



# Wildlife Scoping Instructions and Resource Protection Recommendations

[Wildlife Information and Environmental Services](#)

September 29, 2023

**Step 1:** Access the VA Fish and Wildlife Information Service (VAFWIS) from the DWR website at: <https://services.dwr.virginia.gov/fwis/index.asp> . Also access the below bat data applications: Northern Long-eared Bat Regulatory Buffer Map: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/northern-long-eared-bat-application/> and the Little Brown and Tricolor Bat Hibernacula and Roosts: <https://www.DWR.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/little-brown-bat-tri-colored-bat-winter-habitat-roosts-application/> Send an email to [Support\\_VAFWIS@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:Support_VAFWIS@dwr.virginia.gov) if you need to set up an account or need other assistance.

**Step 2:** Using the geographic search function, generate an Initial Project Assessment (IPA) report for the site using an at least 2 – mile buffer around project boundaries (action area). See the “help” section for instructions.

**Step 3:** Review the below information regarding data returned by VAFWIS and apply, as appropriate. Please see the end of the document for contacts regarding common wildlife species, the location of which may not be accurately depicted by VAFWIS which is most heavily populated by imperiled species and designated resource data.

*Any project with a federal nexus (e.g., the project entails any federal funding, permits, or federal agency action) must comport with consultation requirements pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. To ensure such compliance, the project applicant or proponent should access the USFWS Virginia Field Office Project Review (IPaC) website at: <https://www.fws.gov/office/virginia-ecological-services/virginia-field-office-online-review-process>. Since listing of Atlantic Sturgeon, all hydraulic hopper dredging activities in the Chesapeake Bay, Atlantic Ocean, and major tributaries, regardless of time of year must be coordinated with NOAA Fisheries Service.*

## **I. Listed Species and Designated Wildlife Resources**

**Species Observations (SppObs)** – The Species Observation dataset includes all verified species documentations maintained by DWR. If the IPA results indicate that a *listed species* has been documented from the project area, it is possible that the species is present on the project site, if suitable habitat exists. Coordinate with DWR Environmental Services Staff, per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> , as conservation measures may be necessary to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act

**Threatened and Endangered Species Waters (TEWaters)** – The Threatened and Endangered Species Waters (TEWaters) dataset includes the locations of waters from which *listed species* have been documented and which agency biologists have determined are currently occupied by such species. If work in the TEWater or its tributaries is proposed (ex: installation of crossings, soil borings, stream restoration, utility installation, etc.), we recommend coordination with DWR’s Environmental Services (ES) staff per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> as conservation measures may be necessary to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act. Otherwise, we offer the below general guidance regarding protection of TEWaters:

a) If a waterbody is designated a TEWater due to the presence of listed fishes, mussels, snails, or crayfish, we recommend the following to best protect such listed aquatic species (and the resources upon which they depend) from harm that may result from nearby agriculture, silviculture, habitat management or restoration, and/or land development:

- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated riparian buffer of at least 100 ft on both sides of all intermittent tributaries to the designated water;
- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated riparian buffer of at least 200 ft on both sides of all perennial tributaries to designated waters; and/or

- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated riparian buffer of at least 300 ft on both sides of designated waters.

b) If a waterbody is designated a TE Water due to the presence of wood turtles, we recommend the following (in addition to the above), to best protect this listed semi-aquatic species (and the resources upon which it depends) from harm that may result from nearby silviculture, habitat management or restoration, and/or land development

- Because wood turtles must have access to freshwater streams during hibernation as well as access to adjacent uplands, where they forage, mate, and nest, we recommend coordination with us not only for instream work, but also for any work in uplands adjacent to (within 900 feet of) the designated water.

**Anadromous Fish Use Areas** – The Anadromous Fish Use Areas (AnadFish Waters) dataset includes the locations of streams known to provide migratory and spawning habitats for anadromous fishes. We recommend coordination with DWR ES anytime work in designated AnadFish Waters and/or their tributaries is proposed. Otherwise, we offer the below general guidance regarding protection of AnadFish Waters:

- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated riparian buffer of at least 100 ft on both sides of all perennial tributaries to the designated water; and/or
- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated riparian buffer of at least 200 ft on both sides of all designated waters.

Anadromous Fishes/Fish Passage Expert: Alan Weaver  
804-367-6795 or [Alan.Weaver@DWR.virginia.gov](mailto:Alan.Weaver@DWR.virginia.gov)

**Bat Occurrence Data Applications** – These datasets include documented occurrences of these bats and regulatory buffers around those features. If your project/activity falls within one of the regulatory buffers, we recommend coordination with DWR's Environmental Services (ES) staff per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> as conservation measures may be necessary to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

- Northern Long-eared Bats: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/northern-long-eared-bat-application/>
- Little brown and Tricolor Bat hibernacula and roosts: <https://www.DWR.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/little-brown-bat-tri-colored-bat-winter-habitat-roosts-application/>

**Sea Turtle Nesting Beaches\***– This dataset includes stretches of beach/shoreline in Virginia known to support nesting of sea turtles, all of which are federally- and state-listed. We recommend coordination with DWR ES, per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> as conservation measures may be necessary to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

**Wild Trout Waters** – The Cold Water Streams dataset includes the locations of waters designated as cold water habitat. Many of these streams represent wild trout streams. To best protect these waters and the species they are known to support, we recommend coordination with DWR ESS per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> anytime work in designated Trout Waters and/or their tributaries is proposed. Otherwise, we offer the below general guidance regarding protection of Trout Waters:

- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated buffer of at least 100 ft on both sides of all perennial tributaries to the designated water;
- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated buffer of at least 200 ft on both sides of designated waters.

**Stockable Trout Waters** – The Cold Water Streams dataset also includes the locations of waters currently stocked with trout by DWR as well as those suitable for stocking, but perhaps not currently stocked. To best protect these waters and the species they are known to or capable of supporting, we recommend coordination with DWR ESS per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> anytime work in Stocked Trout Waters is proposed. Otherwise, we offer the below general guidance regarding protection of Trout Waters:

- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated buffer of at least 100 ft on both sides of all perennial tributaries to the designated water;

- We recommend protecting from impacts a natively vegetated buffer of at least 200 ft on both sides of designated waters.

**Colonial Waterbird (CWB) colonies** – This DWR-maintained dataset includes documented locations of colonial waterbird colonies. To ensure protection of the colony and the species known to nest within it, we recommend coordination with DWR’s ES per the protocols provided here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/> for any land development or timbering activities proposed to occur within 0.5 miles of a documented colony. Otherwise, we offer the below general guidance regarding protection of colonial waterbird colonies:

- We recommend preserving, planting and/or enhancing an undisturbed natively vegetated buffer of at least 500 ft around the waterbird colony. This provides the colony with a line of sight and habitat buffer, providing nesting activity protection as well as habitat protection to ensure suitability for future nesting seasons.

**DWR Lands (boat ramps, WMA’s, Fish Hatcheries, Lakes)\*** – The DWR Lands dataset includes locations of all DWR facilities. We support development of easement restrictions protective of our facilities and access to them by the public and our staff; and the watersheds/drainages upstream of our hatcheries and fishing lakes.

**Bald Eagle Nests** – This dataset includes the location of bald eagle nests, and their associated buffers, within Virginia. While we periodically update nest status or add new nests based on curated observations from citizens and/or our staff, we no longer update bald eagle nest data annually per flyover survey data. To ensure protection of bald eagles in compliance with the Bald and Golden Eagle Act, we recommend using the Center for Conservation Biology (CCB) [Eagle Nest Locator](#) to determine if any active eagle nests are known from the project area. If active bald eagle nests have been documented from the project area, we recommend that the project move forward in a manner consistent with [state and federal guidelines for protection of bald eagles](#); and coordination, as indicated, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding possible impacts upon bald eagles or the need for a federal bald eagle take permit.

**Bald Eagle Concentration Area and Roosts (BECAR)** - This dataset includes bald eagle concentration areas (defined as 660 feet landward or channelward of the shoreline) and documented roosting sites documented by VDWR and/or our partners. Significant habitat alteration, location of water-dependent facilities or other recreational and commercial activities within certain distances of eagle nests, concentration zones, or roosts may result in adverse impacts upon eagles. Therefore, we recommend that land owners comply with the Virginia [management guidelines for landowners](#); and that he or she coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding possible impacts upon bald eagles or the need for a federal bald eagle take permit associated with activities on his or her property.

*\* coming to VAFWIS very soon!*

## **II. Common Wildlife Species and Resources**

Use the following table to identify the appropriate contact to answer any questions or provide information regarding common wildlife and/or wildlife-related recreation in your area. Link to DWR regional map: <https://www.DWR.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/vDWR-region-map.pdf>

DWR Region	Terrestrial Species	Aquatic Species	Lands/Facilities
I	David Norris 804-829-6580 <a href="mailto:David.Norris@dwr.virginia.gov">David.Norris@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Clinton Morgeson 804-829-6580 <a href="mailto:Clinton.Morgeson@dwr.virginia.gov">Clinton.Morgeson@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Jennifer Allen 804-367-1000 <a href="mailto:Jenn.Allen@dwr.virginia.gov">Jenn.Allen@dwr.virginia.gov</a>
II	Matthew Overstreet 434-525-7522 <a href="mailto:Matthew.Overstreet@dwr.virginia.gov">Matthew.Overstreet@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Scott Smith 434-525-7522 <a href="mailto:Scott.Smith@dwr.virginia.gov">Scott.Smith@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Pete Schula 434-252-7522 <a href="mailto:Pete.Schula@dwr.virginia.gov">Pete.Schula@dwr.virginia.gov</a>
III	Lisa Sztukowski 276-783-4860 <a href="mailto:Lisa.Sztukowski@dwr.virginia.gov">Lisa.Sztukowski@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Jeff Williams 276-783-4860 <a href="mailto:Jeff.Williams@dwr.virginia.gov">Jeff.Williams@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Tom Hampton 276-783-4860 <a href="mailto:Tom.Hampton@dwr.virginia.gov">Tom.Hampton@dwr.virginia.gov</a>
IV	Jaime Sajecki 540-248-9360 <a href="mailto:Jaime.Sajecki@dwr.virginia.gov">Jaime.Sajecki@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Stephen Reeser 540-248-9360 <a href="mailto:Steve.Reeser@dwr.virginia.gov">Steve.Reeser@dwr.virginia.gov</a>	Matt Kline 540-248-9360 <a href="mailto:Matt.Kline@dwr.virginia.gov">Matt.Kline@dwr.virginia.gov</a>

Temporary 2023

Private Lands Wildlife Biologist Point of Contact:

Marc Puckett  
434-392-8328  
[Marc.Puckett@DWR.virginia.gov](mailto:Marc.Puckett@DWR.virginia.gov)

### **III: Species Special Status Table**

<b>Species Status and Type</b>		<b>Responsible Agency in Virginia</b>
Federal Endangered (FE)	<i>Animals</i>	USFWS (or NOAA) and DWR
	<i>Plants and insects</i>	USFWS and DCR-DNH
Federal Threatened (FT)	<i>Animals</i>	USFWS (or NOAA) and DWR
	<i>Plants and insects</i>	USFWS and DCR-DNH
Federal Candidate (FC)	<i>Animals</i>	USFWS
	<i>Plants and insects</i>	USFWS and DCR-DNH
Federal Proposed (FP)		USFWS (at applicant's discretion)
Federal Species of Concern (FS)		USFWS (at applicant's discretion)
State Endangered (SE)	<i>Animals</i>	DWR
	<i>Plants and insects</i>	DCR-DNH
State Threatened (ST)	<i>Animals</i>	DWR
	<i>Plants and insects</i>	DCR-DNH
Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)^		DWR (at applicant's discretion)

*Table Notes:*

*NOAA Fisheries Service has jurisdictional authority over protection of sea turtles in Virginia's waters (non-nesting), Atlantic sturgeon, shortnose sturgeon and marine mammals.*

*The VA Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) retains legal authority for the protection of all plants and listed insects. However, through a memorandum of agreement with VDCR-DNH, coordination regarding these resources should be initiated with VDCR-DNH.*

See [www.bewildvirginia.org](http://www.bewildvirginia.org) for more information about the Virginia Wildlife Action Plan

### **IV: DWR Environmental Services Contacts**

Amy Martin, Program Manager  
804-481-5296  
[Amy.Martin@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:Amy.Martin@dwr.virginia.gov)

Lee Brann  
804-481-1934  
[Lee.Brann@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:Lee.Brann@dwr.virginia.gov)

Tamara Doucette  
804-659-3428  
[Tamara.Doucette@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:Tamara.Doucette@dwr.virginia.gov)

### **V: Project Review Submission Emails\***

[ESSProjects@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:ESSProjects@dwr.virginia.gov)

[ProjectReview@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:ProjectReview@dwr.virginia.gov)

*\*See information here to determine which email address to submit your project for review:  
<https://dwr.virginia.gov/wies/environmental-services/>*