

AGENDA

Board of Wildlife Resources
Education, Planning, and Outreach Committee
7870 Villa Park Drive, Board Room
Henrico, Virginia 23228

October 27, 2021
3:00 pm

Committee Members: Mr. Tom Sadler, Chair, Mr. Frank Adams and Ms. Tammy Jo Grimes

DWR Staff Liaison: Mr. Tom Guess

1. Call to Order and Welcome
Mr. Tom Sadler
2. Approval of August 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes
Mr. Tom Sadler
3. Public Comment – Non Agenda Item
Mr. Tom Sadler
4. Project Wild
Ms. Courtney Hallacher
5. Habitat Education
Mr. Steve Living
6. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Plan
Mr. George Braxton
7. Relevancy Roadmap Project
Mr. Jeff Trollinger
8. Board Member Remote Participation Policy
Mr. Paul Kugelman

Final Action

Action

9. Director's Report
Mr. Ryan Brown

10. Chair's Report
Mr. Tom Sadler

11. Additional Business/Comments
Mr. Tom Sadler

12. Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 19, 2021
Mr. Tom Sadler

13. Adjournment
Mr. Tom Sadler

DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Education, Planning, and Outreach Committee
Board of Wildlife Resources
7870 Villa Park Drive, Board Room
Henrico, VA 23228

August 18, 2021
3:00 pm

Present: Mr. Tom Sadler/Virtual, **Chair**, Ms. Tammy Jo Grimes; **Absent:** Mr. Frank Adams; **Board members present:** Dr. Mamie Parker, Mr. G. K. Washington, Mr. Leon Boyd; Mr. Brian Vincent, Ms. Karen Terwilliger; **Executive Director:** Mr. Ryan Brown; **Director's Working Group:** Ms. Becky Gwynn, Ms. Paige Pearson, Dr. Mike Bednarski, Mr. Tom Guess, Mr. Darin Moore, Mr. Paul Kugelman, Dr. Gray Anderson.

The Committee Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair noted for the record that a quorum was present for the meeting.

The board secretary took a roll call vote for attendance of Board members attending the meeting. Karen Terwilliger, Tammy Jo Grimes, Mamie Parker, Tom Sadler/Virtual, Leon Boyd, Brian Vincent and G. K. Washington.

Approval of the May 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes: The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2021 Committee meeting. Ms. Grimes made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2021 meeting minutes and Mr. Sadler seconded the motion.

The board secretary took a roll call vote: Ayes: Sadler and Grimes

Public Comment – Non Agenda Item: The Chair called for Public Comments on Non –Agenda Items, hearing none, the Chair continued on with the meeting.

Introduction of New Employees: The Chair called on Mr. Tom Guess.

Mr. Guess introduced 2 new staff members to the Outreach Division, Mr. Steve Living, Habitat Coordinator, and Ms. Courtney Hallacher, Project Wild.

The Chair thanked Mr. Guess for his introductions.

Fish Local: The Chair called on Mr. Alex McCrickard for a presentation.

Mr. McCrickard, the Aquatic Education Coordinator gave a presentation on a new program called FishLocalVa.

After discussion and questions, the Chair thanked Mr. McCrickard for his presentation.

Director's Report: The Chair called on Mr. Ryan Brown for his Director's Report.

The Director reported:

- Diversity & Inclusion Plan will be completed and introduced in October 2021
- Relevancy Roadmap Program will be up and running for October 2021

Chair's Report: The Chair thanked the Outreach Team for their work and to Alex McCrickard for his presentation on Fish Local. The Chair is so impressed at the job that DWR staff does getting the word out to constituents and how professional the staff are at DWR. Appreciates the extra mile that Mike Bednarski and Ryan Brown for go constituents concerns.

The Chair asked if anyone had any further questions or comments and hearing none, the Chair announced the next meeting will be in October 2021 and he adjourned the meeting at 3:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Boswell

/s/



Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan 2021-2025





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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Commonwealth has changed dramatically since the birth of this agency in 1916. Along with the evolution of successes and new challenges in wildlife conservation, Virginia's rich geographic and biological diversity is now matched by its demographic diversity. Preservation of species, habitat, and promotion of wildlife-based recreation for the generations to come depends on our ability to reach both new and traditional constituencies and to serve the needs of all Virginians.

Accordingly, I am pleased to present the Department of Wildlife Resources' 2021-2025 Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan. This Plan, which was developed with input from staff throughout the agency via our Inclusive Excellence Council, outlines our goals and initiatives to build a workforce that will deliver on our mission to "CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT."

Implementing the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan will increase our capabilities; promote diversity, equity and inclusion among the agency's staff; make the outdoors available, accessible, and safe for all Virginians; and help ensure that wildlife and outdoor recreation are enjoyed and supported by generations to come. To paraphrase President John F. Kennedy's memorable speech, we choose this undertaking not because it is easy, but because it is hard; because these goals will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because this challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to accomplish.

Each of us is responsible for ensuring the success of this Plan and I look forward to working with colleagues and constituents to achieve these important objectives.



Ryan Brown
Executive Director,
Department of Wildlife Resources

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE TERMS

If an organization is going to move towards Inclusive Excellence, there must be alignment of goals and mutual intentionality. This is not achievable without a shared vocabulary. To that point, some of the terms below can be found in the Governor's ONE Virginia Plan and will be repeated throughout the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources' (DWR) journey.

DIVERSITY

is defined broadly as all of the characteristics that make individuals unique. It is used to describe the various combinations of group/ social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability, as well as cultural, political, religious and other affiliations) and human differences (e.g., personality, learning style, and life experiences). DHRM's working definition of diversity is to foster a collaborative work environment that is inclusive of every employee by recognizing and effectively utilizing their talent, skills, and perspectives to create a unified and high-performance workforce.

EQUITY

refers to the creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access and equitable opportunity. Equity is also the process of allocating resources, programs, and opportunities to employees, customers, and residents, to address historical discrimination and existing imbalances. Therefore, equity requires an organizational commitment that all employees, customers, and residents will be provided equitable access to opportunities, resources, and the ability to fully contribute to the agency's mission and goals.

INCLUSION

is used to describe the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diverse people, practices, and communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) in ways that increase one's cultural affirmation and respect, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathetic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact with and within systems and organizations. More importantly, genuine and full inclusion fosters a sense of belonging and respect for the differences and uniqueness that all employees bring to the workplace, without the impact of inequities.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

requires that we establish a welcoming and productive community that engages all of its diversity in the service to an organization, for both internal and external stakeholders. It requires affirmation and respect for cultural, social, racial, religious, gender, and ability differences among the organization's stakeholders. It includes organizational improvements in access/success, climate/culture, education/training, infrastructure/accountability, and community engagement.

INTENTIONALITY

is the characteristic of an individual's or organization's acts that requires them to:

- 1) have goals;
- 2) select behaviors that are in the service of attaining the goals; and
- 3) to call into conscious awareness a desired future state. It is this philosophy that will move DWR towards Inclusive Excellence.

UNDERREPRESENTED

refers to populations that are disproportionately lower in number relative to their number in the national/state population.

DWR's INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE VISION

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) will strive to create a work environment that provides all employees equal access to information, development and opportunity. By building an inclusive work environment, we will promote, then leverage, the diversity of people, talent and ideas. As a public agency, our ability to understand, embrace and operate in a multicultural Commonwealth — both among our stakeholders and our employees — is critical to our long-term sustainability and specifically impacts our ability to meet DWR's mission.



INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

CORE PRINCIPLES

Below are the four core principles of Inclusive Excellence at DWR. Each has a specific Goal(s) that is to be accomplished by executing on specific Strategic Initiatives. It is anticipated that this list of initiatives will continue to grow over the four-year lifespan of this plan and such additions will be noted in the annual report on progress.

Too often, strategic plans require certain “outputs” from organizational components. In order to be intentional in our efforts, the plan features Targeted Outcomes which will ultimately determine success. While creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace is the responsibility of every employee, some divisions are more responsible for the execution of specific initiatives than others.

The Accountable Divisions charts assign responsibility for each initiative. The accountable divisions for each strategic initiative are requested to collaborate in the submission of proposed metrics for each of the strategic initiatives within 90 days of the final approval of this plan, as they possess the subject-matter expertise to execute more efficiently.

- Recruiting
- Culture
- Awareness
- Connecting

RECRUITING

- Using a broad spectrum of talent acquisition best practices to attract a diverse and highly skilled applicant pool.
- To manage a process free from artificial barriers that would discourage the hiring of underrepresented candidates.

GOALS

- Complete transparency of the recruitment and selection process allowed within federal and state law and Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) policy.
- Elimination of all reasonable artificial barriers to hiring.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Create a college and university recruitment plan featuring internships and mock interviews that is inclusive of historically Black colleges and universities in the Commonwealth and contiguous states.
2. Develop enhanced relationships with college administrators and proficiency with HANDSHAKE^[1] technology to assist in recruitment.
3. Track applicant flow data for various demographics. Provide a semi-annual report to leadership for action and accountability consideration.
4. Engage diverse recruiting venues, websites, magazines, business publications, and professional and college outdoors-oriented affinity organizations.

[1] HANDSHAKE is an online employment solution for college students used by more than 500,000 employers.

5. Provide clear applicant preferred education qualifications and certification requirements to all colleges and universities.
6. Engage subject matter expert(s) to review interview processes to ensure objectivity in candidate selections.
7. Establish an employer branding strategy which includes images of underrepresented and underserved populations.
8. Develop a centralized Internship Program for all divisions with one point of contact, a start-to-finish participation plan, and a way to capture participant and division feedback with the goal of full-time employment.
9. Foster an environment in which interns are paid a wage that will allow them to live independent of other income during the internship.
10. Review the LawFit[2] measurables and water swimming requirements to ensure that they are appropriate and/or can be obtained at the conclusion of a CPO academy.
11. Offer training to ensure that individuals conducting background investigations are doing so equitably and the process is free from bias.
12. Expand advertisements through all avenues that will attract a diverse population such as radio, billboards, social media sites, LinkedIn, Indeed, etc.
13. Communicate and follow hiring timelines including the requirements for completing the Conservation Police Officers academy.
14. Standardize the sharing of information regarding perquisites and conditions of positions to all interviewing candidates.
15. Perform salary studies to ensure equity in all offers of employment.
16. Avoid including minimal requirements in a position description that can be obtained after employment.

[2] The LawFit LLC is an initial physical fitness assessment tool developed by the National Center for Public Safety Fitness of James Madison University. After this assessment is complete the candidate is expected to complete several hours of physical fitness training leading to optimal performance, endurance, and strength with the management of disease, fatigue, and stress and reduced sedentary behavior. Candidates are tested periodically over a 26-28 week training period.

RECRUITING**TARGETED OUTCOMES**

- Increased number of underrepresented applicants in the pool.
- Increased rate of underrepresented candidates interviewed and hired.
- Increased the number of interns from underrepresented groups.
- Increased rate of underrepresented interns entering the conservation field and working for DWR.

ACCOUNTABLE DIVISIONS

	DIVERSITY INCLUSION	EXECUTIVE OFFICE	FINANCE PLANNING	FISHERIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	LAW	OUTREACH	WILDLIFE
1					X			
2					X			
3	X				X			
4	X				X		X	
5					X			
6	X				X			
7	X						X	
8	X				X			
9	X		X		X			
10	X				X	X		
11	X				X	X		
12	X						X	
13					X	X		
14					X			
15					X			
16					X			

CULTURE

- To promote and sustain a workplace that is inclusive of all people, talents and ideas so that members of the workplace may achieve their highest level of engagement and full occupational potential.

GOALS

- Develop a workforce that resembles the diverse racial, gender, and cultural differences of the Commonwealth.
- Value non-traditional approaches and skill sets that can further DWR's mission.
- Adopt a "best idea wins" approach to decision-making.
- Treat others as THEY wish to be treated and not as YOU wish to be treated.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Challenge and ensure accountability for unacceptable cultural behaviors by both employees and customers.
2. Conduct an annual climate survey of the workforce. Track progress and course correct towards a more inclusive work environment.
3. Move beyond the "rites of passage" approach to starting a career in conservation to one which does not present barriers based on means.
4. Allow employee work profiles and screening criteria to include bonafide and relevant non-career activities when measuring an applicant's qualifications and interests.

5. In the employment process, when not in contradiction with any state, federal or local law or regulations, consider how an applicant's views and past actions align with the vision, mission and values of DWR.
6. Develop an Ombudsman Program that provides a safe space for those who have difficulty in the workplace.
7. Develop an Employee Appreciation Program and demonstrate authentic appreciation that is communicated to the entire staff. Ensure that recognition awards are given annually.
8. Establish a standardized on-boarding process that includes a presentation on "Inclusive Excellence at DWR" and agency-wide introduction of new staff.
9. Challenge seemingly innocuous office practices that could ultimately exclude certain members of the workforce.
10. Conduct a standardized exit interview/survey of all departing staff members with data reported annually to leadership for future action.
11. Emphasize non-traditional/practical experience as a proxy for academic credentials whenever possible.
12. Require specialized cultural awareness education for all customer-facing personnel.
13. Encourage participation and transparency in career development practices for all DWR employees.
14. Conduct all policies, practices, and procedures to ensure alignment with Inclusive Excellence goals.
15. Create a framework for the development of employee resource groups where employees with similar backgrounds and interests may network, mentor, and create a safe space consistent with DWR's policies.

TARGETED OUTCOMES

- Reduction in grievances.
- Reduction in EEO/discrimination claims.
- Reduction in customer complaints.
- Increased employee retention rates.
- Increased employee engagement.
- Increased applicants.
- Increase scores on annual climate surveys.

ACCOUNTABLE DIVISIONS

	DIVERSITY INCLUSION	EXECUTIVE OFFICE	FINANCE PLANNING	FISHERIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	LAW	OUTREACH	WILDLIFE
1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3				X	X	X		X
4				X	X	X		X
5		X	X	X	X	X		X
6		X			X			
7		X			X			
8	X				X			
9	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	X				X			
11				X	X			
12	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
13		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
14	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	X	X						

AWARENESS

- To develop learning opportunities to equip members of the workforce with the ability to promote inclusive excellence and be active and accountable in building an inclusive work environment.

GOALS

- Initiate Agency-wide, mandatory Inclusive Excellence training.
- Integrate Inclusive Excellence principles in all policies, practices and procedures going forward.
- Build training to accommodate diverse learning styles.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Offer regular training on Inclusive Excellence, cultural competency and awareness.
2. Regularly communicate information that raises awareness and promotes civility in the workplace.
3. Hold agency leadership accountable, via 360 reviews, for creating an environment within their divisions that promotes inclusive excellence.
4. Develop training courses that are tailored appropriately for employee's roles and responsibilities.
5. Bring broader perspectives with the use of third-party trainers with experiences beyond DWR.

6. Offer training specifically for hiring managers that emphasizes development of job descriptions, bias recognition and elimination, panel selection, etc.
7. Focus training and awareness opportunities on integrating Inclusive Excellence concepts into all aspects of the agency.
8. Educate outreach personnel, conservation police officers, and other public facing personnel, on cultural competency and building relationships across cultures.
9. Require management training of all new managers within one (1) year of hiring/promotion.
10. Produce annual report on advancement of Inclusive Excellence by Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer.
11. Maintain an engaged Inclusive Excellence Council composed of members of each division who will champion Inclusive Excellence throughout the agency.

AWARENESS

TARGETED OUTCOMES

- Increased hiring and promotion of those from underrepresented populations.
- Improved communication between employees from different backgrounds.
- Improved support for Inclusive Excellence.
- Reduction in EEO/discrimination claims.

AWARENESS**ACCOUNTABLE DIVISIONS**

	DIVERSITY INCLUSION	EXECUTIVE OFFICE	FINANCE PLANNING	FISHERIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	LAW	OUTREACH	WILDLIFE
1	X					X		
2	X							
3		X			X			
4	X				X			
5	X							
6					X			
7	X	X			X			
8	X			X		X	X	X
9		X			X			
10	X							
11	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

CONNECTING

- Utilizing resources and strategies to make the outdoors available, accessible, and safe for all Virginians.

GOALS

- Increase education about, and access to, Virginia's wild spaces and the fish and wildlife that live in them.
- Provide targeted, direct outreach to underrepresented and underserved populations.
- Expand partnership with outdoor-oriented affinity organizations.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Create DWR branded content that highlights DWR's mission and ways to get involved to be distributed at parks, schools and colleges.
2. Create branded content for the Project WILD educational program.[3]
3. Establish strategic relationships with outdoor affinity organizations to better understand their views on outdoor activities and conservation.
4. Include more diverse images in both print and electronic media.

[3] The Project WILD program is an interdisciplinary conservation and environmental education curriculum that focuses on wildlife and conservation for all educators -- pre-service, formal and non-formal, pre-K through high school. DWR provides in-service training for educators in support of the wildlife-related Science Standards of Learning as well as essential skills in math and language arts. The activities in the guides aid in developing students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills through the use of cross-curricular lessons that can be used individually, sequentially, or in units.

5. Provide digital content in the four (4) most prevalent languages for the relevant parts of the state.
6. Update website with images and languages that are inclusive of those in the Commonwealth.
7. Partner with other Virginia outdoor organizations to create synergy in messages to diverse audiences.
8. Seek opportunities to acquire and develop lands and waters that will assist in promoting high-quality outdoor wildlife experiences closer to our urban communities.
9. Seek to convert or expand the usage of DWR's current lands and waters to accommodate activities in which underrepresented groups participate. [4]
10. Host events that target underrepresented populations.
11. Seek sponsorships and participation in outdoor programs and events that are held by, or target, underrepresented populations.
12. Develop a Community Engagement Plan and dedicate an employee to its execution.
13. Share Inclusive Excellence awareness content on website and social media.

CONNECTING

TARGETED OUTCOMES

- Increased participation of underrepresented populations at outreach and community engagement events.
- Increased visitation at Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), and other wild spaces, by underrepresented populations.
- Increased allowable alternative use of WMAs.[5]
- Increased participation in events designed to introduce underrepresented populations to outdoor activities.

[4] & [5] This plan in no way promotes interference with WMAs' primary purpose as wildlife habitat. Any use must be consistent with the purposes for which the property was purchased or compatible with management objectives.

ACCOUNTABLE DIVISIONS

	DIVERSITY INCLUSION	EXECUTIVE OFFICE	FINANCE PLANNING	FISHERIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	LAW	OUTREACH	WILDLIFE
1							X	
2							X	
3	X						X	
4	X						X	
5							X	
6							X	
7		X				X	X	
8				X				X
9				X				X
10	X			X		X	X	X
11	X			X		X	X	X
12	X	X			X		X	
13	X						X	

CONCLUSION

The Inclusive Excellence Council (IEC) is composed of the representatives from each DWR division and led by the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

Primary among the IEC's charges were developing an Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan that would address the Agency's need to evolve both internally and externally. The IEC utilized the following plan development process:

- **Defined parameters of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

We studied the Agency's mission and R3 Strategic Plan and worked within the Commonwealth's ONE Virginia Plan for diversity, equity and inclusion which clearly defines the Governor's vision for an inclusive Commonwealth.

- **Developed a Vision Statement**

The developed vision was vetted and approved by the Director's Working Group.

- **Assessed Needs**

We reviewed areas of improvement highlighted in previous diversity studies, Joint Legislative and Review Commission (JLARC) study and Office of State Inspector General (OSIG) audit. The IEC also retained a third-party facilitator to perform a qualitative assessment through meetings with members of the workforce.

- **Reviewed Best Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Practices in Conservation**

While relatively a new area, we were able to study industry trends and challenges.

- **Established Priorities**

Once the Core Principles were determined, the IEC divided into teams to establish goals, initiatives and targeted outcomes for each one.

- **Determined Accountability and Measures**

The final and most important task to insure success was assigning accountability to agency divisions to devise measures and produce outcomes.

In developing the Plan, the IEC believes it has given DWR a roadmap to becoming an employer of choice among the Commonwealth's agencies and a model steward in making Virginia's outdoor spaces available, accessible and safe for its diverse population. We look forward to working toward the continued growth of the Agency through Inclusive Excellence.

2020-23 DWR Inclusive Excellence Council

George P. Braxton, J.D., C.D.E. (Chair)

Sgt. Michael Hill (Vice-Chair)

Lester Brantley, MPA

Sgt. Jessica Fariss

Karen Horodysky, MS

Ronald Hughes

Lindsay Kagalis

CPO Amanda Nevel

Doreen Richmond

Jaime Sajecki

Jeffrey Trollinger

Virginia DWR Relevancy Project

An Agency Path Forward: Designing Effective Engagement and
Building Capacity for Relevancy



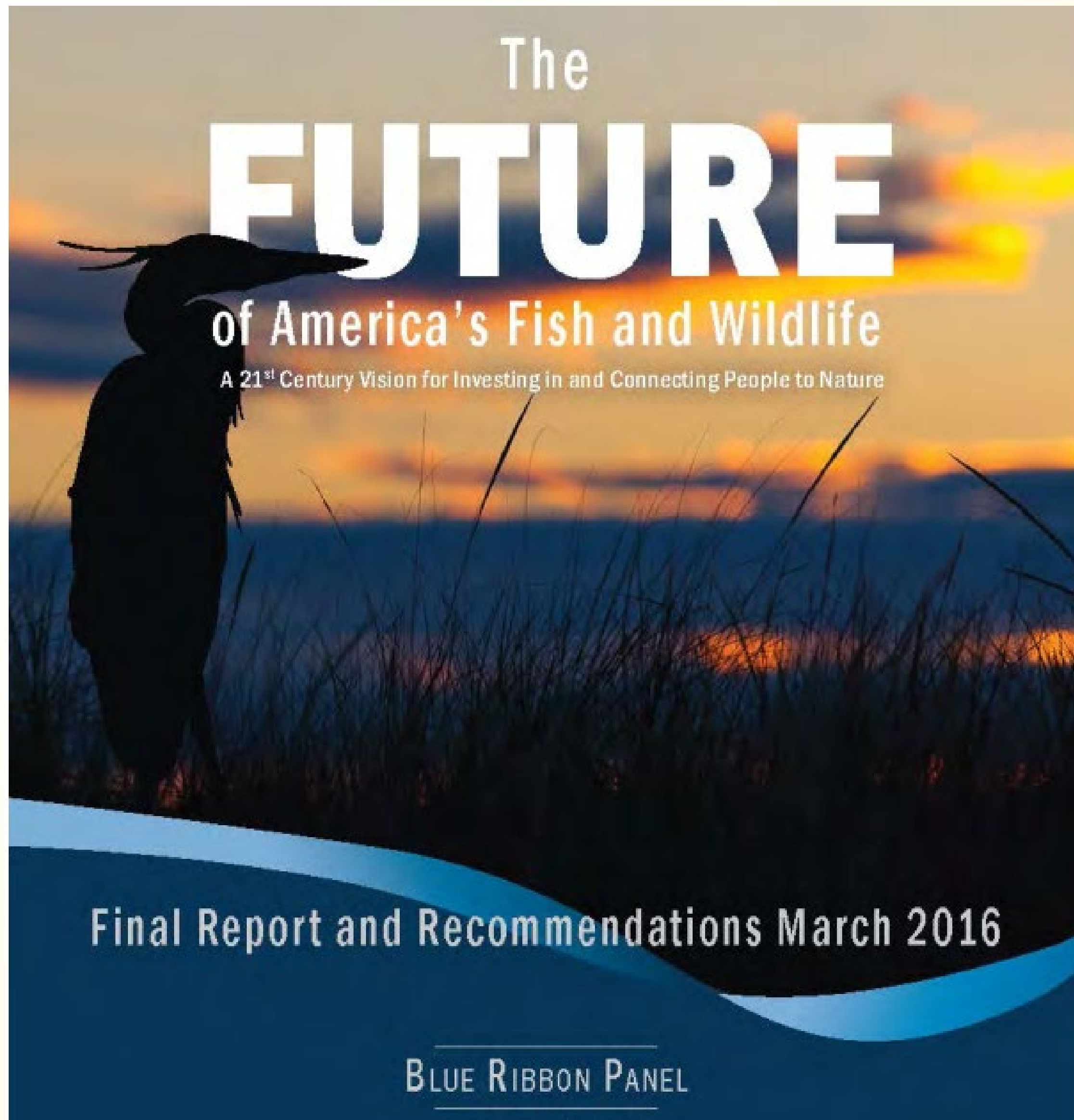
CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

Project Goals and Objectives

Based on the guidance of the [Fish and Wildlife Relevancy Roadmap](#), and recommendations from the Future of America's Fish and Wildlife Blue Ribbon Panel report and related discussions at national and regional conferences, this project proposes three related goals:

1. significantly enhance a state agency's ability to engage new constituencies,
2. cultivate agency relationships with priority new constituencies, and
3. increase these constituencies' engagement with, connection to, and support for the agency and conservation.





Where it all started

Blue Ribbon Panel

In September 2014, John Morris, Founder of Bass Pro Shops and David Freudenthal, former governor of Wyoming asked business and conservation leaders to join them on the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. The Panel was charged with examining the current system of conservation funding and recommending a new mechanism that will conserve all fish and wildlife. After three meetings and consideration of nearly two dozen potential funding options, the Panel agreed on two recommendations that will help set a new course for fish and wildlife conservation in this country.



Recommendation #1

Congress dedicate up to \$1.3 billion annually in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program



Current Situation

State Wildlife Grants must be reauthorized every year.

Virginia receives approximately \$1 million/year for conservation of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) as outlined in the State Wildlife Action Plan.

What would this change?

Virginia could receive dedicated funding of up to \$21 million per year for conservation of SGCN with potential for some of this funding to help with Outreach and Wildlife Viewing programs.

Where are we now?

The Restoring America's Wildlife Act was reintroduced to Congress on April 22, 2021.

Recommendation #2

The Blue Ribbon Panel will examine the impact of societal changes on the relevancy of fish and wildlife conservation and make recommendations on how programs and agencies can transform to engage and serve broader constituencies.



Current Situation

The Relevancy Roadmap was developed beginning in 2018 with input from state and federal fish and wildlife agencies from across the country to identify barriers that make it difficult for agencies to engage and serve broader constituencies.

What did this accomplish?

The Relevancy Roadmap was published in 2019 and identified 19 barriers in 5 areas, along with 5 overarching recommendations.

Where are we now?

The Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) received a Multi-state Grant to identify one test state (Virginia) to develop a set of tools to address increasing relevancy with the thought that these tools could be used across states to address the identified barriers.

List of Barriers to Engaging and Service Broader Constituencies

Category					
	Agency Culture	Agency Capacity	Constituent Culture	Constituent Capacity	Political & Legal Constraints
Barriers	Agency culture and values do not align with nature-based values and outdoor interests of broader constituencies.	Agency lacks sufficient and diverse funding to provide programs and services to broader constituencies.	Perception by broader constituencies that fish and wildlife agency only cares about and serves hunters and anglers.	Broader constituencies' outdoor recreation pursuits are limited by real and perceived barriers such as economics, cultural norms, nature-based values, outdoor interest and access limitations.	Agency decision-making processes are used and influenced by a limited number of constituencies.
	Agency is not adaptive to the changing nature-based values and outdoor interests of broader constituencies.	Agency lacks capacity to identify, understand, engage with, and serve the needs of broader constituencies.	Constituents may have fears, concerns, or beliefs that prevent them from engaging with nature.		Lack of higher-level executive support for agency engagement with broader constituencies.
	Agency has a competitive and siloed culture that inhibits collaboration.	Agency lacks capacity to develop and implement plans that engage and serve broader constituencies.	Constituents may not recognize the threats facing fish and wildlife, their habitats, and humans, or how to engage to address the threats.	Broader constituencies do not value the benefits nature provides.	Agency governing bodies may not represent the nature-based values and outdoor interests of broader constituencies.
		Agency lacks capacity to create and sustain effective partnerships to serve broader constituencies.	Some constituents are resistant to an agency engaging and serving broader constituencies.		Lack of legislative support to engage and serve broader constituencies.
		Agency lacks expertise and knowledge to provide outdoor recreational experiences that serve broader constituencies.			Policies, practices, legal authorities, and funding restrictions limit an agency's ability to serve broader constituencies.



Five Recommendations That Impact All or Most of the Barriers

1. Agency leadership and governing bodies **must recognize the need for conservation agencies to adapt to changing societal conditions** and demonstrate support for adaptation efforts.



2. Agency leadership and governing bodies need to **demonstrate commitment to being more inclusive of diverse perspectives and interests** in fish, wildlife, their habitats and outdoor recreation activities.



Five Recommendations That Impact All or Most of the Barriers

3. Agencies need to **increase acquisition and application of social science information** (stakeholder engagement, stakeholder inquiry, marketing, education, outreach, communications, economics, and evaluation) to identify, better understand, engage, and serve broader constituencies.



4. Agencies need to **commit to assessing, evaluating, and improving agency structures, processes, practices, and programs and to share lessons learned** about their experiences in engaging and serving broader constituencies.

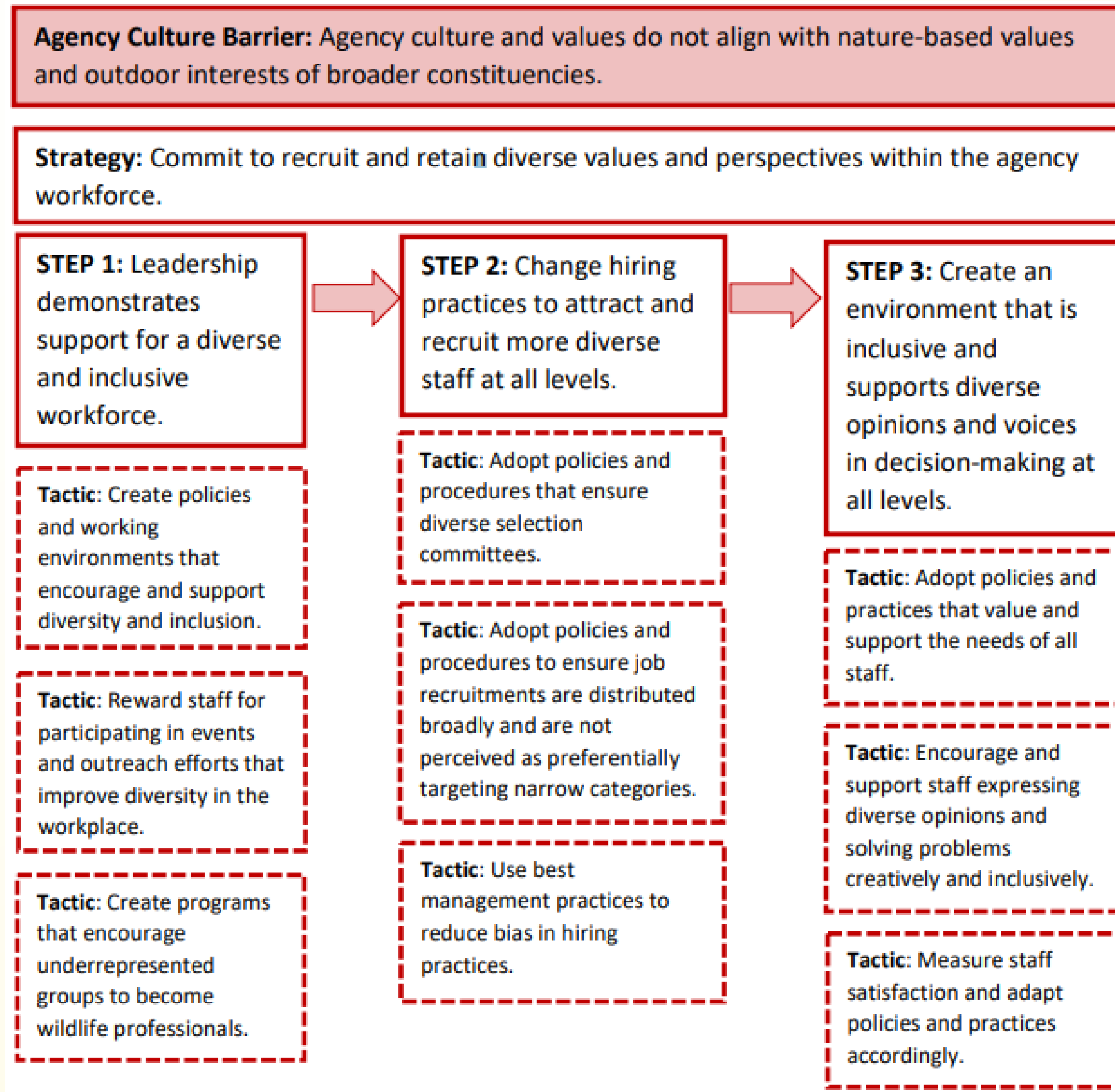


Five Recommendations That Impact All or Most of the Barriers

5. Agencies need to **commit to increased and improved partnering and collaboration** to increase engagement with, and service to, broader constituencies.



Each Barrier has a set of Strategies, Steps and Tactics



Look Familiar??

The Agency's Inclusive Excellence Council is addressing these same issues in our Agency Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

The Governor's [One Virginia Plan](#) set a July 1 deadline for all agencies to have a plan developed.

RELEVANCY touches every aspect of an Agency's culture, structure, workforce and outreach efforts.



The Relevancy Project - NOW

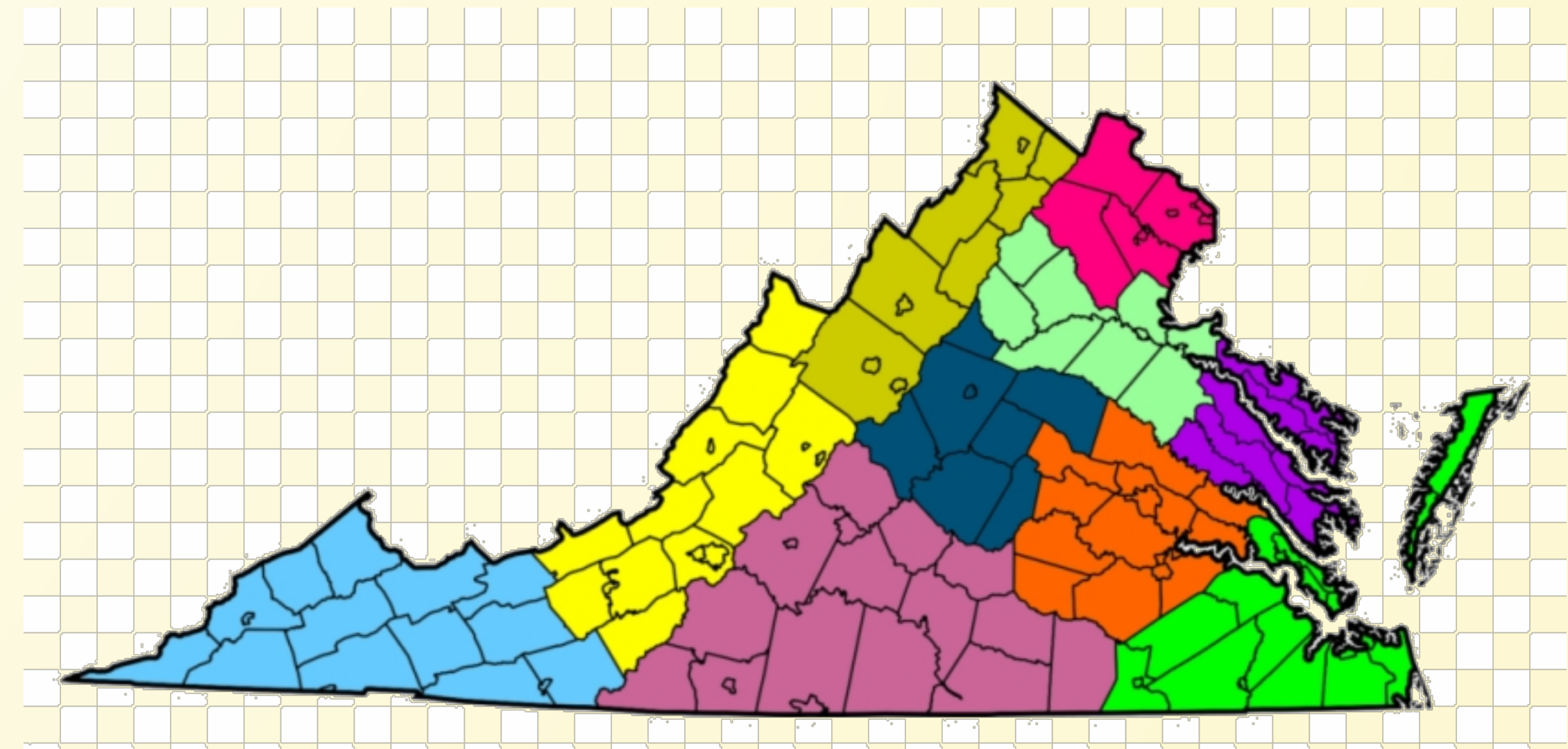
The Virginia Team

- WMI and their contractor Metropolitan Group interviewed several states as potential test cases



Virginia is the focal or test state

- Urban and Rural
- Culturally diverse
- Hunters, Anglers, Boaters and Viewers
- Variety of Wildlife Values
- Recognized Indigenous Tribes



The Relevancy Project - NOW

An Agency Path Forward: Designing Effective Engagement and Building Capacity for Relevancy

List of deliverables:

- Stakeholder mapping and assessment of opportunities for engagement with underserved constituencies.
- Advice and assistance in designing and conducting initial outreach to priority (underserved) partner constituencies.
- Facilitated listening sessions with priority partner constituencies.
- Assessment of priority constituency values, priorities, and perceptions.



The Relevancy Project - NOW

An Agency Path Forward: Designing Effective Engagement and Building Capacity for Relevancy

List of deliverables:

- Assessment of agency capacity, values, culture, value proposition, and perceptions.
- Comparative analyses of partner constituency and agency values, priorities, and perceptions.
- Co-designed strategy document for collaborative engagement to guide future relevancy efforts.
- Co-designed collaborative project prototype(s), setting the stage for ongoing engagement.



The Relevancy Project - NOW

An Agency Path Forward: Designing Effective Engagement and Building Capacity for Relevancy

List of deliverables:

- Comparative pre- and post-project surveys of agency staff and priority constituent group(s).
- Assistance with engagement and relationship building throughout the project.
- Final project report geared toward agency leadership teams.
- Assistance in designing measures for tracking the project's longer-term impact.



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List of deliverables:

All results and products to be integrated into the Relevancy Roadmap and its online community of learning and presented at national and regional agency association meetings.



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How do we define diversity for this project:

- Culture
- Race
- Ethnic background
- Urban
- Rural
- Those who don't know our Agency
- Hunters
- Anglers
- Wildlife Viewers
- Boaters
- Diverse Interests in the outdoors
- Diversity of knowledge about wildlife
- EVERYONE!! (But we can't do it all in this project!!)



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Current Status:

- DWR has assembled 20 separate reports ranging from the House Bill 38 study of 2000 to Wildlife Viewing Plan to Team WILD surveys of the Agency to provide base data for the project.
- Inter-divisional team of 15-20 staff was assembled to provide input on Agency culture and help identify partners to assist.
- Surveyed Agency Staff in June 2021 (Received 330 responses (~78%))
- Working through those results now with the DWR Executive Director, WMI and Metropolitan Group



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Current Status:

- Working with the Executive Committee we have identified two underserved communities to develop outreach and relevancy tools to reach – Native American Tribes (Rappahannock and Upper Mattaponi) and working with George Braxton trying to identify 1 Black/African American group.
- 12 Month Project
- Evaluation will be conducted to determine outcomes
- Toolkit will be developed that will hopefully translate to other state fish and wildlife agencies



Questions?



**Proposed Board of Wildlife Resources' Policy -
Board Member Attending Meeting by Electronic Means**

Policy¹

It is the policy of the Board of Wildlife Resources that individual Board members may participate in Board meetings by electronic means as permitted by Section 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia. This policy shall apply to the entire membership and without regard to the identity of the member requesting remote participation or the matters that will be considered or voted on at the meeting.

Whenever an individual member wishes to participate from a remote location, the law requires a quorum of this Board, six members, to be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location and there must be arrangements for the voice of the remote participant to be heard by all persons attending the meeting in-person and remotely.

When such individual participation is due to a personal matter, such participation is limited by law to two meetings each calendar year or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.

Approval Process²

An individual may make a request to participate in a public meeting from a remote location at any time up to and including the day of the meeting. The requesting member must advise the chair of the request.

Where the basis for the request is due to either (i) a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the member's physical attendance or (ii) a family member's medical condition that requires the member to provide care for such family member, thereby preventing the member's physical attendance, the member is not required to disclose the disability, medical condition, or the identity of the family member, but will be required to provide the general nature of the issue - e.g. "temporary hospitalization, confinement to the home, contagious illness, any disability or medical condition prevents travel to the meeting location, or provision of necessary care for a sick child or parent." This will need to be recorded

¹ The language of this policy is adopted, with slight revision, from Virginia FOIA Council's Electronic Meeting Guide, <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/ref/EMeetGuide2021.pdf> pp.9-10 (last visited Sep. 8, 2021).

² This approval process is adapted from the sample provided in Virginia FOIA Council's Electronic Meeting Guide, <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/ref/EMeetGuide2021.pdf> p.10 (last visited Sep. 8, 2021).

in the minutes along with the location from which the member, subject to approval, will be participating.

Where the basis for the request is due to a personal matter, the member is required to identify, with specificity, the nature of the personal matter. Permissible personal matters include the following - Flat tire on the way to the meeting; Traffic congestion or stoppage; Personal, family, or business emergency; Blizzard, flood, or other sudden severe weather conditions that prevent travel to the meeting location; Business trip; Family trip; and Scheduling conflict. This will need to be recorded in the minutes along with the location from which the member, subject to approval, will be participating.

Individual participation from a remote location shall be approved unless such participation would violate this policy or the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Va. Code §§ 2.2-3700 to -3715. Note that a member may only use “personal matters” for “two meetings or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.” § 2.2-3708.2(A)(1)(b).

If a member’s participation from a remote location is challenged, then the Board shall vote on whether to allow such participation. If the Board votes to disapprove of the member’s participation because such participation would violate this policy, such disapproval shall be recorded in the minutes noting, with specificity, the basis for the denial. Where the request is denied, the requesting member may monitor the meeting, but may only listen.

Otherwise, a member participating through electronic communication means may make motions, vote, join in closed meetings, and otherwise participate fully as if such member was physically present.

It is also important to keep in mind that, where the absence defeats the assembly of a quorum in one physical location, the Board cannot conduct any business. Section 2.2-3708.2 requires that “[a] quorum of the public body is physically assembled at one primary or central meeting location.” Id. (C)(2). Here, a quorum is six Board members. See Va. Code § 29.1-102(B) (“The Board shall consist of 11 members.”) and id. (E) (“The majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.”).