





Virginia Regional Water Supply Planning

2025 RRBC Annual Conference

HANNAH SOMERS

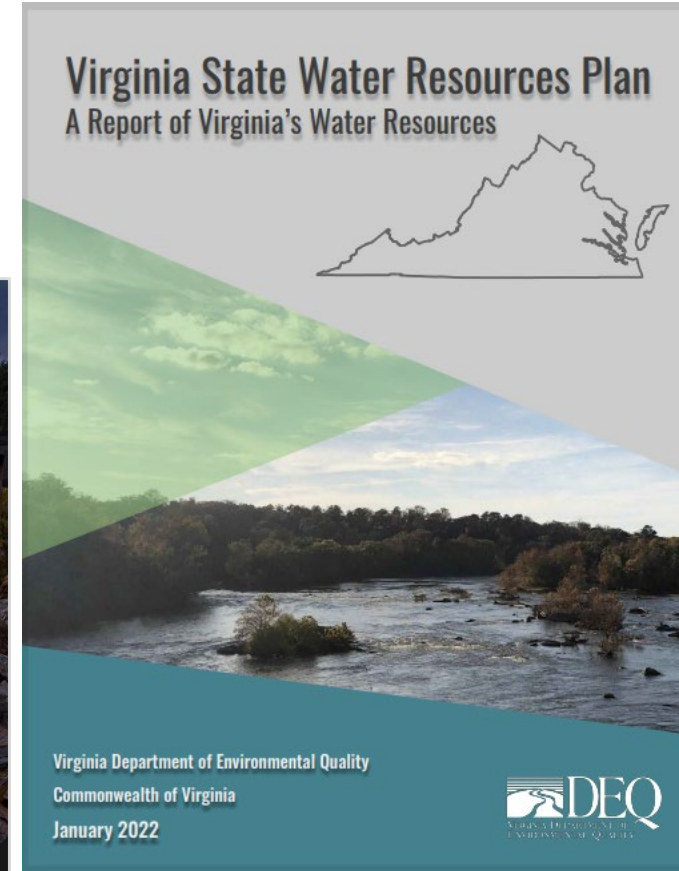
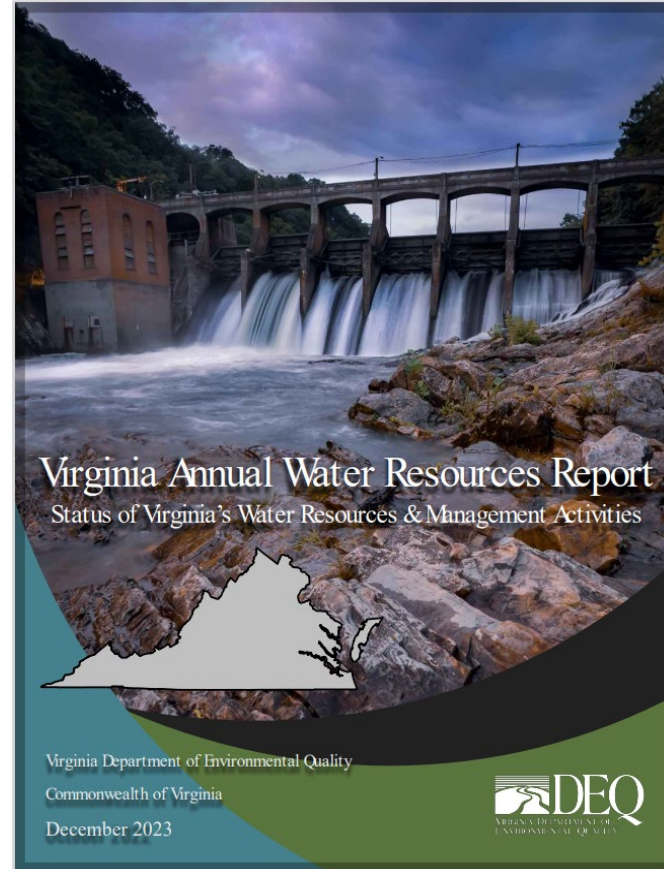
Manager, Water Supply Planning & Analysis

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

September 24, 2025

Water Supply Planning and Analysis

- Regulatory Framework & Updates
- Technical Assistance to Localities
- Surface Water Modeling
- Virginia Annual Water Resources Report
- State Water Resources Plan (2020)
- Water Supply Data Management
- Drought Monitoring and Assessment



Virginia Drought Update

Created By:
Virginia Drought Monitoring Task Force

For the assessment period
ending September 16, 2025

The Main Takeaway

Recent short term precipitation deficits are driving rapid declines in streamflow and groundwater levels.

This Week's Summary

Recent heavy rainfall in eastern parts of the State provided some relief in those regions, but significant precipitation deficits still exist in central and western areas.

Next Week's Outlook

Above normal temperatures are forecasted, along with above normal rainfall in eastern regions, and slightly below normal precipitation expected in northern and western regions.



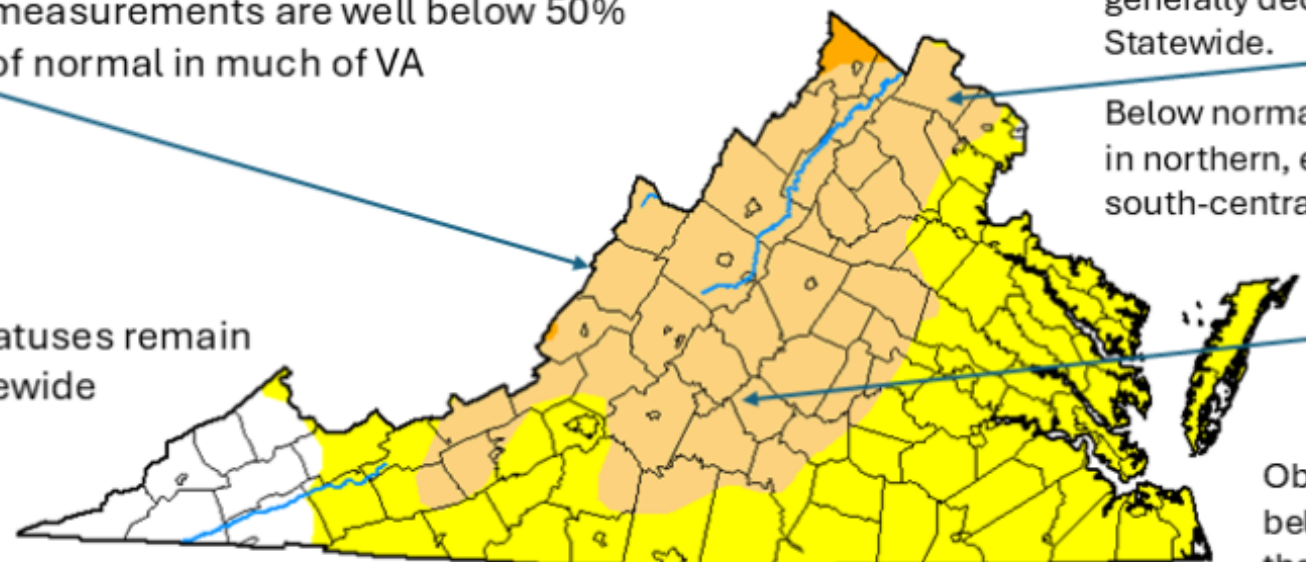
Recent 30-day rainfall measurements are well below 50% of normal in much of VA

Groundwater levels generally declined Statewide.



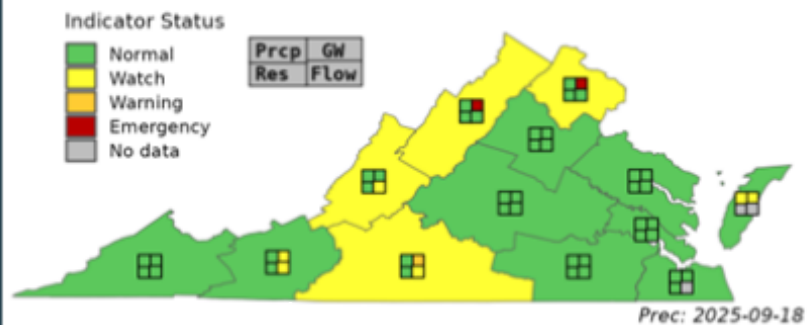
Below normal well levels in northern, eastern, and south-central VA

Reservoir statuses remain normal Statewide



Observed 7 & 28-day below normal flows in the Roanoke and James River watersheds

DMTF Drought Region Status (09/22/25)



Statewide Coverage by Category

Category	Current Coverage	Change Since Last Week
DO: Abnormally Dry	49.04%	-25.29%
D1: Moderate Drought	42.04%	+30.14%
D2: Severe Drought	0.72%	+0.72%
D3 : Extreme Drought	0%	0%
D4: Exceptional Drought	0%	0%

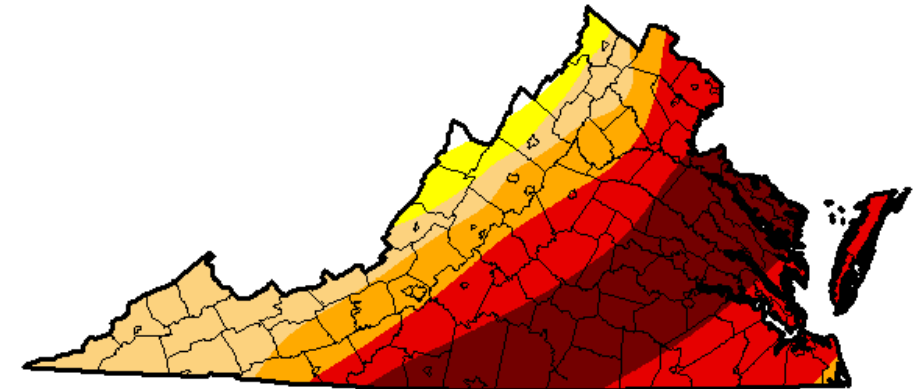
Background

- 1999 – 2002 drought
- Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation (2005) (9VAC25-780)
- Plan submitted and reviewed (2008-2013)
- State Water Resources Plan (2015)
- 5-year Data Updates (2017-2018)
- State Water Resources Plan (2020)

August 27, 2002
(Released Thursday, Aug. 29, 2002)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.79	99.21	94.15	74.28	57.99	28.61
Last Week 8/20/2002	1.23	98.77	92.14	73.47	56.39	30.53
3 Months Ago 5/28/2002	13.89	86.11	56.73	37.61	7.40	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2002	0.00	100.00	98.60	36.16	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 9/25/2001	97.33	2.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 8/28/2001	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:



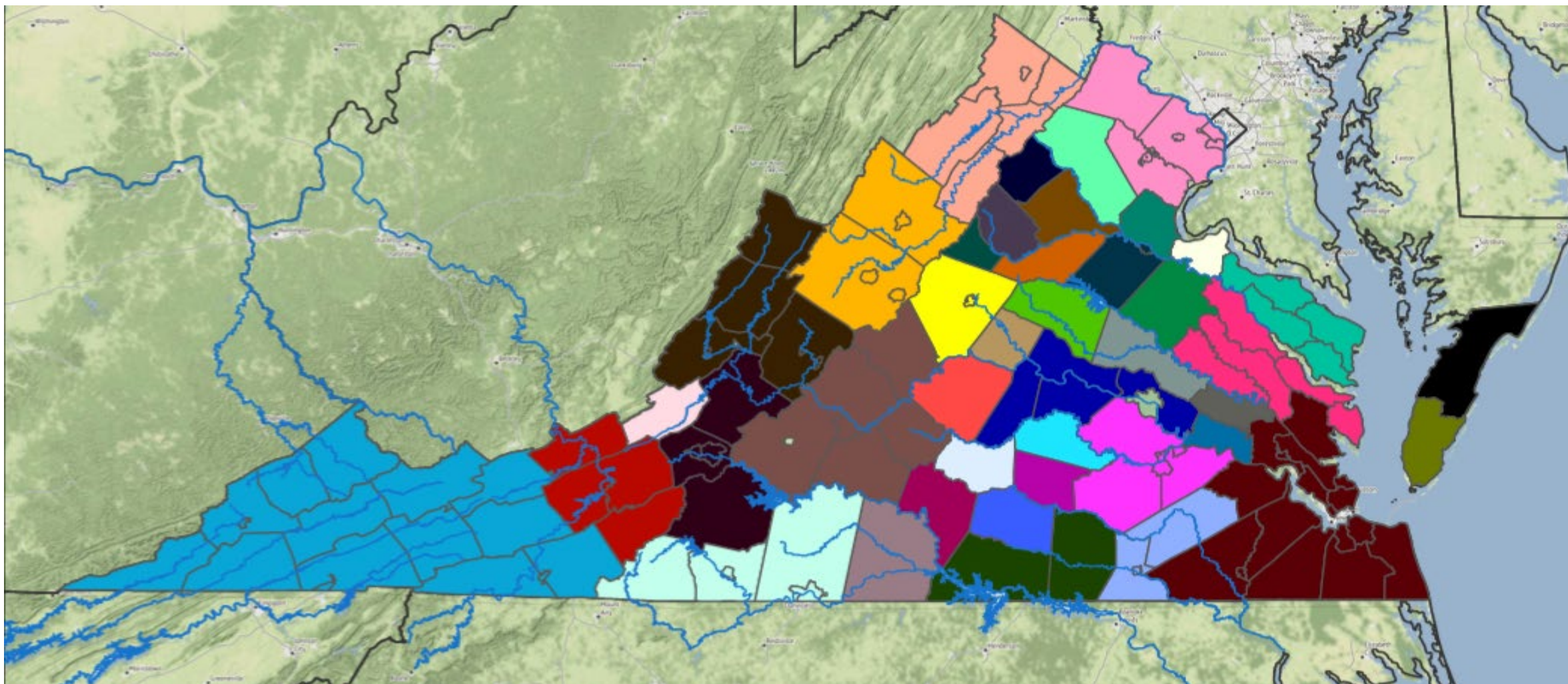


Water Supply Planning Regulation

Original Water Supply Plans (2013*)

- Original Plan Elements
 - **Existing sources**, water use, and resource conditions
 - Projected demand (2040)
 - Water management activities
 - Drought response and contingency plans
 - **Statement of need**
 - **Alternatives Analysis**

2008 – 2011 Water Supply Planning Areas



Legislative Mandates



HB542 (2020)

River-basin approach

Water supply risks

Stakeholder
involvement

HB1297 (2022)

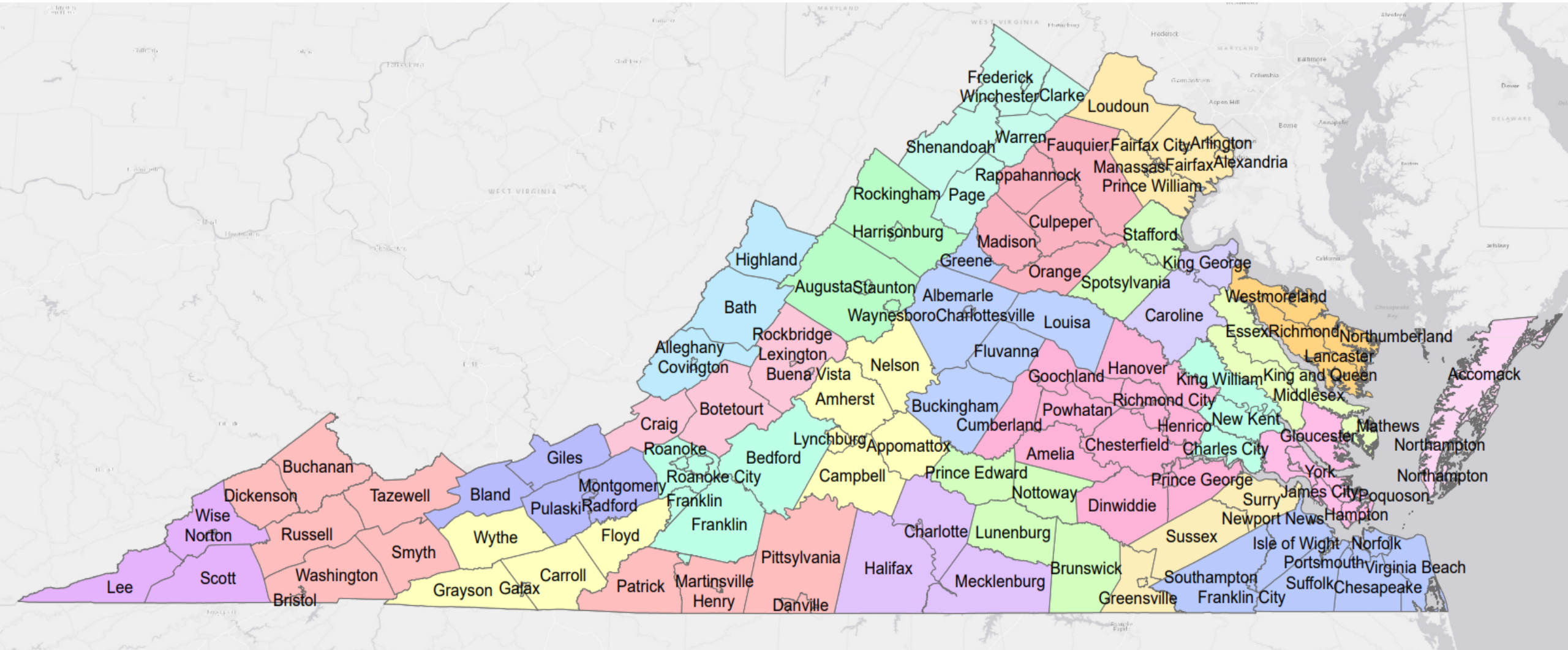
Localities can request
reassignment to adjoining
Regional Planning Area

HB2095 (2023)

Distinct Potomac River
Source Regional Planning
Area

Metro Washington
Drought Plan

Current Regional Planning Areas (RPAs)

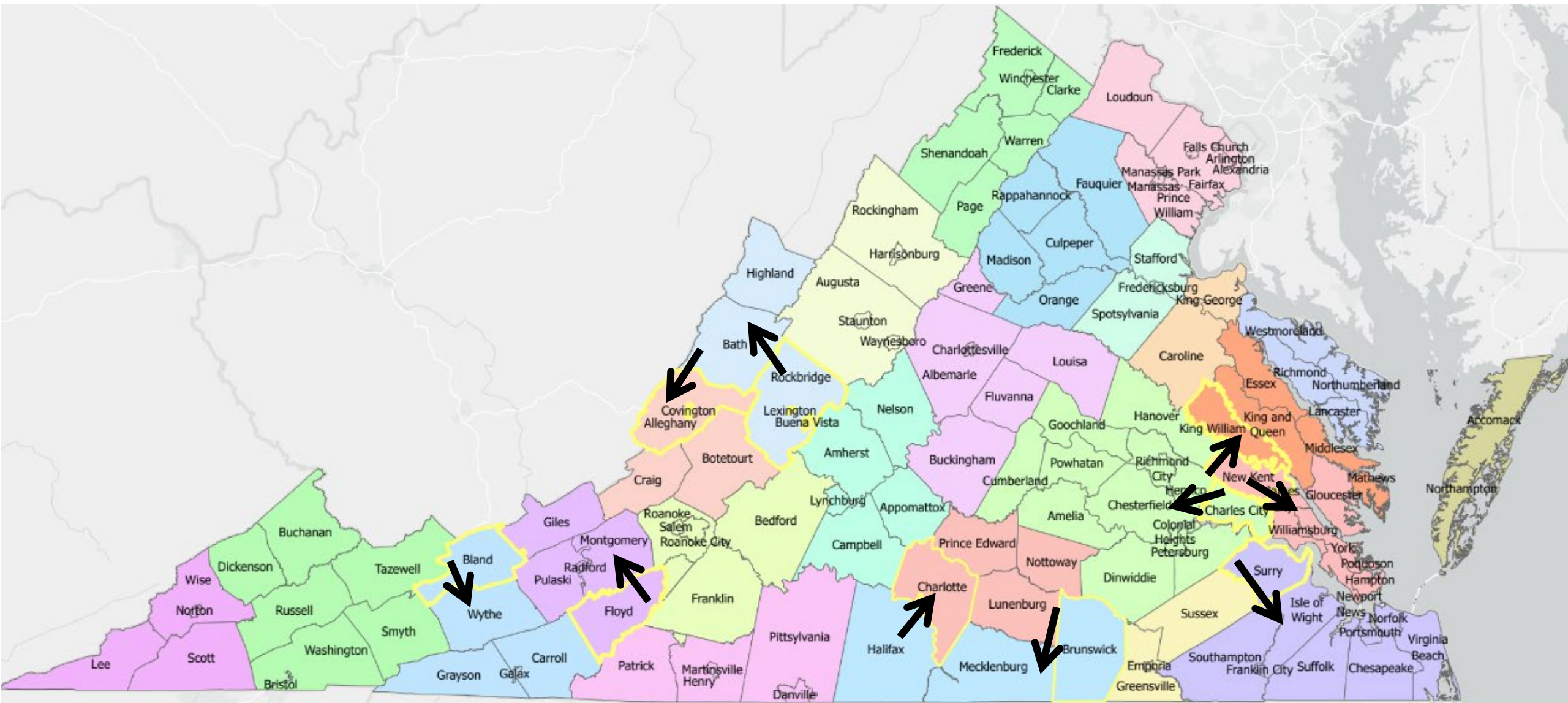


RPA Reassignments

C. A local government may request that the department change its designated regional planning area to an adjoining planning area. The request shall be in writing and shall demonstrate that the local government shares common water supply sources, river basin, or existing or planned cross-jurisdictional relationships with the planning area it proposes to join. The department will provide

- 10 requests, 10 approved

Reassigned Regional Planning Areas (RPAs)(June 2025)



Key Requirements of Updated Regulation

- Requires that localities plan regionally & assigns planning areas
 - Based primarily on river basin, common water supply sources, and/or existing/planned cross jurisdictional relationships
 - Mechanism to request reassignment
- Facilitates increased participation in plan development of stakeholders and public
- Creates requirements for the identification of water supply risks and strategies to address those risks
- Revises the water supply plan development, submission, and review procedures to align with the new requirements, and
- Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of localities, stakeholders, and the Department
- Specifies distinct RPA for Metro Washington Drought region

Chapter 780. Local and Regional Water Supply Planning

[Read Chapter >](#)

Section 10	Application
Section 20	Purpose of chapter
Section 30	Definitions
Section 40	[Repealed]
Section 45	Designation of Regional Planning Areas *New!
Section 50	Preparation of local information and regional water supply plan; submission requirements for a regional water supply plan
Section 55	Public participation in regional water supply plans *New!
Section 60	State role in regional water supply plan preparation
Section 70	Existing water source information
Section 80	Existing water use information
Section 90	Existing water resource information
Section 100	Projected water demand information; statement of need and alternatives
Section 110	Water demand management information
Section 120	Drought response and contingency plans
Section 125	Identification of water supply risks and proposed regional strategies *New!

↓ Continued...

Navigating the Water Supply Planning Regulation



Process Since Effective Date

Coordination

- RPU Contacts
- 25 Kickoff Meetings
 - Local government representatives, PDCs, advocacy groups, water users, interested public
 - 2-hour meetings
 - Background
 - Plan Elements
 - DEQ Resources
 - Next Steps
 - Q&A



Resources for Plan Development

- DEQ webpages
- Data deliverables

Web Links and Resources

The section below lists web links and optional resources, organized by regulatory section, to support Regional Planning Units in the development of regional water supply plans.

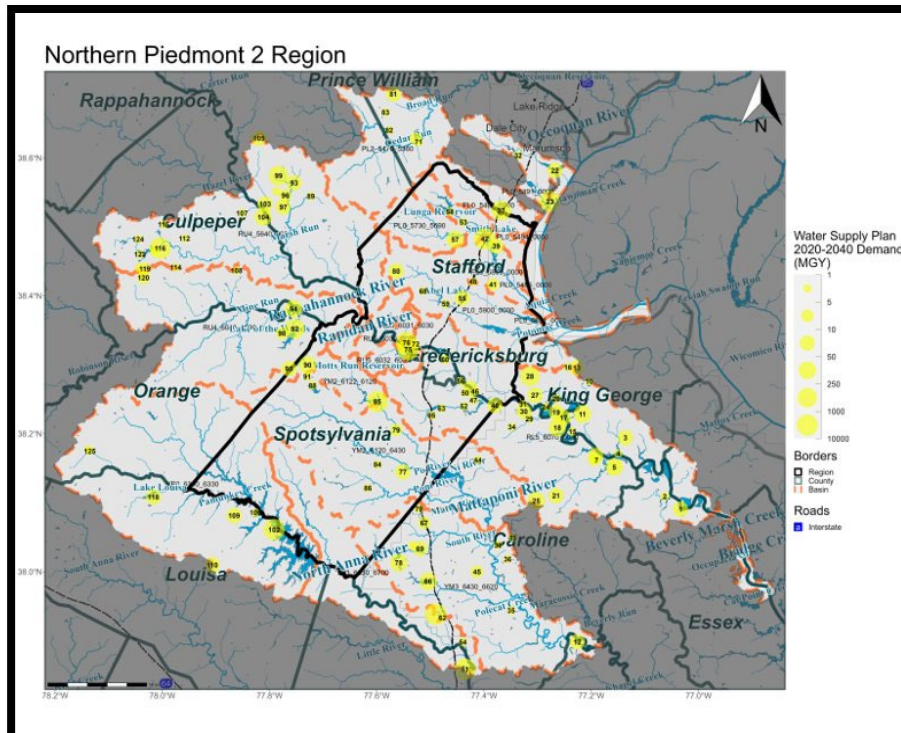
Click any available regulatory section below to expand the box and view relevant web links and optional resources.

9VAC25-780-70 Existing water source information +

9VAC25-780-80 Existing water use information +

9VAC25-780-90 Existing water resource information +

9VAC25-780-100 Projected water demand information; statement of need and alternatives +



A. INTRODUCTION

A.1 Purpose

This guidance document has been developed to assist local governments, regional planning units (RPU, defined in 9VAC25-780-30) and associated stakeholders with creating and submitting Regional Water Supply Plans (Plans) in compliance with § 62.1-44.38:1 of the Code of Virginia and the Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation (9VAC25-780). The guidance will help local governments understand the regulation by describing various planning elements required in the Plans and their intended purpose. Additionally, it offers resources for local governments to reference during the Plan development process. The regulations outline all the necessary components for local governments and RPUs as they develop their Plan. Where needed, this guidance provides further explanation and clarification for specific sections of the regulations.

A.2 Background

Section 62.1-44.38:1 of the Code of Virginia requires a comprehensive water supply planning process that involves local, regional, and state-level planning components and responsibilities. The goals as identified in statute are to: (i) *ensure that adequate and safe drinking water is available to all citizens of the Commonwealth*; (ii) *encourage, promote, and protect all other beneficial uses of the Commonwealth's water resources*; (iii) *encourage, promote, and develop incentives for alternative water sources, including desalinization*; and (iv) *encourage the development of cross-jurisdictional water supply projects*.

Guidance Document

- Formal comment period open through 10/8

Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation Guidance Draft Posted on Virginia Town Hall

DEQ Water Supply Planning & Analysis staff are pleased to announce that the draft guidance document designed to accompany the Local and Regional Water Supply Planning regulation (9VAC25-780) has been posted on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall for a 30-day formal comment period. **The formal comment period began on September 8, 2025, and will end on October 8, 2025.**

Interested parties may submit their comments on the draft guidance document through the [Virginia Regulatory Town Hall website](#).

The resources referenced within the Local and Regional Water Supply Planning regulation guidance document are linked here and in the “Web Links and Resources” section (located at the bottom of this webpage).

[Preparation and Submission Checklist \(Form 50\)](#)

[Water Demand Management Information \(Form 110\)](#)

[Water Supply Risks and Strategies \(Form 125\)](#)

In addition to the above resources, DEQ Water Supply Planning & Analysis staff distributed **Excel Workbook 70-80-100** directly to RPU Representatives in June of 2025. More information on this resource can be found in the “Excel Workbook 70-80-100 Webinar” section of this webpage.

Resources

[Regional Planning Areas Map \(DRAFT-Updated 06/18/2025\)](#)

[Regional Planning Areas Map \(Original\)](#)

[RPU Representative Contact Sheet \(Excel File\)](#)

[9VAC25-780 Final Regulation Text - LIS](#)

[9VAC25-780 Final Regulation - Virginia Register](#)

[9VAC25-780 Amendments - Virginia Regulatory Town Hall](#)

Contacts

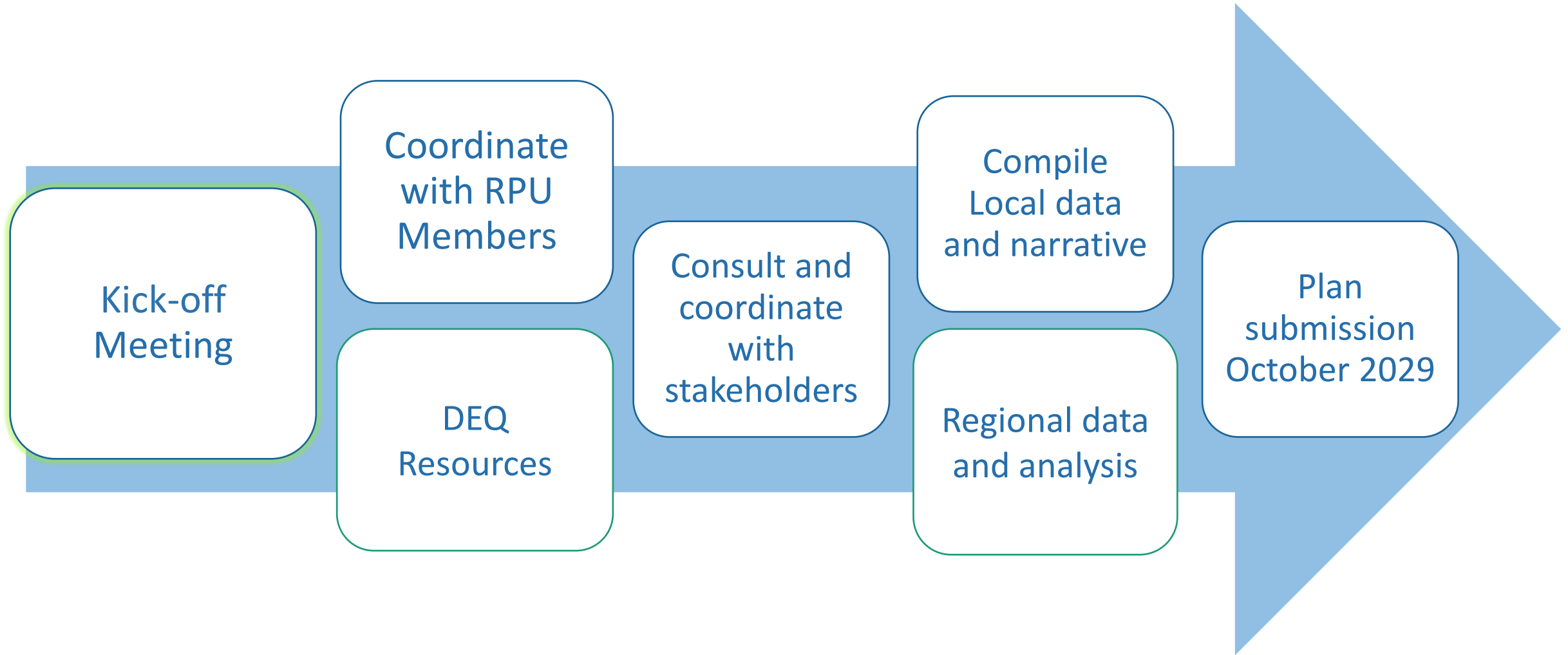
To reach the planner for your

Resources for Plan Development Funding

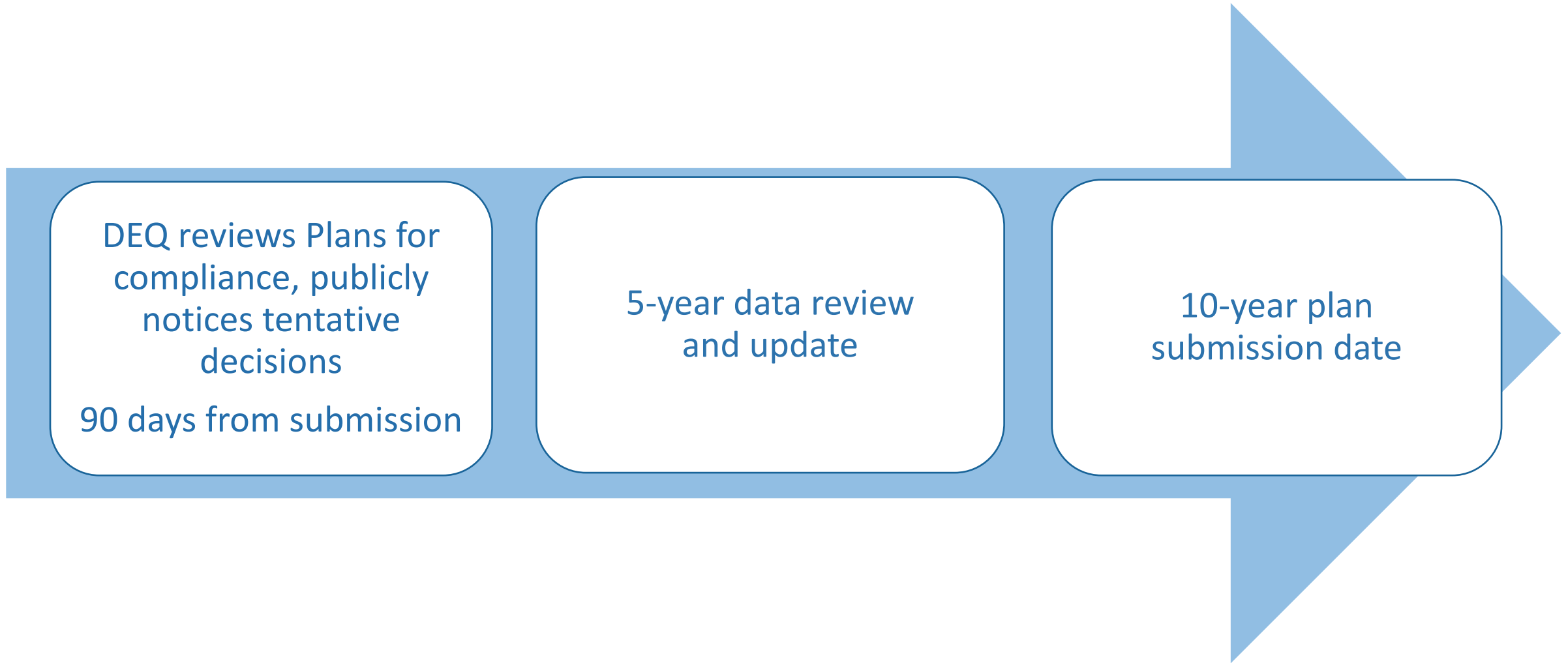
- General Assembly appropriated \$462,000 in grant funds for first two years of water supply plan development
- **\$231,000 available for FY2026**
- Applications open 9/29



Plan Development Timeline



Plan Review and Update Timeline



Questions?

Hannah Somers

Water Supply Planning & Analysis,
Manager

Hannah.somers@deq.virginia.gov
(804) 814-2780

Roles and Responsibilities	DEQ	Local Gov	RPU
Informational Requirements	Provide information to localities on: • Existing water source • Existing water use • Existing water resource information	Compile & review information for their locality including: • Existing water sources, water use, and water resource info • Projected water demands (30-years) • Water demand management activities	• Compiles local information from localities into regional water supply plan
Statement of Need and Alternatives	• Provide approved methods for future water demand projections	• Determine if existing sources meet current/future demands and identify range of alternatives to address local deficits.	• Based on local evaluations, completes regional statement of need and alternatives analysis and incorporates into regional water supply plan
Drought Response and Contingency Plans	• Provide approved methods for managing water demand	• Develop Drought Response and Contingency Plans • Provide info on existing water demand management activities	• Coordinates regional drought plan, and/or incorporates local drought plans into regional water supply plan
Plan Development Process	• Coordinate kickoff meetings (unless PDC coordinated) • Provide policy & technical assistance • Maintain & distribute list representatives • Provide notices of locality's reassignment requests • Review plans for compliance	• Designate a representative/alter and engage with regional planning unit • Must adopt a resolution authorizing submission of plan.	• Coordinate localities during all phases (kick-off, development, 5-year review, 10-year resubmittal)
Stakeholder Involvement	• Follow-up with localities identified as not participating within an RPU • Ensure local governments coordinate sufficiently	• Consult and coordinate with community water systems and self-supplied users > 300,000 gal month within their jurisdiction.	• Develop and implement process for participation of other stakeholders (beyond water users consulted by localities) • Hold informational meetings when 15 or more requests are received
Public Participation	• Provide public notice of tentative compliance determinations and hold informational meetings as applicable	• Each local government must jointly or individually public notice draft regional plan • Hold informational meeting as applicable (May be done regionally as well)	• Regions may jointly public notice draft regional plan and hold informational meetings as applicable • Public notice must cover each jurisdiction.
Water Supply Risks & Regional Strategies	Provide list of water resource conditions that may affect: • In-stream flow • In-stream use • Sources that provide current supply.	• Identify water supply risks within their locality	• Identifies regional water supply risks • Evaluates risks and identifies regional strategies to address each water supply risk.