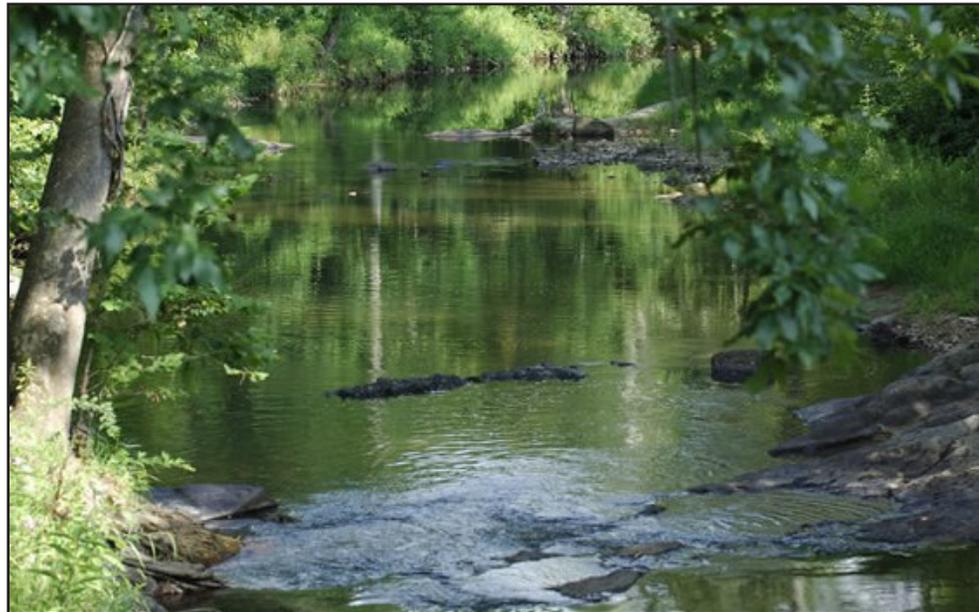




# CHAPTER 4: ENVIRONMENTAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES



# INTRODUCTION

Nestled between the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers lies the natural beauty of Culpeper County. Its rolling and forested hills, contrasted with its farmed plains, are central to the County's identity. The landscape's significance only increases when considering the historic resources scattered across the County, with artifacts dating as far back as pre-human habitation. These environmental and historic resources provide ample opportunities for economic and recreational activity, while helping Culpeper County have its own unique place within Virginia.

The County can play a key role in the preservation of these environmental and historic resources. While the Federal and State Governments have their own regulations regarding environmental standards, the County can also enact its own policies and incentives to further protect these environmental and historic resources. Additionally, local planning allows the County to work on public access to, and enjoyment of, these resources, ensuring that future generations are able to continue to learn about Culpeper and its treasured past, as well as experience and enjoy Culpeper County as it is today.

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the County's existing environmental and historic resources, an analysis of current and future environmental and historic preservation concerns and trends, and a list of the goals, objectives, and action items that will address these identified concerns. These statements will outline the County's environmental and historic preservation-related aspirations for the next several years, influencing how it will impact future decisions. Each of these generalized goals will include detailed objectives and accompanying action items that will provide the framework for what outcomes the County wants to work towards, and how it will achieve them.

# RESOURCES

## ENVIRONMENTAL

As Map 4-1 illustrates, Culpeper County is predominantly rural with forests, pastures, cropland, and trees comprising the top four types of land cover. While the southeastern portion of the County is heavily forested with low rising hills, the center of the County becomes relatively flatter with more land dedicated to pasture and cropland. This flatter plain covers the center of the County, stretching from the Brandy Station and Elkwood area to the southwestern part of the County. The northern and western parts of the County become increasingly hilly and forested. Additionally, as indicated by the open water and NWI/Other classifications, Culpeper County is host to multiple streams and rivers, adding various water resources to the overall environmental character. This diversity of land cover provides ample opportunity for different economic and recreational opportunities, such as tree harvesting, farming, natural trails, canoeing/kayaking, and other outdoor activities. These economic and recreational opportunities help foster a relationship with the innate environmental functions that these resources provide.

For clarification, the Tree classification is for “tree cover of natural or semi-natural woody vegetation as defined by the EPA, that does not encompass at least an acre in size.” The Forest classification is for those that encompass an acre or more. Additionally, the NWI/Other classification is for “all areas where forest, shrubland vegetation, or perennial vegetation accounts for 25% to 100% of the cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water, as provided by the TMI & NWI.” The classification definitions of Map 4-1 can be found online and are linked in the appendix.



Source: Culpeper County Home Page

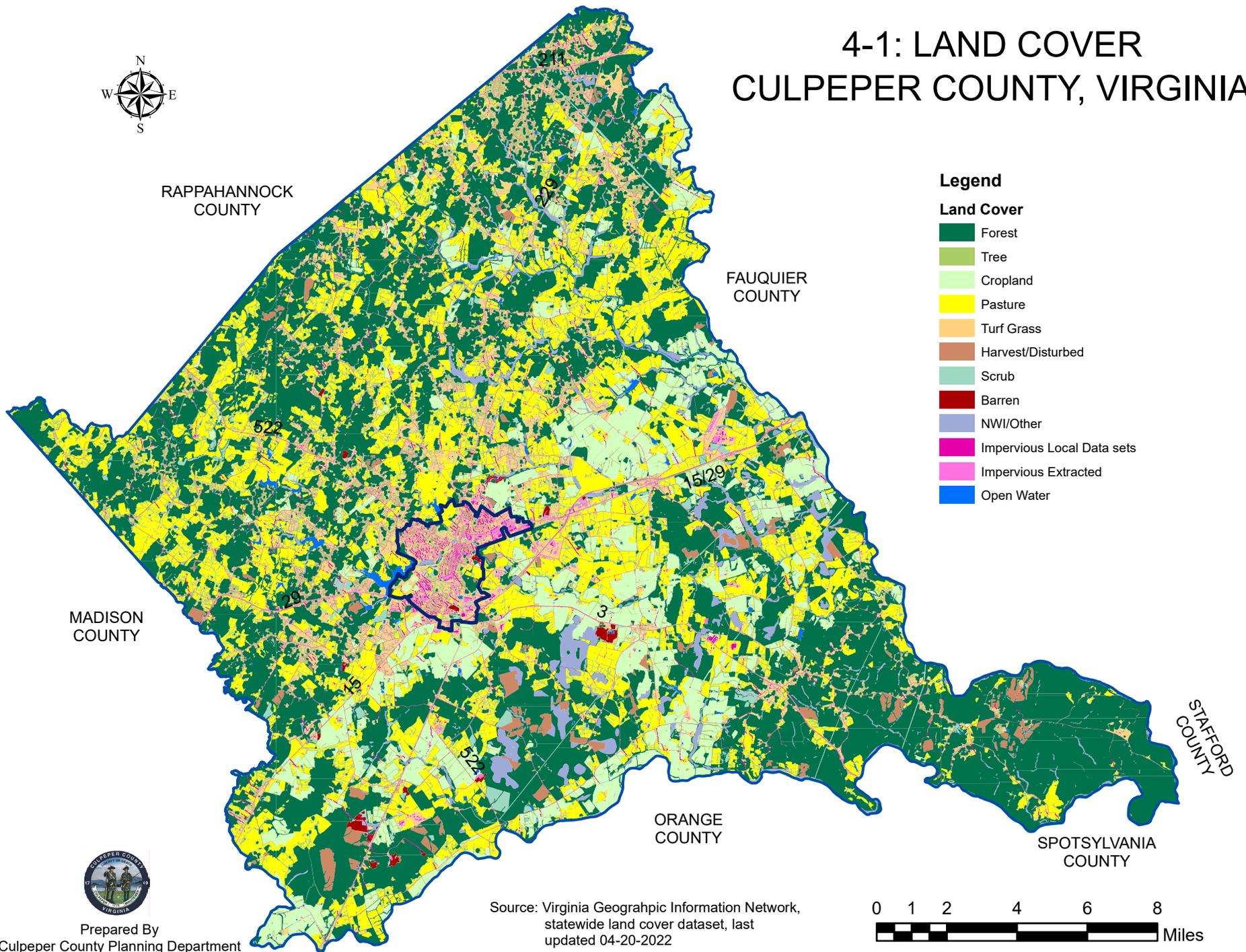
# 4-1: LAND COVER CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



## Legend

### Land Cover

- Forest
- Tree
- Cropland
- Pasture
- Turf Grass
- Harvest/Disturbed
- Scrub
- Barren
- NWI/Other
- Impervious Local Data sets
- Impervious Extracted
- Open Water



MADISON COUNTY

RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY

FAUQUIER COUNTY

ORANGE COUNTY

SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY

STAFFORD COUNTY



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

Source: Virginia Geographic Information Network,  
statewide land cover dataset, last  
updated 04-20-2022



## TOPOGRAPHY

Culpeper County topography ranges from an elevation of 1,160 feet above sea level on Mitchell's Mountain to 130 feet above sea level at the junction of the Rapidan and the Rappahannock Rivers. In general, the land surface slopes southeastward from an average altitude of 600 feet above sea level in the western portion of the county to 350 feet in the southeast. The northwestern portion of the County is generally hilly to steep, the central portion of Culpeper County ranges from mostly level to rolling; and the southeastern section of the County is mostly level. There are numerous mountains designated in the County, the elevations of which are shown in Figure 4-1. Additionally, Map 4-2 shows the topography of Culpeper County.

Development and land disturbing activities, excluding agriculture, on 15%-25% slopes should always require grading permits with erosion and sediment controls prescribed and limited where possible. Additionally, drain fields located on 15%-25% slopes should require a hydrologic report assuring that ground and surface water will be protected both on and off-site. Those areas located on 25% or greater slopes should be restricted from development and drain fields should be prohibited.

Mountain	Elevation	Mountain	Elevation
Mitchells Mountain	1,160ft	Fox Mountain	762ft
Scott Mountain	890ft	Buzzard Mountain	621ft
Hitt Mountain	882ft	Fleetwood Hill	540ft
Bruce Mountain	850ft	Sheads Mountain	540ft
Cedar Mountain	833ft	Coles Hill	510ft
Parrish Mountain	817ft	Hansbrough's Ridge	470ft
Mount Pony	790ft	Stony Point	410ft

Figure 4-1

# 4-2: TOPOGRAPHY CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



RAPPAHANNOCK  
COUNTY

FAUQUIER  
COUNTY

MADISON  
COUNTY

ORANGE  
COUNTY

SPOTSYLVANIA  
COUNTY

STAFFORD  
COUNTY

### ELEVATION LEGEND

- 100-350
- 400-450
- 500-550
- 600-700
- 750-1050



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 07-2022



## GEOLOGY & MINERALS

Culpeper County is located within the Northern Piedmont physiographic province and is underlain by igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks, as shown in Map 4-3. These areas are bordered by the North Appalachian Ridge Valley to the west and the North Coastal Plain to the east.

The Triassic-Jurassic Basin, also known as the Culpeper Basin, is the dominant feature of Culpeper County's geology and stretches from the mid-eastern portion of the County diagonally to the southern tip. The rocks in this basin are Triassic-Jurassic red and brown shales, siltstones, and sandstones intruded by diabase. The types of rocks within this region include sandstone, siltstone, shale, hornfels, diabase, basalt, limited coal seams in some areas, and conglomerate. Groundwater quality in this basin is generally lower because of hardness, acidity, salinity, and iron.

### Extraction

Culpeper County has a varied history of mining efforts. In the mid to late 1800s, copper was found near Slaughter's Mountain, also known as Cedar Mountain. The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy has identified three mines that contain small deposits of copper: the Batna Mine, Culpeper Prospect, and Ellis Mine. Copper mineralization associated with Triassic rocks near Culpeper and Batna have been prospected, but no commercial production has been established.

Gold was first discovered in Culpeper County around 1828. The gold deposits that were found, and may still exist today, are located in a 150 mile long, 10 to 15 mile wide strip which runs from Montgomery County, Maryland to Appomattox County, Virginia. This linear region contains scattered occurrences of pyrite and gold. Gold ore was mined and milled at several sites in the vicinity of Richardsville in the eastern part of the County. Known gold deposits tend to be relatively low grade, with low concentrations of fine flakes. In addition, soapstone has been found near Richardsville.

In the past, diabase, basalt, granitic rocks, sandstone, hornfels, and conglomerate have been quarried as sources of crushed stone. Limestone was quarried near Jennings Store for use as agricultural stone, and limestone from other parts of the County has also been burned to produce lime. Slate has been quarried and other types of rock have been used for local construction purposes. Clay materials were formerly produced for use in brick plants at Culpeper and Elkwood, and for use in the manufacture of brick and tile at Stevensburg. Sand obtained in the Hazel River area has been used for paving, masonry, concrete, and ice control. Sand and gravel deposits suitable for construction are present along the Robinson, Rappahannock, and Rapidan Rivers.

According to the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, in 2013, there were six operating quarries in Culpeper County. The annual tonnage of granite and sandstone quarried from these operations in 2013 was 930,675 tons. These mines produce crushed stone for roadstone and concrete aggregate, and dimension stone for monuments and other architectural applications. See Map 4-4 for a map of active and inactive mines and quarries.

#### Criteria For Future Extraction Locations

Transportation is an important aspect of identifying mineral resources potential. Access is extremely important to active mineral facilities. The weight and size of the vehicles required to transport material demand adequate routes. By siting these facilities along paved roadways with adequate widths, negative traffic impacts can be reduced. Where feasible, the use of railroad sidings should be encouraged. If truck traffic can be reduced through the practice of shipping freight via rail, this should be treated as a substantial benefit.

The availability and location of mineral resources is important information for land use planners, mining and quarrying industries, and the concerned public. Mineral resource extraction should be compatible with surrounding land uses. In planning for future extraction, the need to reserve adequate space for facilities, access roads, buffer zones, and corridors for high-load electrical lines should be considered. Large tracts of land are necessary to provide buffers from the dust, noise, and vibration associated with this industry.

The decision to utilize an available resource relies upon many external factors, principally economic and environmental concerns. Proper planning and regulation in advance of extraction of resources can minimize environmental disruption. Plans to extract any type of resource must be weighed against the effects of extraction on scenic values, recreational uses, surface water quality of the rivers and creeks, agricultural operations and residential quality of life. Mineral resources can be mined only where they are found, thus planning for their potential environmentally sound extraction is the responsibility of the local government. The Culpeper Basin's southern to southeastern boundary in Culpeper County occurs along the Rapidan River. Environmental degradation may occur if proper planning and design techniques are not used. As such, all use permit applications for mineral extraction should include documentation which ensures environmental protection. All applications for conditional use permits will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. This process will allow for site-specific studies with proper planning and siting of the facility. Appropriate conditions should be imposed and approval should be given only when it is shown that the surrounding areas will be compatible with this type of land use, and only when the criteria outlined here have been met.

# 4-3: GEOLOGY CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



RAPPAHANNOCK  
COUNTY

FAUQUIER  
COUNTY

MADISON  
COUNTY

ORANGE  
COUNTY

SPOTSYLVANIA  
COUNTY

STAFFORD  
COUNTY

- Igneous and Metamorphic, undifferentiated
- Igneous, intrusive
- Igneous, volcanic
- Melange
- Metamorphic and Sedimentary, undifferentiated
- Metamorphic, carbonate
- Metamorphic, gneiss
- Metamorphic, intrusive
- Metamorphic, sedimentary
- Metamorphic, sedimentary clastic
- Metamorphic, undifferentiated
- Metamorphic, volcanic
- Sedimentary, carbonate
- Sedimentary, clastic
- Tectonite, undifferentiated
- Water

SOURCE: USGS



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

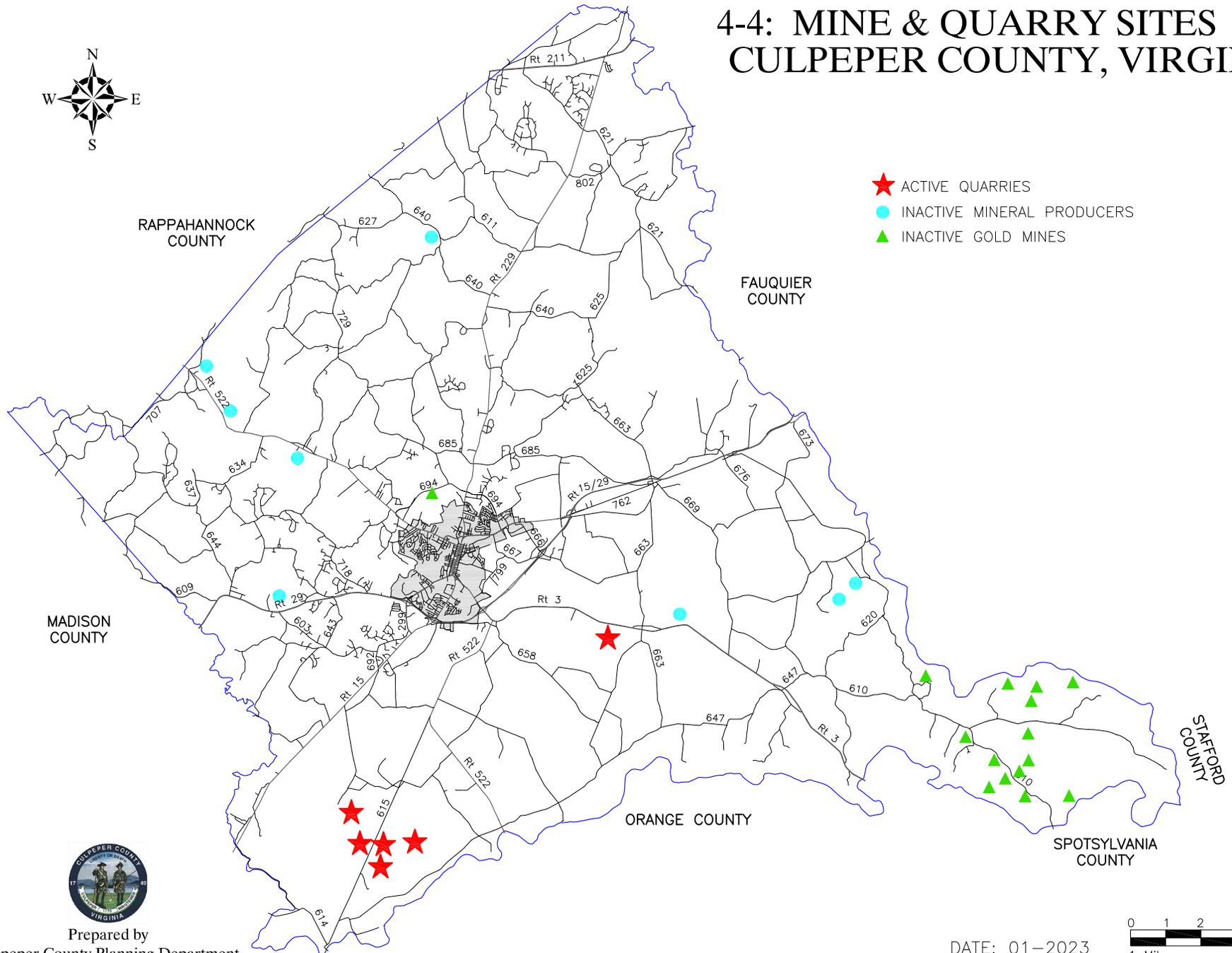
DATE: 07-2022



# 4-4: MINE & QUARRY SITES CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA

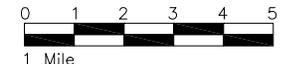


- ★ ACTIVE QUARRIES
- INACTIVE MINERAL PRODUCERS
- ▲ INACTIVE GOLD MINES



Prepared by  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 01-2023



## SOILS

Culpeper County lies entirely within the Piedmont Plateau physiographic province. Such provinces are geologic regions with similar relief, biologic, and climatic characteristics. The north, northwest, and western portion of the County is known as the Piedmont Uplands and is composed of acid crystalline rock material such as granites, gneisses, basalts, and arkosic sandstones. The southeastern part of the County, east of Lignum near the Rapidan-Rappahannock confluence, is a remnant part of the Piedmont Uplands composed of basic metamorphic rock such as sericite shists. The southern and central portion of the County, east of Route 15 to Lignum, is part of the Triassic Basin (an old ocean bed) and is composed of sedimentary rock such as shale and sandstone, with intrusions of igneous rock. The different rock types determine the physical and chemical composition of the overlying soil types. Map 4-5 outlines the general soils found in Culpeper County.

Many soils found within the County are suitable for agricultural and residential purposes. Soil limitations do exist in some locations; these limitations include steep slopes, susceptibility to wind and water erosion, shallow soil depths, unfavorable soil structure and workability, and permanent wetness problems that hinder farming and many forms of septic disposal. All soils require careful management and conservation practices to prevent deterioration in water quality and to maintain and improve soil quality.

Soil properties are measured in terms of depth to water table, ease with which water filters through, moisture retention capacity, stability with changes in temperature and moisture content, acidity (pH), corrosiveness, and a variety of other criteria. The relative importance of each criterion varies with the contemplated use. Specifically, home sites are relied upon to provide both drinking water and to clean wastes. The areas designated as unsuitable for drain fields are those in areas where the soils have high shrink-swell potential or shallow depth to bedrock. In general, the soils with the greatest building limitations are found in the Triassic Basin.



# 4-5: GENERALIZED SOILS MAP CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



RAPPAHANNOCK  
COUNTY

FAUQUIER  
COUNTY

MADISON  
COUNTY

ORANGE  
COUNTY

SPOTSYLVANIA  
COUNTY

STAFFORD  
COUNTY

### Legend

- Alanthus-Myersville-Fauquier-Catoctin
- Codorus-Comus-Elbert-Germanna-Elsinboro-Delanco
- Edgemont-Glenelg-Culpeper-Griffinsburg
- Jackland-Waxpool-Haymarket-Montalto
- Penn-Nestoria-Clover-Ashburn-Dulles
- Rapidan
- Rhodhiss-Mine run-Meadowville-Clifford
- Sycoline-Ott-Kelly
- Yellowbottom-Penn hook-Blocktown-Happyland-Flume



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 01-2023



## HYDROLOGY

A more detailed analysis of the County's water supply can be found on the Environmental Services page of the County website. It is located under water and wastewater, and is titled Regional Water Supply Plan.

### Surface

Culpeper County lies wholly within the Rappahannock River basin. The County is drained by three major tributaries and their stream networks into the Rappahannock River. The three major tributaries are the Hazel River, which drains the northern portion of the County; Mountain Run, which drains the central portion of the County and consists of several impoundments that were designed as multi-purpose lakes; and the Rapidan River, which drains the southern portion of the County and forms the County's southern boundary. The Rappahannock River itself forms the northern and eastern boundaries of Culpeper County, and the confluence of the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers border the southeastern tip of the County. The County is also located in the non-tidal portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Approximately 2,075 acres of Culpeper County is covered by lakes, rivers, and streams.

The 26-square-mile portion of the Mountain Run watershed west of the Town of Culpeper contains Lake Culpeper and Mountain Run Lake, which serve as the primary water supply for the Town of Culpeper. These lakes are also used for recreation, including fishing and boating, although gas engines are prohibited. Mountain Run Lake was completed in 1959 with the construction of an earth-fill dam, approximately 700 feet long and 40 feet high, that impounds 611 acre-feet of water. 531 acre-feet are reserved for water supply storage, and 80-acre feet are reserved for sediment storage. The lake has a surface area of 75 acres. Lake Culpeper was completed in 1972 with an earth-fill structure about 1,000 feet long and 38 feet high, that impounds 1,942 acre-feet. 1,000 acre-feet are reserved for water supply and 942 acre-feet are reserved for sediment storage. There are 16,542 acres in the drainage area for Lake Culpeper and it has a surface area of 254 acres. Both dam structures have more recently been replaced and upgraded by the Town of Culpeper. There are additional lakes in the watershed that could be considered for future water supply. Their impoundment structures are owned and maintained by the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District.

Several stream flow-gauging stations are maintained throughout the County. The U.S. Geological Survey publishes the data from these annually. Flow information coupled with water quality information can help determine the feasibility of water withdrawals or surface water impoundments along these streams and rivers.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) released the Final 2020 305(b)/303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report. The 2020 Integrated Report is a summary of the water quality conditions in Virginia. DEQ develops and submits this report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency every even-numbered year. Impaired waters are listed to identify potential risks to public health and safety. These listed waters require implementing an action plan called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to improve water quality. A number of Culpeper County waters are included on the impaired waters list, including portions of the Rappahannock River, the Rapidan River, the Hughes River, the Hazel River, the Thornton River, Mountain Run, and Cedar Run. Some of the main causes for impairment include the presence of Escherichia Coli (E. Coli) and Polychlorinated Biphenyls, and due to the results of Benthic Macroinvertebrates Bioassessments. Land development which may further impact impaired streams should be required to take additional measures in order to prevent further degradation. DEQ's website provides a much more detailed list of impaired waters. Additionally, the Environmental Protection Agency's How's My Waterway online application provides a visual component regarding the quality of the County's streams and rivers.



Source: InsideNova

## Ground

Culpeper County depends on groundwater for domestic, commercial, and industrial uses. Several areas adjacent to the Town of Culpeper use the Town's water system, allowing these areas to avoid utilizing individual or community wells.

Groundwater is a vulnerable resource, the quality of which is largely determined by how people use the land. Due to Culpeper County's dependence on groundwater, it is imperative that measures are taken to protect this resource. According to the Virginia Water Control Board, the most severe threats to groundwater quality come from leaking surface impoundments used to store, treat and recycle waste products, leaking underground storage-tanks, malfunctioning septic tanks and drain fields, improper uses and inadequate design of landfills, and agricultural use of fertilizers and pesticides.

## Floodplain

Flood-prone areas in Culpeper County that occur along all major streams are designated by the Flood Hazard Map developed from the 2021 HUD Flood Hazard Boundary Maps. Floodplains are seen as a means of creating corridors which tie together large open space areas in the County. These help to provide for the movement of wildlife. Primarily, floodplains are designated for protection of the health, safety, and welfare of County citizens and for the protection of property. A map of the Floodplain is shown in Map 4-6.

Land uses in the flood-prone areas are subject to the provisions contained in the County's Floodplain Overlay District section of the County Zoning Ordinance. Culpeper County is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program that allows for the issuance of flood insurance and disaster assistance in relevant areas.

Forests and other natural vegetation along streams and ponds are important to protect water quality. These vegetated streambanks and shorelines provide a riparian buffer that filters nutrients and sediments, provide shade that moderates water temperature, and provide habitat and food for wildlife. In addition to the County's Floodplain and Watershed Management Overlay Districts, Culpeper County encourages development to protect streams and surface water from disturbance through the use of riparian buffer setbacks. Culpeper County plays a vital role in protecting the water quality in the headwaters of the Rappahannock River.

# 4-6: FLOOD HAZARD AREAS CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



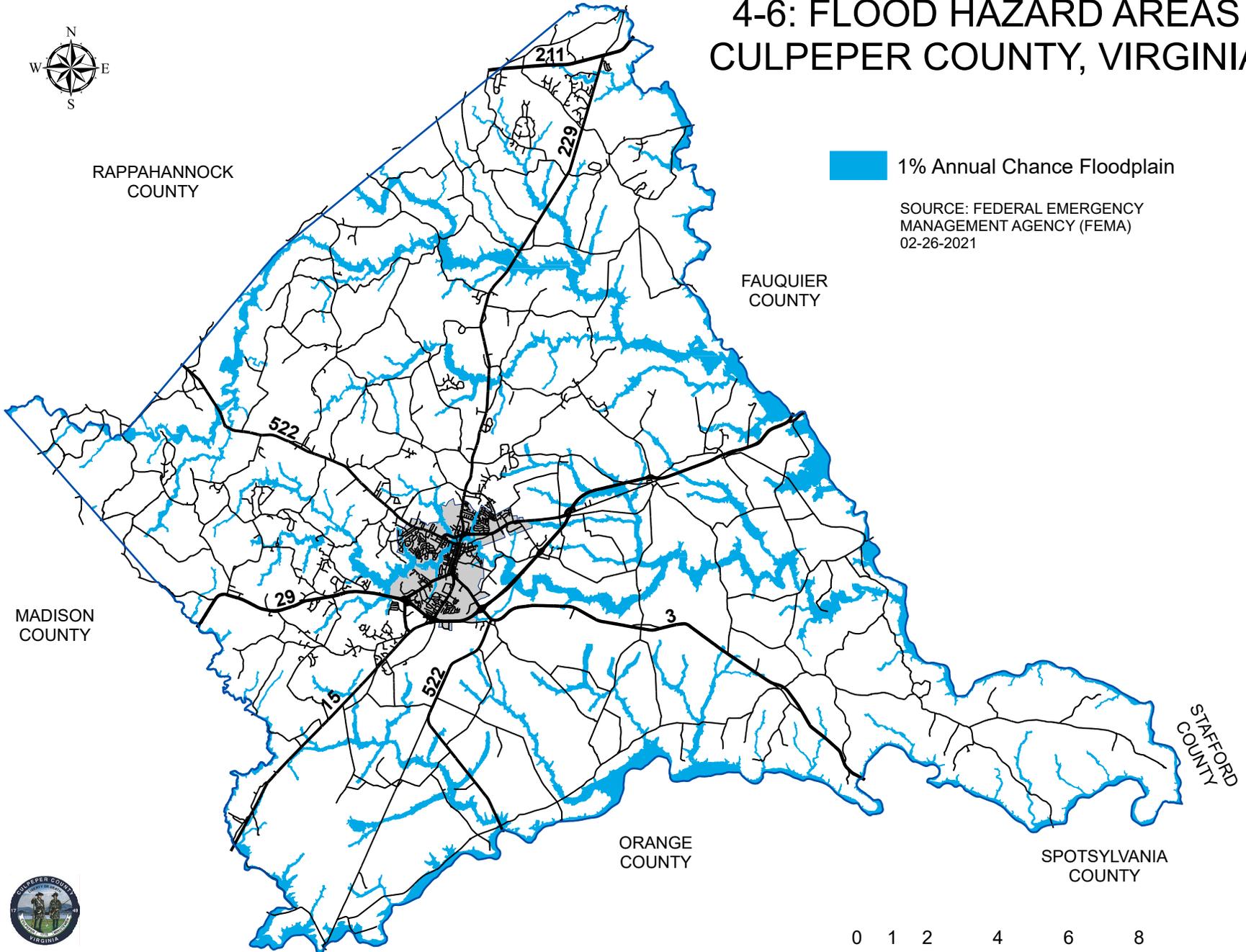
RAPPAHANNOCK  
COUNTY

 1% Annual Chance Floodplain

SOURCE: FEDERAL EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)  
02-26-2021

FAUQUIER  
COUNTY

MADISON  
COUNTY



STAFFORD  
COUNTY

ORANGE  
COUNTY

SPOTSYLVANIA  
COUNTY



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 01-2023



## Wetlands

Wetlands are transitional zones between open water and dry land. Non-tidal wetlands, as found in Culpeper County, often occur where water is at or near the surface of the ground or in places where the ground is covered by shallow water ranging from a few inches to several feet. Some wetland areas are dry during certain seasons, and flooding is common during the winter and spring when rivers overflow their banks.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in cooperation with the EPA, administers wetlands through Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and has had the primary regulatory authority for preserving non-tidal wetlands in Virginia. The Corps must review any development plan that involves wetland areas, and a permit to work in a wetland or a letter indicating that a permit is not necessary must be obtained.

Wetlands are a valuable resource that must be preserved. Therefore, it is a policy of Culpeper County to discourage the drainage or destruction of wetlands that meet the criteria as outlined in the Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Wetlands (or the most current federal identification and delineation policy). If such disturbance is unavoidable, the proper permits must be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Innovative storm water management and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that preserve, establish and enhance wetland features are encouraged.

A map of the wetlands in Culpeper County can be viewed on the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation map, which is linked at the end of this chapter.

## Watershed Protection

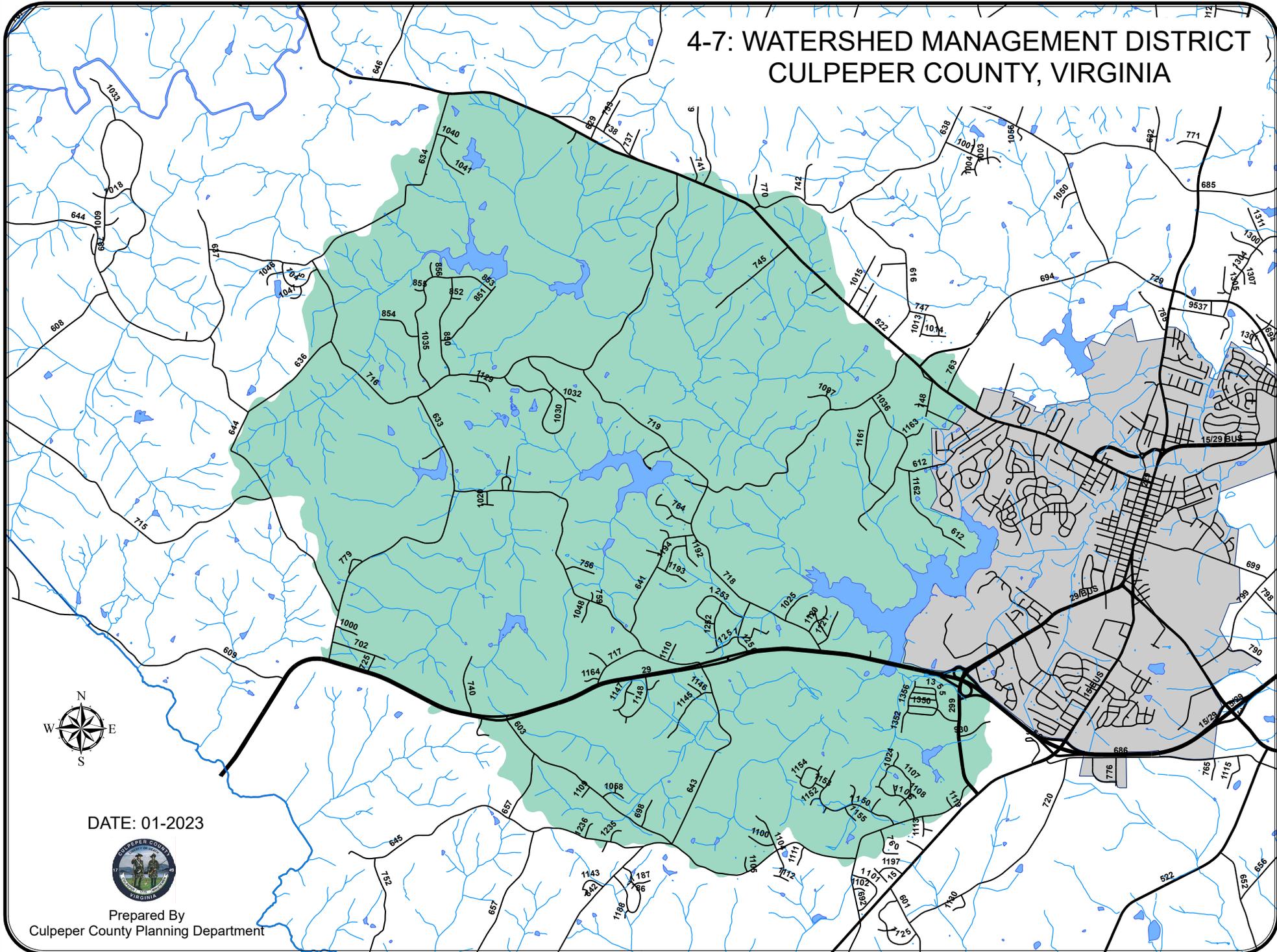
With the advent of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (the Bay Act), enacted in 1988 by the State legislature, a program of watershed management was initially designed to restore the once pristine water quality afforded by the Chesapeake Bay and its fishing industries. Stringent guidelines and enforcement measures were set in place to manage tributaries leading to the Bay. These measures impact private citizenry, private industry, and public policy with the goal of improving the ecology of the Bay. The implementation of measures taken from the Bay Act may be advisable to improve water quality over time.

**DEQ** oversees all stormwater regulations applicable in Culpeper County.

While the lakes west of the Town of Culpeper have proven to be an amenity, growth pressures in this area increase the potential of point and non-point source pollution. To mitigate the adverse environmental impacts of this growth and associated development, the Town and County have developed a watershed management plan to protect and enhance the water quality conditions within the watershed. This plan led to the adoption of a Watershed Management District (WMD) which is illustrated in Map 4-7.

On March 3, 1992, the Culpeper County Board of Supervisors adopted Article 8C Watershed Management District (WMD), into the Culpeper County Zoning Ordinance. The WMD is an overlay zone specific to the Mountain Run Lake - Lake Culpeper Watershed. It creates additional restrictions regarding densities, buffers, and development standards.

# 4-7: WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DISTRICT CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



DATE: 01-2023



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

### Woodland Features

Culpeper County has forested land in tracts that range from small privately owned wood lots to major parcels managed for commercial harvest. In addition to commercial timber opportunities, wooded areas also provide additional environmental and recreational benefits such as watershed protection through storm water management and erosion control, aesthetic and scenic viewsheds, air pollution and noise reduction, and groundwater recharge areas.

As noted on the previous map on land cover, a large portion of the County is wooded. Efforts to retain these areas will help ensure that the environmental quality of the community is protected. Areas that are managed for commercial timber operations should use Best Management Practices (BMP) and should enact a reforestation plan. Areas under development should provide plans that indicate preservation of the existing woodland features and re-vegetation of areas that are denuded in order to reduce the erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff impacts on downstream areas. Retention of existing woodlands on slopes greater than 15% is encouraged.

### Ecological Cores

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation identifies Ecological Cores that are key to the environmental richness and stability to the Commonwealth. Below is the official definition.

“Using land cover data derived from satellite imagery, the VaNLA identified large, unfragmented cores, which are patches of natural land with at least 100 acres of interior cover. Cores provide habitat for a wide range of species, from interior-dependent forest species to habitat generalists, as well as for species that utilize marsh and maritime habitats.” The definition goes on to describe how these areas are “essential for basic ecosystem services such as cleaning our air and filtering our water,” acting as hubs of species diversity, and providing excellent recreational areas.

As shown in Figure 4-2 on page 4-21, the southeastern portion of Culpeper County, bounded by the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers, is considered to be a practically continuous ecological core with Outstanding Value, deserving enhanced protections. Other ecological cores of varying value are also important to maintaining the environmental quality and should be protected as well. The County is outlined by the light green line, which is filled in with a pale yellow, transparent layer.

## HISTORIC

Culpeper County has a rich and diverse history, which has been well-documented by numerous sources. Various sites have provided archaeological evidence of prehistoric settlement in the Culpeper County area. In addition to these archaeological sites, preserved dinosaur tracks were found at the Culpeper Stone Quarry located in the Stevensburg area of the County. These prints, which date back 215 million years, are relatively rare and are currently on display at both the Museum of Culpeper History and the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

The Sioux were found to have settled in the area of present-day Culpeper County by Captain John Smith. Captain Smith mapped the area in 1608, locating four Sioux Villages along and between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan Rivers. Captain Smith also met three other Native American tribes in the area, one of which, the Ontponeas, gave their name to Mount Pony. Some believe that the Ontponeas are responsible for the carvings inscribed in rock overhangs near Mount Pony's 791-foot high summit.

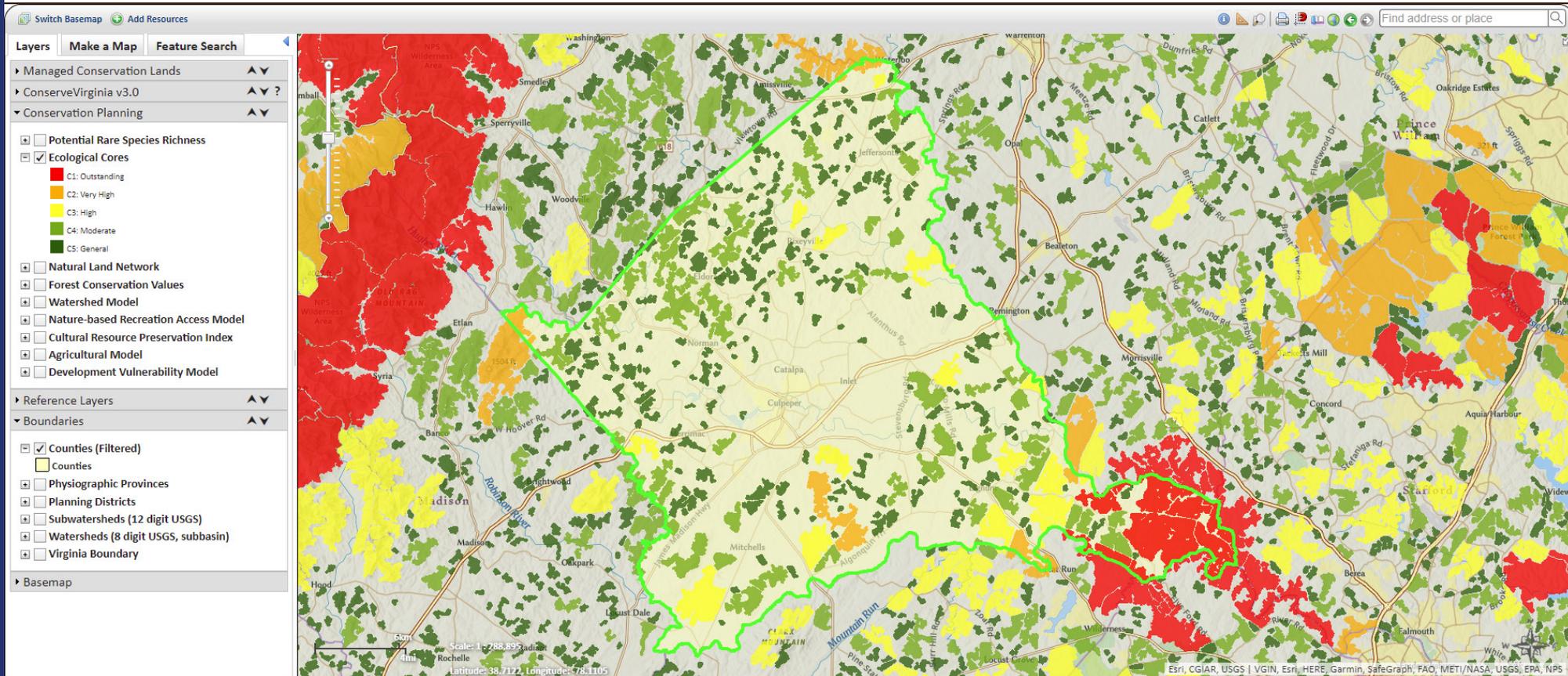


Figure 4-2  
Source: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

In 1649, King Charles II granted 5.28 million acres of land to seven proprietors. One of these grants, was 629,120 acres, known as the Northern Neck Proprietary, and contained what was to become Culpeper County. In 1735, Thomas, Sixth Lord Fairfax, became the first owner of the Northern Neck Proprietary to set foot on his property. In 1749, the Virginia General Assembly created Culpeper County. The name Culpeper, surname of Lord Fairfax's mother, was chosen because Fairfax County already existed.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Culpeper County was still on the nation's frontier. Culpeper's famed Minute Men were first formed in 1775. During the Revolutionary War, the Minute Men fought in several battles, including the Battle of Great Bridge, the first Revolutionary battle on Virginia soil.

Culpeper County continued to grow during the period following the Revolutionary War. Towns, among them Jeffersonton and Stevensburg, were created by the Virginia General Assembly. The County seat was officially known as Fairfax, but was commonly called Culpeper Court House.

The outbreak of the Civil War marked the beginning of a significant part of Culpeper's history as intense battles were fought in and around the County. As the tide of the war shifted back and forth across Virginia, several areas in Culpeper were occupied in force alternately by both the Northern and Southern armies. Major battles of note which occurred in the County were the Battle of Brandy Station and the Battle of Cedar Mountain.

Reconstruction after the war progressed rapidly in Culpeper. Immediately after the war, the County was described as a scene of utter desolation, but by 1867, the Richmond Dispatch reported that "the land now smiles with its pristine verdure and beauty". History has left its unique stamp on the physical development of Culpeper County. The County's agricultural roots are apparent from the current landscape and development patterns. The development of transportation networks, first rivers, then wagon trails, railroads, and finally highways, influenced where and how growth occurred in the County.

Though many of Culpeper's rural areas and landscapes have managed to survive largely intact, increasing pressures in recent decades from population growth, new development, and economic fluctuations have begun impacting many of the area's cultural heritage resources. Signs of pervasive deterioration and neglect were noted in many of the areas of historic interest recently surveyed. The loss of this built heritage, in turn, can impact public memory and erodes the long-standing historic identities of many of Culpeper's communities.

## STATE & NATIONAL REGISTERS OF HISTORIC PLACES

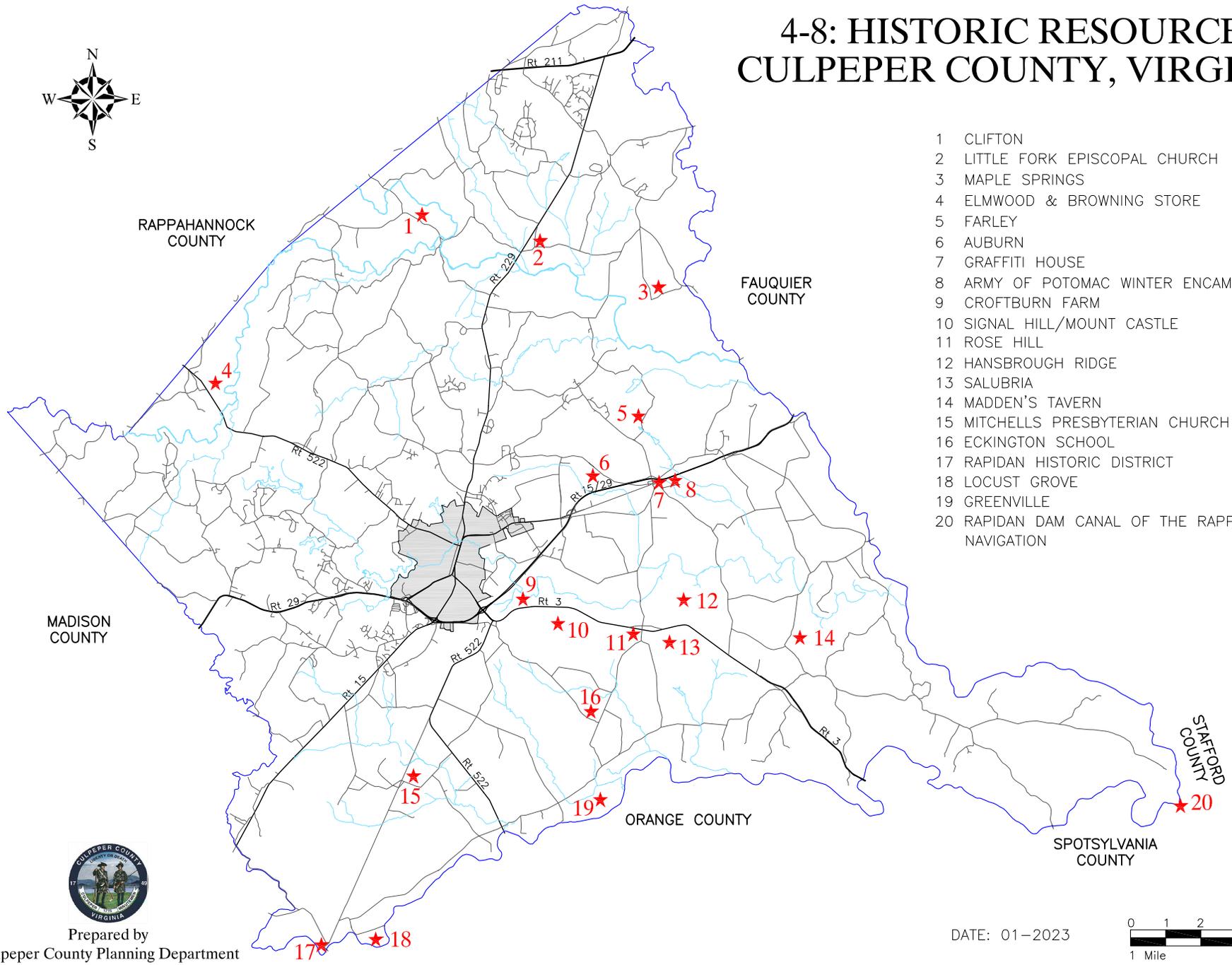
Created by the National Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register of Historic Places is a national list of buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects which prominently define the nation's history and development. It is designed to create a permanent record of the nation's historic resources. The principal purpose of National Register designation is to focus attention on and increase public awareness of the nation's physical heritage.

There are two programs designed to recognize significant resources and to encourage their continued preservation: the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

The National Register of Historic Places, managed by the National Park Service, is the official list of structures, sites, objects, and districts that embody the historical and cultural foundations of the nation. The National Register of Historic Places already includes more than 2,000 properties in Virginia. The Virginia Landmarks Register, also established in 1966 and managed by the Department of Historic Resources, is the state's list of properties important to Virginia's history. The same criteria are used to evaluate resources for inclusion in each register.

Several properties in the County have been listed on the National Register. There are also a number of additional sites which have a strong potential to be listed. Designation of a property on the National Register requires the consent of the owner. However, National Register designation does not restrict the property owner's use of the property in any way. The owner may alter or demolish buildings, or subdivide land, as long as no federal funds are involved in the project. These places are shown in Map 4-8. This map does not include places located inside the Town of Culpeper.

# 4-8: HISTORIC RESOURCES CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA

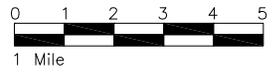


- 1 CLIFTON
- 2 LITTLE FORK EPISCOPAL CHURCH
- 3 MAPLE SPRINGS
- 4 ELMWOOD & BROWNING STORE
- 5 FARLEY
- 6 AUBURN
- 7 GRAFFITI HOUSE
- 8 ARMY OF POTOMAC WINTER ENCAMPMENT
- 9 CROFTBURN FARM
- 10 SIGNAL HILL/MOUNT CASTLE
- 11 ROSE HILL
- 12 HANSBROUGH RIDGE
- 13 SALUBRIA
- 14 MADDEN'S TAVERN
- 15 MITCHELLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
- 16 ECKINGTON SCHOOL
- 17 RAPIDAN HISTORIC DISTRICT
- 18 LOCUST GROVE
- 19 GREENVILLE
- 20 RAPIDAN DAM CANAL OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK NAVIGATION



Prepared by  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 01-2023



## HISTORICAL STUDY

In January 2008, Dovetail Cultural Resource Group began a multi-phase reconnaissance-level investigation of architectural and archaeological resources located within 23 previously specified Areas of Historic Interest (AOHI) known as the Cultural Resource Survey of Culpeper County. The established 23 AOHI relied heavily on The Historic-Site Survey and Archaeological Reconnaissance of Culpeper County, Virginia, (hereafter Historic-Site Survey) by Eugene M. Scheel prepared for the County of Culpeper, November, 1992 - April, 1994. This 1994 survey consists of two parts: a set of U.S. Geological Survey Map Quadrangles on which all of the sites are located; and a separate write-up for each site. This document and the 2008 Cultural Resource Survey are incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan by reference, and will be used to support the policies set forth in this chapter. This is available on the website.

The 2008 Cultural Resource Survey was completed at the request of the Culpeper County Department of Planning in satisfaction of requirements outlined in the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) cost-share survey program contract. The multi-phase survey comprised a Phase I level investigation of all historic architectural properties over 50 years in age and a general evaluation of each area's potential archaeological value. Following the fieldwork, a comprehensive Data Sharing System packet was completed for each surveyed resource, including an architectural description, statement of significance, location maps, and sets of both black & white and color digital photographs. In addition, three of the areas of interest deemed potentially eligible for listing as historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were subjected to more in-depth investigations and documented in a Preliminary Information Form (PIF) to be submitted to the DHR for its review. The 23 surveyed AOHI included: Brandy Station, Cedar Mountain Battlefield, Cunningham Farm, Fleetwood Hill, Griffinsburg, Hansbrough Ridge, Hansbrough Ridge Encampment, Hazel River, Jeffersonton, Jonas Run, Kellys Ford, LaGrange, Lignum, Mitchells, Mount Pony, Mountain Run, Raccoon Ford, Rapidan, Richards Ford, St. James Church, and Stevensburg. Two other areas, Beverlys Ford and the Rappahannock River Fortifications, were also among the original list of twenty-three AOHI, but were not studied further.

In total, Dovetail completed surveys of 274 new and previously-recorded historic properties in 21 of the 23 targeted areas of historic interest. The resultant pool of surveyed resources spans the entire spectrum of Culpeper County's cultural development, dating from early prehistoric periods through the current millennium. The distribution of individually recorded sites is consistent with the pattern seen in many other areas of the state: a scattering of pre-Civil War era buildings intermixed with a preponderance of buildings dating to both the post-bellum period and the years between the two World Wars.

In addition to these comprehensive studies, the National Register of Historic Places, the National Historic Landmark Program, Virginia's Landmarks Register and the work of local historians provide information on the significant historic places and archaeological sites located throughout the County.

## Battlefields

The Battle of Brandy Station took place on June 9, 1863. 20,500 troops were involved in the conflict, in which there were 1,400 casualties. In terms of the number of troops involved, the battle ranks 72nd among all Civil War engagements; and in terms of casualties, it ranks 91st. Brandy Station was the largest cavalry battle of the war, and military historians cite it as the largest cavalry engagement in the Western Hemisphere. Strategically, it is considered the opening battle of the Gettysburg Campaign.

While the battle encompassed a large area, it can be divided into three sectors. These are Kellys Ford, Stevensburg, which includes, Mountain Run and Hansbrough Ridge, and Brandy Station, which incorporates Brandy Station, Fleetwood Hill, St. James Church, Cunningham Farm, and Beverlys Ford.

Further details about the battle can be found in the Cultural Resource Survey and The Historic-Site Survey. The areas of historic interest, and the components of those areas, are described briefly in this chapter. The areas of St. James Church and Fleetwood Hill are primarily west of Beverlys Ford Road. Development endeavors and efforts to improve the Culpeper Regional Airport to the east of Beverlys Ford Road will not necessarily adversely impact the historic areas, and should not be impeded by the policies of this Chapter.

The Battle of Cedar Mountain took place on August 9, 1862. Also known as the Battle of Slaughter's Mountain or Cedar Run, the battle involved approximately 28,000 active troops, 20,000 of them Confederate under command of Major General Thomas J. 'Stonewall' Jackson. Opposing this force was Major General John Pope's Army of Virginia, in its first action. The five-hour fight was intense, with Union casualties at thirty percent of the troops engaged: 2,400 killed, wounded, and missing. The Confederates lost six percent of their force totaling approximately 1,300. The importance of the battle is debated, but it has been described as a crucial battle prior to the Second Manassas campaign.

Further details about the battle can be found in the Cultural Resource Survey and The Historic-Site Survey. This area of historic interest, unlike Brandy Station, is defined as a single, contiguous area.

Under the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002, the American Battlefield Protection Program has designated "core areas" and surrounding "study areas" for multiple battlefields in Culpeper County. These areas are extensive, and encompass areas much larger than the Areas of Historic Interest contained in this chapter. These core and study areas should be taken into account.



Source: Culpeper Star Exponent  
(Youngkin)

## Areas of Historic Interest

The Historic-Site Survey identifies individual buildings, building sites, archaeological sites, and other historically significant places throughout the County. In some instances, a 'place' may consist of more than one parcel of land. These may be villages, battlefields, areas that may contain a high concentration of individual sites, or areas of similar characteristics. These areas have been identified as AOHI. These areas are shown in Map 4-9.

The Brandy Station area of community interest includes most of the older structures in the village of Brandy Station and is outlined on the area map. Most of the area identified is south of Route 15/29 and the Southern Railroad corridor. There are many late 19th and early 20th century structures, with the newer structures generally in keeping with the older. Any new construction should be encouraged to maintain that motif. The structures of local significance include Graffiti House, Blue Haven, Bailey's Store, Stone Compton House, Brandy Baptist Church, Christ Church Rectory, Christ Episcopal Church, Brandy Station Post Office, Fleetwood Methodist Church, Humphries House, and Stevens Masonic Lodge. A more intensive historic-site survey or archaeological reconnaissance is probably not needed when considering development in this area, although excavation should be performed with caution.

The Cedar Mountain Battlefield area delineated encompasses the main area of fighting, the area of five early 20th century memorials to the battle, and the area of the majority of fifty-five small markers. The Historic-Site Survey delineates two additional boundaries. One is that of the U.S. Park Service (1987) and the other is that of the Virginia Historic Landmarks commission (1988). "An Assessment of the Cedar Mountain Battlefield in Culpeper County" indicates the basis for the area shown and details the battle.

The Cunningham Farm AOHI encompasses a 571-acre tract located north of Route 15/29 in northcentral Culpeper County. Most of the land consists of open, agricultural fields that are recorded as part of the Brandy Station Battlefield. A small gravel parking area with interpretive signage is located within the southern section of this AOHI to cater to Brandy Station battlefield tourists. Only two resources were recorded within this AOHI, but both properties provide useful insights into the distinct agricultural history of this area.

The Fleetwood Hill AOHI, located in central Culpeper County between Brandy Station and Elkwood, is the second-largest AOHI at 1,370 acres. Like most of this part of Culpeper County, the Fleetwood Hill area is primarily still used for agricultural purposes, and most of the land is under cultivation. The oldest resource is Farley. Located near the intersection of Routes 663 and 679, Farley was constructed in 1801 and has been fully restored. A modern home on Fleetwood Hill was removed by the American Battlefield Trust to restore the battle era viewscape.

The Griffinsburg AOHI is the newest of Culpeper County's historic areas and many of the buildings date from the 1920's, with the oldest structure being Yates Inn, ca. 1906. The remaining buildings are associated with persons of note.

Hansbrough Ridge and Hansbrough Ridge Winter Encampment AOHI is located along Route 3. Controversy exists regarding the location of both the main Union and Confederate positions in this area. It is this area, however, where the heaviest fighting in the Stevensburg sector of the Battle of Brandy Station occurred, being fought June 9, 1863. All sources agree that the heaviest fighting took place north of present Route 3 and west of present Route 739.

The designated area of historic interest includes the Winter encampment of the Army of the Potomac, 1863-1864. From November 26, 1863 to May 4, 1864, the Ridge lodged the 2nd Corps of the Army of the Potomac and the 20th Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. More than 10,000 men resided here in a military city on the crest and slopes of what they called "Piney Ridge". The site contains shallow depressions where the soldiers built huts, and many fallen chimney bases which retain the original fireboxes and hearths.

This site is designated on the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Inventory and is a potential National Register Site. There has been, however, a great deal of disruption and relic hunting in this area.

Salubria, a Civil War cavalry brigade headquarters and the oldest brick home in the County (built by one of Culpeper's most famous Episcopal ministers), is also located here. This area is bisected by a primary road, Route 3. The area of historic interest focuses on Salubria to the south and the winter encampment to the north.

The Hazel River-Ryland Chapel area of historic interest extends from the crossroads of old Ryland Chapel east to Hurt's Ford on the Hazel River. This area is scenic as well as historic. At the center, Ryland Chapel Road follows the ridge, and along its 2 miles are 9 homes dating from the mid-to-late 19th century. The most important is North Cliff, built in 1847, which is a potential National Register Site. In addition to North Cliff, the homes of interest include Rock Springs, Spring Hill, Clover Hill, Edgewood, Haught Place, Homeland, and Coons Place. A very large number of interesting outbuildings accompany these homes. At least 3 of the outbuildings are log corn houses. It is recommended that future development in this area proceed with extreme care, especially regarding the building setbacks, since most of these homes are set a good distance from the road. The Hazel River itself provides a significant resource contributing to the value of this area.

The Village of Jeffersonton has roots in two towns: Jefferson Town, the southern part, and Wealsborough, the northern part of the village. By the late 1820s, Jeffersonton (as the U.S. Post Office called it) had eclipsed Stevensburg as Culpeper's leading town, owing to the intersection of two regional roads and the opening of Jeffersonton Academy. Significant structures in the Jeffersonton area of historic interest include the Jeffersonton Baptist Church, dated 1848 and a potential National Historic Site; the Jeffersonton Methodist Church, dated 1907; and many historic residences. Also of significance are the areas around the Baptist Church where a Civil War skirmish occurred, the Jeffersonton Academy archaeological site, and structural reminders of the 1730 Little Fork German Settlement.

The Mountain Run and Jonas Run area includes the final Confederate and Union positions of the significant Stevensburg sector during the June 9, 1863, Battle of Brandy Station. The Confederates were positioned north of the Run, and the Union forces south of the run centered at Thomas Norman's grist mill located just off the old Carolina Road (present Route 663). Casualties in this area were slight but significant: Colonel Matthew Calbraith Butler was severely wounded, and Jeb Stuart's chief scout, Will Farley, was killed. Farley was buried in Culpeper's Fairview Cemetery until returned to his South Carolina family in 2002. The Confederates held their line at Mountain Run, preventing a major northern force from joining the Fleetwood Hill action that was ongoing near Brandy Station at the same time. Colonel Butler later became a South Carolina Senator and Major General of Volunteers during the Spanish-American War of 1898. Any controls on this district should allow for a reasonable widening of Route 663, Stevensburg Road.

The Kellys Ford area encompasses the first Union and Confederate positions of the March 17, 1863, Battle of Kellys Ford—the area of heaviest fighting. This area also includes all of the November 7, 1863, action at the Ford which, resulted in more than 300 casualties; the archaeological sites of the village of Kellysville, the largest manufacturing complex in pre-war Culpeper County (grain and lumber mills, barrel and shoe factories, slaughterhouse, butter, etc.); the village of Wheatleyville; and related mill dams, races, fords, and bridges. It is notable that much of this area and a significant area along the Rappahannock River to the north has been placed in permanent historic conservation easements.

Significant structures in the LaGrange area of historic interest include the LaGrange Post Office, a second LaGrange Post Office, Luther Brown House, Brown's Shop, and the Herbert Brown House. These buildings all date from the turn of the 20th century.

Lignum, Latin for wood, started with the establishment of Absalom Graves Willis' steam powered sawmill which produced and assembled hardwood barrels after the Civil War. Village growth added numerous residences, stores, shops, and the first rural accredited high school in Culpeper. Historic structures located in the Lignum area of historic interest include the Lael Baptist Church, J. A. Brown's Store, Willis' Store, Hopewell Methodist Church, and several residences. Two archaeological sites also have been identified.

The Mitchells AOHI began as Mitchell's Station, a stop on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in 1854. It includes the Mitchell's Presbyterian Church, Mitchell's School, Foxleigh Farm, Mitchell's Store, Bethel Baptist Church, and the Carpenters Seed Cleaning Plant. Boundaries of this area enclose the listed structures in addition to an extra 300 feet around them. Three houses included in this area date from post -1950, but are in character with the older structures.

The Mount Pony area has an extensive agricultural history. The western boundary is 300 feet west of the old Georgetown-to-Nalles Mill Road. The northern boundary is generally Mountain Run. The southern boundaries encompass Mount Pony.

Most of this area was part of Charles Carter's early 18th century 36,000 acre Mount Pony Tract. Within a distance of three miles along Route 3, there are several homes of historic interest. This area also includes the Georgetown-to-Nalles Mill Road trace, the Mount Pony Church marker, and the rock drawing atop Mount Pony. The height of this prominence above the Piedmont plain served for centuries as a communications point.

Raccoon Ford began with John Alcocke's mill about 1815, the Post, (probably a store and blacksmith shop) in 1825, and by 1834, contained eight significant homes, the mill complex extending to both sides of the Rapidan, a shoe and boot factory, tailor, wagon-maker, and carriage-maker. After its near-destruction during the Civil War, Gustavus Brown Wallace Nalles rebuilt the village; and sold lots through the 1880's to restore its vitality. Photographs of the village show three stores standing before 1913. Severe floods in 1937 and 1942 washed away the mill and the bridge, respectively, with the last store burning in 1949, and the post office closing in 1951.

The Rapidan AOHI was previously known as Waugh's Ford. This area was renamed Rapidan when the railroad came through in the mid-1850s. The extended area includes land in both Culpeper and Orange Counties, and was designated the Rapidan Historic District in 1915 by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Area boundaries enclose all significant structures with an additional 300-foot buffer. The river was named 'Rapid Anne' for the last Stuart monarch, for whom Germanna was named in the year she died, and for the need for a chain-drawn ferry to negotiate the swift current.

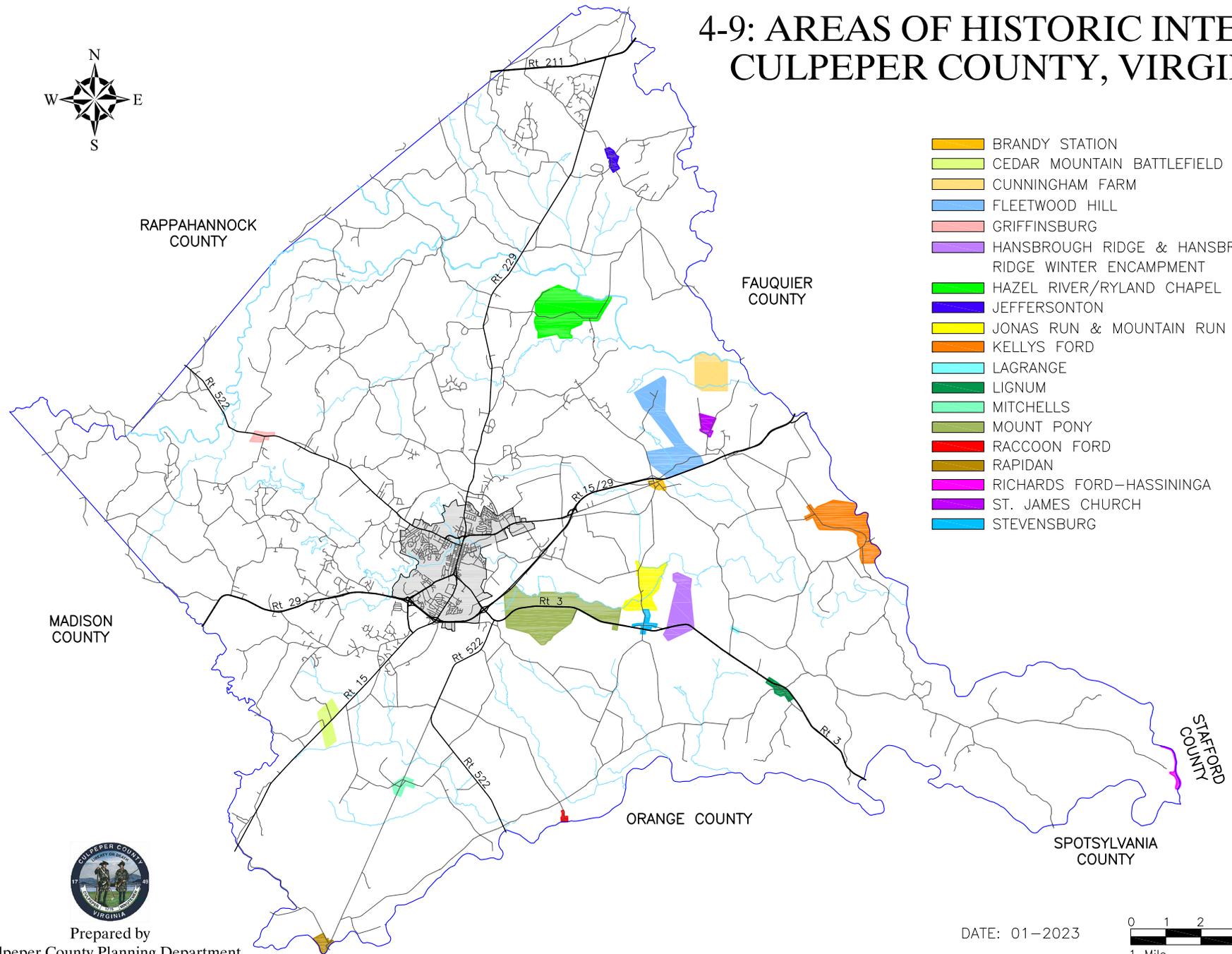
The Richard's Ford-Hassininga area includes the Native American village of Hassininga, and the general area near Richard's Ford and Ferry, including the locks, dams, and associated structures of Powell's Canal of the Rappahannock Navigation enterprise. The area is one of the most important, nearly pristine regions of the County, with sites dating from prehistoric times through the mid-19th century. Most, if not all of this area, is owned by the City of Fredericksburg and is protected by a Virginia Outdoors Foundation conservation easement.

The St. James Church AOHI, located in central Culpeper County, includes 120 acres. Most of the land is in open, agricultural fields that are recorded as part of the Brandy Station Battlefield. A small area of the Culpeper Regional Airport is within the AOHI. All of the historic resources within the area are archaeological sites or architectural ruins.

The St. James Episcopal Church site includes the ruins of both the ca. 1840 church and its associated cemetery. The church was destroyed during the Battle of Brandy Station, and the cemetery was left in ruin. Archaeological excavations of the church site were conducted in 1992 by a team from the Smithsonian, led by Dr. Douglas Owsley. Artifacts from the church component consisted primarily of architectural items, while the cemetery artifacts included coffin hardware, burial clothing, and accessories. Today, the area is protected, and contains a parking lot, interpretive trails, and wooden signage denoting the remains of the original church and the location of the cemetery. Several interpretive signs recounting the history of the church and the battle are located just off the parking area.

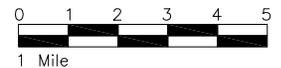
The Stevensburg AOHI contains the remains of the old village of Stevensburg, Culpeper County's first village of prominence. While there are only two homes in the village which retain their 19th century look, there are many structures which date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The newer homes are in scale with the older homes. This area also includes the Stevensburg Baptist Church and its cemetery. New buildings in this area should blend in with the old, especially with respect to scale.

# 4-9: AREAS OF HISTORIC INTEREST CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



Prepared by  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 01-2023



## **AGRICULTURAL/FORESTAL USE & CONSERVATION**

Agricultural & forestal uses play a significant role in the preservation of the County's environmental and historic resources. Specifically, these uses are less intensive on the land and on the surroundings compared to other uses, such as residential subdivisions and industrial parks. Since these uses minimally alter the existing landscape and ecological profile, there is relatively minimal threat to the County's environmental quality and to the integrity of nearby historic resources.

Additionally, the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District provides assistance to agricultural & forestal operations in land management and for the installation of best management practices. One service provided by this organization is Agricultural Cost Sharing, which helps cover the cost for practices such as grazing land management with stream exclusion, afforestation of crop, hay & pastureland, and nutrient management planning.

Finally, some agricultural & forestal uses acquire a conservation easement, which provides long-term protection to the land. A conservation easement is a simple legal agreement between a landowner and a government agency or a non-profit conservation organization that places permanent limits on the future development of the property in order to protect the conservation values of the land. The easement terms are negotiated between the landowner and a public agency or a qualified conservation organization. Except for rights explicitly given up in the easement document, the landowner continues to own, use and control the land. Conservation easements can be a particularly useful tool for ensuring protection of Culpeper's agricultural lands. It applies not only to the current landowner, but also all subsequent owners of the property. A conservation easement can help preserve environmental and historic resources while helping maintain rural landscapes that are central to Culpeper County's identity. Map 4-10 shows the existing conservation easements located in Culpeper County.

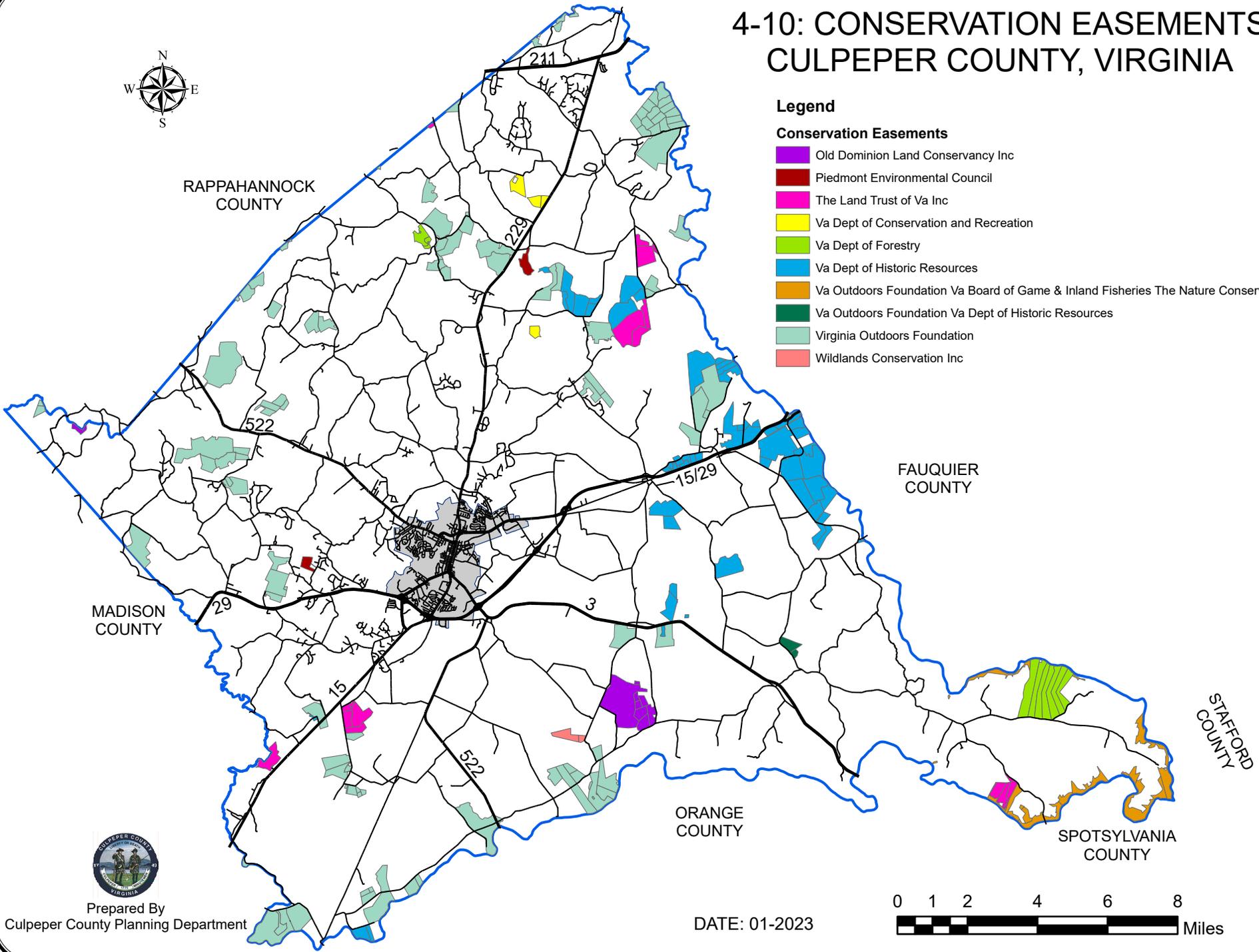
# 4-10: CONSERVATION EASEMENTS CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



## Legend

### Conservation Easements

- Old Dominion Land Conservancy Inc
- Piedmont Environmental Council
- The Land Trust of Va Inc
- Va Dept of Conservation and Recreation
- Va Dept of Forestry
- Va Dept of Historic Resources
- Va Outdoors Foundation Va Board of Game & Inland Fisheries The Nature Conservancy
- Va Outdoors Foundation Va Dept of Historic Resources
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation
- Wildlands Conservation Inc



Prepared By  
Culpeper County Planning Department

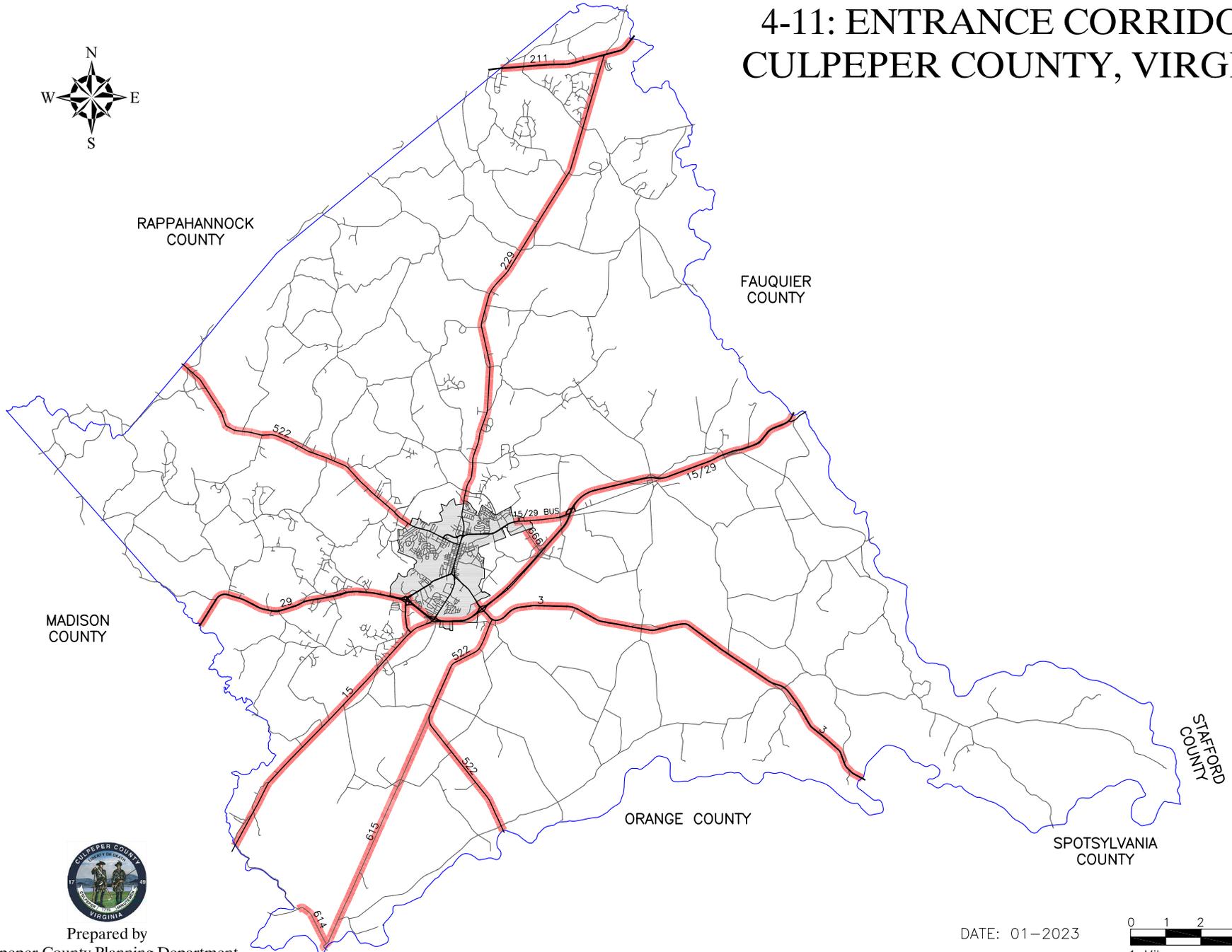
DATE: 01-2023



## **ENTRANCE CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT**

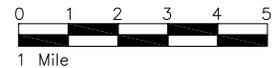
Culpeper County has implemented an Entrance Corridor Overlay District to preserve the rural character, as well as significant environmental and historic resources, near major traffic corridors. Once an Entrance Corridor is designated, the affected area is “to the full depth of all parcels of land that are contiguous to the rights-of-way of the following EC streets in Culpeper County, or to a depth of five hundred (500) feet from the rights-of-way, whichever shall be greater, but in no case to exceed 1,500 feet.” The Entrance Corridor creates additional regulations on “any development or portion thereof which shall be visible from a designated EC street.” Primarily, these regulations are additional scrutiny on plans and permits which requires a certificate of appropriateness. As illustrated in Map 4-11, there are 12 designated Entrance Corridors. They are U.S. Route 211, Virginia State Route 229, U.S. Route 522, U.S. Route 15, U.S. Route 29, U.S. Route 15-29, U.S. Route 15-29 Business (Town Corporate Limits to Route 15-29), Virginia State Route 3, Secondary Route 615 (Orange County Line to Route 522), Secondary Route 614 (Route 615 to Route 721), Secondary Route 666 (Route 15-29 to Route 15-29 Business), and Virginia State Route 299. Additional details regarding the Entrance Corridor can be found in the Article 30 of the County’s Zoning Ordinance.

# 4-11: ENTRANCE CORRIDORS CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA



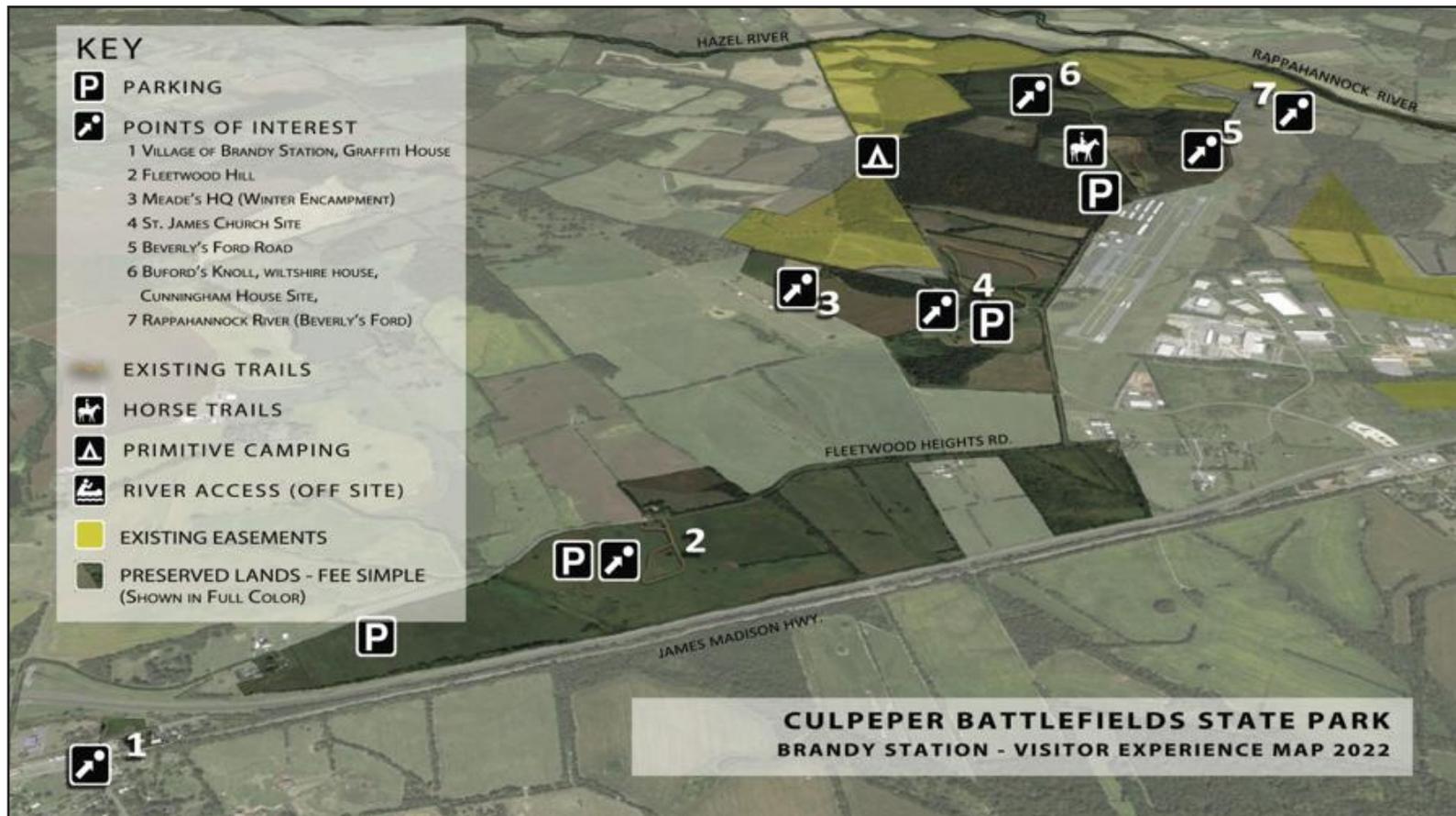
Prepared by  
Culpeper County Planning Department

DATE: 01-2023



## FUTURE STATE PARK

As of the 2022 Virginia Budget, there are provisions for funding the creation of a state park in Culpeper County. As outlined in a Culpeper Star-Exponent article, “The state park would include parts of two Civil War battlefields, at Brandy Station and Cedar Mountain, and a Union army encampment on Hansbrough’s Ridge near Stevensburg. It would encompass 1,700 publicly accessible acres preserved by the American Battlefield Trust, enhanced with another 4,000 acres held in conservation easements on private land.” The creation of such a park will be a major boon to the community, preserving important historic resources while protecting the natural environment and creating additional recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The development implications are discussed in Chapter 2, Land Use & Development.



Source: Culpeper Star Exponent (Youngkin)

# CONSTRAINTS & CONCERNS

## GROWTH PRESSURE AND DEVELOPMENT

As previously discussed in the Land Use & Development Chapter, growth pressure to build in the rural areas is a major threat to rural preservation. While site-specific development could drastically alter, or destroy, an important environmental or historic resource, development at a resource's periphery can equally detract from its function, value, and enjoyment. The County needs to address both direct and indirect threats to the preservation of these important resources.

Threats to environmental preservation range from developing over assets, such as the County's interconnected forests and scenic viewsheds, to harming the quality of a natural resource through upstream or upwind pollution, and isolation from greater natural networks that traverse Virginia. County-wide preservation initiatives must take into account how development, irrespective of the environmental importance of that specific site, could impact the broader County environment.

Threats to historic preservation range from site-specific alterations to the disruption to the overall historic area. Specifically, unrecognized properties that could have significant historic significance run the risk of being replaced with other types of development or fall into a state of disrepair. Identified historic properties and areas still run the risk of being surrounded by incompatible land uses that detract from the historic atmosphere of the area.

## UNDERPROMOTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

The County's environmental and historic resources provide great opportunities for facilitating tourism. However, more can be done regarding the promotion of these resources and their potential transformation to regional attractions. Successful promotion of environmental and historic resources helps facilitate a healthy tourist-driven economic force, which usually benefits area businesses as well. Additionally, the ability to experience an important environmental or historic resource is one of the central reasons for engaging in preservation efforts. Finally, easy access to these preserved resources helps convey the importance of resource preservation.



Source: Culpeper Star Exponent (Youngkin)

## PREPARING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES

Natural disasters are a part of life, but a community can prepare for them and minimize the amount of damage by taking proactive and preventative actions. While natural disaster severity continues to grow and change, Culpeper County needs to actively identify and prepare for natural threats and work towards minimizing a disaster's impact on lives and property. Some of these disasters include flash floods and prolonged drought.

Environmental crises are more than just natural disasters. They can also take the form of different types of pollution that are commonly emitted, dumped, etc., into the environment. High concentrations of pollutants in the air, water, ground, etc., carry the possibility of harming the health of the community and the surrounding environment. Efforts should be taken to avoid future issues regarding pollution and work towards remediation of existing pollution concerns.

The 2019 Culpeper County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) details the County's response to a wide range of disasters through the creation of a response framework which identifies the response hierarchy, the role of each department, response priorities and guides, the roles of County departments, and responses to "situations requiring specialized application of the EOP." Regarding natural disasters, which are called natural hazards in the EOP, the top 6 threats are from flooding, hurricane/tropical storms, winter storms/ice, severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, and drought.

Additionally, Culpeper County outlines Dam Inundation Zones on its online mapping application, highlighting areas that are at risk of flooding if identified and studied dams fail. The most significant areas include the stream that begins at Caynor Lake and merges with Mountain Run, most of Mountain Run from Mountain Run Lake to Jonas Run, Lake Culpeper, and portions of Hungry Run and Gaines Run.



Source: WJLA

# GOALS, PATHWAYS, & ACTION ITEMS

## ENVIRONMENTAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES VISION

Ensure that the environmental and historic resources of Culpeper County are respected and protected aspects of the County's identity.

**GOAL 1:** Increase the County's role in environmental and historic stewardship.

***PATHWAY 1:*** Enhance environmental preservation methods used by Culpeper County.

*ACTION ITEM:* Coordinate with relevant organizations whose operations include conservation easements to maximize conservation efforts.

*ACTION ITEM:* Explore alternative ways to facilitate additional revenue streams for environmentally important lands to encourage their preservation.

*ACTION ITEM:* Enhance the recognition and experience of environmental resources and benefit from ecological tourism.

***PATHWAY 2:*** Explore potential historic preservation methods that would enhance the County's historic resources.

*ACTION ITEM:* Determine the feasibility of implementing a voluntary Historic District, which would function similarly to the Agricultural & Forestal Districts, to preserve and protect historic areas.

*ACTION ITEM:* Provide assistance for the identification and preservation of historically significant resources.

*ACTION ITEM:* Explore alternative ways to facilitate additional revenue streams for historically important lands to encourage their preservation.

*ACTION ITEM:* Enhance the recognition and experience of historic properties and areas to benefit from historic tourism.

**GOAL 2:** Work on creating a more environmentally sustainable community.

***PATHWAY 1:*** Reduce the County's impact on the environment.

*ACTION ITEM:* Encourage, incentivize, and/or require heightened environmental standards on new developments, such as low-impact development designs, to minimize their impact on the County.

*ACTION ITEM:* Add additional and enhance existing provisions regarding environmental standards for rezonings, especially in or adjacent to ecologically important areas, identified historic resources, and rural areas.

*ACTION ITEM:* Partner with relevant organizations to raise awareness of ways the community can engage in more environmentally sustainable practices.

**GOAL 3:** Work on creating a more environmentally resilient community.

***PATHWAY 1:*** Proactively prepare for extreme environmental crises.

*ACTION ITEM:* Protect and enhance existing environmental features, such as riparian buffers, that already function as natural barriers against natural disasters.

*ACTION ITEM:* Partner with relevant organizations to raise awareness of ways the community can prepare for natural disasters.

*Action Item:* Develop additional planning policies that will create community conditions which will lessen the severity of the likely natural disasters listed in the EOP.

***PATHWAY 2:*** Plan for the preservation of future water resources.

*ACTION ITEM:* Review the existing Watershed Management District and associated ordinance.

*ACTION ITEM:* Update the Watershed Management Ordinance as needed to correspond with new water quality regulations.

*ACTION ITEM:* Continue to review and update other ordinances, such as the Floodplain Ordinance, to ensure measures are in place to protect life and property from flooding.

# Chapter Source Appendix & Resources

- Culpeper County Code of Ordinances, Appendix A, Zoning Ordinance [https://library.municode.com/va/culpeper\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CD\\_ORD\\_APXAZOOR](https://library.municode.com/va/culpeper_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CD_ORD_APXAZOOR)
- Culpeper County Code of Ordinances, Appendix D, AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION [https://library.municode.com/va/culpeper\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CD\\_ORD\\_APXDAGLAPR](https://library.municode.com/va/culpeper_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CD_ORD_APXDAGLAPR)
- Culpeper County Emergency Operations Plan [https://web.culpepercounty.gov/Portals/0/Departments/Emergency\\_Management/EOP\\_2019%20FINAL.pdf?ver=A6fNJcPTGSwDv-RV4PIksg%3d%3d](https://web.culpepercounty.gov/Portals/0/Departments/Emergency_Management/EOP_2019%20FINAL.pdf?ver=A6fNJcPTGSwDv-RV4PIksg%3d%3d)
- Culpeper County Environmental Services <https://web.culpepercounty.gov/environmentalservices>
- Culpeper County Environmental Services Water and Wastewater <https://web.culpepercounty.gov/environmentalservices/page/water-and-wastewater>
- Culpeper County Home Page <https://web.culpepercounty.gov/>
- Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District <http://www.culpeperswcd.org/>
- Culpeper Star Exponent (Virginia legislature OKs Culpeper battlefields state park) [https://starexponent.com/news/virginia-legislature-oks-culpeper-battlefields-state-park/article\\_2e273cd3-88e2-5b9d-bcf6-fc7436acde96.html](https://starexponent.com/news/virginia-legislature-oks-culpeper-battlefields-state-park/article_2e273cd3-88e2-5b9d-bcf6-fc7436acde96.html)
- Culpeper Star Exponent (Youngkin approves Culpeper Battlefields State Park) [https://starexponent.com/news/local/youngkin-approves-culpeper-battlefields-state-park/article\\_32fd4ad4-4e2b-5716-bc5a-15292f9b63f0.html](https://starexponent.com/news/local/youngkin-approves-culpeper-battlefields-state-park/article_32fd4ad4-4e2b-5716-bc5a-15292f9b63f0.html)
- Dovetail Cultural Resource Group (COST-SHARE CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY OF 23 AREAS OF HISTORIC INTEREST WITHIN CULPEPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA) [https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf\\_files/SpecialCollections/CU-042\\_Cost-share\\_Survey\\_23-Historic-Interest\\_Areas\\_2009\\_DOVE\\_report.pdf](https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf_files/SpecialCollections/CU-042_Cost-share_Survey_23-Historic-Interest_Areas_2009_DOVE_report.pdf)
- How's My Waterway? <https://mywaterway.epa.gov/>
- InsideNova (So long, Pelham - Culpeper votes to remove Confederate soldier's name) [https://www.insidenova.com/culpeper/so-long-pelham---culpeper-votes-to-remove-confederate-soldiers-name/article\\_c25814a2-6b26-11eb-bb13-1f731e564593.html](https://www.insidenova.com/culpeper/so-long-pelham---culpeper-votes-to-remove-confederate-soldiers-name/article_c25814a2-6b26-11eb-bb13-1f731e564593.html)
- National Park Service National Register of Historic Places <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm>
- Museum of Culpeper History <https://culpepermuseum.com/>

# Chapter Source Appendix & Resources

- Regional Water Supply Plan for Town of Culpeper, Virginia and County of Culpeper, Virginia [https://web.culpepercounty.gov/Portals/0/Departments/Environmental\\_Services/Documents/Regional%20Water%20Supply%20Plan%20-%20DRAFT%205-13-11.pdf?ver=2020-05-29-115918-453](https://web.culpepercounty.gov/Portals/0/Departments/Environmental_Services/Documents/Regional%20Water%20Supply%20Plan%20-%20DRAFT%205-13-11.pdf?ver=2020-05-29-115918-453)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Data Gateway <https://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/GDGOrder.aspx>
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Soil Survey Geographic Database [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/soils/survey/geo/?cid=nrcs142p2\\_053628](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/soils/survey/geo/?cid=nrcs142p2_053628)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Web Soil Survey <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>
- USGS Land Cover Data Download <https://www.usgs.gov/programs/gap-analysis-project/science/land-cover-data-download>
- USGS Virginia Geologic Map Data <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/geology/state/state.php?state=VA>
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer <https://vanhde.org/content/map>
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality Integrated Report <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/water/water-quality/assessments/integrated-report>
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-register/>
- Virginia GIS Clearinghouse <https://vgin.vdem.virginia.gov/pages/cl-restservices> and associated classifications [https://www.hrpdcva.gov/uploads/docs/Attachment\\_5A\\_1%20meter%20Land%20Cover%20Dataset%20Metadata.pdf](https://www.hrpdcva.gov/uploads/docs/Attachment_5A_1%20meter%20Land%20Cover%20Dataset%20Metadata.pdf)
- WJLA (Culpeper County under flood emergency, roads closed by dangerous high waters) <https://wjla.com/news/local/culpeper-county-under-flood-emergency-roads-due-to-dangerous-high-waters>