

2026-2027 Migratory Gamebird Seasons and Bag Limits

Staff Recommendations



**Wildlife Resources Division
Department of Wildlife Resources Board Meeting
January 2026**





Process For Setting Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits



- **Flyway Technical Sections Meet in February to review population data and hunt plans.**
- **Recommendations for out year are submitted to the Flyway Councils for approval.**
- **Further approval by the Service Regulatory Committee which becomes the Federal Frameworks.**
- **States set seasons and bag limits within the guidelines of the Federal Frameworks. Can be more restrictive but not more liberal.**



Timeline for 2026-27 Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limit Approval

<u>January 21 & 22:</u>	Staff presents preliminary recommendations to Committee and Board.
<u>Early Feb. – March:</u>	Public comment period on Agency website.
<u>Late February:</u>	Federal Frameworks finalized.
<u>March 18 & 19:</u>	Staff presents final proposals to Committee and Board.
<u>Prior to April 30:</u>	Staff submits State selections to USFWS for publication in Federal Register.



DOVE



DOVE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON

DATES: September 5 – October 23 (49 days)
 November 21 – November 29 (9 days)
 December 19 – January 18 (31 days)

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily and 45 in possession.

(Note – Possession limit is 3 times the daily limit for all migratory game birds unless otherwise specified)

SHOOTING

HOURS: Sept. 5 Noon until sunset
 Sept. 2 – Oct. 23: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.
 Nov. 21 – Nov. 29: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.
 Dec. 19 – Jan. 18: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.



RAILS



CLAPPER RAIL



KING RAIL



SORA



VIRGINIA RAIL

GALLINULES



PURPLE GALLINULE



COMMON GALLINULE



RAILS and GALLINULES

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 5 – October 24 (50 days)
November 10 – November 29 (20 days)

BAG LIMIT: Clapper/King Rail - **10** daily, only 1 may be a King rail.
Sora/Virginia – 25 daily
Gallinules - 15 daily
(bag limits are singly or aggregate)

SHOOTING HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.

Notes: - Recommendation provides 30+ days of 3-ft or greater tides.
- Non-toxic shot required for Rail, Snipe & Gallinule hunting.



WOODCOCK

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: November 10 – November 30 (21 days)
December 24 – January 18 (24 days)

BAG LIMIT: 3 daily

SHOOTING

HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset



SNIPE



SNIPE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 28 – November 29 (63 days)
 December 19 - January 31 (44 days)

BAG LIMIT: 8 daily

SHOOTING

HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset

Note: Non-toxic shot required for Rail, Snipe, & Gallinule hunting.



DUCKS



SEPTEMBER TEAL



Blue-Winged Teal

Green-Winged Teal



SEPTEMBER TEAL

- Special teal seasons were initiated in late 1960's to provide harvest opportunities on early migrating blue-winged and green-winged teal. When the blue-winged teal breeding population (BPOP) is above 3.3 million, a 9-day season can be offered. If the BPOP exceeds 4.7 million, a 16-day season can be offered. If the BPOP estimate is between 3.3 and 4.7 million birds a 9-day season can be offered.
- 2025 Estimate 4.4 million



SEPTEMBER TEAL

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 19 - September 27 (9 days)

HUNT AREA: East of I-95

September 22 – September 27 (6 days)

HUNT AREA: West of I-95

SHOOTING

HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

BAG LIMIT: 6 daily, (any combination of Blue-winged
and Green-Winged Teal)



DUCK SEASONS



DUCKS - FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Outside Dates: September 27, 2026 - January 31, 2027

Season Length: 60 days; plus 2 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Days.

Bag Limit: **Total daily limit of 6 ducks, but with the following restrictions:**
Can include no more than 3 wood ducks, 4 mallards (only 2 hens), 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 2 black ducks, 3 pintails, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck.
Scaup: 1/day for 40 days and 2/day for 20 days.
Sea Ducks: 4 total sea ducks (no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks and 3 eiders (only 1 hen)).
Closed Season on Harlequin duck.
Possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

Split Season Options: 3 Segments.

Shooting Hours: 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily.



DUCKS - STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Season Length: 60 hunting days; plus 2 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Day

Season Dates: October 9 – 12 (Black Duck closed) (4 days)
November 18 – November 29 (12 days)
December 19 – January 31 (44 days)
October 24, February 6 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Days

Bag Limit: **Total daily limit of 6 ducks, but with the following restrictions:**
Can include no more than 3 wood ducks, 4 mallards (only 2 hens), 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 2 black ducks, 3 pintails, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck.

Scaup: 1/day for 40 days and 2/day for 20 days (January 12 – 31).

Sea Ducks: 4 total sea ducks (no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks and 3 eiders (only 1 hen).

Closed Season on Harlequin duck.

Possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

Shooting Hours: 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily.



Other Waterfowl Seasons

MERGANSERS

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

OPTION A

Season Dates: To coincide with duck season

Bag Limit: 5 birds daily

The restriction on



AMERICAN COOT

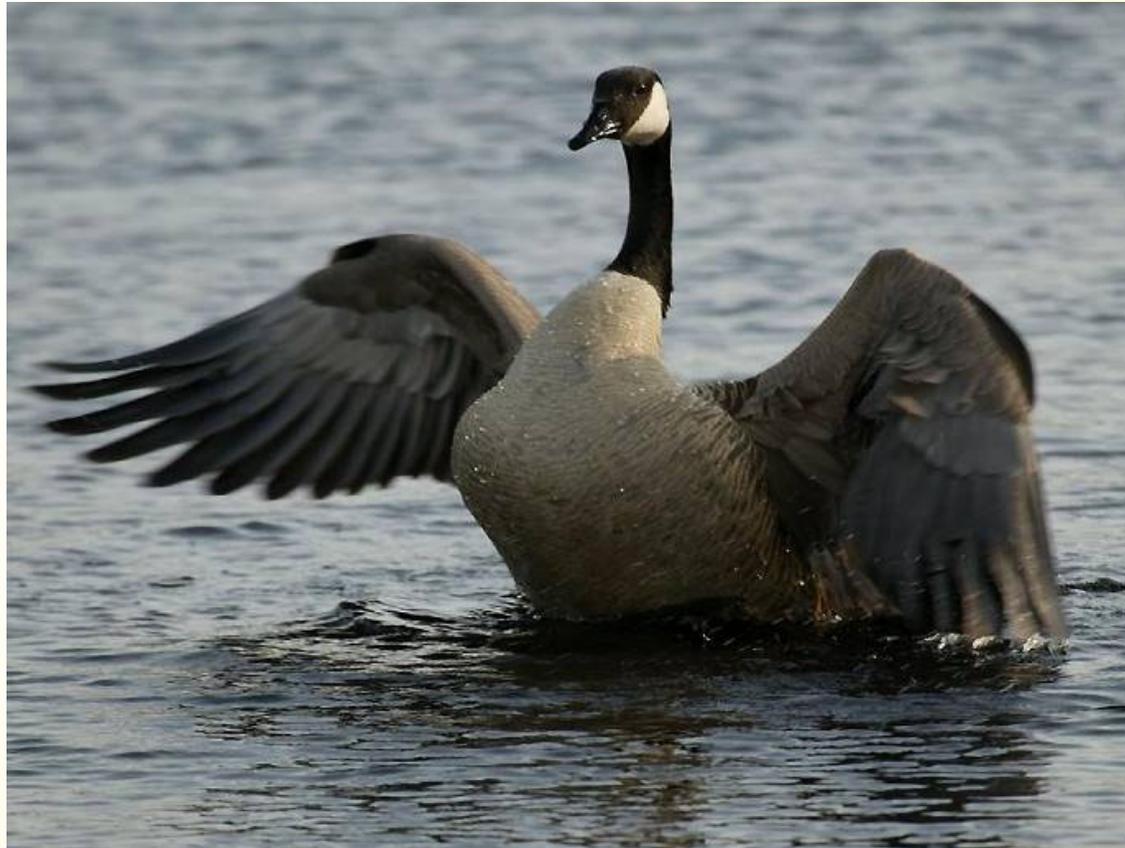
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Season Dates: To coincide with duck season

Bag Limit: 15 daily



GEESE, BRANT and SWANS



SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 1 - September 25 (25 days)

BAG LIMIT: 10 daily

HUNT AREA: Statewide

SHOOTING HOURS:

East of I-95: September 1 - 18: ½ hr before sunrise to 1/2 hr after sunset
September 19 - 25: ½ hr before sunrise to sunset

West of I-95: September 1 - 21: ½ hr before sunrise to 1/2 hr after sunset
September 22 - 25: ½ hr before sunrise to sunset

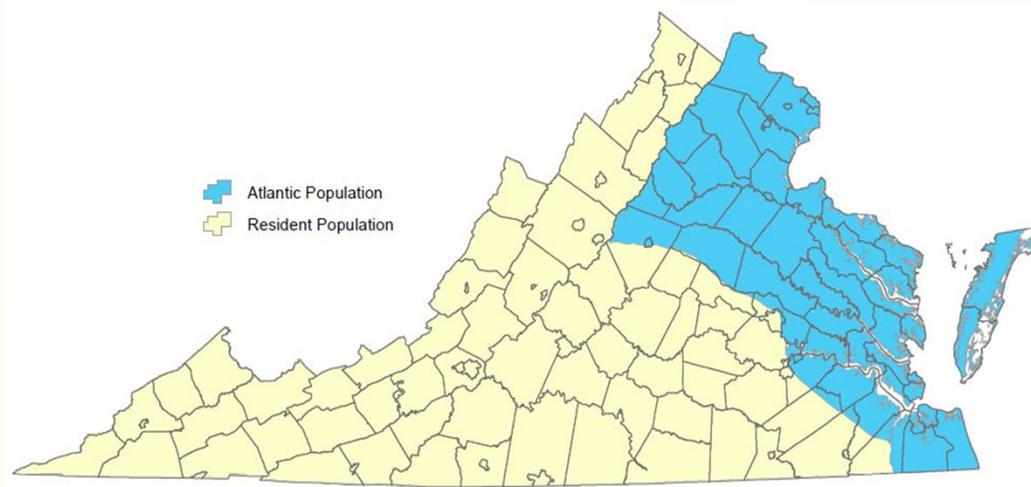
Other Special Measures: Unplugged shotguns may be used when no other waterfowl seasons are open (September 1-18 East of I-95 and September 1-21 West of I-95). Staff is not recommending the options of using electronic calls.



CANADA GOOSE HUNT ZONES

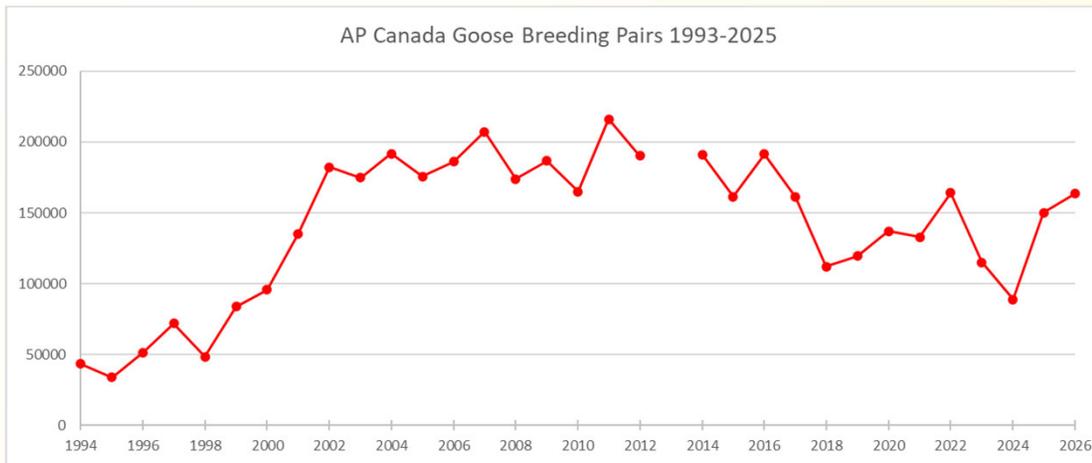
Atlantic Population (AP) Hunt Zone – The area to the east of the following line: the “Blue Ridge” (Loudoun County-Clarke County border) at the West Virginia-Virginia Border, south to Interstate 64 (the Blue Ridge line follows county borders along the western edge of Loudoun-Fauquier-Rappahannock-Madison-Greene-Albemarle and into Nelson Counties), then east along Interstate Rt. 64 to Interstate 95 in Richmond, then south along I-95 to Route 460 in Petersburg, then southeast along Route 460 to Route 32 in the City of Suffolk, then south to the North Carolina border.

Resident Population (RP) Hunt Zone – The portion of the state west of the above AP Zone boundary.



Atlantic Population Canada Goose Status

Figure 1. Atlantic Population Canada Goose Breeding Pair survey estimates 1993-2025.



- Based on the AP Goose Harvest Strategy a liberal harvest package including a 45-day season with a 2-bird bag limit will be allowed for the 2026-2027 season.



CANADA GEESE

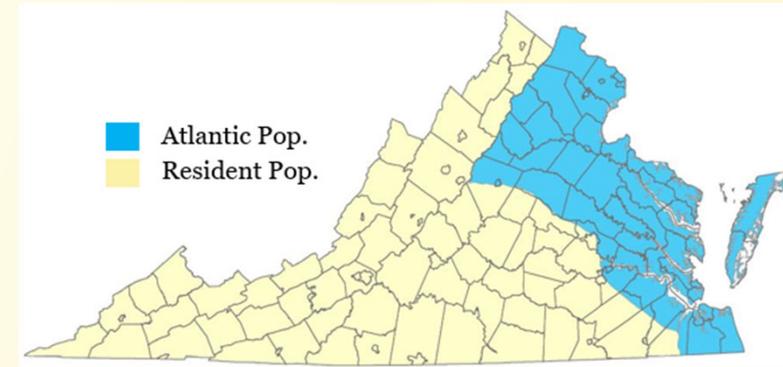
FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE:

Season Length: **45** hunting days
Outside Dates: **November 15 – February 5**
Bag Limit: **2** bird daily

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE:

Season Length: **80** hunting days
Outside Dates: **November 15 – March 10**
Bag Limit: **5** birds daily



Notes: Shooting Hours in all zones are 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily.
All seasons include White-Fronted Geese counted in aggregate.



CANADA GEESE

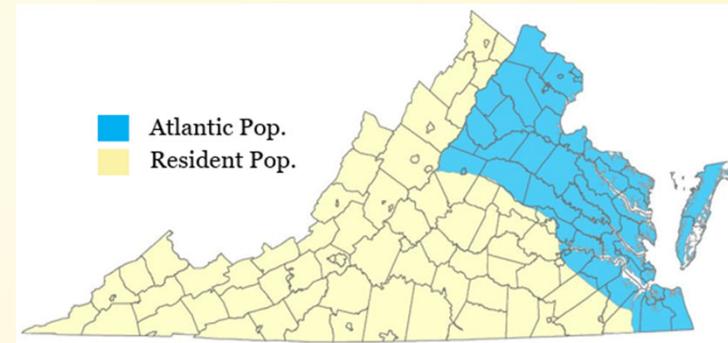
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE:

Season Dates: November 24 – November 29 (6 days)
December 24 – January 31 (39 days)
Bag Limit: 2 bird daily

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE:

Season Dates: November 18 – November 29
December 19 – February 21
Bag Limit: 5 birds daily



**Notes: Shooting hours are 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset, in all zones.
All seasons include White-Fronted Geese along with Canada geese in the aggregate.**

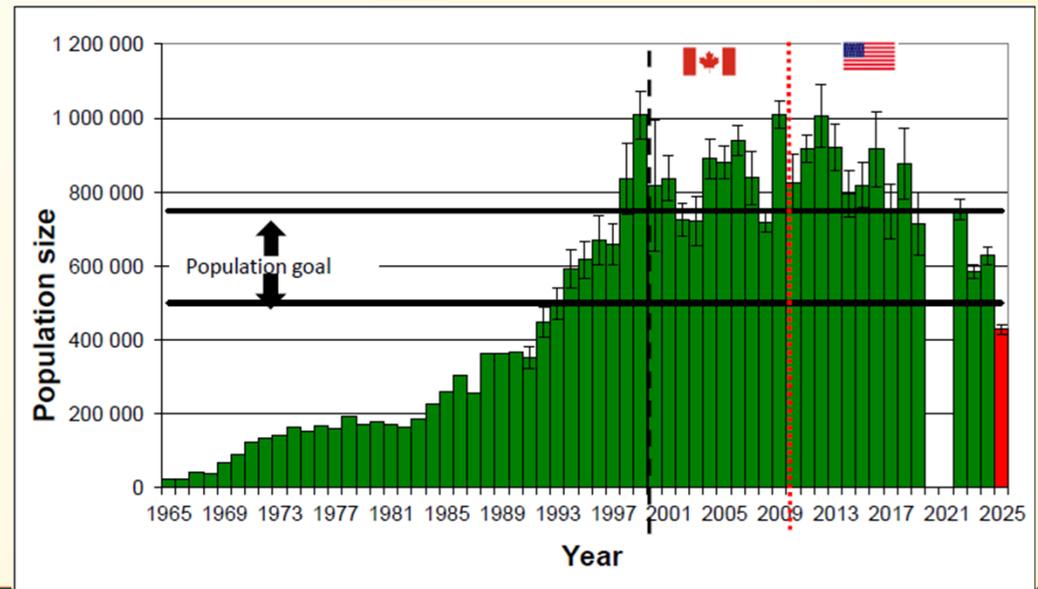


LIGHT GEESE (Greater and Lesser Snow Geese & Ross' Goose)



STATUS OF LIGHT GEESE

- In addition to the regular hunting season a Conservation Order (CO) was established in 2009. CO allowed hunting after the end of the regular season framework and special hunting measures.
- The Greater Snow Goose population is monitored on spring staging areas along the St. Lawrence Valley in Quebec. The 2025 spring population estimate was 428,000 geese. Lower than the population objective for the first time since the early 1990's.

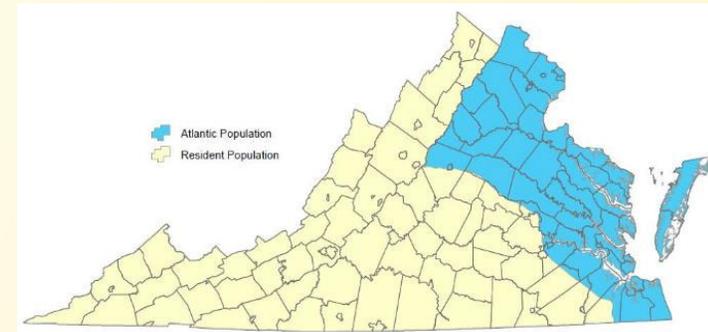


LIGHT GEESE (Greater and Lesser Snow Geese & Ross' Goose)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

LIGHT GOOSE SEASON

Season Dates: November 24 – March 10
Bag Limit: 25 birds daily (no possession limit)
Special Measures: Available when no other seasons are in.



Light Goose
Conservation Order
Zone in Blue

CONSERVATION ORDER

Zone: Same as New AP Canada Goose Zone
Season Dates: **TBD**
Bag Limit: No daily or possession limit
Special Methods: Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and shooting extended to 1/2 hour after sunset.
Special Requirements: Hunters participating in the Conservation Order Season must register on-line or by phone, obtain a harvest report form, and return the report form back to the department within two weeks following the close of the season.

ATLANTIC BRANT



ATLANTIC BRANT

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

<u>Season Length:</u>	30 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	September 23 - January 31
<u>Split Season Option:</u>	2-way split season
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	1 bird daily

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

<u>Season Dates:</u>	December 19 – December 31	(13 Days)
	January 15 - January 31	(17 Days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	1 bird daily	



TUNDRA SWAN



TUNDRA SWAN

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

Season Length: 90 Days

Outside Dates: October 1 - January 31; State agency may issue up to 475 permits in Virginia and must obtain harvest and hunter participation data. Each permittee is authorized to take only one (1) tundra swan per season.

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season.



TUNDRA SWAN

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Season Dates: November 15 - January 31

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season (475 permits).

Hunt Area: All counties and portions of counties lying east of U.S. Route I- 95 and south of the Prince William/Stafford County line in Chopawamsic Creek at Quantico Marine Corps Base.



FALCONRY



FALCONRY

STAFF RECOMMENDATION*

Dove:	September 5 – October 23 November 21 – November 29 December 19 – January 31
Rail, Gallinule & Moorhen:	September 5 – December 20
Woodcock:	October 17 – January 31
Snipe:	October 1 – December 2 December 19 - January 31
Goose:	September 1 – 25 November 18 – November 29 December 19 – February 21
Teal (Statewide):	September 16 - September 30
Ducks, Mergansers, Coot	October 9 – 12 November 18 – February 7
Brant and Light Geese:	October 18 – January 31

*Recommended dates based on firearms proposals

2026-2027 Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Motion

Mr. Chairman:

I move that the Committee approve the preliminary 2026-2027 Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limit recommendations as presented by staff, for consideration by the full Board at the January 22, 2026 meeting.



Smallmouth Bass Management Plan – 2026



Kristen Chestnut-Faull
District Fisheries Biologist

Jason Hallacher
District Fisheries Biologist

Presented By:
Mike Bednarski
Chief of Fisheries



Management Plans - Approach

- Consistency and Transparency

- Stocked Trout
- Wild Trout
- Musky
- Walleye
- Striped Bass
- Channel Catfish
- F1 Largemouth Bass

In Development – Florida Bass, Gar and Bowfin



Why Smallmouth?

- Tremendous economic value
 - Pursued by 56% of anglers
 - Popular target in warm water streams and large impoundments
 - New River, James River, Shenandoah River,
 - Smith Mountain Lake, Claytor Lake, Lake Moomaw etc...
 - Supports multiple fishing guides and businesses
- Challenging to manage in Virginia
 - Southern edge of range
 - Variable river flow

HOME • SMALLMOUTH • MUSKY • CABINS • EVENTS

FISHING • PRICING • FLY FISHING • GALLERY • LODGING • TRIP DETAILS • GUIDES • TESTIMONIALS

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New River Outdoor Co. is located in Blacksburg, Virginia (~30 min west of Blacksburg/Virginia Tech). All of our guided smallmouth trips are run on the New River, recognized as some of the best smallmouth (and musky) water in the entire country. Britt and his team of professional guides have plied these ancient waters for decades in pursuit of trophy smallmouth bass and musky. The NROC guide team tailors each day on the water to that day's clients' needs and revels in the lifetime memories that are made. Please call 540-921-7438 or email at info@newriveroutdoorco.com to book a trip.

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The New River is recognized as the second oldest river in the world and is estimated to be between 10 and 360 million years old. Characterized by its extensive ledge systems, deep pools, numerous rocky runs, and plentiful forage, the New River has all the necessary ingredients to garner the ranking as one of the best rivers in the country for producing citation-sized (20" and up) smallmouth.

Our New River Guided Fishing Trips are run on over 100+ miles of the New River in the state of Virginia. We cater to both spin and fly anglers and run guided trips year-round. We are equipped with fully outfitted self-bailing rafts with fishing frames. We carry a full array of tackle on every trip and furnish our clients with G.Loomis spin rods, Shimano reels, and the like. Bonus fish include walleye, striper, hybrids, musky, carp, rock bass, brook rainbow trout, flathead or channel catfish, largemouth bass, and Kentucky spotted bass; all of which have been caught by our clients on guided trips.

NROC's Guide Team have years of experience fishing the New River with proven results. Our guide service has been featured in a number of national and regional outdoor publications including Bassmaster, In-Fisherman, Cabela's Outfitter Journal, Harris' Bass Fishing Annual, Blue Ridge Country, American Angler, Fly Fisherman, Musky Hunter, and VAWV Game & Fish magazines.

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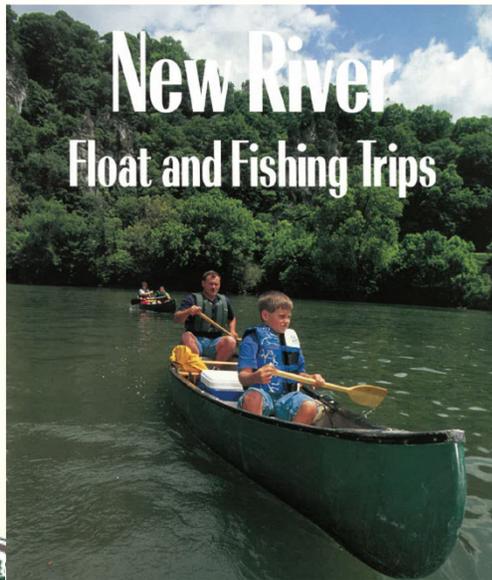
Content of Plan

- Background
- Monitoring
- Regulation
- Hatchery Production
- Knowledge Base
- Marketing



Goals

- *Goal 1:* Management and Monitoring - Maintain and enhance recreational fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass in Virginia.



Goals

- *Goal 2:* Research - Develop a more complete understanding of causative mechanisms impacting smallmouth bass population dynamics in Virginia.



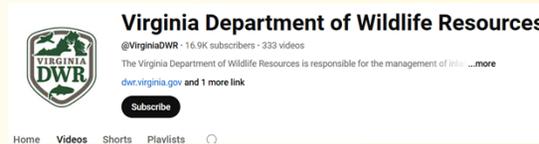
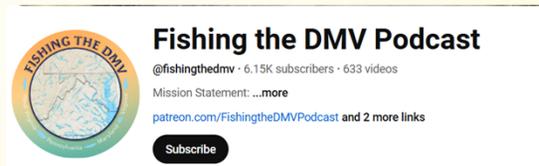
Goals

- *Goal 3: Culture* - Investigate the feasibility of smallmouth bass production in-house to facilitate the potential use of supplemental stocking or population restoration as a management tool.



Goals

- *Goal 4: Outreach* - Facilitate the effective flow of information between fisheries management staff and stakeholder groups and increase the use of the smallmouth bass resource in Virginia.



Timeline

- 2022-2024 – Need Identified, Plan Development
- January 2025 – Presented to Wildlife and Boat Committee
- April 2025 – Public Comment



Comments Received

- 62 Total Comments – Individuals and Government Partners
 - Declines in Quality
 - Access Improvements
 - Regulatory Suggestions – Catch and Release, Tournaments
 - Hatchery Need/Investment
 - Invasive Species – Flatheads and Alabama Bass
 - Concerns about Musky
 - Lack of Enforcement
- No Revisions at this Point



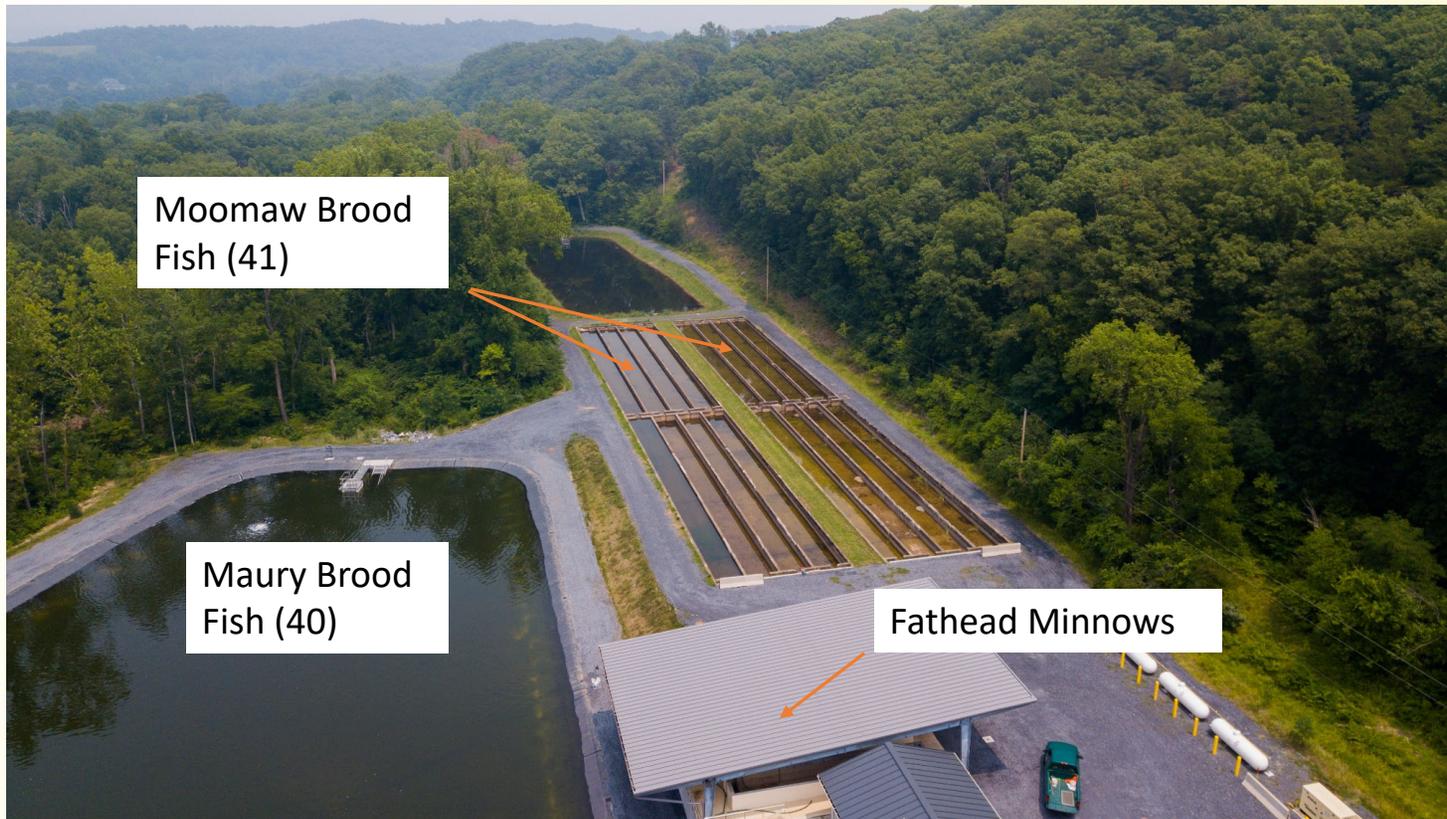


Production and Stocking

- Front Royal Fish Cultural Station Restoration



Hatchery Overview



20 Nest Boxes Deployed



Hatchery Overview





31,589 fingerlings produced with room to spare



Results - 2024

- South Fork Shenandoah: 6,696
- South River: 4,000
- North Fork Shenandoah: 19,102
- Hearthstone Lake: 200
- Lake Laura: 1,591



2025 Goals: 40,000



2025 Production: 287,000



Timeline

- 2022-2024 – Need Identified, Plan Development
- January 2025 – Presented to Wildlife and Boat Committee
- April 2025 – Public Comment
- September 2025 – Internal Document Finalized
- January 2026 – Presented to Wildlife and Boat Committee for Endorsement
- March 2026 – Will post to Website



Motion

- I move that the Wildlife and Boat Committee of the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources recommend the Smallmouth Bass Management Plan for endorsement by the full Board



A person wearing a cap and a backpack is standing in a forest, looking to the side. The background is a dense forest with large rocks in the foreground.

Wetland & Coastal Forest Initiatives:
*Implementation of the
EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant*

David Norris
Regional Wildlife & Coastal Habitat Grants Manager

Wildlife Division

January 2026



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant

- \$5 Billion nationally to states, local governments, tribes, and territories to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution
- Atlantic Conservation Coalition:
 - State agencies and The Nature Conservancy spanning NC, SC, VA, and MD
 - Awarded \$421 Million; 5-year timeframe



DWR: \$44.5 Million for 8 projects to store carbon by protecting, enhancing, and restoring wetlands, living shorelines, and coastal forests for wildlife habitat

- **Includes 8 new positions for 5 years**

Hog Island WMA Living Shoreline Restoration

- Restore coastal marsh habitats and install 11 breakwaters along 3,425 feet of shoreline to reduce extensive erosion and protect 406 acres of naturally occurring marsh
- *Status:* Permitting and design complete; Construction this summer/fall



Ragged Island WMA Living Shoreline Restoration



- Protect the fast-eroding saltmarsh ecosystem with a series of low breakwaters and a living shoreline that will absorb and breakdown wave energy and fetch before impacting the marsh
- Restores 1.2 miles of shoreline and creates 3 acres of marsh
- *Status:* Construction recently completed; Plantings and continued research with Christopher Newport University



Coastal Marsh and Shoreline Protection at Ware Creek WMA

- Protect 6,350 feet of shoreline through installing breakwaters, wetland plantings, and wetland renourishment; includes 312 acres of emergent wetlands and 122 acres of coastal forested wetlands, primarily oak-pine and loblolly-shortleaf pine stands
- *Status:* Working With Ducks Unlimited, completed a preliminary design; begin project permitting this spring



Tidal Marsh Restoration at the Guinea Marshes



- Preserve and enhance the expansive tidal marsh ecosystems within the Guinea Marsh WMA and other publicly owned Mobjack Bay Marsh Islands
- Safeguards 400 acres of tidal wetlands and beaches and restores 3 acres of wetlands, dunes, and beaches
- *Status:* Partnering with the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission and utilizing National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funding to implement community engagement and complete the project design for permitting and construction



Wetland Restoration and Enhancement Projects

- Identify and implement 3,000 acres of wetland restoration and enhancement projects on public and private lands with willing landowners; nearly doubles previous efforts
- *Status:*
 - Hired 2 of 3 new Wetland Biologists, final position is under recruitment
 - Hosting 2 Sea Grant fellows
 - Conducting staff trainings
 - Initiating site visits and reviewing the newly purchased Coastal Forests WMA for restoration site identification



Coastal Forest Restoration on Eastern Shore WMAs



- Restore 1,500 acres to provide high quality habitat for wildlife, particularly migratory birds
- Sustainable forestry and habitat restoration best management practices: selective cutting, shelterwood cuts, regeneration cuts, mowing, prescribed fire, native plantings, invasive plant control
- *Status:*
 - Hired 5 new staff: 1 Forester, 3 Assistant Foresters, 1 Infrastructure Specialist
 - Conducting staff trainings and certifications; Starting forest inventories



Saltmarsh Acquisition and Preservation on the Eastern Shore

- Working with a willing private seller to acquire 621 acres on the Eastern Shore to secure and conserve a high priority saltmarsh
- Adjacent to DWR lands and includes excellent waterfowl and waterbird habitat
- Property will be publicly open for hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching
- Status: Completing land acquisition due diligence; Closing summer 2026



Doe Creek WMA (credit: Meghan Marchetti, DWR)



Acquisition and Reforestation in the City of Chesapeake



- Working with willing landowner to acquire 1,313-acre tract in Chesapeake
- After acquisition, restore lands back to forested wetlands, primarily focused on the globally rare Atlantic white cedar
- Status: Acquisition due diligence occurring; Planning restoration project design; Discussing with Department of Forestry to provide seedlings

Atlantic white cedar forest in Virginia (credit: Caren Caljouw, DCR-DNH)



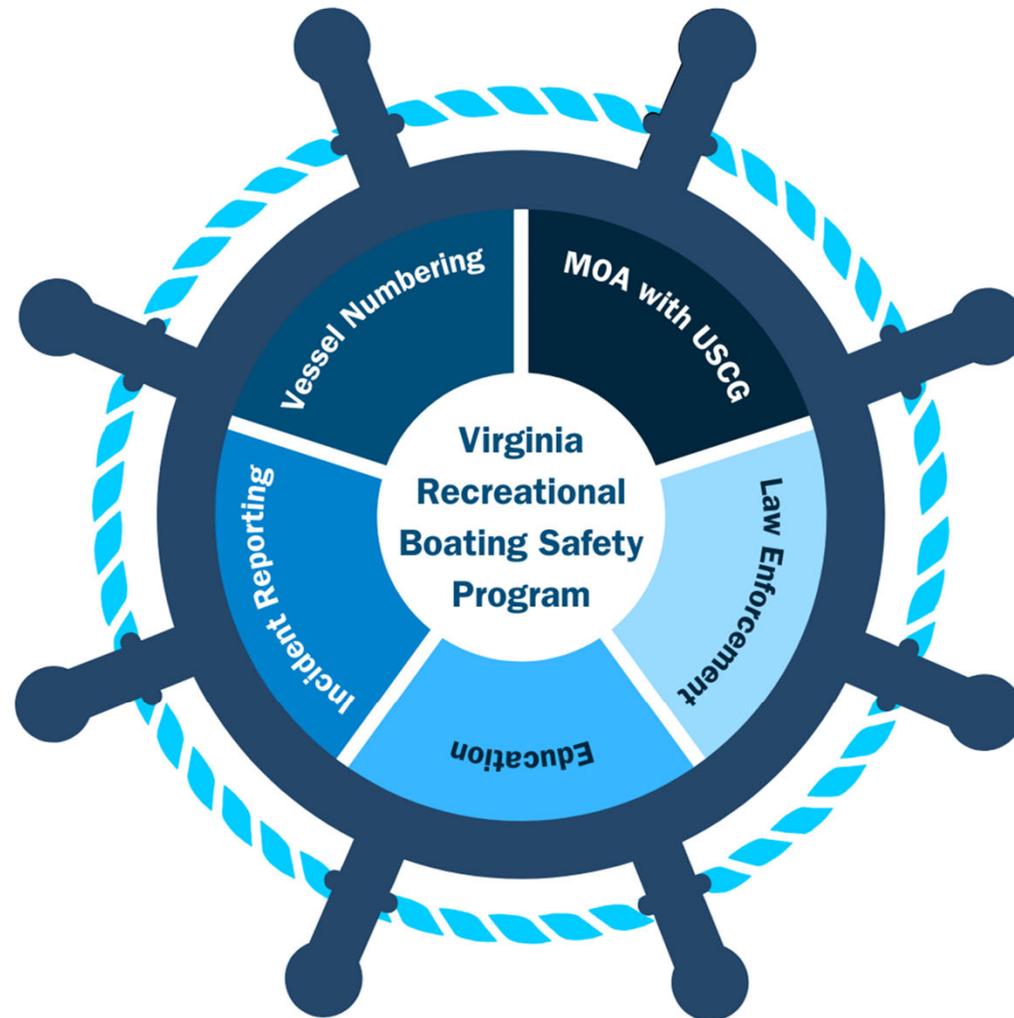
Questions?



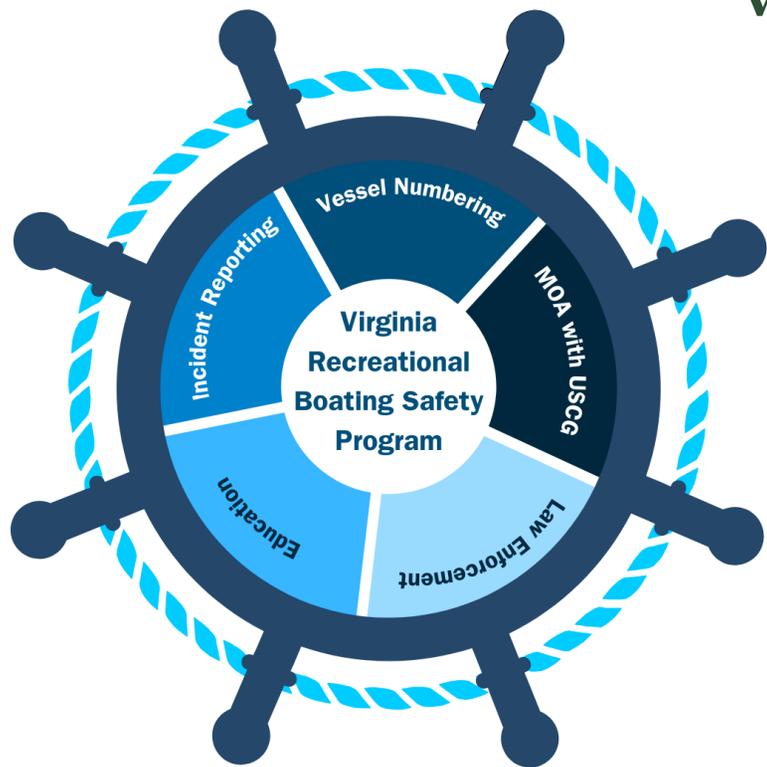
BOATING DIVISION ANNUAL REPORTS TO USCG



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.



Vessel Number System approved by the USCG

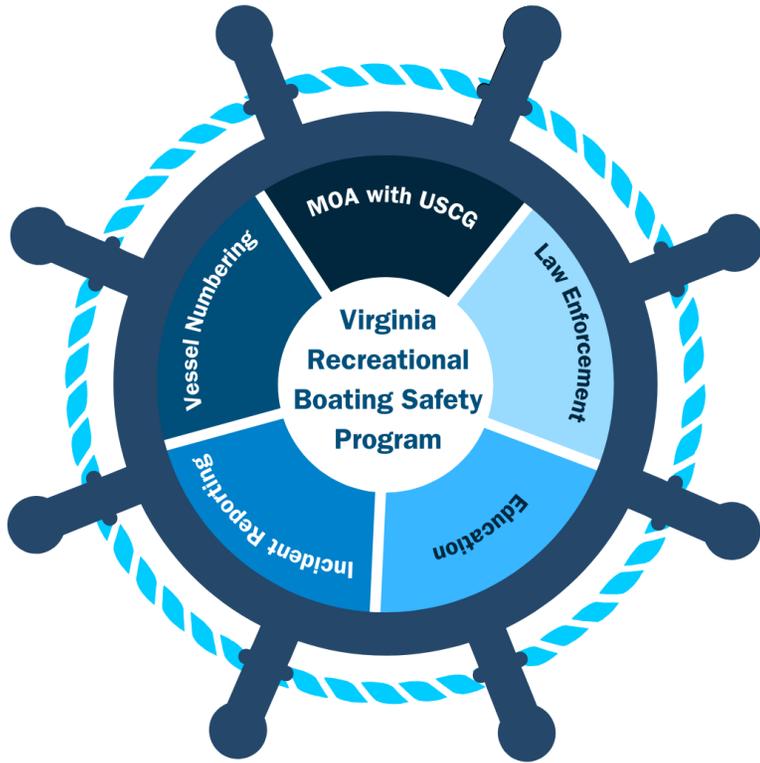


Recreational Vessels Registered By Length Category						
Motorized Vessel Types	< 16	16 to <26	26 to < 40	40 to 65	> 65	All Lengths
Airboat	17	16	-	-	-	33
Auxiliary Sail	116	801	671	69	-	1,657
Cabin Motorboat	14	4,882	2,531	178	4	7,609
Houseboat	2	17	87	95	8	209
Inflatable	1,749	79	3	-	-	1,831
Open Motorboat	46,103	99,781	3,260	33	4	149,181
Personal Watercraft	31,276	-	-	-	-	31,276
Pontoon Boat	436	15,609	611	1	1	16,658
Other	85	6	-	-	-	91

	TOTAL
Recreational Motorized	208,545
Recreational Non Motoriz	2,899
Commercial	3,142
Total Registration	214,586



Memorandum of Agreement with East District of the U.S.C.G.

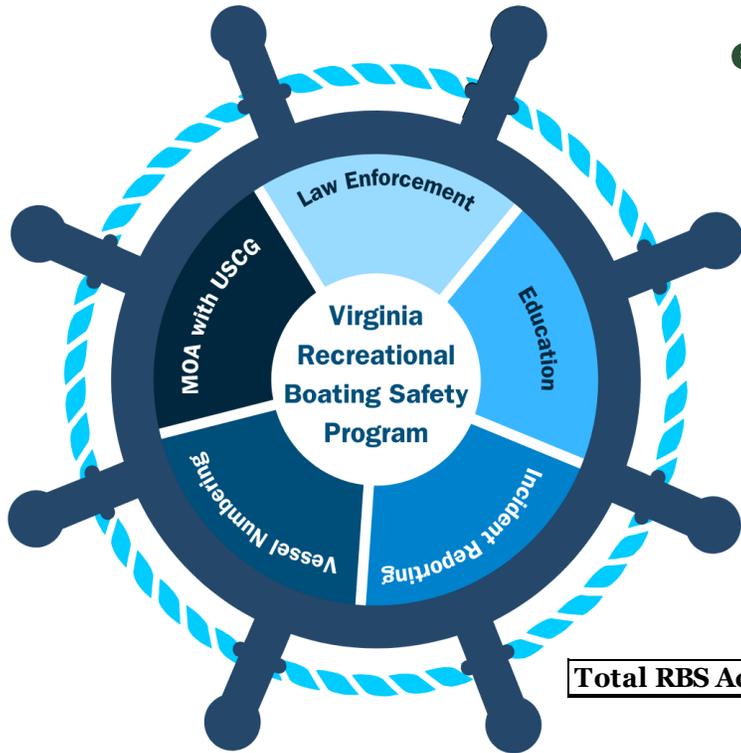


In process of being updated:

- Law Enforcement
- Boating Under the Influence
- Public Education and Training
- Information Sharing
- Boating Incident Notification, Investigating, and Reporting Responsibilities
- Search and Rescue



Sufficient patrol to ensure adequate enforcement of State boating safety laws and regulations

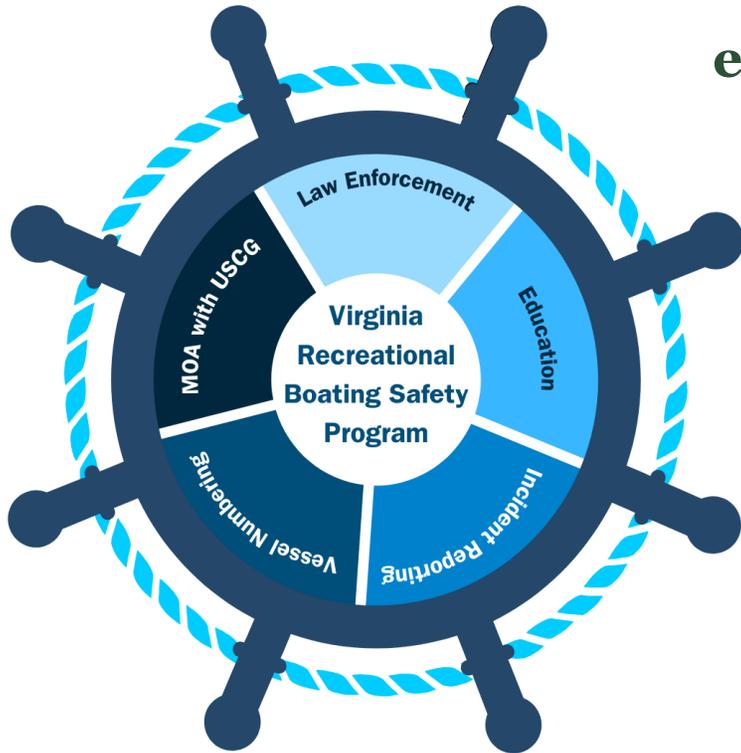


Number of Officers Who Successfully Completed Training In:	
Basic RBS Officer Training (anytime during their career)	172
Accident Investigation Training (State/NASBLA) (within the FY)	30
BUI/OUI/Drug Recognition Training (State/NASBLA) (within the FY)	14
Navigation Rules Training (within the FY)	14
Other in-service RBS training not specified above (within the FY)	25

Total RBS Activity Hours (to include SAR, LE, education, court prep, investigations, etc)	44,393
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Sufficient patrol to ensure adequate enforcement of State boating safety laws and regulations

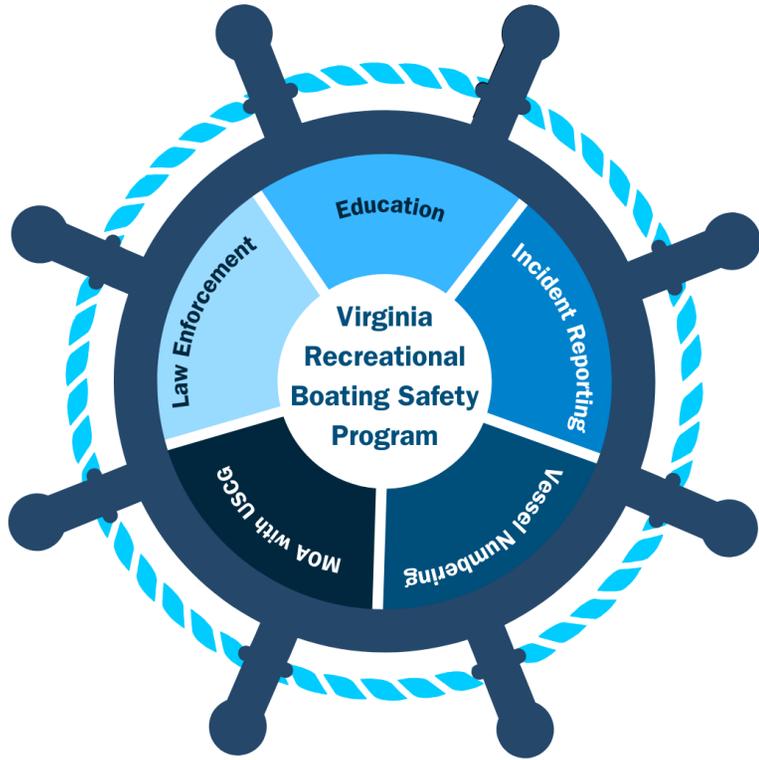


Safety Equipment Carriage Requirements		Citations	Warnings
	Wearable PFDs	637	192
	Type IV PFD	0	0
	Fire Extinguisher	188	91
	Visual Distress Signals	0	0
	Sound Producing Device	0	2
BUI/OUI		48	0
Careless/Negligent/Reckless Operation		182	44
Navigation Rules		67	26
Registration/Numbering Violations		432	236

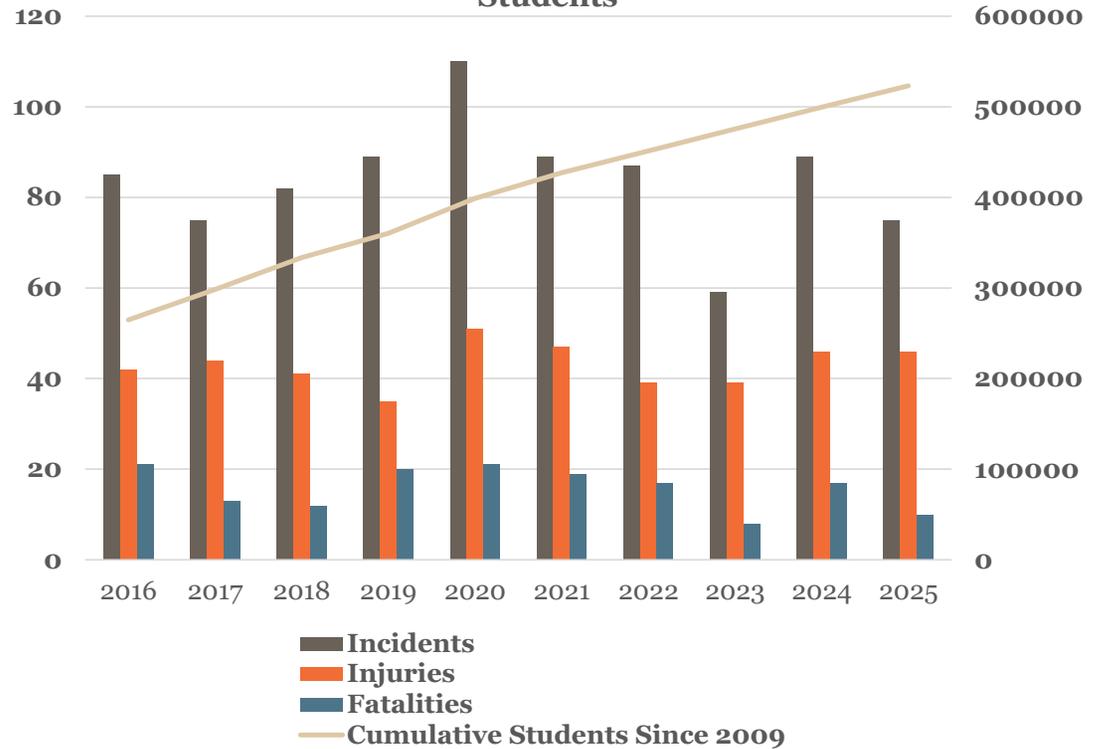
Total Boating-Related Citations	2,204
Total Boating-Related Warnings	828



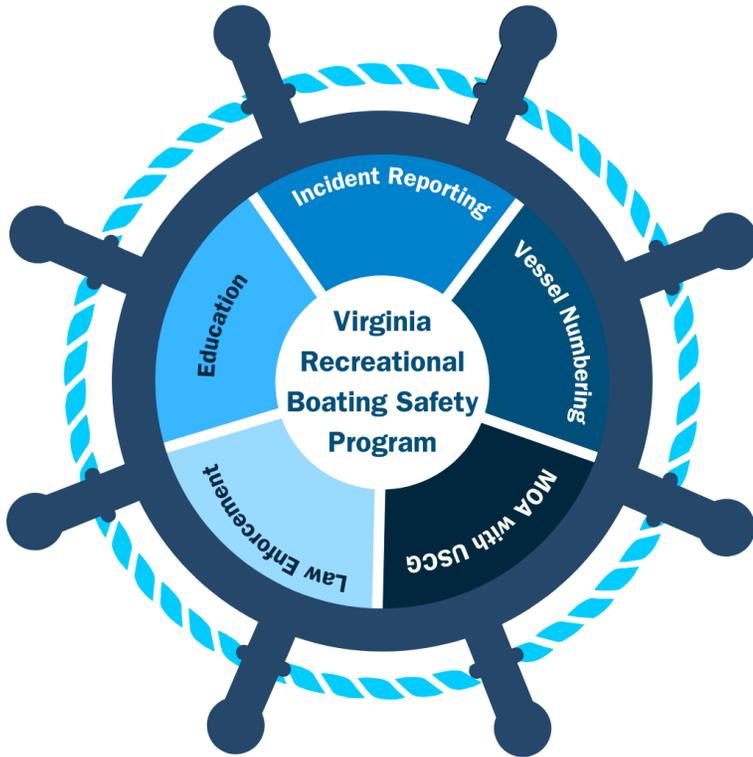
An adequate State boating safety education program



Boating Incidents and Cumulative Boating Safety Students



A System for Reporting Marine Casualties (Boat Incidents)



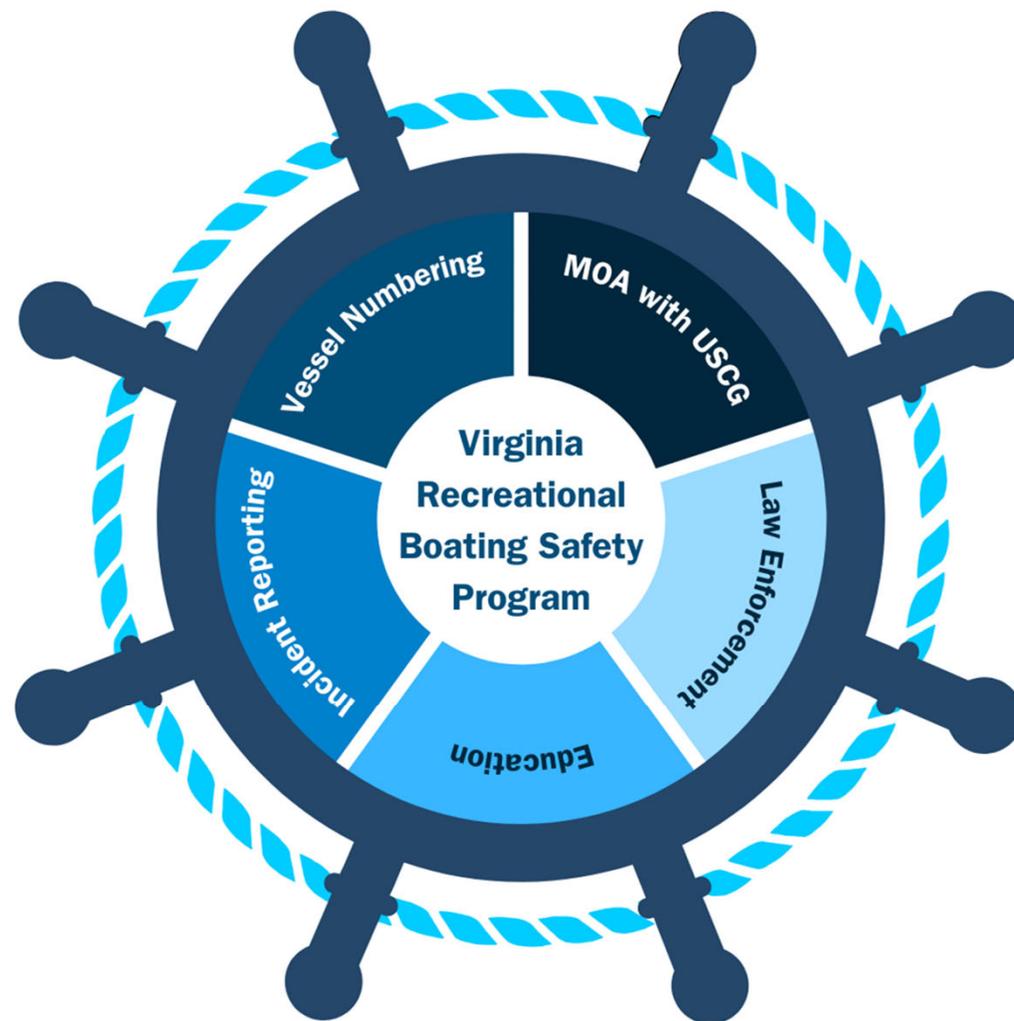
Law Enforcement
Responds to
Incidents

Boating Safety
Section review
incident reports

Boating Safety
Section Submits Data
To USCG

Report
within
30-Days





THANK YOU!

Stacey Brown
Boating Division Director
stacey.brown@dwr.virginia.gov



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas: A Citizen Science-informed Conservation Tool

Amy Martin
Nongame and Endangered Species Program

DWR Wildlife and Boat Committee
Jan 21, 2026

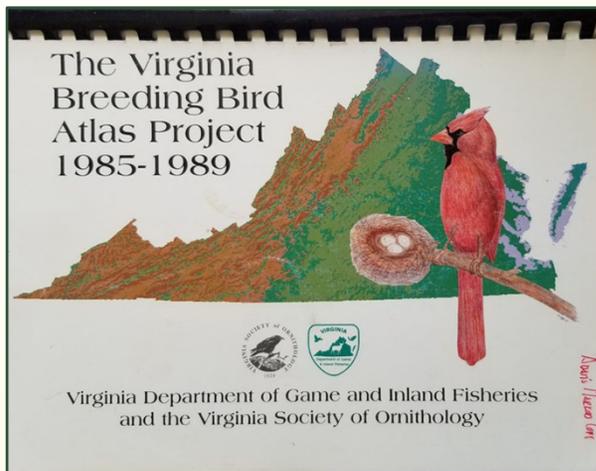


CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

What is a breeding bird atlas?

- A comprehensive **field effort**;
- Documents the **distribution** and **abundance** of the birds breeding in a state;
- Results in a **baseline dataset** from which to measure changes in bird populations; and ultimately
- Informs **avian conservation**.



One of the largest avian surveys in Virginia

Data collection: 2016 – 2020

Data Analysis and Publication of Results: 2021 - 2025



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

Partnerships



- Funding and Fundraising
- Staffing and shared work
- Outreach and Media
- Contract development and admin
- Long-term relationship

Volunteers

- Approximately 1500 volunteers participated
- More than 80,000 survey hours
- More than 10 million birds reported
- Many, many connections made!



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

Interesting Findings



1. New Breeding Species (documented since the 1st Atlas)



Anhinga



Mississippi Kite



Black-necked Stilt



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Eurasian Collared Dove



Trumpeter Swam



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

Interesting Findings

2. New First Time Breeding Species



Painted Bunting



Merlin



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

Interesting Findings



3. Species “lost” (not documented breeding in Virginia) since the 1st Atlas



Blue-winged Teal



Green-winged Teal



Ring-necked Pheasant



Upland Sandpiper



Bewick's Wren



Sedge Wren



Bachman's Sparrow



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

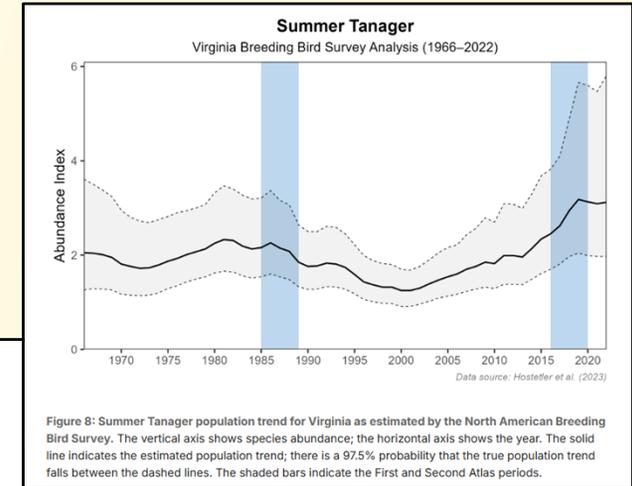
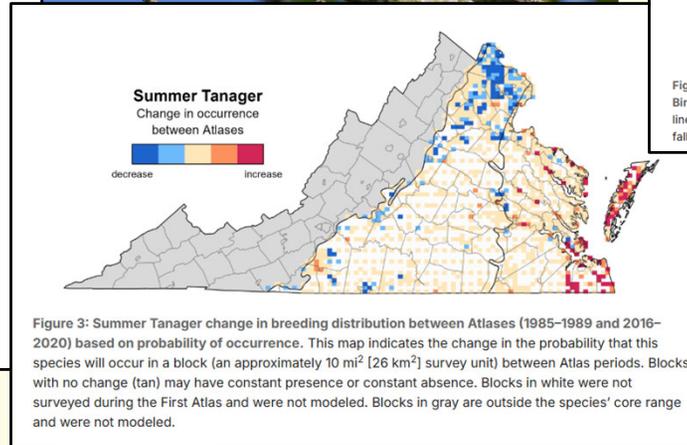
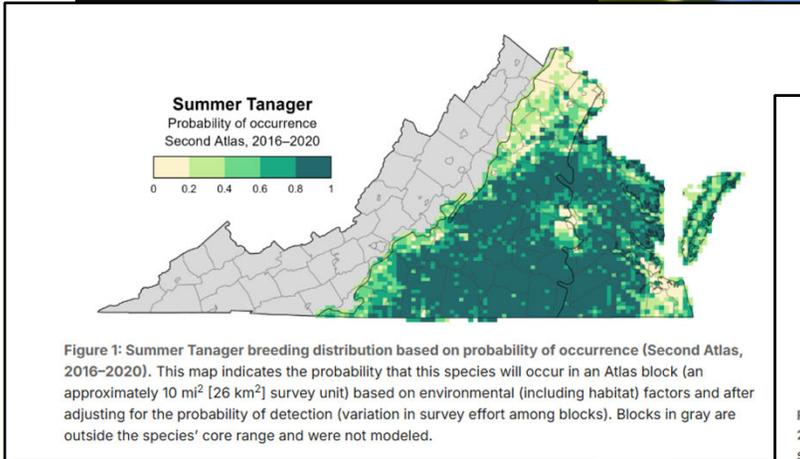
Product: 203 Species Accounts



Piranga rubra
Summer Tanager

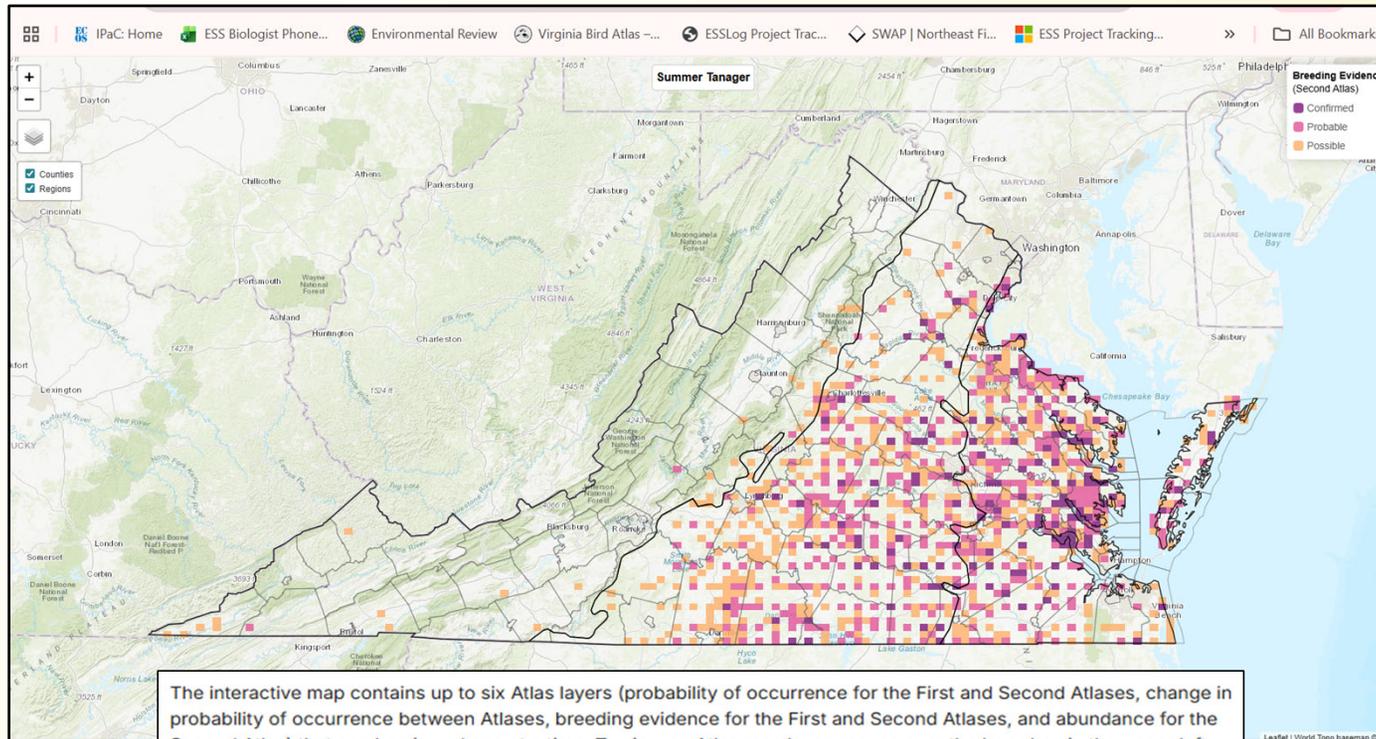
BY RON ROHRBAUGH

Sponsored by Dixie Sommers in honor of Austin Kane



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

Product: Interactive Map



The interactive map contains up to six Atlas layers (probability of occurrence for the First and Second Atlases, change in probability of occurrence between Atlases, breeding evidence for the First and Second Atlases, and abundance for the Second Atlas) that can be viewed one at a time. To view an Atlas map layer, mouse over the layer box in the upper left. County lines and physiographic regional boundaries (Mountains and Valleys, Piedmont, and Coastal Plain) can be turned on and off by checking or unchecking the box below the layer box. Within the map window, users can hover on a block to see its value for each layer and pan and zoom to see roads, towns, and other features of interest that are visible beneath a selected layer.



Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas

Benefits to Avian Conservation



- Informed Environmental Review
- Targeted Research and Monitoring
- Conservation Planning
- Outreach and Education
- Comprehensive Wildlife Habitat Management
- Informed Land Acquisition
- Supports the SWAP and SGCN Development
- Fostering Valuable Relationships and Building New Ones



Check out Virginia's Second Breeding Bird Atlas at www.vabirdatlas.org



Thank You!



Proposed Schedule – Board and Committee Meetings – 2025-2026

October 22nd, 2025 – Committee Meetings

October 23rd, 2025 – Board Meeting

January 21st, 2026 – Committee Meetings

January 22nd, 2026 – Board Meeting

March 18th, 2026 – Committee Meetings

March 19th, 2026 – Board Meeting

May 20th, 2026 – Committee Meetings

May 21st, 2026 – Board Meeting

August 19th, 2026 – Committee Meetings

August 20th, 2026 – Board Meeting



Regulatory Cycle – Aquatic Wildlife, Non Game, and Boating – 2026

Jan 2026 – Feb 2026 - public issues Scoping period -- forms on web – staff makes contact with constituent groups or individuals, assess concerns or ideas for changes, utilizing format on input form.

Feb-March - Aquatic committees meet

March 18th, 2026– Wildlife and Boat committee mtg. - preliminary review of issues

March 19th, 2026 - Board meeting – preliminary review of issues identified by staff

April-May – Aquatic staff core group meets to finalize staff recommendations, finalize staff recommendations with AG review

May 20th, 2026 - Wildlife and Boat committee mtg. - Staff recommendations presented

May 21st, 2026 - Board Meeting – Staff recommendations presented, Board proposals created

30 Day public comment period on Board proposals (no public meetings, unless a hot topic needs discussion)

Aug 19th, 2026- Wildlife and Boat committee – staff presents final recommendations on proposals

Aug 20th, 2026 - Board Meeting – Staff presents final recommendations for final board approval

January 1st, 2027 – Regulations go into effect

Digest out late fall

