



CONSERVATION ALMANAC  
*Tracking Investments in Protected Lands*

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## State Highlights in Conservation: West Virginia

### Profile of State Program(s)

**West Virginia Division of Natural Resources:** The Wildlife Resources Section of the Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) acquires land for Wildlife Management Areas through fee simple purchases using money derived from a state capital improvements account. The account is funded with revenue generated from sales of a conservation stamp, purchase of which is required to receive hunting or fishing licenses in the state. Acquisitions are also funded in part from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, and occasionally by donations to the program's land acquisition efforts.

**West Virginia Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund:** The Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund (OHCf) protects lands that host West Virginia's wild and wonderful natural resources. Housed in the Department of Commerce, the Fund was established in April 2008 when the Voluntary Rural and Outdoor Heritage Conservation Act was signed into law.

Revenue generated from a \$10 deed recording fee is divided evenly between the OHCf and the West Virginia Agricultural Land Protection Authority. The OHCf will designate half the funds received toward priority land acquisitions and will award the other half through a competitive grants program.

Note: OHCf has contributed to one acquisition made in partnership with the WVDNR (2012), and two conservation easements through the WV Agricultural Land Protection Authority (2009 and 2012). OHCf is not yet been the primary sponsor of an acquisition. In addition, data on the 2012 parcels does not yet appear in the Conservation Almanac (includes acquisitions only through 2011).

**West Virginia Agricultural Land Protection Authority:** The Voluntary Farmland Protection Act,

passed by the state legislature in 2000, established a two-tier state and local level system to enable landowners to protect their farmland voluntarily. The Act created the West Virginia Agricultural Land Protection Authority as the state-level equivalent of county Farmland Protection Boards, and enabled the Authority to accept conservation easements from landowners. In 2002, the Act was amended to allow each county with a Farmland Protection Program to provide funding exclusively for farmland preservation through a real estate transfer tax. State dollars are generated through the dedicated recordation fee approved as part of the West Virginia Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund.

### Local Financing Enabled

**West Virginia Farmland Protection Act:** On March 10, 2000, the West Virginia Legislature unanimously passed into law the Voluntary Farmland Protection Act. The act went into effect on June 8, 2000.

On March 9, 2002, the West Virginia Legislature modified the Voluntary Farmland Protection Act to allow each county with a Farmland Protection Program to provide funding for such Program through a real estate transfer tax. The County Commission of each county that has established a program may enact an additional tax on the privilege of transferring real estate to be used solely to fund the county's Farmland Protection Program. The maximum rate allowable is \$1.10 per \$500 (\$2.20 per \$1,000) or fraction thereof of the real estate transfer value. The money raised must be used exclusively for funding farmland preservation.

West Virginia counties and cities have the option to utilize dedicated revenue streams for land conservation, including general obligation bonds. According to the West Virginia Code, "Bonds may be issued by any municipality having a population of fifty thousand or more or by any county."

Municipalities and counties that conduct a bond referendum for land conservation need the approval of 60 percent of all votes cast for the proposition.

### Local Programs Included

Local program dollars represent local farmland preservation efforts conducted in collaboration with the West Virginia Agricultural Land Protection Authority. Local funding comes largely from a real estate transfer tax. Visit [www.landvote.org](http://www.landvote.org) for more information.

### Federal Partnerships

Federal agencies and programs that have conserved land in West Virginia include:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Section 6 Grant
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. National Park Service
- U.S. National Park Service – LWCF Stateside
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)



The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

#### The Conservation Almanac

A comprehensive database of land conservation and public conservation funding in America, the Conservation Almanac provides a context for assessing impacts of conservation and the growing conservation finance movement. The Almanac offers information on public dollars spent and acres conserved, details on local, state, and federal conservation programs, and geospatial mapping of conserved land.

Almanac data collection efforts focus on land conserved using public dollars; contributions funded by private and non-governmental organizations are not tracked comprehensively. Federal data is complete from 1998-2017. State and local data is complete from 1998-2011. In the tables and charts below, acres are allocated to each program proportionate to the size of the contributions to each acquisition. For example, if an acquisition had two contributions, and each program contributed equal dollar amounts, each program receives 50% of the acres. If you have questions or want to provide updated information, please contact Jessica Welch at [jessica.welch@tpl.org](mailto:jessica.welch@tpl.org).

[www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

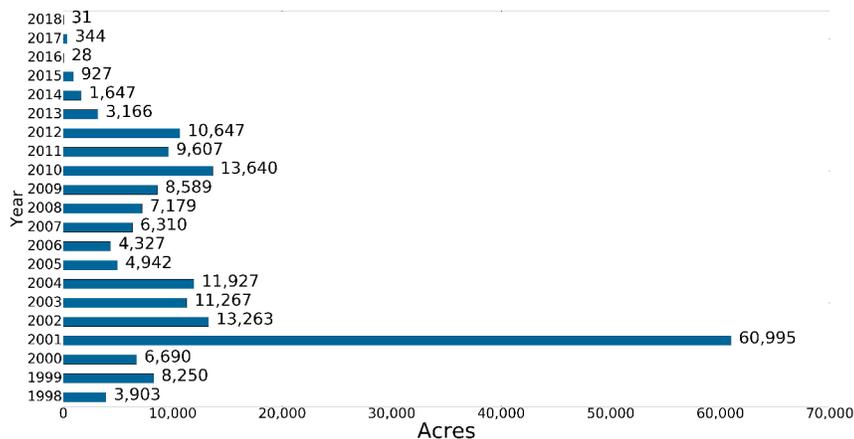
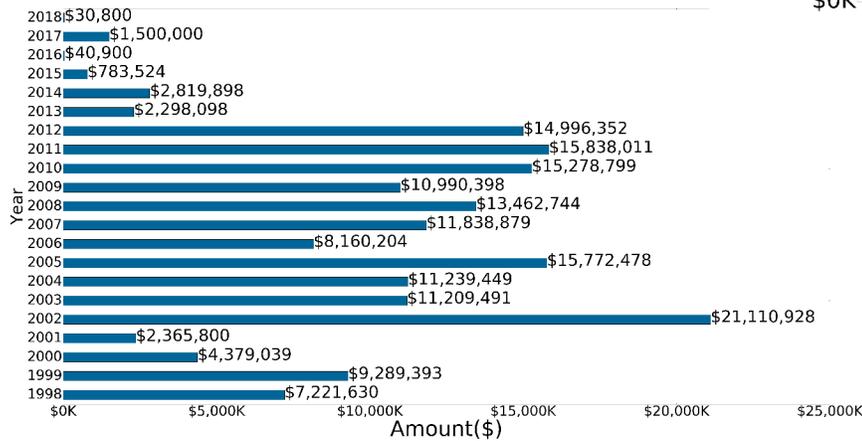
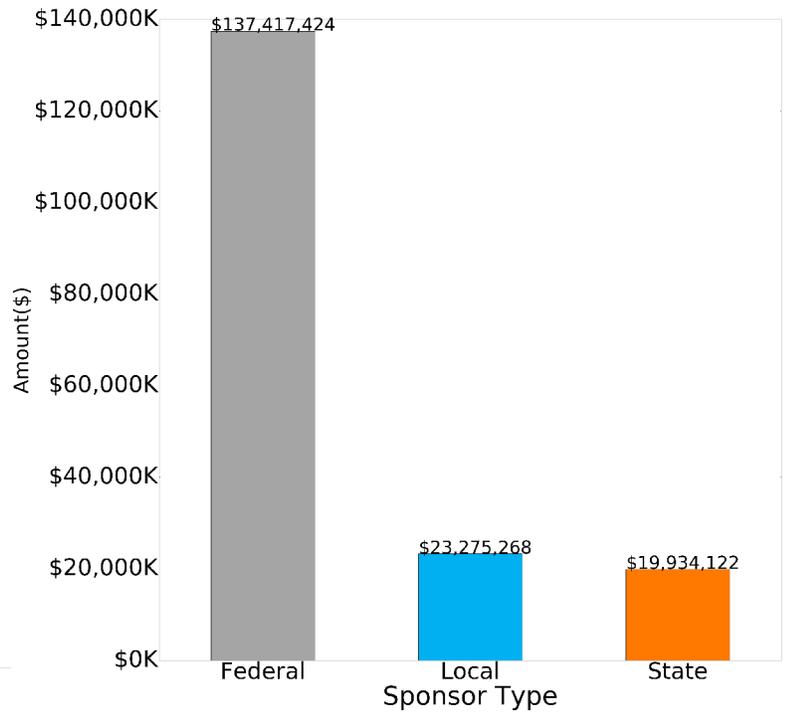
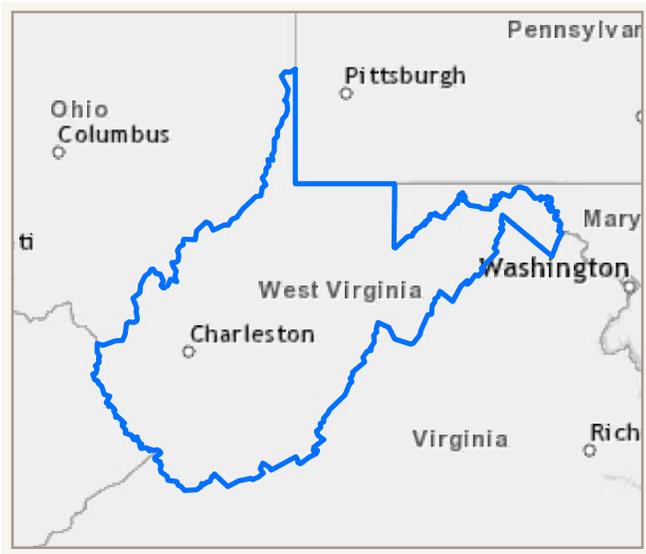
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# State Conservation Report West Virginia



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November 20, 2020



The data in the Conservation Almanac track the impacts of public spending on land conservation. Created by The Trust for Public Land, the Conservation Almanac brings those data together along with state policy profiles, current conservation finance news, and an interactive map, to provide a powerful online tool.