



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Transportation Board

Nicholas Donohue
Chairperson

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Richmond, Virginia 23219

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Agenda item # 1

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

February 17, 2026

MOTION

Made By: Mr. Fowlkes, **Seconded By:** Ms. Dunlop
Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously

**Title: Recreational Access to the
Cleveland Barrens Natural Area Preserve
Project 1207-193-105 – Russell County**

WHEREAS, § 33.2-1510 of the *Code of Virginia* sets forth that the General Assembly of Virginia has found and declared that it is “. . . in the public interest that access roads and bikeways to public recreational areas and historical sites be provided . . .” and sets aside highway funds for such purpose, “. . . [w]hen the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation has designated a public recreational area as such . . . and recommends to the [Commonwealth Transportation] Board that an access road or bikeway be provided or maintained to that area”; and

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) have adopted a joint policy to govern the use of the Recreational Access Fund pursuant to § 33.2-1510 of the *Code of Virginia*; and

WHEREAS, the Russell County Board of Supervisors has, by appropriate resolution, requested Recreational Access funds to provide roadway access to adequately serve recreational facilities located off of Tank Hollow Road and said roadway access is estimated to cost \$250,000; and

WHEREAS, this request has been considered by the Director of DCR and has been found to comply with the provisions of § 33.2-1510 of the *Code of Virginia* and has designated the site a public recreation area.

Resolution of the Board

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that \$250,000 of the Recreational Access Fund is allocated to improve access to the Cleveland Barrens Natural Area Preserve off Tank Hollow Road, Project 1207-193-105, contingent upon:

1. All right of way, environmental assessments and remediation, and utility adjustments being provided at no cost to the Commonwealth.

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CTB Decision Brief

Recreational Access – Russell County Cleveland Barrens Natural Area Preserve

Issue: Pursuant to § 33.2-1510 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Russell County Board of Supervisors has requested funds from the Recreational Access Program to improve roadway access to the Cleveland Barrens Natural Area Preserve.

Facts: Section 33.2-1510 of the *Code of Virginia* provides that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) shall expend from funds set aside for the construction of access roads and bikeways to public recreational areas and historical sites. CTB Policy requires that the locality provide all rights of way, utility adjustments, and environmental assessments and remediation at no cost to the Commonwealth. Further, this section of the *Code of Virginia* grants the CTB the authority to construct access roads and bikeways to public recreational areas and historical sites when the governing body of the locality in which the access road is to be provided passes a resolution requesting the road and when the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has designated the public recreational area as such and recommends to the CTB that an access road be provided to that area.

The Cleveland Barrens Natural Area Preserve is a 1288-acre preserve located along the Clinch River, within the Town of Cleveland (Russell County). This preserve is managed by DCR and offers visitors access to several hiking trails, overlooks, and most notably, Tank Hollow Falls, which is a 60-ft waterfall. This project will improve 0.21-miles of Tank Hollow Road by paving existing gravel sections, installing 3 cross drains, and constructing nominal widening for 2 pull-out locations. The Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT's) Bristol District staff will administer the design and construction of the proposed access project.

VDOT's Local Assistance Division has coordinated with DCR staff to confirm their support of the project. The Director of DCR has designated the Cleveland Barrens Natural Area Preserve as a public recreational area and recommends utilization of Recreational Access funds to improve access to the Cleveland Barrens.

Recommendation: VDOT recommends the allocation of \$250,000 from the Recreational Access Fund be approved for design and construction of this project, subject to certain contingencies as set forth in the accompanying resolution.

Action Required by the CTB: The *Code of Virginia*, the Virginia Administrative Code, and the CTB's Recreational Access Fund Policy specify that the CTB shall approve the allocation of funds for the design and construction of the access road project. A resolution is provided for formal vote.

Result, if Approved: VDOT and Russell County will proceed with the Recreational Access project.

Options: Approve, Deny, or Defer.

Public Comments/Reactions: None