



Backgrounder

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Environmental Accomplishments by the Kaine Administration

Water Quality / Chesapeake Bay

- Under Governor Kaine's leadership, the Chesapeake Executive Council adopted in May 2009 a new transparent accountability system – two-year milestones for reducing nitrogen and phosphorus – for Bay restoration efforts by the six Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia.
- A record \$1.1 billion was invested in wastewater treatment plants over the past four years.
- In 2007, Virginia passed the \$250 million “Bay bonds” initiative to fund the installation of nutrient-removal technology at water treatment facilities. (Learn more at <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?071+sum+HB1710>.)
- A record \$57 million was invested in agricultural best management practices (BMPs) over the past three years. The Kaine Administration has provided a consistently funded, dependable cost-share program with farmers.
- The Kaine Administration developed the “Chesapeake Bay and Virginia Waters Cleanup Plan” (HB-1150) in 2007. The plan is updated every year. (Learn more at <http://www.naturalresources.virginia.gov/Initiatives/WaterCleanupPlan>.)
- Governor Kaine announced in December 2007 that Virginia will meet its *Chesapeake 2000* goals for wastewater treatment plant improvements. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=551>.)
- Governor Kaine led efforts to work with the White House on Chesapeake Bay restoration and protection issues. In May 2009, President Obama issued the first-ever Presidential Executive Order on the Chesapeake Bay, the most significant federal action on the Bay in 25 years. (Learn more at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Executive-Order-Chesapeake-Bay-Protection-and-Restoration.)
- Virginia recently completed a nearly four-year effort to update its stormwater management regulations, which had not been updated in about 20 years. According to independent evaluators, these regulations may be the most advanced and scientifically defensible in the Bay watershed.

Land Conservation

- Within six months of taking office in April 2006, Governor Kaine set in place his entire natural resources agenda, which included a 400,000-acre land conservation goal. This goal was set to effectively double the average number of acres Virginia had conserved – about 54,000 acres per year – since 2000.
- Land conservation was set as the centerpiece of the Kaine Administration's natural resources agenda, since Virginia loses about 60,000 acres per year to development. Preserving forests, farms and other lands benefits water quality and air quality, and also provides a growing population with additional recreational opportunities.

- The General Assembly passed Virginia's first-ever land conservation bond in 2008. The \$30 million bond was a record amount to be invested in land conservation.
- As of December 2009, approximately 385,000 acres of land had been conserved under the Kaine Administration.
- Specific land conservation accomplishments include:
 - Two new state parks – High Bridge in Farmville and Mayo River State Park in Henry County – totaling 1,200 acres were created.
 - Six new state forests totaling 9,500 acres were created.
 - Thirteen natural area preserves totaling 8,200 acres were created.
 - Parts of 13 Civil War battlefields totaling 1,900 acres were conserved.

Fisheries

- *Blue Crabs*: Virginia's iconic blue crab population has plummeted 70 percent over the last 15 years. Virginia worked hand-in-hand with Maryland to construct new management regulations for crabs. As a result, the blue crab population is rebounding. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=643> and <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=926>.)
- *Menhaden*: After more than a decade of efforts to cap the Bay's menhaden fishery, the Kaine Administration, the General Assembly and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission negotiated a cap of 109,000 metric tons per year with Omega Protein. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=198>.)
- *Native Oysters*: After a nearly five-year study on the efficacy of introducing the non-native oyster *C. ariakensis*, Virginia, Maryland and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concluded that the use of non-native oysters posed ecological risks to the Bay and its tributaries. Focus now returns to restoring the native oyster. (Learn more at http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Advisory%20and%20Administrative/Public%20Affairs/WebStories/20090406-Official_Announce_Oyster_Consensus.asp.)

Virginia Energy Plan

- Governor Kaine broadened the historic jurisdiction of Virginia's Secretary of Natural Resources to include energy issues, in partnership with the Secretary of Commerce & Trade.
- In 2006, Governor Kaine and the General Assembly worked together to pass legislation setting forth a first-ever state energy policy. The legislation called on the executive branch to develop a 10-year Virginia Energy Plan that will implement the energy policy. (Learn more at <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?061+sum+SB262>.)
- From mid-2006 to mid-2007, the Natural Resources and Commerce & Trade secretariats worked to write the nearly 200-page Virginia Energy Plan. This is the first comprehensive statewide document that catalogs Virginia's energy supply, demand, research and infrastructure. (Learn more at <http://www.naturalresources.virginia.gov/Initiatives/EnergyPlan/>.)
- The Virginia Energy Plan also contained the recommendation that Governor Kaine establish a climate change commission.

Governor's Commission on Climate Change

- Governor Kaine established the Governor's Commission on Climate Change in 2007. (Learn more at http://www.governor.virginia.gov/Initiatives/ExecutiveOrders/2007/EO_59.cfm.)
- The Commission on Climate Change worked from February-December 2008 to assess the likely affects of climate change on Virginia's natural resources, economy and public health and make recommendations to Governor Kaine on how best to reduce Virginia's greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent of their projected 2025 levels.
- The commission consisted of environmental advocates, economists, scientists and meteorologists, elected local government and state government officials, and representatives from the agricultural, development, energy and transportation sectors.
- The commission produced more than 75 recommendations in its December 2009 final report. The primary recommendation was to focus on energy efficiency. (Learn more at http://www.deq.virginia.gov/export/sites/default/info/documents/climate/CCC_Final_Report-Final_12152008.pdf.)

Air Quality

- Today, Virginia's air quality is better than it was four years ago, despite growth in population, commerce and number of vehicles.
- In 2006 the Kaine Administration launched a two-year study to determine the source(s) of high mercury levels in many Virginia waters. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/mediarelations/newsreleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=339>.)
- Governor Kaine in 2009 launched a new initiative to begin evaluating the more than 300 "grandfathered sources" of air pollution. These are facilities whose emission levels and control systems were largely grandfathered when the federal Clean Air Act was passed in the early 1970s. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/mediarelations/newsreleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=979>.)
- Virginia is achieving its best air quality measures in the last decade. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/newsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=1102>.)

Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment

- A key initiative by Governor Kaine has been to better align land use policy with transportation policy. Much of this work centers around community sustainability.
- Gov. Kaine issued an Executive Order in 2008 that established the Principles of Sustainability. This required the state to review all discretionary spending and determine how the Principles could be applied. (Learn more at http://www.governor.virginia.gov/initiatives/executiveorders/2008/EO_69.cfm.)
- An Executive Order in 2009 significantly expanded efforts to "green" the state government by reducing energy and environmental impacts of executive branch agencies and institutions. (Learn more at <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=969>.)