

# Beaches to Bluegrass Trail



# Agenda

1. Overview of the Project
2. Background
3. Challenges
4. Next Steps
5. Questions

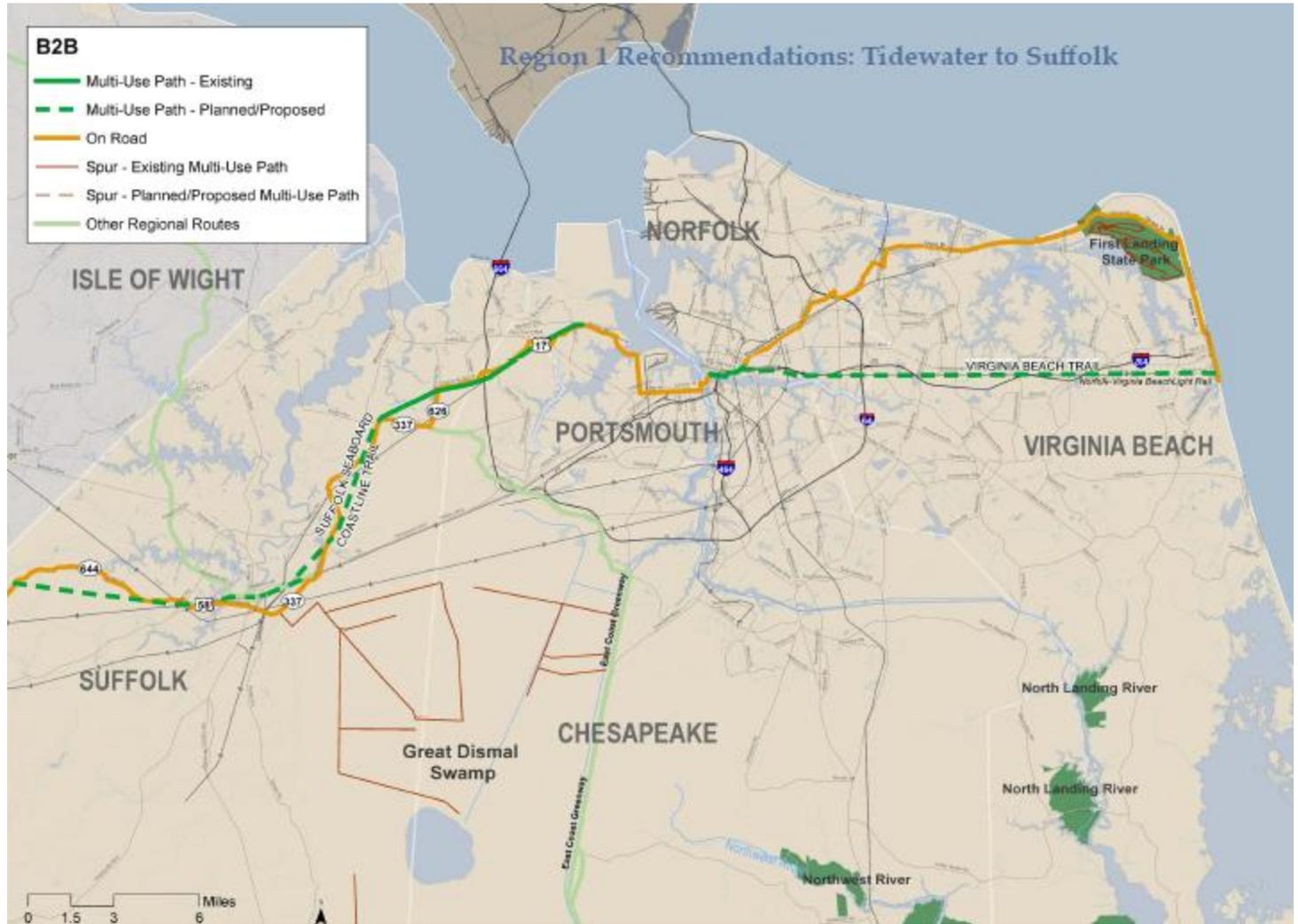


# Overview of Project



More than 400 miles long, the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail will connect communities across southern Virginia and provide convenient recreational and transportation opportunities to thousands of Virginians

# Regional Recommendations



# Priorities

## Beaches to Bluegrass Trail Priority Recommendations: Bridging the Gaps

Chapter Contents:

Overview

Priority Trail Planning and Development

Development Strategy

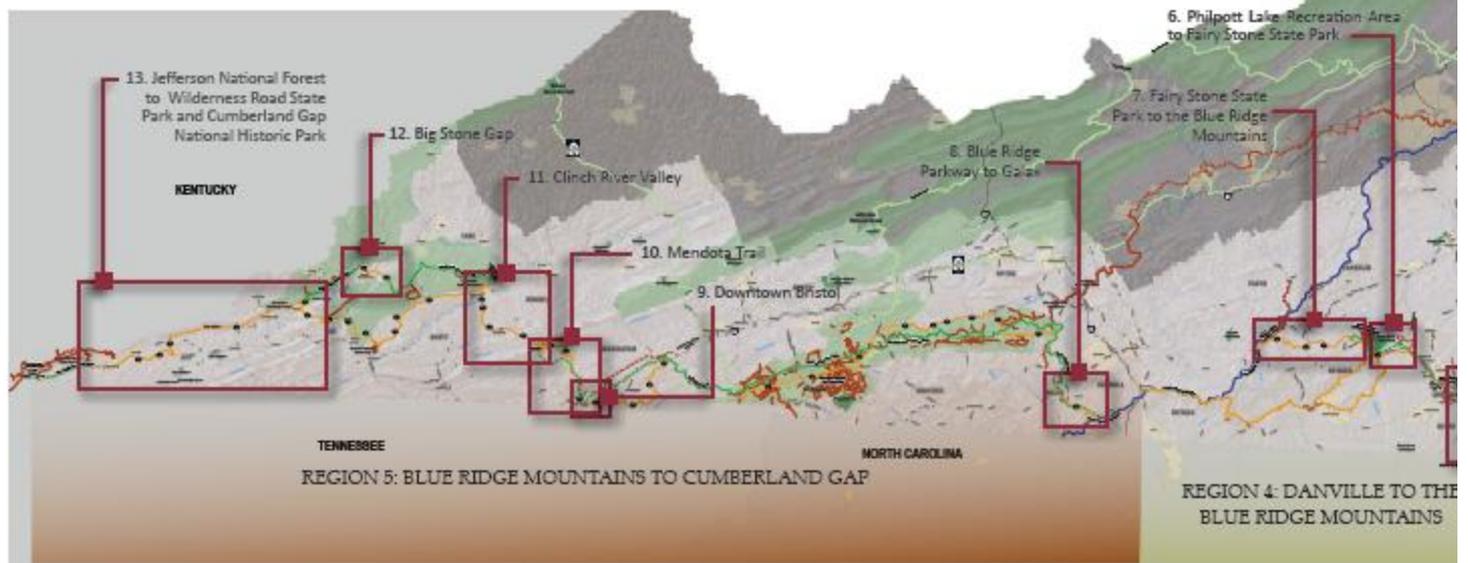
Funding and Resources

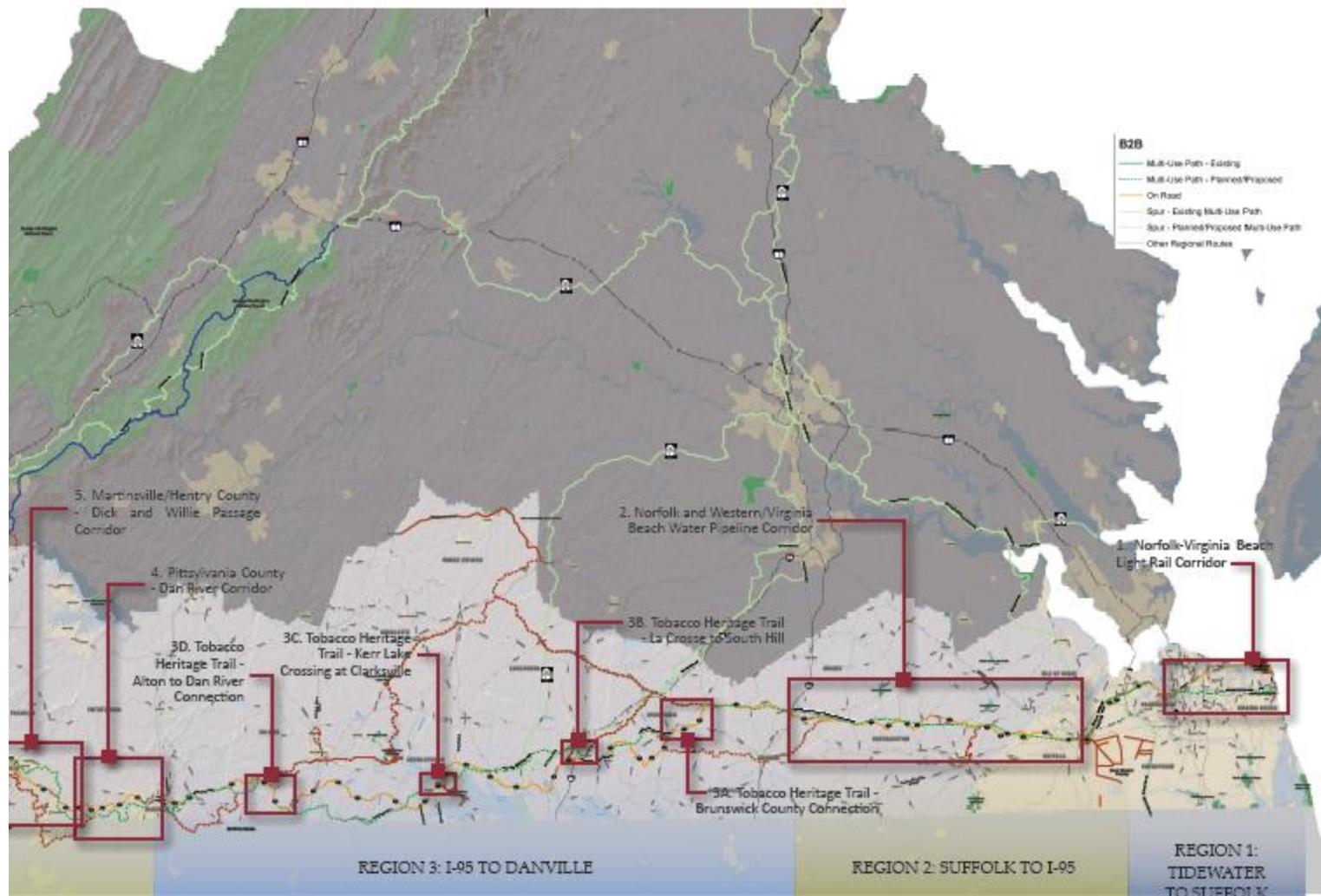
### Overview

With a strong network of existing trails, a developing network of planned and proposed trails, and new corridors identified in gap areas, the state of Virginia is in excellent position to reveal scenic landscapes, unique geographical and cultural features, and a line of epic trails that will link communities, local economies, and outdoor adventure from Virginia Beach to Cumberland Gap. In moving forward, this section details strategies and actions that will guide this momentum for trail development toward concrete results, benefiting both present and future generations. The end result will be the incorporation of the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail as a foundational element of a more dynamic southern Virginia infrastructure. Key components of this Chapter include:

1. Priority Trail Planning and Development
2. Strategy and Action Steps
3. Funding and Resources

The map below showing the recommended Beaches to Bluegrass Trail has 13 sections that are specifically highlighted in red boxes and detailed throughout this Chapter. These are the priority areas where gaps exist or limited trail planning has taken place. Bridging these gaps will be essential next steps in Trail development.





# Background

## Beaches to Bluegrass Trail

- Cross State Trail connecting Virginia to the Cumberland Gap
- Provides transportation and recreation options for communities along the trail and near the trail
- One of six trunkline routes in Virginia

### Virginia's Long-Distance Trail Network

#### Legend

- State Parks
- State Forests
- State Natural Area Preserves (some restrictions)
- State Wildlife Management Areas (some restrictions)
- DGIF Boat Ramps in trail corridor
- The Nature Conservancy Preserves
- Federal Lands with recreational use
- Regional Trails existing or under development
- Cities
- Interstates
- Appalachian Trail

#### Proposed Trail Corridors

- East Coast Greenway
- Beaches to Bluegrass Trail
- Great Eastern Trail
- Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
- James River Heritage Trail
- Planning Districts



For more information on state resources, visit the following Web sites:  
State Parks—[www.dcr.virginia.gov/state\\_parks/](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/)  
State Natural Area Preserves—[www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural\\_heritage/natural\\_area\\_preserves/index.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/natural_area_preserves/index.shtml)  
State Forests—[www.dof.virginia.gov/stateforests/index.htm](http://www.dof.virginia.gov/stateforests/index.htm)  
State Wildlife Management Areas—[www.dgif.virginia.gov/wmas/](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wmas/)

For more information on federal resources in Virginia, visit these Web sites:  
National Parks—[home.nps.gov/applications/parkssearch/state.cfm?st=va](http://home.nps.gov/applications/parkssearch/state.cfm?st=va)  
National Forests—[www.fs.fed.us/r6/gwy/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/gwy/)  
National Fish and Wildlife Refuges—[www.fws.gov/refuges/refugelocator/Maps/Virginia.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/refugelocator/Maps/Virginia.html)  
For other federal recreation areas, search [www.recreation.gov/](http://www.recreation.gov/)

Today, as population growth and development patterns continue to change Virginia's landscape, the need for places to walk, bicycle, horseback ride and be physically active is more important than ever.

Trail locations, as of fall 2009 on this map are not exact or to scale. This map should not be used for navigation or trip planning.  
[http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational\\_planning/documents/trailnet.pdf](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/documents/trailnet.pdf)

# Background

## Trails Program Vision

*active communities and open space linked by trails and greenways that connect individuals, children and their families to nature and to each other*



# Background

## Beaches to Bluegrass Trail Goals

Pull together existing trail groups and enthusiasts to form a group to coordinate efforts in developing what is tentatively being called the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail.

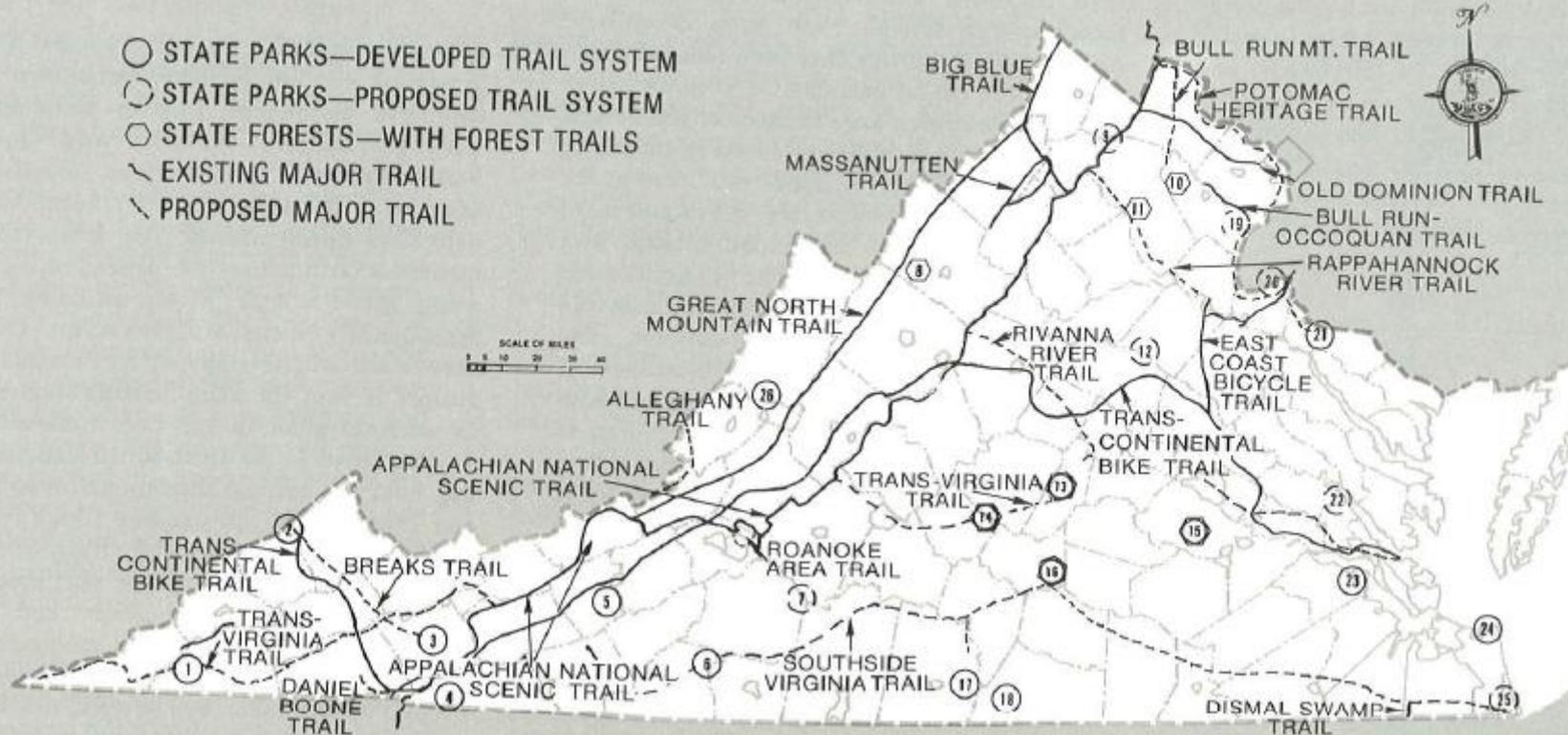
Their efforts could result in a braided trail that will connect the Cumberland Gap with the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Designated components of the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail will be joined together to form along-distance network across the southern length of Virginia. Since the trail will be comprised of many existing trail segments, not all trails will be multi-purpose, but in general the trail will attract a diverse mix of users.



# 1979 Virginia Outdoors Plan

## Trails

- STATE PARKS—DEVELOPED TRAIL SYSTEM
- STATE PARKS—PROPOSED TRAIL SYSTEM
- STATE FORESTS—WITH FOREST TRAILS
- EXISTING MAJOR TRAIL
- - PROPOSED MAJOR TRAIL



## Most popular activities

| Activity                             | % of households |      |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------|
|                                      | 2006            | 2011 |
| Walking for pleasure                 | 71.7            | 82.2 |
| Visiting parks (local, state, natl.) | --              | 50.6 |
| Visiting historic areas              | 56.1            | 44.2 |
| Swimming/pool                        | 44.0 (all)      | 43.1 |
| Sunbathing/relaxing on a beach       | 36.4            | 41.3 |
| Swimming/beach                       | 44.0 (all)      | 38.3 |
| Jogging/running                      | 24.1            | 33.6 |
| Using a playground                   | 25.0            | 29.9 |
| Picnicking away from home            | 26.1            | 28.0 |
| Visiting gardens/arboretums          | 21.6            | 25.6 |

## Public Perception of What Outdoor Recreation Facilities are Most Needed

| Activity                               | % of households |      |
|--|-----------------|------|
|  | 2006            | 2011 |
| Hiking and walking trails              | 49.0            | 67.6 |
| State waters: fishing, swimming, beach | 50.2            | 59.6 |
| Natural areas                          | 42.0            | 55.1 |
| Bicycling trails                       | 39.7            | 54.2 |
| Historic areas                         | 33.3            | 50.8 |
| Canoeing, kayaking                     | --              | 46.4 |
| Wildlife watching and nature study     | --              | 44.8 |
| Playing fields for outdoor sports      | 35.5            | 40.0 |
| Public pools                           | --              | 38.3 |
| Tennis and basketball courts           | 25.4            | 31.7 |

# Challenges

- Regional variation
- Local capacity to provide recreation facilities
- Established land uses
- Health literacy
- Adjacent landowners
- Lost opportunities on abandoned railroad lines



# Regional Variation

## Most-Needed Outdoor Recreation

### Hampton Roads Recreational Planning Region

| activity  | % of households in |       |
|---|--------------------|-------|
|   | region             | state |
| Trails for hiking and walking   | 72                 | 68    |
| Trails for bicycling  | 62                 | 54    |
| Public access to state waters for fishing, swimming and beach use             | 59                 | 60    |
| Natural areas   | 56                 | 55    |
| Historic areas  | 55                 | 51    |
| Public access to state waters for nonmotorized boating (canoeing or kayaking) | 54                 | 46    |
| Trails for wildlife watching and nature study                                 | 47                 | 45    |
| Playing fields for outdoor sports (softball, baseball, football and soccer)   | 44                 | 40    |
| Public pools  | 39                 | 38    |
| Outdoor playing courts for tennis and basketball                              | 38                 | 32    |
| Trails for horseback riding   | 25                 | 22    |
| Public access to state waters for motorized boating                           | 22                 | 22    |
| Trails for motorized off-road vehicles  | 17                 | 17    |
| Other   | 5                  | 6     |

## Most-Needed Outdoor Recreation

### Southside Recreational Planning Region

| activity  | % of households in |       |
|---|--------------------|-------|
|   | region             | state |
| Public access to state waters for fishing, swimming and beach use             | 63                 | 60    |
| Trails for hiking and walking   | 59                 | 68    |
| Natural areas   | 53                 | 55    |
| Trails for wildlife watching and nature study                                 | 48                 | 45    |
| Historic areas  | 45                 | 51    |
| Trails for bicycling  | 45                 | 54    |
| Public pools  | 41                 | 38    |
| Playing fields for outdoor sports (softball, baseball, football and soccer)   | 38                 | 40    |
| Public access to state waters for nonmotorized boating (canoeing or kayaking) | 37                 | 46    |
| Public access to state waters for motorized boating                           | 27                 | 22    |
| Trails for motorized off-road vehicles  | 27                 | 17    |
| Outdoor playing courts for tennis and basketball                              | 26                 | 32    |
| Trails for horseback riding   | 26                 | 22    |
| Other   | 4                  | 6     |

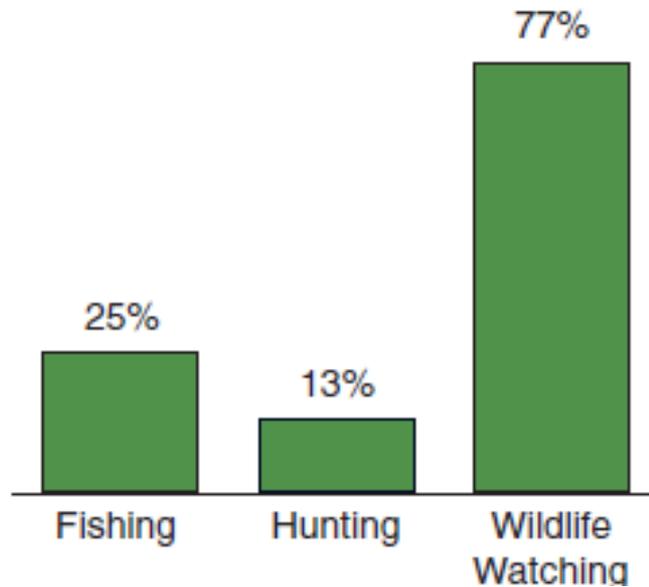
*Southside and Commonwealth Council regions were combined for sampling purposes.*



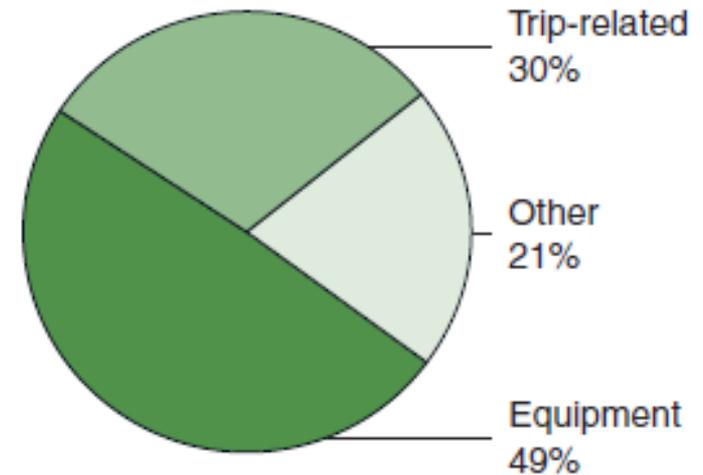


# Established Land Uses

**Percent of Total Participants  
by Activity**  
(Total: 3.3 million participants)



**Wildlife-Related  
Recreation Expenditures  
in Virginia**  
(Total: \$3.5 billion)



*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Census Bureau*

2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation—Virginia

# Selected Characteristics of Virginia Resident Anglers, Hunters and Wildlife Watchers 2011

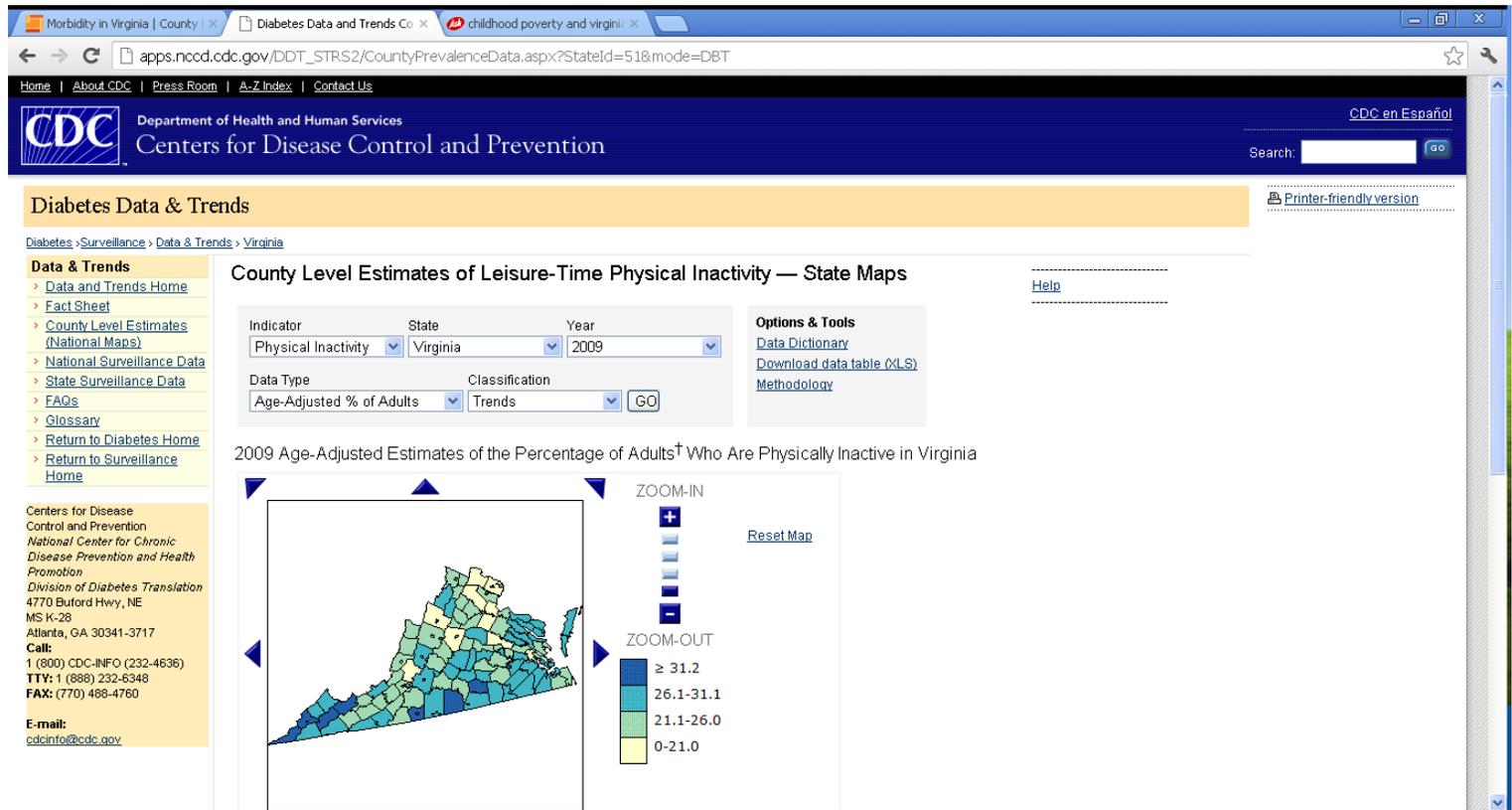
|        | Anglers                  | Hunters | Wildlife Watching |
|--------|--------------------------|---------|-------------------|
|        | Percent who Participated |         |                   |
| Male   | 18                       | 10      | 33                |
| Female | 5                        | ...     | 39                |

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Census Bureau*

2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation—Virginia



# Health Literacy



The screenshot displays the CDC Diabetes Data & Trends website. The browser address bar shows the URL: `apps.nccd.cdc.gov/DDT_STRS2/CountyPrevalenceData.aspx?StateId=51&mode=DBT`. The page title is "Diabetes Data & Trends". The main heading is "County Level Estimates of Leisure-Time Physical Inactivity — State Maps". The interface includes a search bar, a printer-friendly version link, and a navigation menu with options like "Data & Trends Home", "Fact Sheet", and "County Level Estimates (National Maps)".

The main content area features a form for selecting data parameters:

| Indicator           | State    | Year |
|---------------------|----------|------|
| Physical Inactivity | Virginia | 2009 |

Below the form, there are options for "Data Type" (Age-Adjusted % of Adults) and "Classification" (Trends), with a "GO" button. To the right, there are links for "Options & Tools", "Data Dictionary", "Download data table (XLS)", and "Methodology".

The map displays "2009 Age-Adjusted Estimates of the Percentage of Adults<sup>†</sup> Who Are Physically Inactive in Virginia". The map shows Virginia divided into counties, color-coded by the percentage of physically inactive adults. A legend on the right indicates the following ranges:

- ≥ 31.2 (Dark Blue)
- 26.1-31.1 (Medium Blue)
- 21.1-26.0 (Light Blue)
- 0-21.0 (Yellow)

The map includes zoom controls (ZOOM-IN and ZOOM-OUT) and a "Reset Map" button.

On the left side of the page, there is contact information for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Diabetes Translation, Atlanta, GA 30341-3717. Contact details include phone numbers (1-800-CDC-INFO, TTY, and FAX) and an email address (cdcinfo@cdc.gov).

# THE ROLE OF Communities

IN PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## WALKABLE COMMUNITIES

People who live  
in walkable  
neighborhoods are

**2**  
times

as likely to get  
enough physical  
activity as those  
who don't.

## JOINT USE

The number of children who  
are physically active outside is

**84%** higher when  
schoolyards  
are kept open  
for public play.

## TRAILS

People who live  
near trails are

**50%**

more likely to  
meet physical  
activity guidelines.

## RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Teens who live in poor or mostly  
minority neighborhoods are

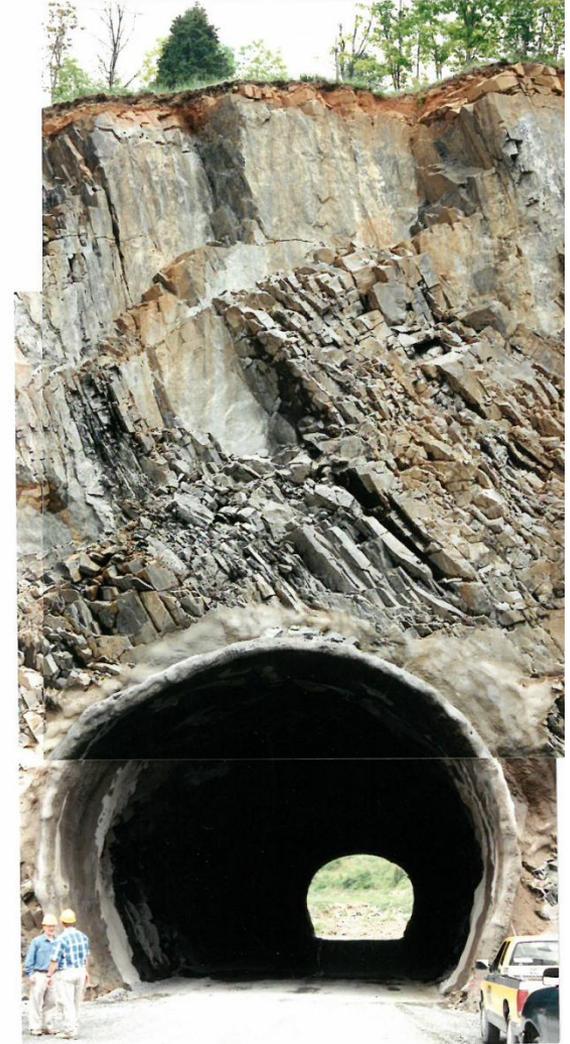
**50%** less likely to have  
a recreational facility  
near home.

Active Living Research

[www.activelivingresearch.org](http://www.activelivingresearch.org)

Sources: TRAILS: Huston S, Evenson K, Bors P, et al. "Neighborhood Environment, Access to Places for Activity, and Leisure-Time Physical Activity in a Diverse North Carolina Population." *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 18(1): 58-69, September/October, 2003. WALKABLE COMMUNITIES: Frank LD, Schmid TL, Sallis JF, Chapman J, Saelens BE. Linking objectively measured physical activity with objectively measured urban form. Findings from SMARTRAQ. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2005; 28(252):117-125. JOINT USE: Farley T, Meriwether R, Baker E, Watkins L, Johnson C, Webber L. Safe play spaces to promote physical activity in inner-city children: Results from a pilot study of an environmental intervention. *Am J Pub Health*. 2007;97:1625-1631. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES: Gordon-Larsen P, Nelson MC, Page P, Popkin BM. "Inequality in the Built Environment Underlies Key Health Disparities in Physical Activity and Obesity." *Pediatrics*, 117(2): 417-424, 2006.

# Adjacent Landowners



# Lost Opportunities

## Rails to Trails

### Existing Rails-to-Trails

1. Chessie Nature Trail
2. Devils Fork Loop Trail
3. Guest River Gorge Trail
4. Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail
5. Huckleberry Trail
6. James River Heritage Trail
7. Lake Accotink Trail
8. Little Stony Natl. Rec. Trail
9. New River Trail State Park
10. Phillips Creek Loop Trail
11. Railroad Ford Trail
12. Richmond - Danville Rail-Trail
13. Riverwalk Trail
14. Staunton River Battlefield Rail-Trail
15. Virginia Creeper Natl. Rec. Trail
16. Washington and Old Dominion RR Regional Park
17. Wilderness Road Trail
18. Virginia Airline Trail

Potential Rail-to-Trails  
or Rails-with-Trails under study or  
development by Dept. of Conservation  
and Recreation (DCR)



May 8, 2008 - Draft

# Next Steps

- Further outreach to stakeholders and public (Fall)
- Plan Review (Current)
- Present Draft Plan (Fall)
- Develop final Plan (Fall/Winter)

## Stay Involved!

[http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/beaches\\_to\\_bluegrass\\_conceptual\\_trail\\_plan.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/beaches_to_bluegrass_conceptual_trail_plan.asp)



# Questions?

