of Chapter 1073. Across-the-board reductions of 3 percent the first year and 6 percent the second year result in a recommended decrease of \$4.1 million for Natural Resources, while targeted reductions account for over \$9.5 million of the proposed decrease. The largest component of targeted reductions is the elimination of the second year appropriation to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund of \$6.2 million GF.

- **Secretary of Natural Resources**
 - ***Executive Management/Productivity Savings.*** Proposes a combination of productivity and management savings that result in decreases of \$80 GF the first year and \$444 GF the second year.
- **Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department**
 - ***Executive Management/Productivity Savings.*** Proposes a combination of productivity and management savings that result in decreases of \$8,042 GF the first year and \$14,428 GF the second year.
- **Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation**
 - ***Reduce General Fund Support.*** Recommends targeted decreases of \$225,000 GF the first year and \$300,000 GF the second year and 2.0 FTE positions. This amendment reduces general fund support for the Foundation by 75 percent the first year and 100 percent the second year.
- **Department of Conservation and Recreation**
 - ***Increase Nongeneral Fund Appropriation for Indirect Cost Recovery.*** Recommends a technical amendment to increase the agency's nongeneral fund appropriation by \$388,000 NGF each year. The source of these funds is indirect cost recoveries from federal pass-through funds. Previously, the Department of Planning and Budget has made these funds available to the department through administrative action.

- **Productivity Savings.** Reduces agency funding by \$326,024 GF the first year and \$694,864 GF the second year through a variety of strategies including the reduction of storage space and the number of vehicles and management of staff turnover and vacancies.
 - **Executive Management Savings.** Proposes across-the-board savings of 3 percent the first year and 6 percent the second year that total \$1.6 million GF.
 - **Virginia Land Conservation Foundation.** Eliminates the \$6.2 million GF appropriation for the second year that was approved by the 2000 General Assembly. An additional language amendment in § 3-1.01 of the budget transfers \$17,995 from the foundation to the general fund, representing balances from a property acquisition in the first year.
 - **Reduce Support for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.** Reduces support for local Soil and Water Conservation Districts by \$875,000 GF each year, representing almost a 20 percent reduction in state support for these local water quality programs.
 - **Reduce Support for the Natural Heritage Program.** Reduces funding by \$250,000 GF each year, or 12.5 percent, and eliminates 4.0 FTE positions that were approved by the 2000 General Assembly.
 - **Eliminate Funding for National Soil Survey.** Eliminates \$260,000 GF the second year for participation in the national soil survey.
 - **Master Equipment Lease Program.** Reduces funding for agency equipment purchases by \$165,000 GF the second year. The savings are projected to be achieved by using the MELP.
- **Department of Environmental Quality**
 - **Water Quality Improvement Fund.** Includes the statutorily required deposit of \$2.7 million GF the second year to the Water Quality Improvement Fund. However, proposed language overrides the Water Quality Improvement Act and transfers this amount to the Combined Sewer Overflow Matching Fund, leaving no additional funding for Water Quality Improvement Fund grants.
 - **Combined Sewer Overflow.** Recommends a total of \$4.0 million NGF the second year be credited to the Combined Sewer Overflow Matching Fund to provide grants of \$2.0 million each to the cities of Richmond and Lynchburg to match federal funds for ongoing projects. In addition to the \$2.7 million NGF transfer from the Water Quality Improvement Fund, \$1.3 million NGF is available

from interest earned by the Combined Sewer Overflow Matching Fund.

- **Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund.** Proposes three separate language amendments authorizing expenditures from the Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund (VEERF). This fund consists of civil penalties assessed for violations of environmental laws and is to be used for emergency response to environmental pollution incidents.

Language which overrides the VEERF statute and allows the agency to utilize an unspecified amount of funds from the VEERF to further develop the Department's Comprehensive Environmental Data System, so long as the amount of funds used for this purpose does not cause the balance in the VEERF to fall below \$2.0 million.

Language which overrides the VEERF statute and allows the agency to spend up to \$150,000 NGF the first year and \$300,000 NGF the second year from the VEERF to perform fish tissue sample analysis as required by legislation passed by the 2000 General Assembly. A proposed amendment reduces the general fund appropriation by a like amount.

Language which establishes legislative intent that VEERF balances be used to meet match requirements for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund State Support Contracts. A related amendment in § 2-0.I.1 of the budget reverts \$1.1 million to the general fund that was provided for this purpose in the 1998-00 biennium.

- **Productivity Savings.** Reduces agency funding by \$281,072 GF the first year and \$1.5 million GF the second year through a variety of strategies including reducing office and warehouse space, reducing the number of agency fleet vehicles, and eliminating positions for manual permit data submission.
- **Executive Management Savings.** Proposes across-the-board savings of 3 percent the first year and 6 percent the second year that total \$1.3 million GF.

- **Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

- **Embrey Dam Project.** Includes language in § 3-1.01 of the budget that transfers \$121,250 from the Fish Passage Revolving Loan Fund to the general fund. The 2000 General Assembly appropriated this amount in general funds to the fish passage fund for the Embrey Dam project.

- **Department of Historic Resources**
 - ***Executive Management/Productivity Savings.*** Proposes a combination of productivity and management savings that result in decreases of \$104,883 GF the first year and \$261,836 GF the second year.

- **Marine Resources Commission**
 - ***Oyster Replenishment Activities.*** Removes \$52,500 GF the second year that was provided as required match for federal funds.
 - ***Elizabeth River Hazards Removal.*** Eliminates \$100,000 GF each year for projects that were to remove abandoned vessels, deteriorated structures, and waterway obstructions on the Elizabeth River. A companion language amendment strikes the authorization permitting the agency to retain year-end unexpended balances for this activity.
 - ***Reduce Shellfish Cultivation Grants.*** Reduces funding for shellfish cultivation grants by \$7,750 GF each year.
 - ***Executive Management Savings.*** Proposes across-the-board savings of 3 percent the first year and 6 percent the second year that total \$714,506 GF.

- **Virginia Museum of Natural History**
 - ***Executive Management/Productivity Savings.*** Proposes a combination of productivity and management savings that result in decreases of \$100,217 GF the first year and \$199,739 GF the second year.