

Virginia Resource Advisory Committee
George Washington and Jefferson National Forest
SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT
Meeting Notes

March 14, 2023

The Virginia Resource Advisory Committee was convened for a hybrid in-person and virtual meeting at 1:30 P.M. on March 14, 2023 at the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest Supervisor's Office, 5162 Valleypointe Parkway, Roanoke, VA 24019 and virtually over Microsoft teams.

In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public.

Committee members present:

Tauna Gulley, virtual attendance
Tom Richardson, virtual attendance
Keith Simmons, virtual attendance
Ed Stoots, in-person attendance
Richard Brooks, in-person attendance
Al Bourgoise, in-person attendance
Wayne Thacker, virtual attendance
Stephanie Danahy, virtual attendance
Lisa Quigley, in-person attendance

Staff of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest present:

Lauren Stull, Acting Designated Federal Official, in-person attendance
Rebecca Robbins, Committee Coordinator, in-person attendance
Beth Christiansen, Eastern Divide District Ranger, virtual attendance
Ed Wright, Mount Rogers National Recreation Area Ranger, in-person attendance
Mary Yonce, Lee District Ranger, in-person attendance
Kevin Kyle, James River and Warm Spring District Ranger, in-person attendance
Jennifer Hummel, Public Affairs Specialist, in-person attendance

Ethics

RAC members were provided with ethics training materials prior to the meeting and given certification forms to return at the meeting.

Election of a New Virginia RAC Chairperson

Tom Richardson finished his term as Chairperson of the Virginia RAC. A simple majority is needed to elect a new chairperson according to the SRS RAC Charter. This simple majority was met as the attending RAC members voted unanimously to elect Stephanie Danahy as the new Chairperson.

Review of Current RAC Elected Projects

Lauren Stull, Acting Designated Federal Official led a review of progress on VA RAC elected projects from previous years.

Review of SRS funding and county election process

Rebecca Robbins, Committee Coordinator, led a presentation on Virginia county elections of Title II funding.

Discussion of the Virginia RAC Project Proposal Outreach and Selection Process

RAC Members and FS Staff discussed the outreach process and timeline for the public to submit project proposals to the VA RAC for funding in 2023. The RAC made the following suggestions:

- Concerns were raised by members of the VA RAC regarding the subjectivity of some of the project evaluation criteria. It was decided that some of the current evaluation criteria for proposed projects will be replaced with quantitative criteria and rewritten to reduce the amount of subjective language.
- Members suggested that the project rating rubric be removed from the application package in exchange for general language on project evaluation criteria.
- Members suggested broadening outreach for project solicitation by reaching out to the Appalachian Trail Club, The Nature Conservancy, Ruffed Grouse Society, National Wild Turkey Federation, Trout Unlimited, equestrian and other recreation groups, Blue Ridge Prism, hunt clubs, and partners like Virginia Department of Forestry.

Follow up questions from RAC Members

Questions were raised by VA RAC members that required further research and follow-up on policy and regulations. The questions and follow-up items are as follows:

- 1) Who makes the decision for the county funding elections later this year?
- 2) What is the default election if the counties do not elect SRS or 1908 Act payments?
- 3) Please provide the reports or information about funding calculations that will inform county decisions.
- 4) Where can Title II funds be spent?
- 5) Provide examples of project evaluation criteria from other RACs.
- 6) Send out calendar invite for the July 11 meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

Stephanie B Danahy

Lauren Stull
Acting Designated Federal Official
Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor

Stephanie Danahy
Chairman
Public at Large

These minutes will be formally considered by the Council at its next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.