

Virginia State Wildlife Grant Success Stories

In the five years since its inception, the State Wildlife Grants Program has played an important role in the conservation of Virginia's wildlife. The following are some of the projects funded through State Wildlife Grants:



Virginia, Photo Courtesy of USFWS

Conservation: Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife Land Use Planning

Habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation caused by human development are among the most serious threats to wildlife populations and communities in Virginia. Often, the most cost-effective means to protect our wildlife heritage is through planning activities and permits. Through State Wildlife Grants, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has been able to provide guidance to public and private landowners on proper management techniques for wildlife populations and their habitats as well review and comment on land use plans and environmental assessments. As Virginia's communities grow, this effort will help the state fulfill its responsibility to conserve wildlife and the places they live for future generations.



Freshwater Mussel Research, Photo Courtesy of USFWS

Restoration: Working with Partners to Bring Back Wildlife and Natural Areas Freshwater Mussels

The health of freshwater mussels is often an early indicator for disease and pollution that affect us all. Of the 81 species of mussels that live in Virginia, approximately 20 are federally listed as endangered species and others are declining at an alarming rate. State Wildlife Grants are being used to conduct field surveys that will provide information for recovery and conservation plans for freshwater mussels. Outreach to private landowners is also helping to restore and enhance mussel habitat. This is a proactive approach that will prevent more mussels from becoming endangered, and benefit the health of wildlife and people while saving taxpayer money.



Virginia Bird Watcher, Photo Courtesy of USFWS

Management: Proactive Measures that Benefit Wildlife and People Important Bird Area Program

People enjoy watching birds. With over 400 species to watch in Virginia, it is important to conserve what brings peace and relaxation to our busy lives. The Important Bird Area Program is an international initiative for saving birds and other wildlife. State Wildlife Grants enable Virginia to join this exciting effort to identify and protect outstanding habitat for birds. By protecting the places birds live, we ensure their health and survival so that future generations can continue to enjoy their beautiful songs and colors.

Congress has appropriated \$7.4 million in State Wildlife Grants to Virginia since 2001. This has been matched with at least \$1.5 million state and partner dollars.