



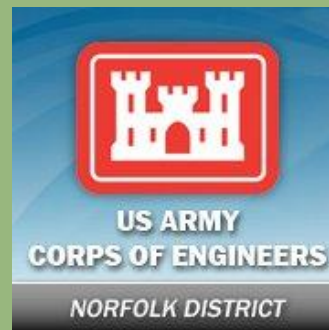
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Virginia Aquatic Resources Trust Fund – Site Selection Guidelines

Karen Johnson, May 8, 2013

Virginia Aquatic Resources Trust Fund

- Cooperative program between TNC, USACE and DEQ which establishes a mechanism to provide compensatory mitigation for wetland and stream impacts through an in-lieu-fee agreement
- Established by a 1995 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), amended in 2003.
- New Program Instrument completed in 2011 to comply with the 2008 Federal Mitigation Rule.



Compensation Planning Framework - Conservancy Focus

Compensation Planning Framework directs where we search for projects


















Developed from TNC priority watersheds and landscapes in cooperation with scientists and conservation partners, experts throughout the state

Existing priorities – formalized in 2011 Instrument

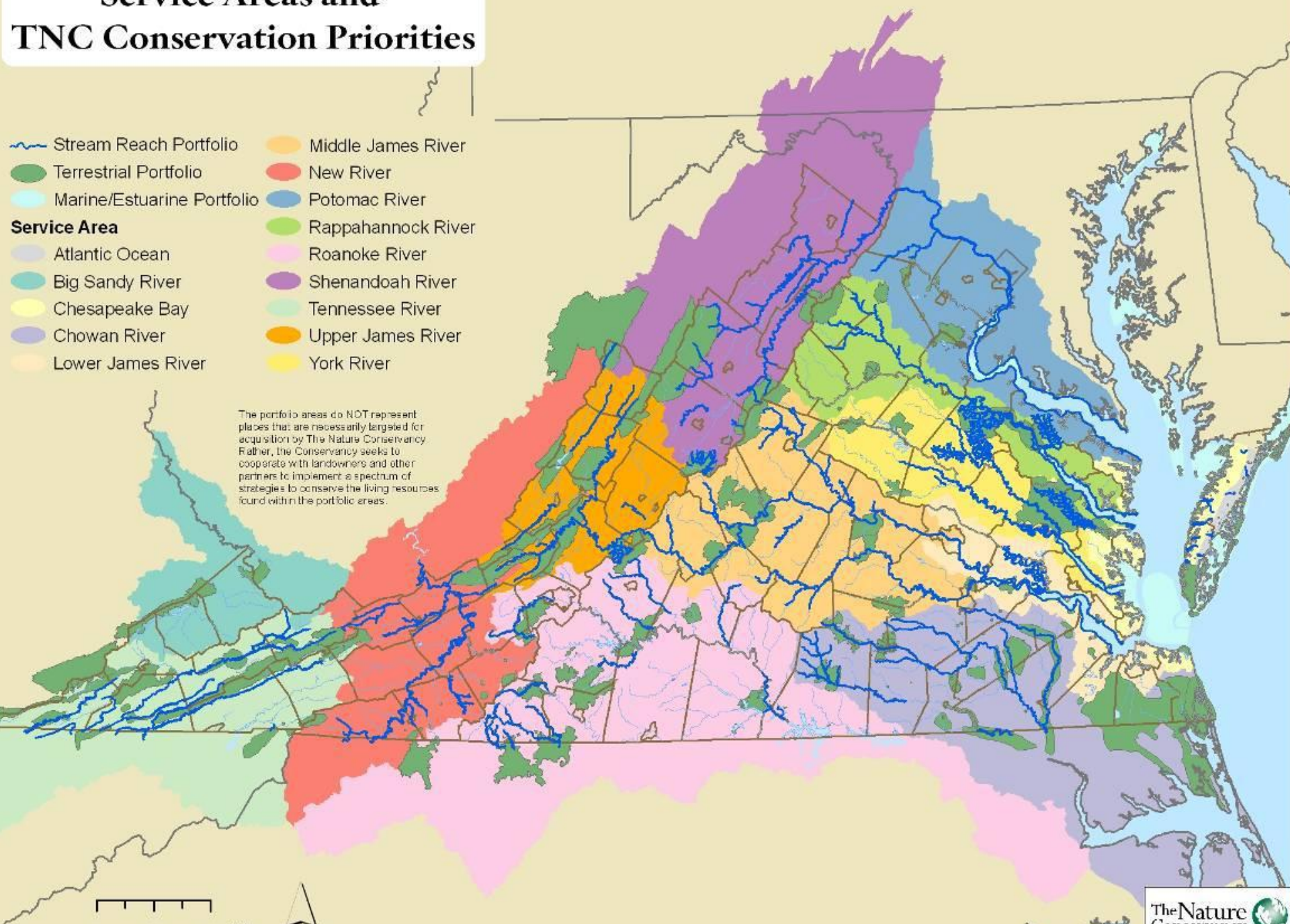
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S WATERSHED APPROACH TO COMPENSATION PLANNING FOR THE VIRGINIA AQUATIC RESTORATION TRUST FUND



Service Areas and TNC Conservation Priorities

-  Stream Reach Portfolio
-  Terrestrial Portfolio
-  Marine/Estuarine Portfolio
- Service Area**
-  Atlantic Ocean
-  Big Sandy River
-  Chesapeake Bay
-  Chowan River
-  Lower James River
-  Middle James River
-  New River
-  Potomac River
-  Rappahannock River
-  Roanoke River
-  Shenandoah River
-  Tennessee River
-  Upper James River
-  York River

The portfolio areas do NOT represent places that are necessarily targeted for acquisition by The Nature Conservancy. Rather, the Conservancy seeks to cooperate with landowners and other partners to implement a spectrum of strategies to conserve the living resources found within the portfolio areas.



Site Selection Factors



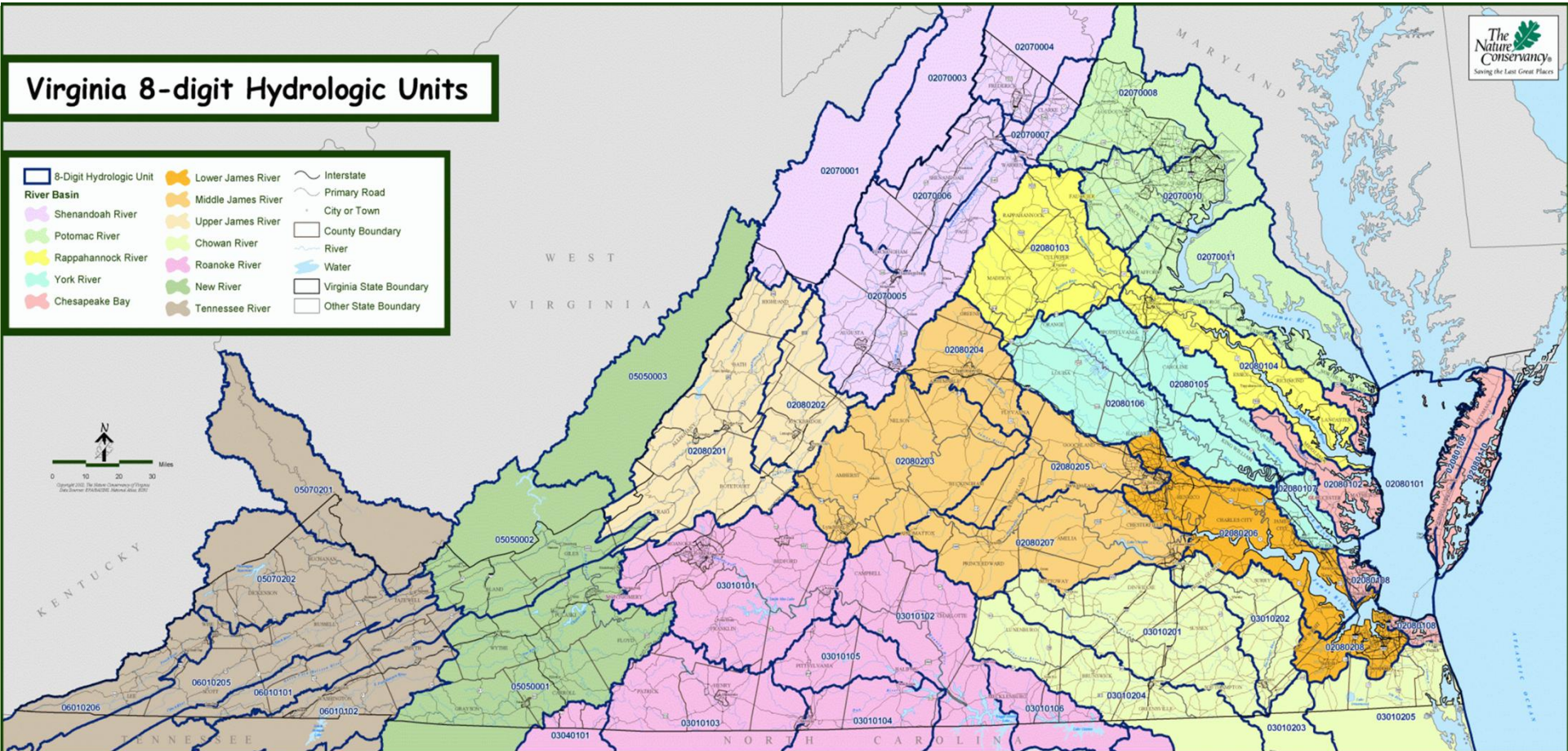
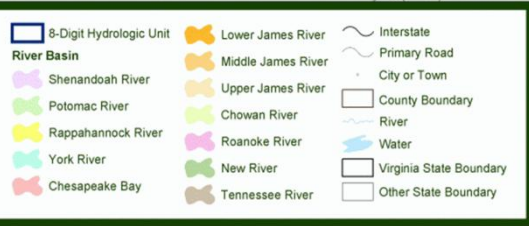
Site selection factors include:

- Mitigation need within watershed
- Available funds within the watershed and for specific resource
- Landscape setting
- Size and scope
- Feasibility of restoration
- Project costs

Most of these factors are interrelated

VARTF Service Areas

Virginia 8-digit Hydrologic Units



- Trust Fund services the entire state of Virginia – 13 major river watersheds
- Trust Fund can provide mitigation for all aquatic resources in Virginia
 - Non-tidal wetlands, tidal wetlands, and streams

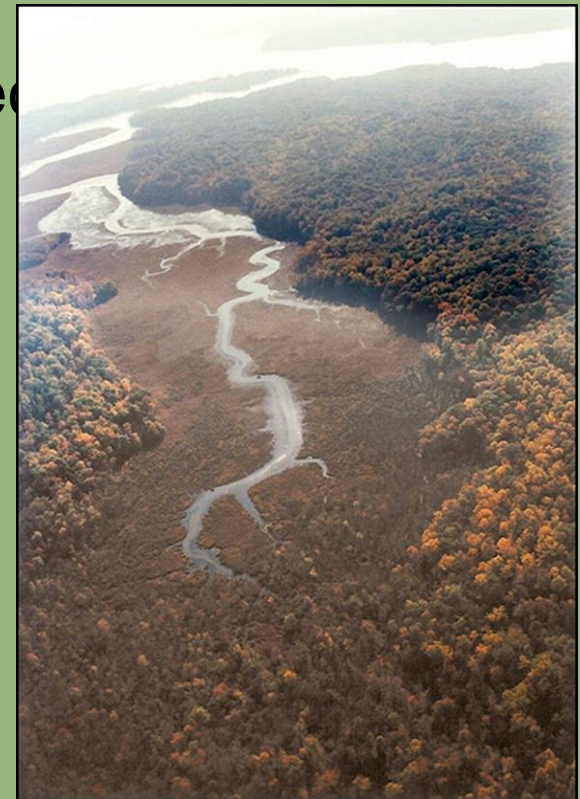
Mitigation Need w/in Service Area

Mitigation need per service area is determined by:

- Amount of impacts to date
- Status of already funded projects and credits generated

Roanoke River Basin	Proposed Credits	Released Credits
Approved Projects		
RO-6	2433	966
	2433	966
Proposed Projects		
RO-7	2500	-
Credit Balance	4933	966
Impacts to Date (If)		
	5325	
Credits Required	4534	3568

and project



Mitigation Funds Available w/in Service Area

Determine if appropriate and adequate funds are available.

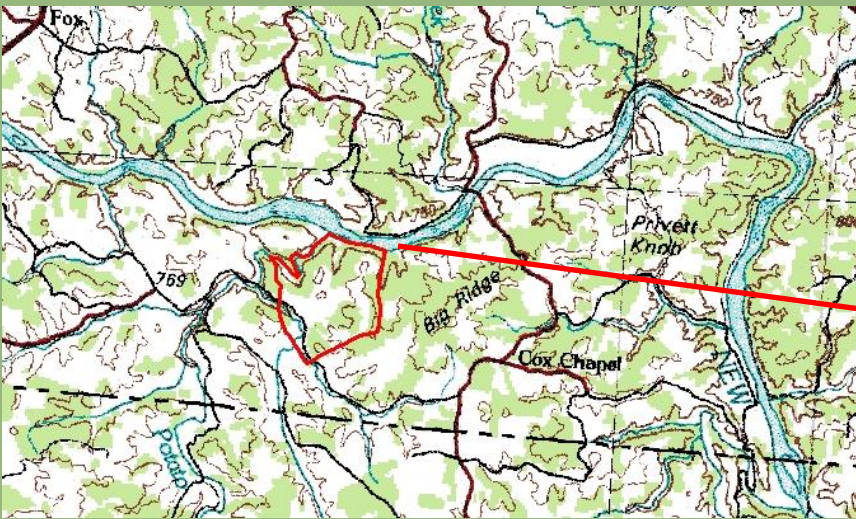
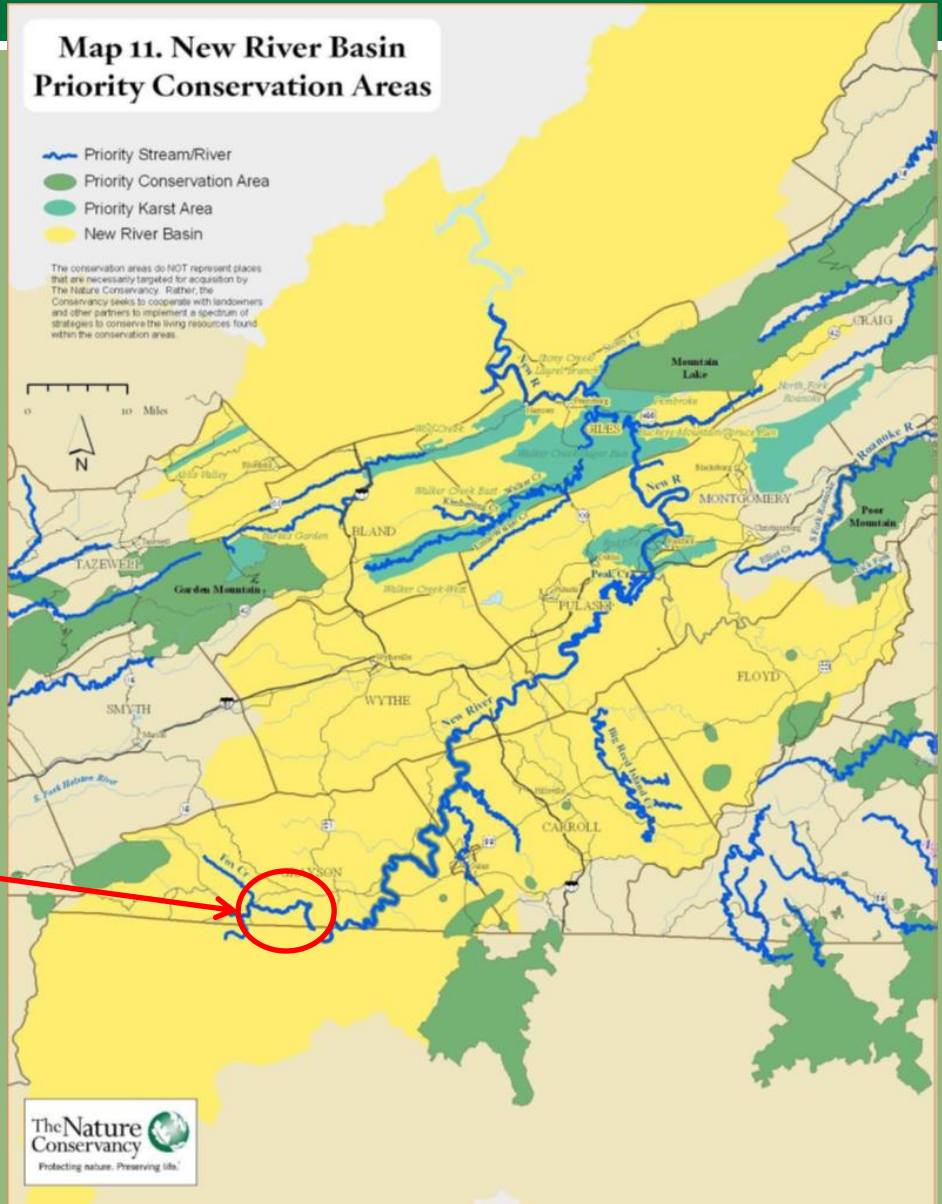
- Total payments to date
- Amount of funds approved
- Amount of funding proposed

- Project compensation “in-kind” for mitigation need

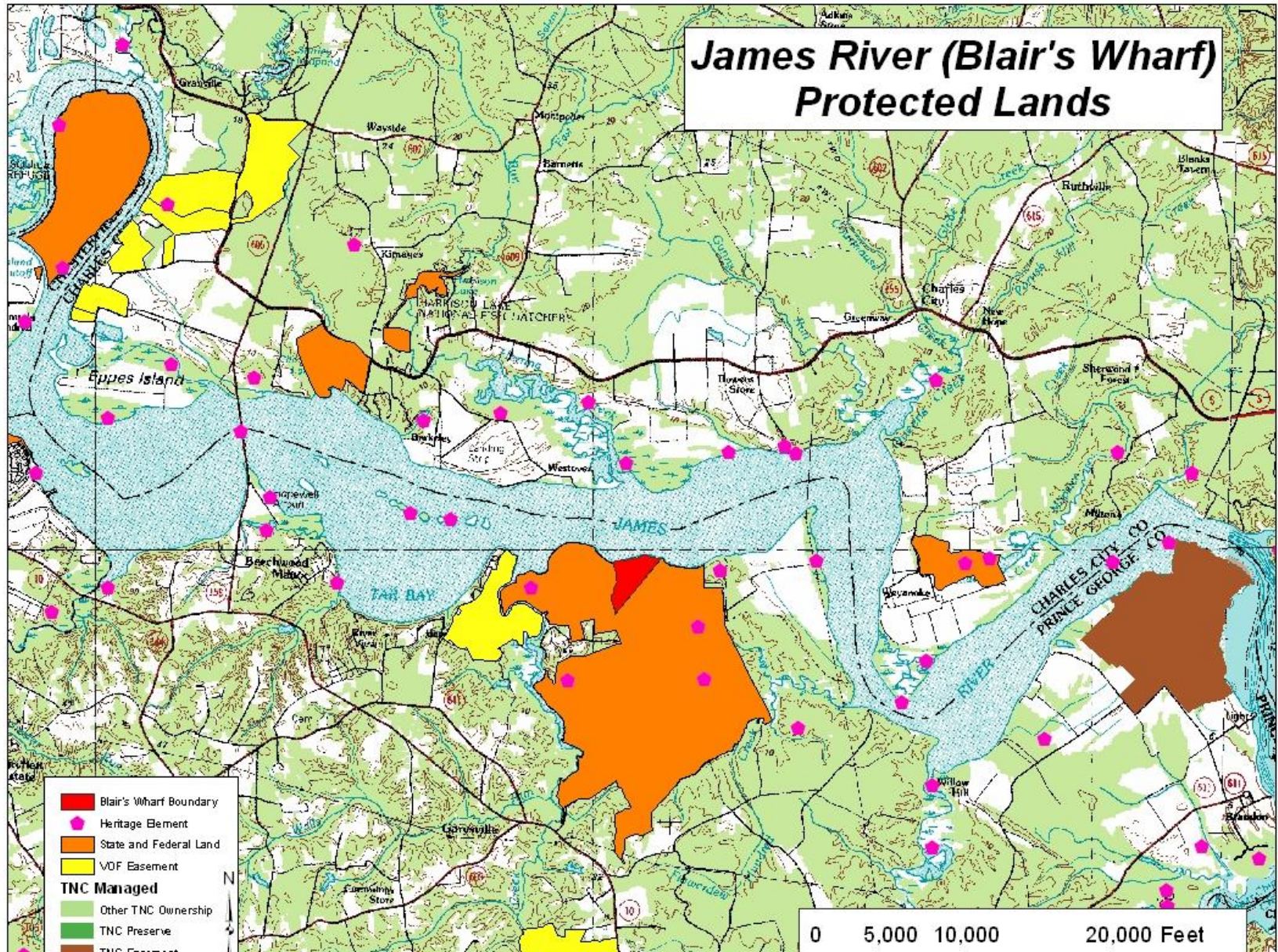
Potomac Basin	Allocated
Project Name	
PO-1	\$175,000.00
PO-2	\$4,000.00
PO-5	\$256,819.50
PO-6	\$800,000.00
Total Funds Allocated	\$1,235,819.50
Proposed Projects	
PO-9	\$200,000.00
Total Funds Requested	\$200,000.00
Total Mitigation Payments	\$1,508,462.71
Available Balance	\$72,643.21

Proximity to Portfolio/Priority Areas

Site is located within or near priority area identified in VARTF Compensation Planning Framework
 -TNC portfolio sites

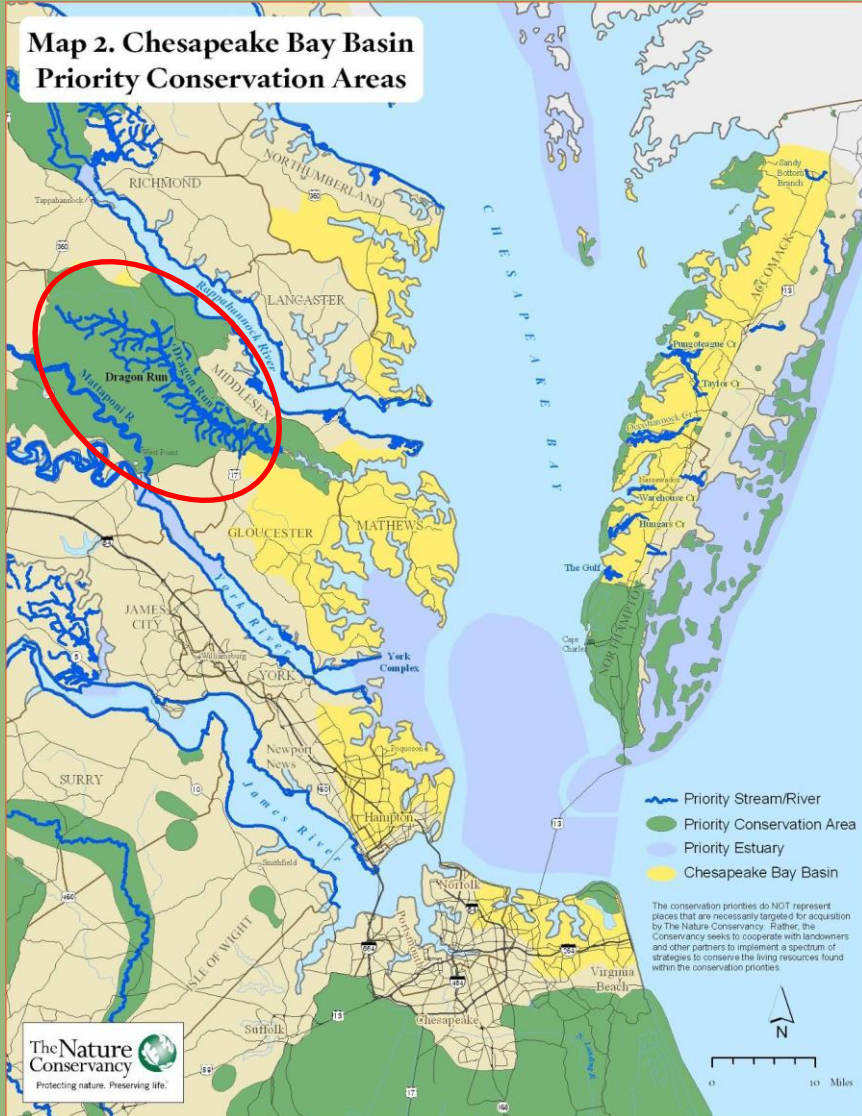


Proximity to Other Conservation Targets

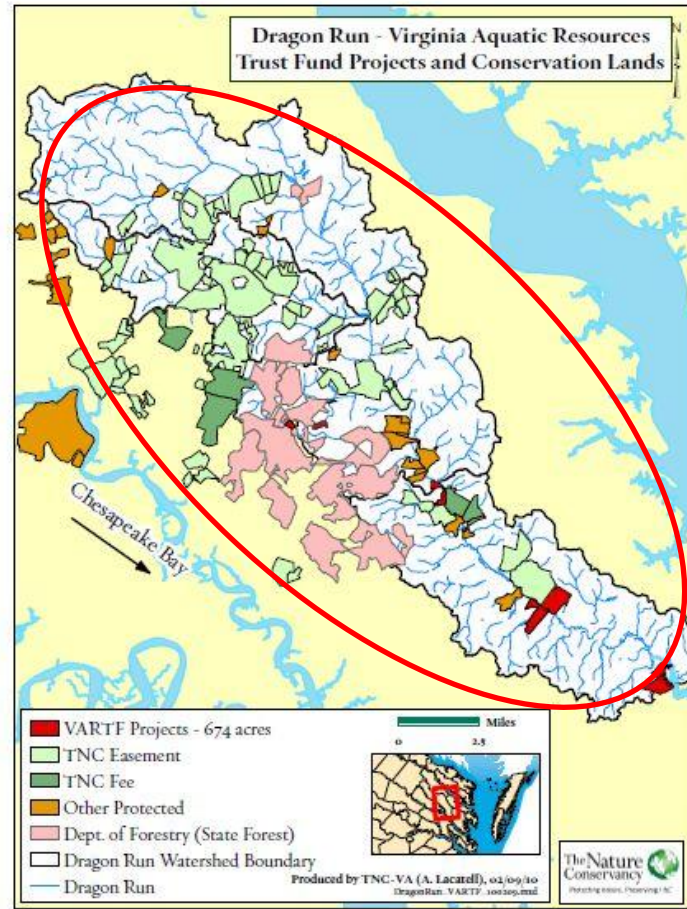


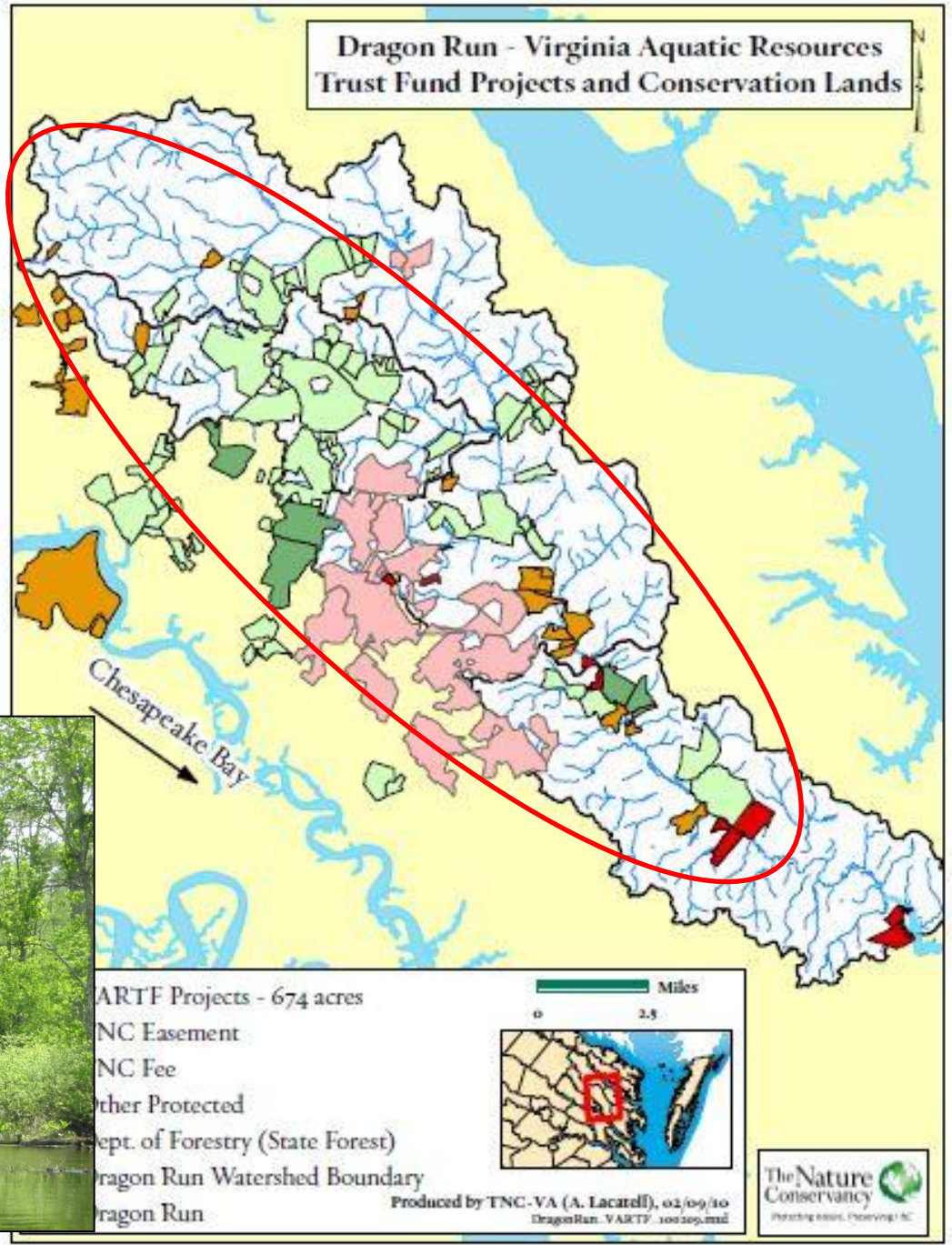
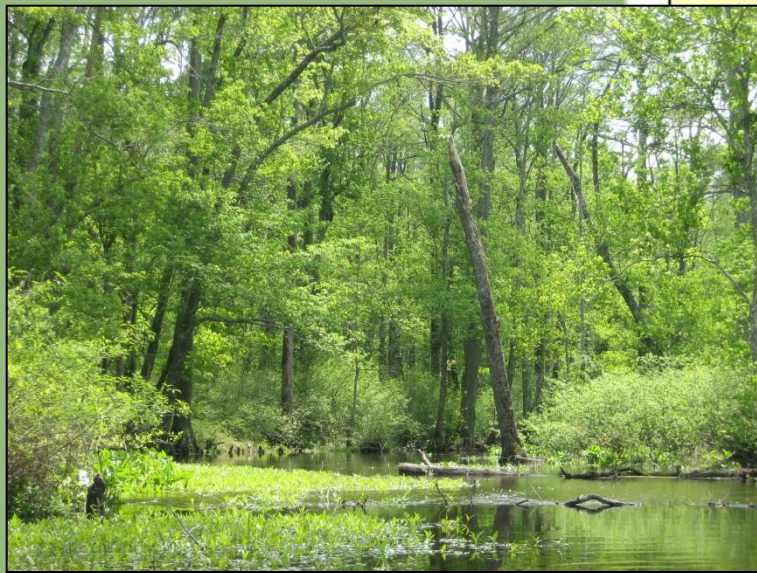
Connectivity to Existing Sites/Corridors

Map 2. Chesapeake Bay Basin
Priority Conservation Areas



Dragon Run - Virginia Aquatic Resources
Trust Fund Projects and Conservation Lands





Likelihood of Success



Location in the watershed

- Closer to headwaters = less unpredictable flows / impacts

Surrounding land use

- Developed or rural watersheds, and land use can drive appropriate compensation activities
- Future land use changes affect impervious surfaces, run-off, etc.

Size of potential compensation area

Current resource condition

- Systems may be too degraded to adequately restore and maintain

Site constraints (utilities structures, property boundary)

Easement language and perpetual protection



Compensation provided by the project justifies the total project cost

Factors considered include:

- Available funds/Advance Credit fee schedule
- Level of coordination
- Land acquisition & associated costs
- Permits
- Design
- Construction
- Plantings
- Monitoring
- Potential corrective actions
- Stewardship



Project Development/Proposal

- VARTF staff evaluate site potential
- Develop proposal for funding/project request
- Present project to IRT
- Coordinate site visit/comments from agencies
- Revise proposal (prospectus) for public notice
- 30-day public comment period
- TNC addresses any comments
- 30-day coordination with IRT on approval
- Funding approved, VARTF moves forward with project

Questions?

www.nature.org/vartf

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