

Virginia Wildlife Viewing Plan Implementation Table

(updated April 2023)

Outreach Division	Wildlife Division	Watchable Wildlife Program	Fishes Division	Human Dimensions Program	Planning & Finance Division	GIS & Mapping Program	Law Enforcement Division	Human Resources Division	Boating Division	Director's Office	All DWR
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GOAL 1: Connect diverse segments of the public to wildlife and wildlife viewing in Virginia

Objective 1: Increase participation by underrepresented gender, ethno-racial, and socio-economic groups, and those with diverse accessibility needs in wildlife viewing events, programs, and activities led by DWR and partners.

1. Use best practices and market research to target communications with a diversity of wildlife viewers.	R	S	C							I		
2. Represent and foster inclusivity of underrepresented groups through media, language, messaging, and venue in all DWR communication materials.	R	S	S							S	★	
3. Develop strategic partnerships with organizations focused on and representative of underrepresented groups to promote wildlife viewing and support social networks for viewers from these groups, especially those new to viewing.	S	C	S							I	R	★
4. Enhance the accessibility and relevance of DWR lands, programs, and resources for underrepresented groups.	S	S	S	S		C	C	C			R	
5. Promote cultural competence and diversity and inclusion in agency approaches to hiring and training staff.									R		C	★

Objective 2: Increase engagement of urban populations in activities that connect people to wildlife and wildlife viewing.

1. Expand access to and awareness of locations for wildlife viewing in and near urban areas.	S	S	R			S	I		I		
2. Develop and promote programs and activities that support positive wildlife viewing experiences in urban areas.	S	C	R				I				
3. Develop communications materials that address human-wildlife conflict and promote responsible wildlife viewing in urban areas and habitats.	R	S	S	C				C			

Objective 3: Increase awareness of wildlife and opportunities for participating in wildlife viewing among youth and families.

1. Develop educational materials targeting families, with an emphasis on wildlife viewing, conservation of natural resources, and outdoor activities.	R	C	R	C							
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2. Create and aid the development of activities that can be used or distributed by schools, partner organizations, libraries, and others to encourage wildlife viewing.	R	C	R				S					
3. Incorporate additional focus on Virginia's wildlife and ways to get involved in wildlife viewing and conservation into current agency-sponsored school programs.	R		C									
4. Offer agency programs that engage youth and families in wildlife viewing and habitat conservation.	R	S	R	S			C					

Objective 4: Develop resources to help viewers with little or no experience progress from initial awareness of recreational opportunities to continued participation and identification as a wildlife viewer.

1. Create introductory resources, activities, and programs to help new and inexperienced wildlife viewers get started.	C	C	R				C					
2. Feature viewers with a variety of specialization levels in DWR media and communications.	R	I	S							I		★
3. Connect beginner viewers with partner organizations that can foster continued participation in wildlife viewing through viewing opportunities and social support.	S	I	R									

Objective 5: Raise awareness of wildlife viewing among groups that participate in other forms of outdoor recreation, in order to enrich their outdoor experience and introduce a new and related activity.

1. Partner with organizations and events that broadly promote engagement with nature and the outdoors in order to reach outdoor recreationists and introduce viewing as a companion activity.	S	S	S	S								R
2. Develop informational and communications materials that promote DWR, the VBWT, and wildlife viewing to specific outdoor recreationists (for example, paddlers, trail runners, mountain bikers, or campers).	C	S	R	C			S					

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GOAL 2: Provide a variety of wildlife viewing opportunities accessible to all in the Commonwealth

Objective 1: Encourage increased wildlife viewing on agency lands and waters through habitat management and communications about these properties.

1. Continue to conduct holistic habitat management on DWR properties that supports opportunities for wildlife viewing and is consistent with the DWR Wildlife Action Plan.	C	R	R										
2. Develop communications that clarify the purpose of agency properties and the ability of these lands and waters to support multiple forms of wildlife recreation.	R	S	C	S			C	C					C
3. Create simple, user-friendly communications and interpretation materials about wildlife viewing opportunities on various DWR properties, specific rules and restrictions for each property, amenities and accessibility, and appropriate safety information.	S	C	R	C			S	C					C
4. Ensure on-site signage is effective, with accurate, up-to-date information about access and clearly marked entry points and parking areas.		R	C	R									

Objective 2: Increase use of Virginia Bird and Wildlife Trail sites for wildlife viewing activities.

1. Expand promotion of the VBWT to improve awareness and understanding of the VBWT among wildlife viewers.		S	R				C						
2. Revitalize partnerships with tourism agencies at state and local levels to achieve the VBWT's nature tourism potential and benefits.	R	S	R					I					
3. Strengthen relationships with the owners or managers of VBWT sites and trail users to ensure the continued accessibility of these sites for wildlife viewing and to promote opportunities for public engagement in wildlife viewing, habitat management, or other activities on VBWT sites.	C	S	R	C	I			I					
4. Expand partnerships with counties, friend groups, wildlife viewing organizations, and other volunteers to support routine maintenance and reporting on VBWT sites.	S	C	R										

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5. Increase the accessibility of VBWT sites for viewers with physical disabilities.	C	R	R	R			S				C	

Objective 3: Increase access to wildlife viewing opportunities at or close to home.

1. Ensure that DWR's Habitat for Wildlife resources are easily accessible, up-to-date, and widely promoted and distributed.	R	S	S	C			S					
2. Create and promote DWR resources, programs, and events that support wildlife viewing at or close to home.	R	S	R				S					
3. Increase promotion of wildlife viewing opportunities external to the agency that viewers can participate in from or close to home.	R	C	S									

Objective 4: Increase external funding to support wildlife viewing in the Commonwealth, particularly the DWR's programs and activities

1. Identify specific existing needs or expansion opportunities (e.g., wildlife viewing in urban settings; habitat improvement at existing VBWT sites; capacity building) and develop scalable concept proposals that position the DWR to be responsive to external grant solicitations that include identifying connections to cross-cutting conservation themes.	S	S	R	S		I	S	C				R
2. Share concept proposals with existing partners and seek new partners to identify opportunities to expand implementation capacity and to build support for proposals.	S	S	S	S		I						R
3. Strengthen relationships with owners and/or managers of VBWT sites to identify and apply for external funding to support infrastructure or habitat improvements that enhance the wildlife viewing potential of a site.	S	S	R	S		S	C					S
4. Revitalize and explore new partnership opportunities with existing organizations and tourism entities at state and local levels to achieve shared priorities and potentially leverage partner match for grant proposals.	R	S	R	S								S

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5. Regularly assemble and synthesize the latest relevant information (e.g., regional human population demographics, economic value of wildlife viewing) to have ready access to key information to support proposal development.	S		R		S						I	
6. Create and maintain a database of ongoing funding opportunities (e.g. federal and state grant programs) to ensure all prospective sources are being considered and utilized to grow and support the agency's wildlife viewing program.	S	S	S	S	S	R					S	
7. Explore opportunities to work with corporate or retail partners to generate funding for wildlife conservation and viewing-related programming.	R	S	S	S		S					S	

GOAL 3: Promote wildlife and habitat conservation through wildlife viewing

Objective 1: Increase volunteer engagement by connecting wildlife viewers to conservation opportunities.

1. Develop resources that communicate avenues for wildlife viewers to engage in volunteer conservation activities, such as citizen science, habitat stewardship, outreach, and advocacy.	R	S	S	S								
2. Provide opportunities for volunteers to assist with habitat stewardship on DWR lands to accomplish management goals.	S	R	S	R								
3. Develop and promote citizen science projects that are aligned with DWR's management and conservation goals, and mechanisms for incorporating data generated by citizen scientists in DWR decision-making processes.	R	R	R	R			C					
4. Work with partner organizations to create and coordinate volunteer opportunities for wildlife viewers and to recruit volunteers.	R	C	R	S								
5. Implement best practices across volunteer programs to promote volunteer satisfaction and retention.	R	S	S	C	C					S		★
6. Develop pathways for volunteers to transition between projects in order to retain current agency volunteers and reactivate former volunteers.	R	C	S	C						S		

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Objective 2: Foster a culture of responsible wildlife viewing.

1. Emphasize responsible wildlife viewing, including stewardship, ethics, and safety, in new and existing DWR communication materials, signage, and programs.	S	R	R	R						C				
2. Work with partner organizations to incorporate stewardship, ethics, and safety into new and existing programs and events.	S	C	R											

GOAL 4: Connect broader constituencies to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources through wildlife viewing

Objective 1: Increase awareness of the scope of DWR's mission and its relevance to wildlife viewing.

1. Develop a communication strategy to share the DWR mission, the role of DWR in conservation and outdoor recreation, and the agency's commitment to diverse constituencies, including wildlife viewers.	R	C	C	C										C
2. Sponsor, participate in, and organize events (virtual and in-person) that generate interest in wildlife viewing and engage the public with DWR staff and programs.	S	S	R	S						S				

Objective 2. Increase dialogue and recognition between the agency and wildlife viewers to cultivate improved relationships.

1. Train DWR staff about the importance of wildlife viewing to DWR's mission, agency programs that support wildlife viewing, and ways in which viewers support the agency.	C	S	R	S						S	S	S	S	★
2. Establish and communicate mechanisms through which wildlife viewers can provide input to the agency.	S	C	S	C						S	I			R
3. Expand the scope of the Executive Director's advisory group to include regular communication and opportunities for feedback on issues relevant to wildlife viewing organizations.	I		C											R
4. Seek opportunities for engagement with wildlife viewing-focused organizations and groups to build stronger relationships between wildlife viewers and the agency.	C	C	R	S										R

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5. Highlight the relevance of DWR's work to wildlife viewers through content published in partner and DWR communication channels.	R	S	S	S			C					
6. Train agency volunteers to become "ambassadors" that can serve as a conduit for communication between DWR and the wildlife viewing community.	S		R									
7. Foster ongoing engagement with agency volunteers and recognition of their contributions.	R	S	R	S								★

Objective 3: Increase monetary contributions of wildlife viewers to support DWR's work with wildlife and habitat conservation.

1. Increase internal training and awareness among DWR staff of the ways in which wildlife viewers financially support DWR.	C	I	R	S						S		★
2. Streamline and expand external promotion of existing funding mechanisms through which wildlife viewers can support DWR.	R	C	S			S					C	
3. Implement DWR-sponsored events in which fees support wildlife or habitat conservation.	R	S	R	S		S		S				
4. Collaborate with corporate or retail partners to create mechanisms for their customers to generate funding for wildlife conservation and viewing-related programming, through their purchases, voluntary donations, and/or by creating awareness among their customers about funding opportunities.	R	C	S	C		S					R	

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