

# Natural Resources

Amendments for the 2010-12 biennium contained in the introduced budget propose funding of \$211.2 million GF and \$554.1 million NGF for the Natural Resources secretariat. These amounts represent an increase of \$36.7 million GF and \$4.1 million NGF compared to Chapter 874 of the 2010 Acts of Assembly. The general fund total includes increases of nearly \$39.0 million GF, offset by reductions of \$2.3 million GF.

The majority of the general fund increase can be accounted for by a statutorily required deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund, which was generated from 10 percent of the FY 2010 general fund revenue surplus and 10 percent of year-end, unreserved agency balances. A total of \$36.4 million GF is provided as required by the *Code of Virginia*, of which \$32.8 million GF is proposed for nonpoint source projects in the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and \$3.6 million GF is provided for point source projects in the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Most of the balance of the general fund increase for the secretariat is from \$2.0 million GF proposed for preservation of open space and Civil War historic site preservation.

Nongeneral fund increases include technical amendments providing \$1.8 million NGF in the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) in the Boating Safety and Regulation program, and within the Department of Conservation and Recreation increases of \$1.4 million NGF for the Open Space Fund, \$500,000 NGF for the Land Preservation Fund, and \$200,000 for the State Park Acquisition Fund.

- **Secretary of Natural Resources**

- *Assistant Secretary of Natural Resources.* Provides \$100,000 NGF in FY 2012 for the salary and benefits of a position that is dedicated to leading the execution of the Watershed Implementation Plan required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to meet newly established goals for cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. The position is funded by a federal grant administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

- **Department of Conservation and Recreation**

- *Nonpoint Source Water Quality Improvement Fund Deposit.* Provides a deposit of \$32.8 million GF in FY 2011 for the Water Quality Improvement Fund for nonpoint source pollution control, which represents 90 percent of the deposit required by the *Code of Virginia* (the remaining 10 percent is provided for point source projects in DEQ). From the nonpoint source deposit, \$14.0 million GF is proposed to be transferred to the Natural Resources Commitment Fund for the implementation of agricultural best management practices to control nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment runoff from farming. 8 percent of this \$14.0 million GF is required to be distributed to soil and water conservation districts to provide technical assistance to farmers, pursuant to the *Code*.

- ***Funding for Land Conservation.*** Provides an additional \$2.0 million GF in FY 2012 for land conservation. Out of this amount, \$1.0 million GF is proposed for deposit to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund in DCR and \$1.0 million GF is to be transferred to the Department of Historic Resources for deposit to the Civil War Historic Site Preservation Fund.
- ***Technical Adjustments to Nongeneral Fund Appropriation.*** Provides a base appropriation for four existing nongeneral fund sources to limit the need for administrative transfers when the General Assembly is not in session. This technical adjustment includes nongeneral fund increases of: \$700,000 NGF each year from a \$1.00 deed recordation fee charged in localities where easements have been registered and that is transferred to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation; \$250,000 NGF each year for the Land Preservation Fund from the Land Preservation Tax Credit transfer fees collected by the Tax Department; \$100,000 NGF each year for the State Park Acquisition and Development Fund from revenues generated by sales of surplus state property; and, \$5,000 NGF each year for administrative expenses associated with the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, which is derived from the sale of “Friends of the Chesapeake” license plates.
- ***Turnover and Vacancy Savings.*** Proposes a reduction of \$251,616 GF in FY 2011 from savings generated by not filling vacant positions throughout the agency.
- ***Reduce Funding for State Park Visitor Centers.*** Proposes a reduction of \$200,000 GF in FY 2012 resulting in shorter hours of operations at state park visitor centers.
- ***Reduce Funding for Information Technology.*** Proposes savings of \$65,524 GF in FY 2011 and \$78,734 GF in FY 2012 based on a reduction in information technology server inventory.
- ***Transfer Land Conservation Position to Nongeneral Funds.*** Recommends savings of \$54,803 GF in FY 2011, which is replaced with an increase in nongeneral funds of the same amount by supporting a land conservation position with Land Preservation Tax Credit fees instead of general funds.
- ***Reduce Non-personal Services Costs.*** Proposes savings of \$15,866 GF each year by reducing expenditures related to training and travel.

- **Department of Environmental Quality**

- ***Point Source Water Quality Improvement Fund.*** Provides \$3.6 million GF in FY 2011 from the statutory Water Quality Improvement Fund deposit for point source pollution control projects to remove nutrients from wastewater treatment plant discharges. It should be noted that DEQ has signed agreements for point source projects with local governments and regional authorities that will require approximately \$108.0 million in funding within this biennium. It should also be noted that the funding for this amendment was erroneously placed in Item 355 in

HB 1500/SB 800, while the corresponding language is found in Item 357, which is the correct item for this program.

- ***Renewable Energy Program.*** Provides \$25,657 GF in FY 2011 and \$74,390 GF in FY 2012 and 1.0 FTE position for a staff member to assist with the issuance, monitoring and enforcement of renewable energy permits.
- ***Reduce Fund Balance in Air Mobile Source Inspection Program.*** Proposes a reduction of \$827,815 GF in FY 2012 from the Inspection and Maintenance Fund. However, it should be noted that there is no general fund in this program. However, there is an error in the introduced budget as this was intended to be a nongeneral fund transfer to the general fund, as opposed to a general fund reduction to the agency.
- ***Reduce Staffing in Agency Programs.*** Reduces funding by \$257,012 GF in FY 2012 through the elimination of three FTE positions within the agency. However, the introduced budget contains an error as three general fund positions were added rather than subtracted.
- ***Reduce Water Quality Monitoring.*** Proposes savings of \$194,217 GF in FY 2012 by eliminating two contracts with Virginia Commonwealth University for fish tissue analysis. Also, eliminates funding for a water quality monitoring position within DEQ.
- ***Eliminate Local Water Supply Planning Grants.*** Proposes savings of \$80,000 GF in FY 2012 by eliminating all local water supply planning grants that were provided to localities.
- ***Eliminate Funding for Organizational Memberships.*** Included in Item 473 in Central Appropriations is \$210,000 in reductions proposed by eliminating funding in the second year for dues to the Interstate Commission of the Potomac River Basin (\$151,500 GF), the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (\$48,500) and the Southeastern Enforcement Network (\$10,000 GF).

- **Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

- ***Boating Safety and Regulation Program.*** Provides an increase of \$1.8 million NGF in FY 2012 for boating education and safety, and boat titling and registration. The nongeneral fund comes from watercraft sales and use taxes and boat titling and registration fees.

- **Department of Historic Resources**

- ***Reduce Pass-through Payments to Montpelier.*** Reduces funding for payments to Montpelier by \$11,965 GF in FY 2011 and \$147,040 in FY 2012 based on the required state match rate, which is \$0.20 for each \$1.00 of charitable contribution spent for the restoration of Montpelier.

- *Additional Civil War Grave Sites.* Provides \$200 GF in both years for the maintenance of 40 additional Confederate Graves that were recognized in legislation passed by the 2010 General Assembly.

- **Marine Resources Commission**

- *Restore Funding for Marine Law Enforcement.* Provides \$120,000 GF in FY 2011 and \$120,000 GF in FY 2012 for Marine Law Enforcement. Funding from the Law Enforcement division was being used to pay the agency's VITA bill.
- *Transfer Marine Police Positions to Federal Funds.* Reduces funding by \$109,577 GF in FY 2012 by transferring funding for 2.0 Marine Police positions to federal funds. However, there are no additional nongeneral funds provided and no corresponding adjustment to FTE positions in the introduced budget.

- **Virginia Museum of Natural History**

- *Collections Manager.* Provides \$64,422 GF each year and 1.0 position to hire a manager with primary responsibility for care and maintenance of the museum's 20 million specimen collection in order for the museum to maintain accreditation.
- *Part-time Development Grant Writer.* Provides \$33,495 GF and \$16,148 NGF each year to allow the museum to hire a part-time grant writer to help the museum secure additional nongeneral fund revenues to support education programming, exhibits and special events.