



# **Pound Scenic River Report**

## **Dickenson County and Wise County**

Prepared By  
Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Planning and Recreation Resources

April 2020



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## **I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In 2019, DCR completed a Scenic River evaluation for a section of the Pound River. The section starts from the county/town border of Wise County and the Town of Pound (along Old Mill Village Road), and ends at the Pound River Campground (next to Little Laurel Branch) in Dickenson County.

Based on the evaluation, the 17 miles were deemed eligible for inclusion in the Virginia Scenic River System. The designation as a Virginia Scenic River is recommended, and it is further recommended that DCR be the administering agency.

## **II. REASON FOR THE STUDY**

In April and June of 2019, local officials from the Dickenson County Board of Supervisors and Wise County Board of Supervisors contacted the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) requesting that the Pound River be evaluated for inclusion in the Virginia Scenic River System. An evaluation of the Pound River was completed in 2019, wherein DCR concluded that the river was eligible for designation.

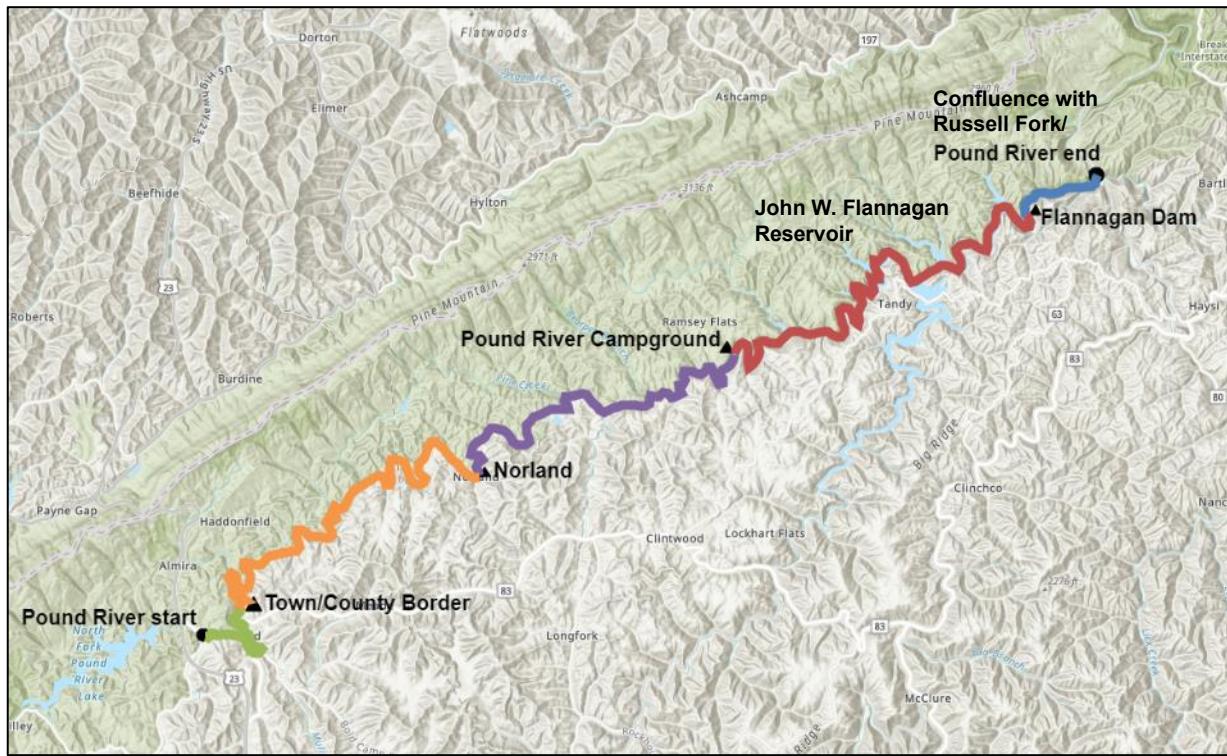
The Scenic Rivers Act instructs DCR to conduct, "studies of rivers or sections of rivers to be considered for designation," and to, "recommend to the Governor and to the General Assembly rivers or sections thereof to be considered for designation as Scenic Rivers" (§ 10.1-401). This report fulfills this statutory directive.

### **A. History of Scenic River Designation for the Pound River**

The 2019 evaluation of the Pound was done in two parts. The first segment was evaluated from the county/town border of Wise County and the Town of Pound—located along Old Mill Village Road—to Norland in Dickenson County, a distance of 8 miles. The second segment was from Norland to the Pound River Campground, a distance of 9 miles. The campground is also called Pound Recreational Area, and is next to Little Laurel Branch.

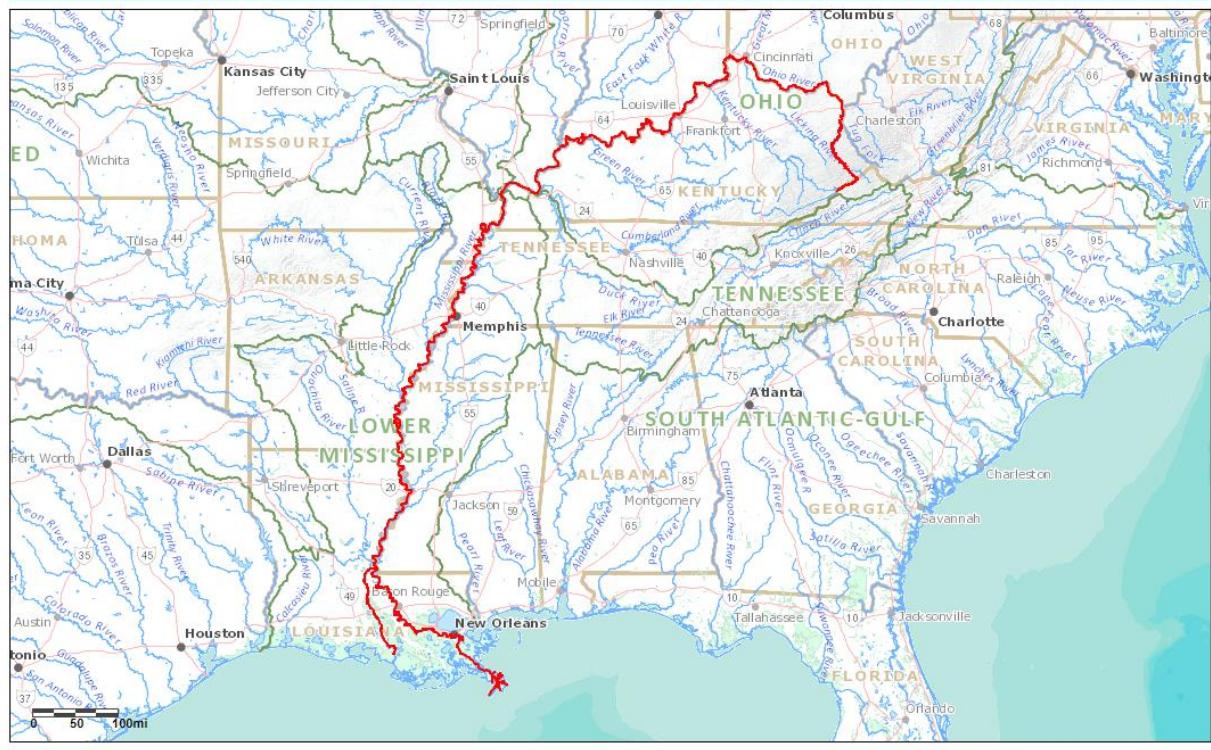
The full length of the Pound River crosses three units of local government: the Town of Pound, Wise County, and Dickenson County (Map 1). The river is formed within the Town of Pound at the joining of two rivers: the North Fork Pound River and the South Fork Pound River. The Pound then flows northeastward, its path winding through Wise and crossing into Dickenson. (The Pound is one of only two rivers in Virginia that flow north—the other is the New River.) In Dickenson, the Pound River eventually becomes part of the John W. Flannagan Reservoir, which collects water from several other rivers as well. The Pound continues past the reservoir's dam, Flannagan Dam, for about two miles until it joins the Russell Fork River, a designated Virginia Scenic River. The Pound—by way of the Russell Fork River, Big Sandy River, and Ohio River—is part of the Mississippi River watershed (Map 2).

No part of the Pound currently is in the Scenic River System. However, Dickenson and Wise counties have other rivers in the system. In Dickenson, both the Cranesnest (10.7 miles) and the Russell Fork (9 miles) are designated. In Wise, the Guest River (6.5 miles) is designated.



*Map 1. The Pound River, from its origin at the Town of Pound to its end at the Russell Fork River. In green is the part of the river that flows through the Town of Pound. In orange is the section that flows across Wise County and past the county line, ending at Norland in Dickenson County. In purple is the section from Norland to the Pound River Campground at the head waters of Flannagan Lake. In red is the section that flows through John W. Flannagan Reservoir. In blue is the section from Flannagan Dam to the confluence with the Russell Fork, where the Pound River ends. The evaluated sections of the river are the orange and purple ones; i.e., from the town/county border to the Pound River Campground.*

*Source: EnviroAtlas, <https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/interactivemap/>*



*Map 2. The Pound River's connection to the Mississippi River. The Pound River is located in southwest Virginia, but its waters—by way of the Russell Fork River, Big Sandy River, Ohio River, and Mississippi River—flow towards the Gulf of Mexico. Source: U.S. Geological Survey Streamer; <https://txpub.usgs.gov/DSS/Streamer>*

## B. Benefits of Designation

The Scenic Rivers Act (the Act), found in Title 10.1, Chapter 4, §§ 10.1-400 through 10.1-418.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, was enacted in 1970 as a means of recognizing the Commonwealth's scenic rivers and their immediate environs. In order to be eligible for Scenic River designation, a river must contain substantial natural, scenic, recreational, and historical attributes.

Designated rivers need not include the entire river, and may include tributaries. At the request of the locality(s), DCR evaluates a specified river segment and writes a report documenting these attributes.

Since the passage of the Act and as of 2019, 33 river segments, totaling nearly 860 miles, have received Scenic River designation from the General Assembly. A list of those rivers can be found at: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/document/srlist.pdf>

The Virginia Scenic River designation accomplishes the following:

- Allows riparian landowners to continue using their land as they did before designation, except as provided in §10.1-407 (§10.1- 408),  
<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-408/>
- Requires the Federal Energy Commission (FERC) to consider the impact of proposed hydropower or related projects on a designated Scenic River using the Scenic River report developed in the qualification process
- Requires all state agencies to consider visual, natural, and recreational values of a Scenic River in their planning and permitting process (§10.1-402),  
<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-402/>
- Gives riparian landowners, local citizens, and local governments a greater voice in the planning and implementation of federal and state projects that might affect the river (§10.1-406.1), <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-406.1/>
- Requires authorization by the General Assembly for the construction, operation and/or maintenance of any structure, such as a dam, that would impede the natural flow of a Scenic River (§10.1-407), <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-407/>

The Virginia Scenic River System is a state-level system for recognizing the uniqueness and quality of a river. Note that the Virginia Scenic River System is different from the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The national-level system has a different set of criteria, and requires designation by Congress or the Secretary of the Interior. According to rivers.gov, Virginia has approximately 49,350 miles of river, but no congressionally designated Wild and Scenic rivers.

## C. Designation Process

Before an evaluation of a potential scenic river, DCR needs, in hand, a letter from the local governing body, county administrator, city manager or town manager requesting that a study be conducted.

In order to determine whether a river (or river segment) is eligible for Virginia Scenic River designation, a field study must be conducted to evaluate the following criteria:

1. River Corridor Vegetation
2. Riverbed and/or River Flow Modifications
3. Human Development of Visual Corridor
4. Historic Features
5. Landscape
6. Quality of Fishery
7. Special Natural Flora and Fauna
8. Water Quality
9. Parallel Roads
10. Crossings
11. Special Features Affecting River Aesthetics
12. Public Recreational Access
13. Land Conservation

Each evaluation involves data collection from multiple sources. These include state agencies,

local and regional planning commissions, map surveys, and related literature reviews. Each evaluation also involves fieldwork. The fieldwork requires canoeing, boating, or walking the stretch of a river and rating the characteristics of the resource. The fieldwork, combined with the data collected from multiple sources, is used to validate existing land use information and rank the river according to relative uniqueness and quality.

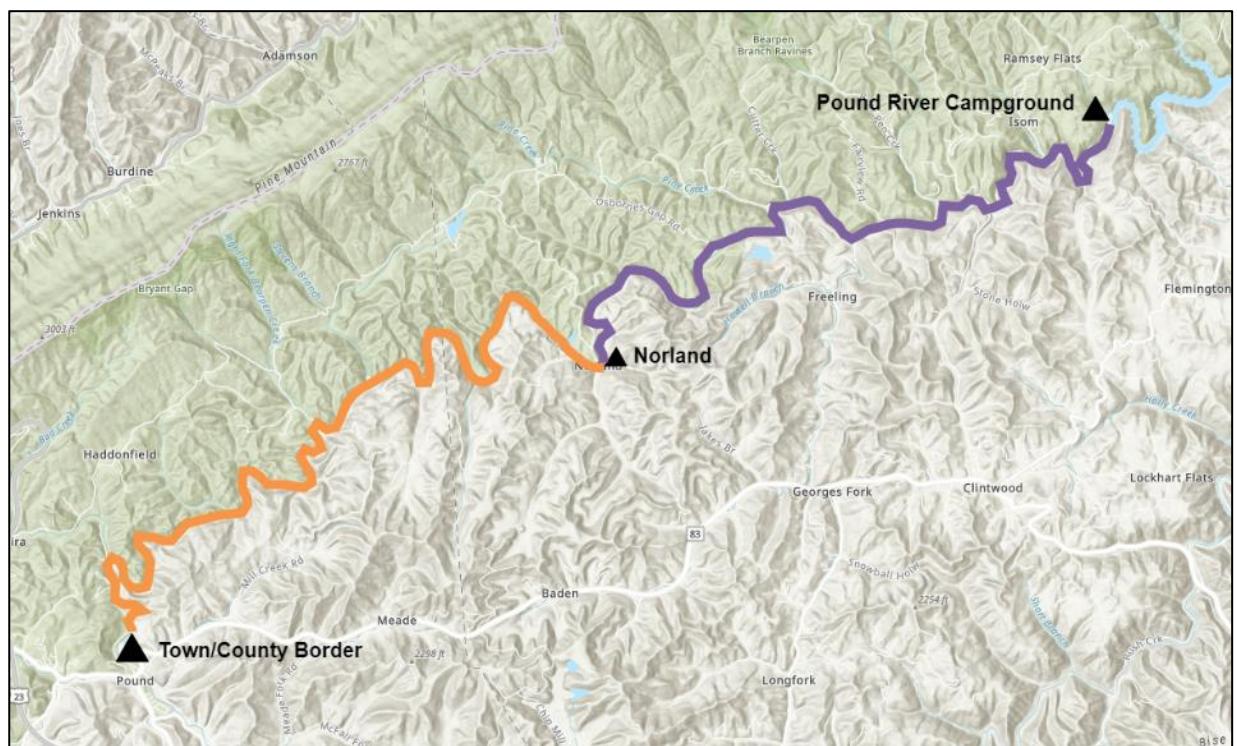
Once the study has been completed, and DCR has finalized a report and designation recommendations, resolutions and letters of support should be solicited from as many governmental and civic groups and individuals as possible. These letters and resolutions will become part of the official record if a public hearing on the designation recommendation is held.

The support of local members of the General Assembly is also part of designation. They introduce the designation legislation and also provide support throughout the legislative process. Sample legislation can be obtained from DCR staff. For proposed legislation, see **Appendix D**.

### **III. CORRIDOR STUDY MAP**

The Pound River originates within the Town of Pound by the joining of two rivers: the North Fork Pound River and the South Fork Pound River. The Pound then flows northeastward, its path winding through the counties of Wise and Dickenson, and flowing through the John W. Flannagan Reservoir, before reaching the Russell Fork River.

This report will discuss two consecutive river segments (Map 3). The first segment is about 8 miles, flowing from the county/town border of Wise County and the Town of Pound—located along Old Mill Village Road—to Norland in Dickenson County. The second segment is about 9 miles, flowing from Norland to the Pound River Campground. The campground is also called Pound Recreational Area, and is next to Little Laurel Branch.



*Map 3. The 17 miles of the Pound River recommended for Scenic River designation. In orange is the 8-mile section that flows from the Town of Pound border, across Wise County, and ending at Norland in Dickenson County. In purple is the 9-mile section from Norland to the Pound River Campground.*

*Source: EnviroAtlas, <https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/interactivemap/>*

## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Personnel from DCR's Division of Planning and Recreation Resources and local stakeholders, including two representatives from Outdoor Adventure Centers (OAC), performed fieldwork in Dickenson County on June 14, 2019. The representatives from OAC, after having received training from DCR, then performed fieldwork in Wise County on July 4, 2019. Debbi Hale, who represents the Pound for the Wise County Tourism Committee, also evaluated the Pound (from the town/county border to Norland), on September 11, 2019.

The following is a description of the qualities and conditions of the resource that make the Pound a candidate for the Virginia Scenic River System.

### A. River Corridor Vegetation

The Pound River winds through a varied landscape of forestland and limited residential areas. Rhododendrons, shrubs, and deciduous trees line the river's banks (Image 1). Trees lean over much of the river, providing shade for recreational users (Image 2). The shade also provides habitat, as some species thrive in the cool waters.

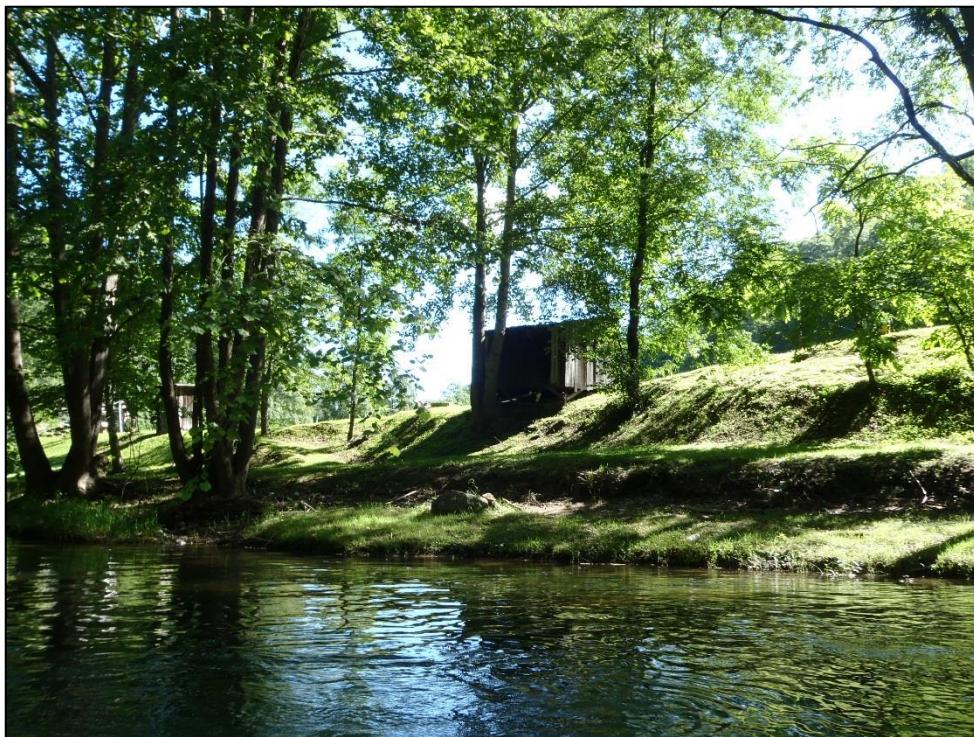
The first section (of about 8 miles) had nearly all of its shoreline covered with forested buffers of at least 100 feet. However, the 9-mile section had about 55 percent of its shoreline forested with a buffer of at least 100 feet, and 40 percent of its shoreline with either no buffers or narrow buffers of less than 100 feet (Image 3). Approximately 5% of the corridor was in pasture or hay fields and virtually no croplands were visible from any evaluated part of the river.



*Image 1. Lush buffer along the Pound filled with Rhododendron trees, deciduous trees, and shrubs.*



*Image 2. Kayaker on the Pound underneath the shade of overhanging trees.*



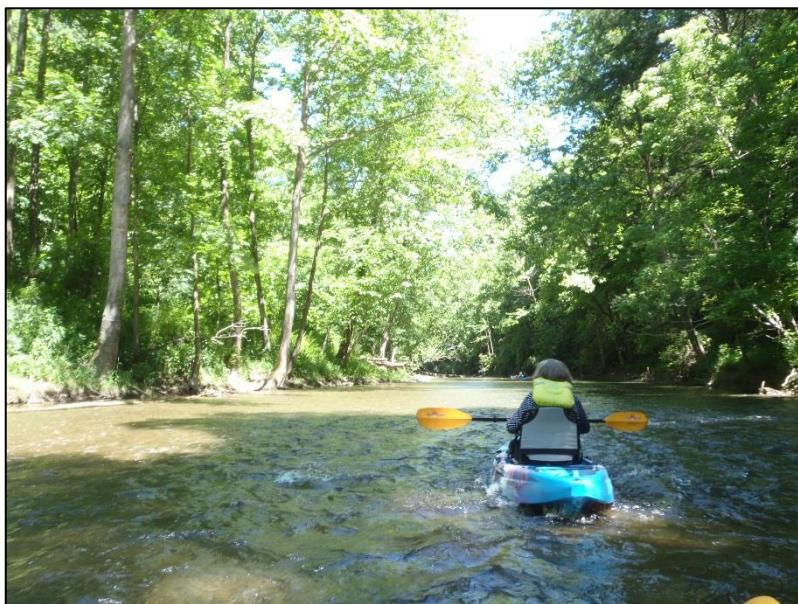
*Image 3. A bank along the Pound without buffer.*

## B. Riverbed and/or River Flow Modifications

The evaluated sections of the Pound River were free-flowing and meandering. Naturally occurring rock ledges, outcrops, islands, and in-stream rock formations added visual and paddling interest. The rapids on the Pound did not impact river flow (Image 4). The Class 1 and Class 2 rapids added excitement and only required intermediate paddling skills (Image 5). There were no streambed or Stream flow modifications.



*Image 4. Rapids on the Pound River.*



*Image 5. Kayaking through the rapids on the Pound.*

### C. Human Development of Visual Corridor

The first section (i.e., the 8-mile section) was remote, with few houses. The 9-mile section from Norland to the campground, however, had more frequent signs of human development. An average of 1.5 homes or clusters of homes per mile were visible from the river (Image 6, Image 7), which is a low rating for rural development. Mobile homes were not included in the count.



*Image 6. Home with faded wood at the banks of the Pound. Note the absence of forested buffer.*

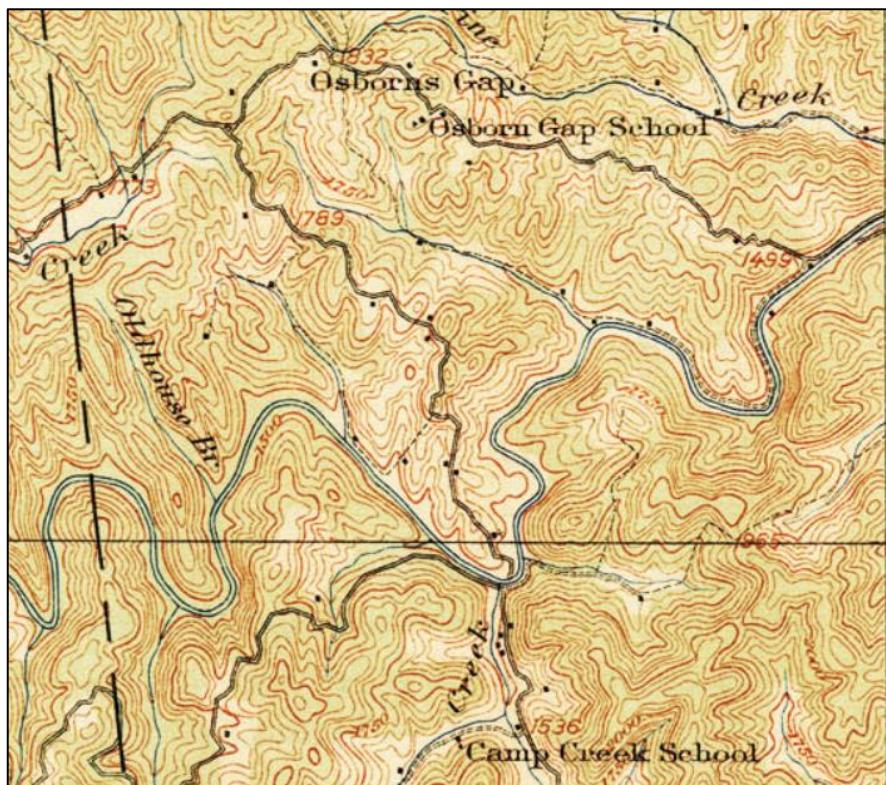


*Image 7. Home at the banks of the Pound. Note the absence of forested buffer.*

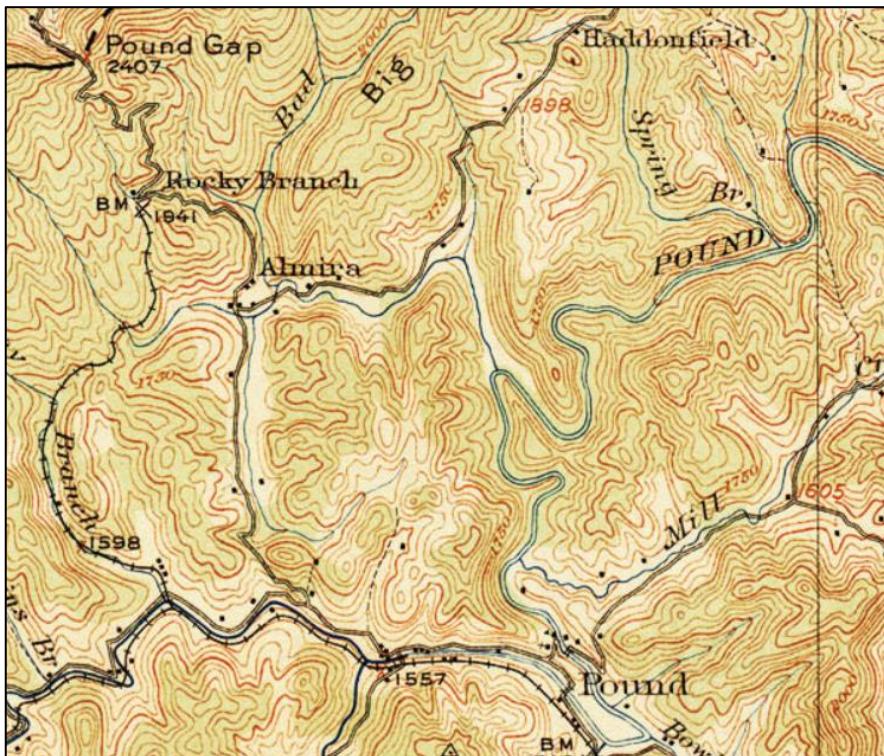
## D. Historic Features

According to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), there are no historical/cultural features within 1000 feet of each side of the studied section of the Pound. However, a 1916 topographic map indicates that there were homes and several schools in proximity to the river (Map 4, Map 5). Among the earliest inhabitants around the Pound River were the people of the Mississipean Culture (Woodland Indians), who had moved into Southwest Virginia around 1000 CE.

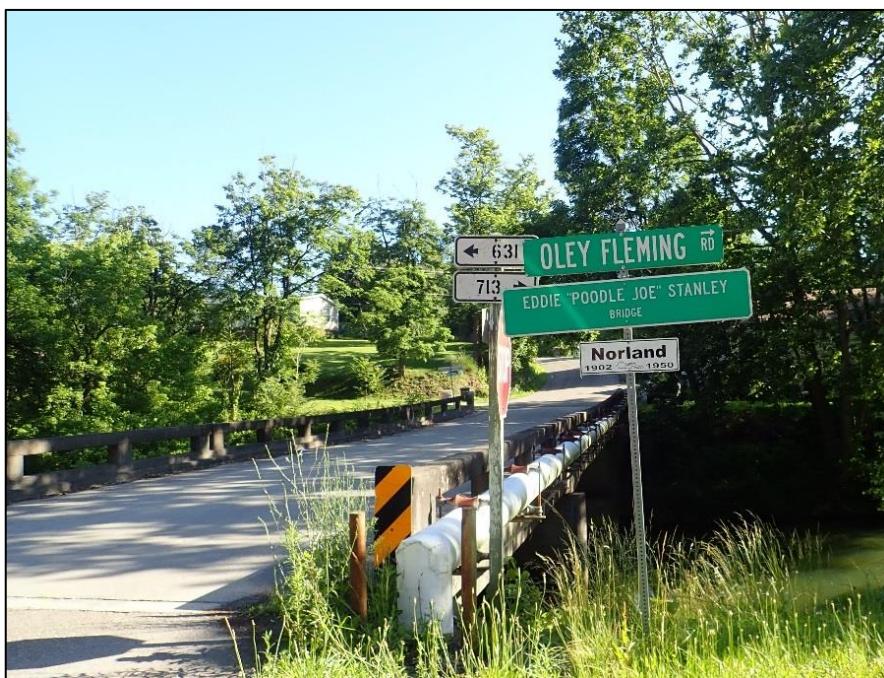
Dickenson County has a few historical records related to the evaluated section of the Pound River. For example, the bridge at Norland that crosses over the Pound (Route 624 Bridge, Structure No. 5851) was named the Eddie “Poodle Joe” Stanley Bridge in 2008. According to the March 20, 2008 Resolution of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, the naming commemorates a local resident “who gave his personal time, talents and resources for the betterment of his community,” and who had passed away in 2007 (Image 8, Image 9).



*Map 4. Topographic map from 1916 shows that there were homes and several schools in proximity to the river. In the middle of the map, at the location where several roads intersect the river, is the location of what is today the unincorporated community of Norland. The dashed line to the left is the boundary between Wise and Dickenson counties.*



*Map 5. Topographic map from 1916 shows the Town of Pound (at the bottom) surrounded by Wise County. The town was named after the manner in which Indians and early settlers used the town's river loop as a natural fence to impound cattle and other animals. At the top of the map is Pound Gap, the infamous location where five people were murdered in 1892.*



*Image 8. Eddie "Poodle Joe" Stanley Bridge at Norland.*



*Image 9. Eddie "Poodle Joe" Stanley Bridge at Norland, as seen from the Pound River.*

## E. Landscape

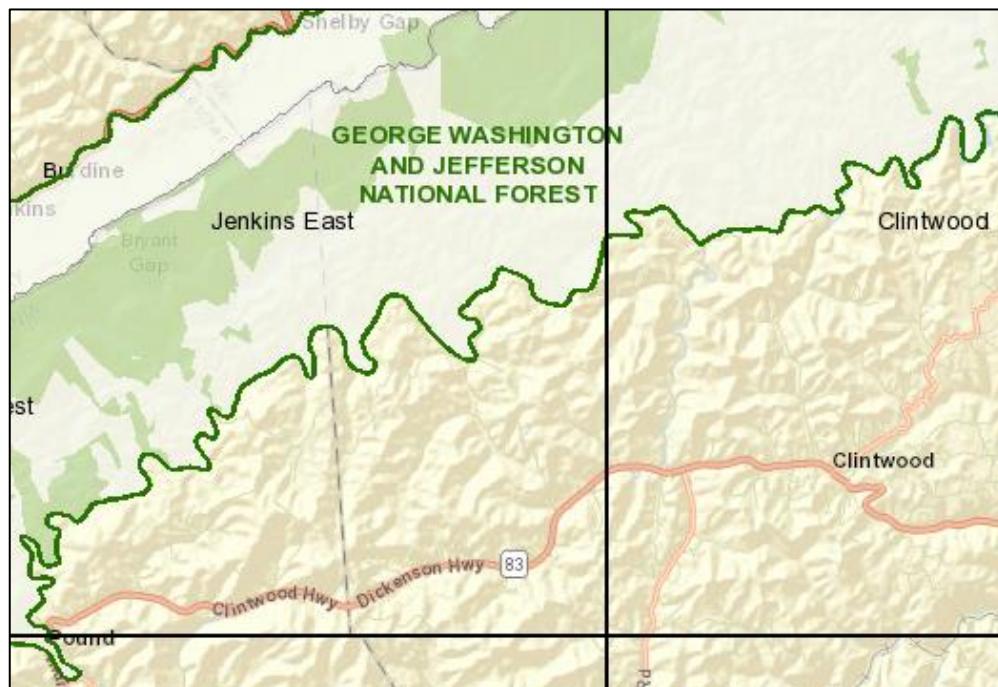
Landscape is measured by two factors; the diversity of landscape and diversity of the views. The Pound River is in the Appalachian Plateaus province. This province is a region of southwest Virginia characterized by rugged terrain dissected by streams.

According to Virginia Whitewater, by H. Roger Corbett:

“The scenery on the Pound River must receive a good to very good rating. In many parts of the trip, rock cliffs rise vertically from the river; not high cliffs, mind you, but still cliffs. The dense stands and thickest of mountain laurel, in combination with juniper trees, are most pleasant to the eye. In places, the river is within a narrow gorge that is barely wide enough for the road and the river.”

The first studied portion of the Pound is near the river’s origin. Views along this segment are less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and have mountains on either side with lush forested buffers. The abundance of forest along the shoreline is largely thanks to the presence of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest along the river (Map 6).

The 9-mile portion of the Pound, from Norland to the campground, is the mid-section of the river. Views along this segment are less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and feature fallen logs, rapids, and rocky islands. They also offer forested buffers and shade by tree canopy (Image 10). As mentioned in a previous section, however (see **Section A: River Corridor Vegetation**), the 9-mile segment also had houses along its banks and other signs of human development (Image 11).



Map 6. The George Washington and Jefferson National Forest. The Pound River forms the southern border of the national forest. Source: FS Topo Map, <https://data.fs.usda.gov/geodata/rastergateway/states-regions/states.php>



*Image 10. Typical scenery along the Pound River: lush buffer and trees overhead.*



*Image 11. A bank of the Pound featuring a home with no forested buffer.*

## F. Quality of Fishery

The Pound offers moderate game fish populations and good fishing opportunities. The river has walleye, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, blue gill, and rock bass. The studied section also likely has catfish and redbreast sunfish.



*Image 12. Child fishing along the Pound.*

## G. Special Natural Flora and Fauna

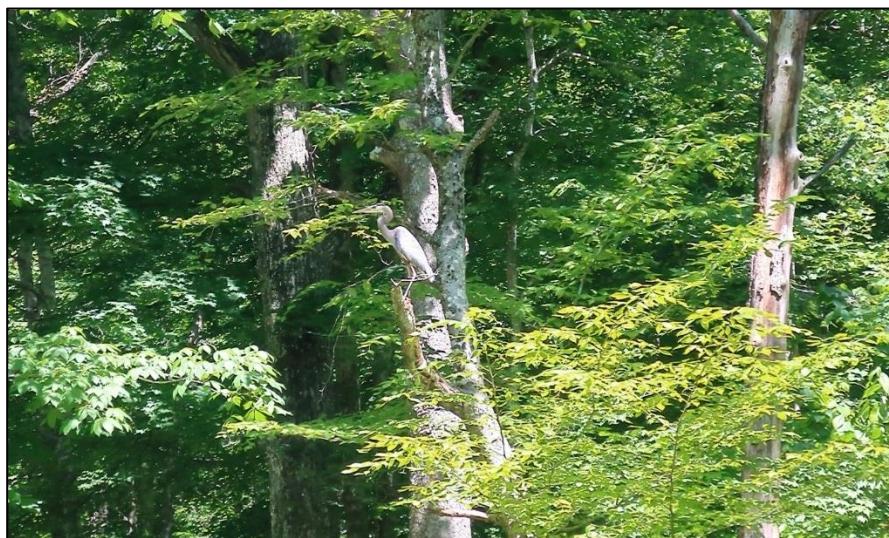
According to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF), a wide variety of animals call home the Pound River and surrounding woodlands.

In reference to one section around the Pound, DGIF says the following:

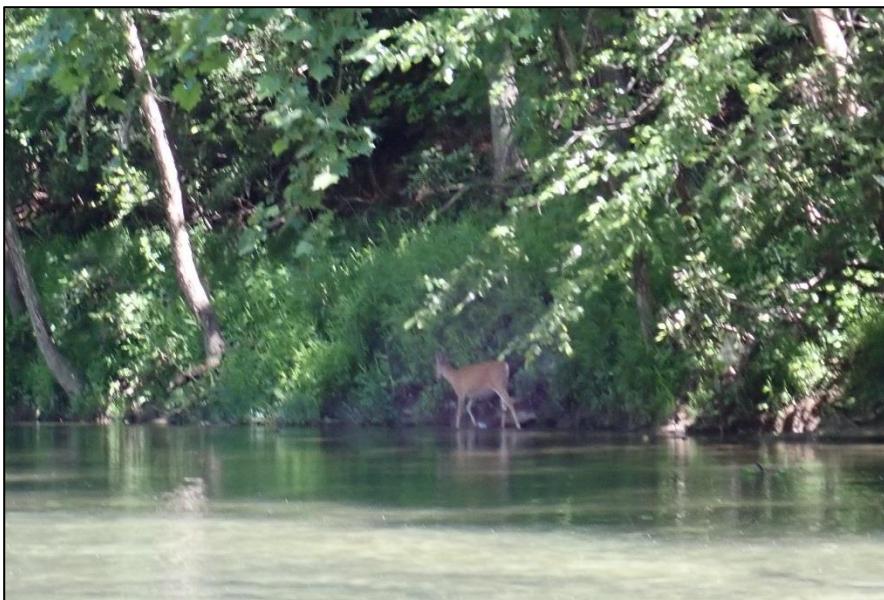
“A sizeable beaver population, providing a unique ecosystem and home to diverse wildlife, maintains the river bottom. In addition to beaver, look for other wildlife such as red fox, wild turkey, white-tailed deer, and least weasel. The riparian woodlands are home to a number of nesting birds, including blue-gray gnatcatcher, black-and-white and hooded warblers, downy woodpecker, wood thrush, and ovenbird. Green heron can be found wading in shallow edges of the river, and belted kingfisher, perching from higher perches on tree limbs. The more open and/or shrubby areas behind the river are home to indigo bunting, song sparrow, eastern kingbird, and gray catbird.”

For more information, see Pound River: Active Beaver Area and Recreational Area (<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/vbwt/sites/pound-river-active-beaver-area-and-recreational-area/>).

In the June 14<sup>th</sup> evaluation from Norland to the campground, animals seen along the river included herons, ducks, Monarch butterflies, and dragonflies (Image 13). Noteworthy sights included a young buck on the river (Image 14), a red-spotted newt on the shore at Norland (Image 15), and a beaver—an otherwise nocturnal animal—moving under the water. Also seen was the Japanese meadowsweet: an ornamental, non-native plant (Image 16). In the July 4<sup>th</sup> study between the town/county border and Norland, the animals observed included red cardinals and brook trout.



*Image 13. Great blue heron seen along the Pound in Dickenson County.*



*Image 14. Young buck on the Pound.*



*Image 15. Red-spotted newt next to the Pound River at Norland.*



*Image 16. Japanese meadowsweet viewed from the Pound River. The Japanese meadowsweet has pink flowers, while the similar-looking Virginia meadowsweet—a native, federally threatened species—has white flowers.*

## Species with Conservation Status

The Pound River has more than four species with state-level or national-level conservation status. The following information was provided by the DCR Natural Heritage Program and was used in the final evaluation.

For species ranking definitions (G1, G2, etc.), please see **Appendix B**.

(1) Green-faced Clubtail/ *Gomphus viridifrons*

G3G4/S2

A small but robust mostly black dragonfly with a clear gray-green face and sides on the thorax. Habitat rocky streams with high quality oxygenated water. Found in small to large moderate-gradient rivers; free flowing with high water quality; larvae burrow in silt, adults forage in trees. Information source: NatureServe Explorer. (Image 17).



Image 17. Green-faced Clubtail © Greg Lasley  
cc-by-nc-4.0

(2) Big Sandy Crayfish/ *Cambarus callainus*

G2/LT/LT

Like all crayfish found in North America, the adult big sandy crayfish resembles a miniature lobster, ranging from 3 to 4 inches in size. Its shell is an olive brown to light green color, with blue and red accents around its eyes and legs. The Big Sandy Crayfish needs clean, medium-sized streams and rivers for its social reproductive, and energetic needs. They are usually found in faster moving sections of the water, in areas with large boulders and rocks, and little sedimentation or pollution. Information source: Southeast Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (Image 18).



Image 18. Big Sandy Crayfish, Public Domain,  
Zachary Loughman, West Liberty University

(3) Drooping Trillium/ *Trillium flexipes*

G5/SH

The name drooping trillium refers to the way the flower droops; this is because of its long peduncle. Similar to most trilliums this plant grows best in well-drained soil and can survive shade or dappled sunlight underneath the tree canopy. Information source: Ohio Department of Natural Resources. (Image 19).



Image 19. Drooping Trillium. © Sherrie Snyder,  
iNaturalist, cc-by-nc-4.0

(4) Virginia Meadowsweet/ *Spiraea virginiana*

G2/S1/LT/LE

A shrub with upright, arching branches, usually 1-3 m tall. Leaves are acute at the apex and entire or sparingly toothed. Produces showy clusters of small white flowers. In Virginia, occurrences are along flood scour zones in crevices of sandstone cobbles, boulders, and massive rock outcrop, and quartzite/feldspar boulders. Information source: NatureServe Explorer. (Image 20).



*Image 20. Virginia Meadowsweet, Unrestricted,  
Alan Cressler, Wildflower Center Digital  
Library*

## H. Water Quality

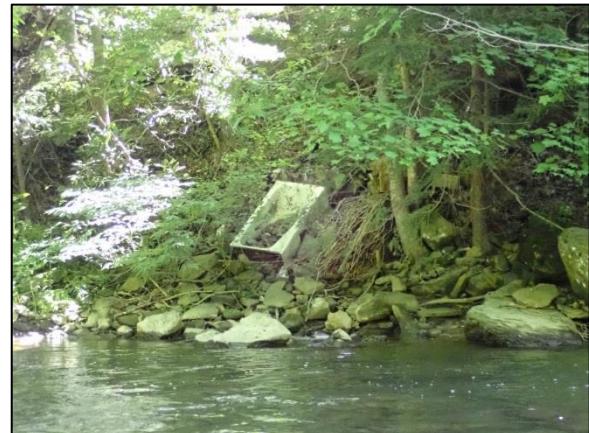
Visibility through the water column was clear (Image 21). Large trash items, including at least one abandoned boat and several abandoned vehicles, were present close to Norland (Image 22). Otherwise, trash was present along the Pound, but infrequently (Image 23). Deeming the water quality high for the Pound River.



*Image 21. Clear waters of the Pound.*



*Image 22. Two abandoned vehicles and an upside-down boat close to Norland.*



*Image 23. Trash along the Pound.*

## I. Parallel Roads

Roads run parallel to about one third of the 8-mile section of the Pound. For the 9-mile section, roads run parallel the entire way. One major road on the 9-mile section is Rt. 631. It is a secondary highway that follows the Pound from Norland to Isom. The parallel roads have virtually no impact on the River experience.

While roads may negatively impact the sights and sounds of a river, the impact may be minor if the road is small or not frequently used. Some roads may even offer benefits to the river's scenic quality, by allowing fishing access and providing passerby views of the river. For example, Rt. 631 forms part of the Active Beaver Area Loop. This is a driving loop that meanders through U.S. forestlands and gives motorists several pull-off stops for a closer view of the river (Image 24).



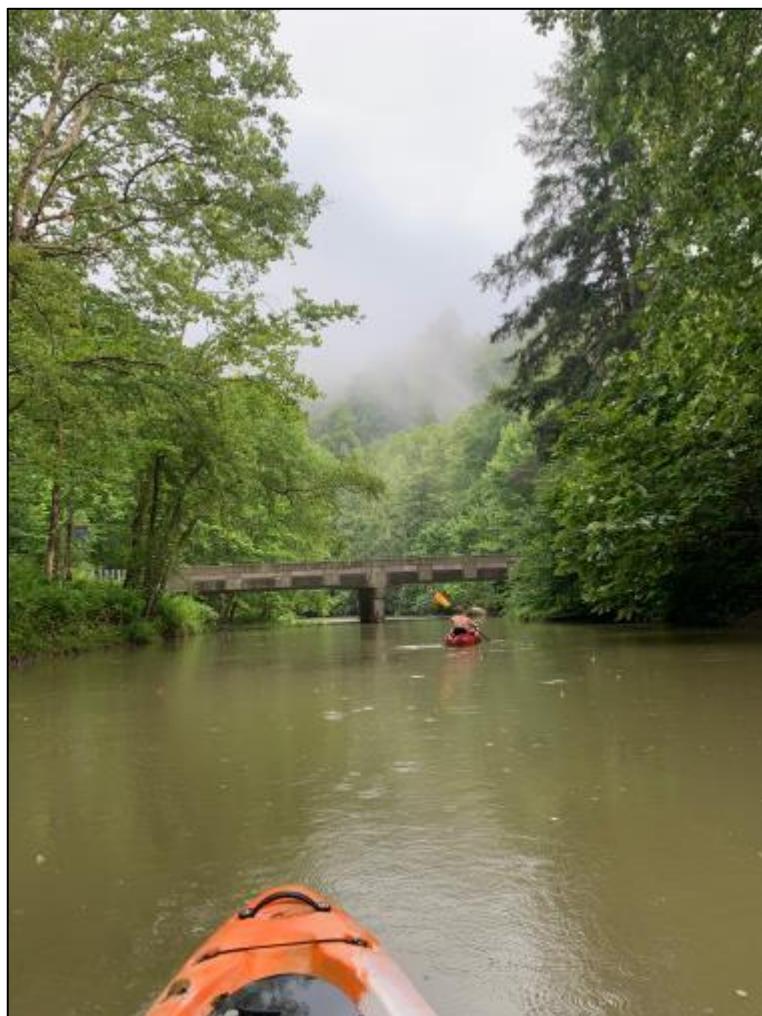
*Image 24. Route 631 visible from the Pound River.*

## J. Crossings

Crossings are roads and power/communication lines that pass over a river. Although crossings reduce the sense of remoteness along a river, they can provide visual and physical access to the water.

The 8-mile section from the town/county border to Norland had one bridge: River Hill Road (Image 25). The 9-mile section from Norland to the campground had at least two bridges (Image 26, Image 27) and at least one powerline crossing. Because of its historical significance, the Eddie "Poodle Joe" Stanley Bridge was not included in the crossings count. Residential wire crossings also did not count, nor did a swing bridge located near Osbornes Gap Road (Image 28).

Overall, the crossings have no impact on the upper section of the river and a moderate impact on the lower section of the river.



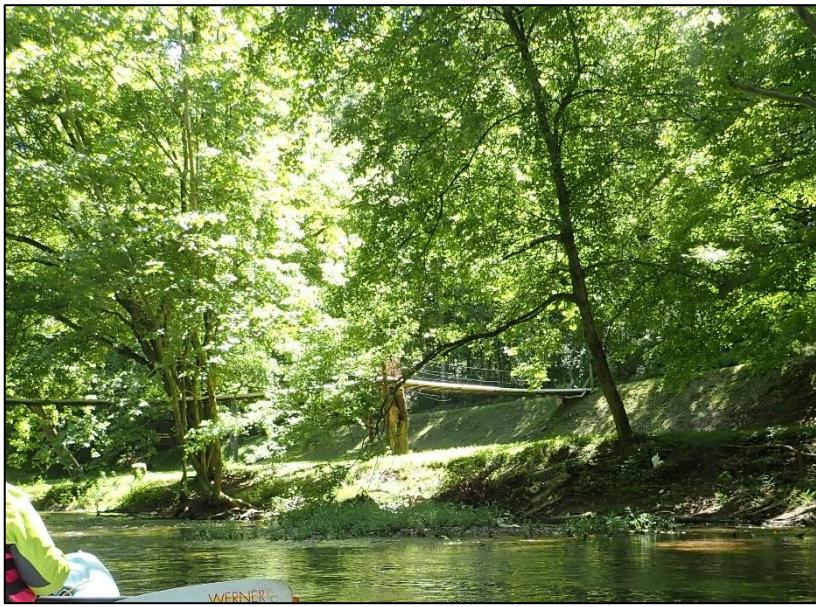
*Image 25. Kayakers on the Pound River in Wise County. The bridge is River Hill Road. Photographer: Outdoor Adventure Centers (OAC).*



*Image 26. Bridge crossing the Pound River. The bridge is Lower Georges Fork Holw.*



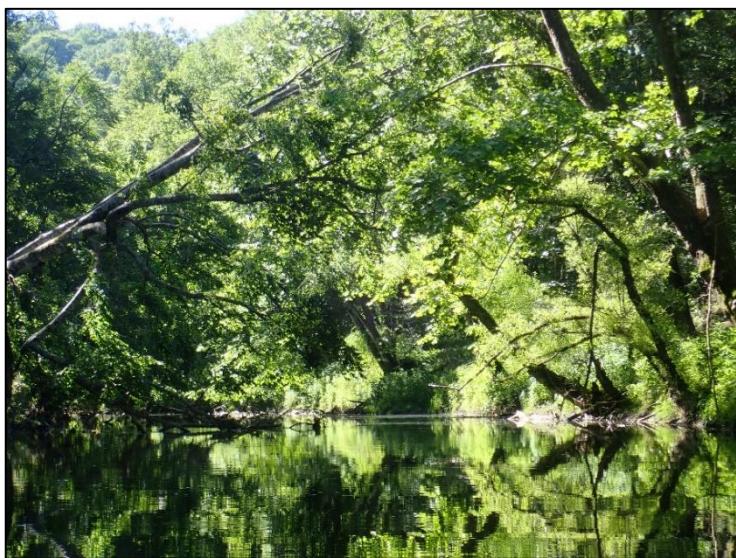
*Image 27. Bridge crossing the Pound River. The bridge is Rt. 631/Brush Creek Road.*



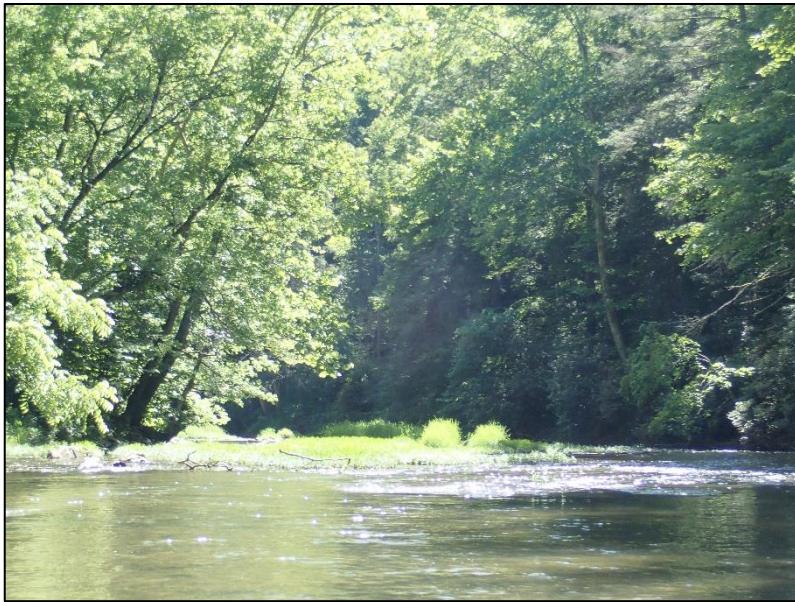
*Image 28. Swing bridge, located near Osbornes Gap Road.*

## **K. Special Features Affecting River Aesthetics**

The views along the Pound are generally small and intimate, only reaching a few hundred feet at-a-time (Image 29). Nevertheless, the river-goer can expect a variety of experiences along the river. Class 1 and Class 2 rapids are regularly interspersed with calm waters. In-stream rock formations, cliffs, and small islands provide navigational interest (Image 30). Shaded canopy along much of the river provides a respite from the sun's rays. Along the journey, the sounds of the river are rippling water and birds singing. River-goers that reach the Jerry Branch confluence can find the entrance to an underwater cave (Image 31). Thus the overall aesthetic score is very high.



*Image 29. An intimate space along the Pound. Note the shade provided by the canopy.*



*Image 30. Several small, grassy islands in the Pound River.*



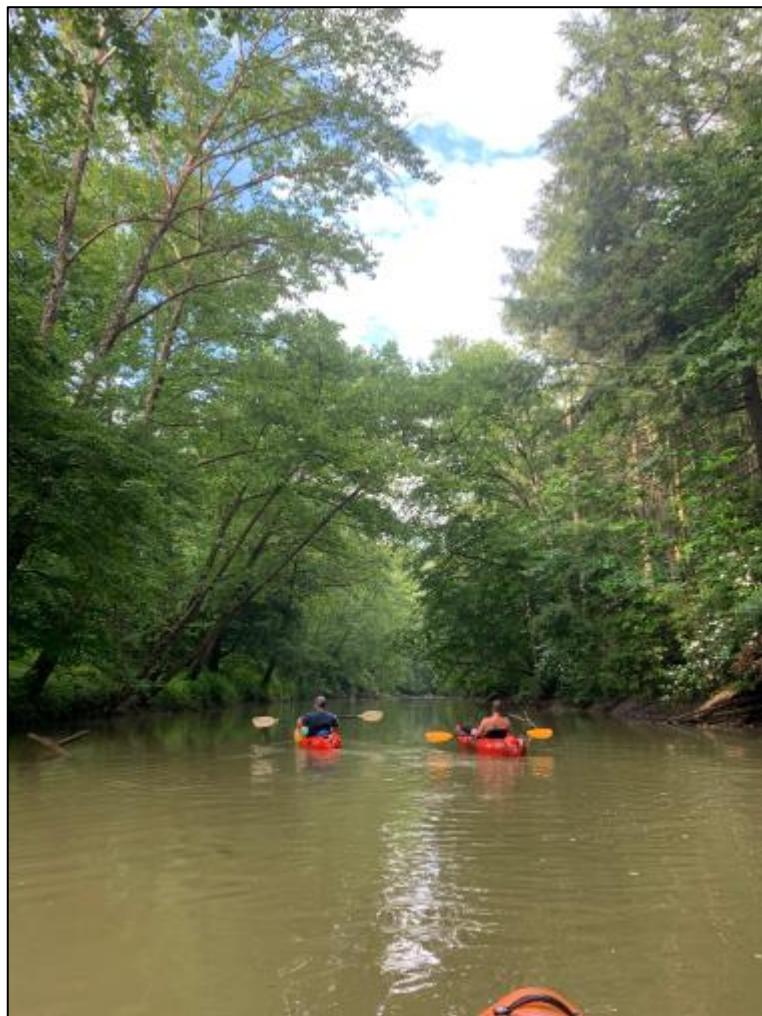
*Image 31. Entrance to an underwater cave, at the intersection of the Pound and Jerry Branch.*

## **L. Public Recreational Access**

Recreationists can paddle the 17-mile segment with canoes and kayaks (Image 32). Paddlers and tubers can access the river at public bridge crossings, such as the Eddie “Poodle Joe”

Stanley Bridge, and by permission from private landowners.

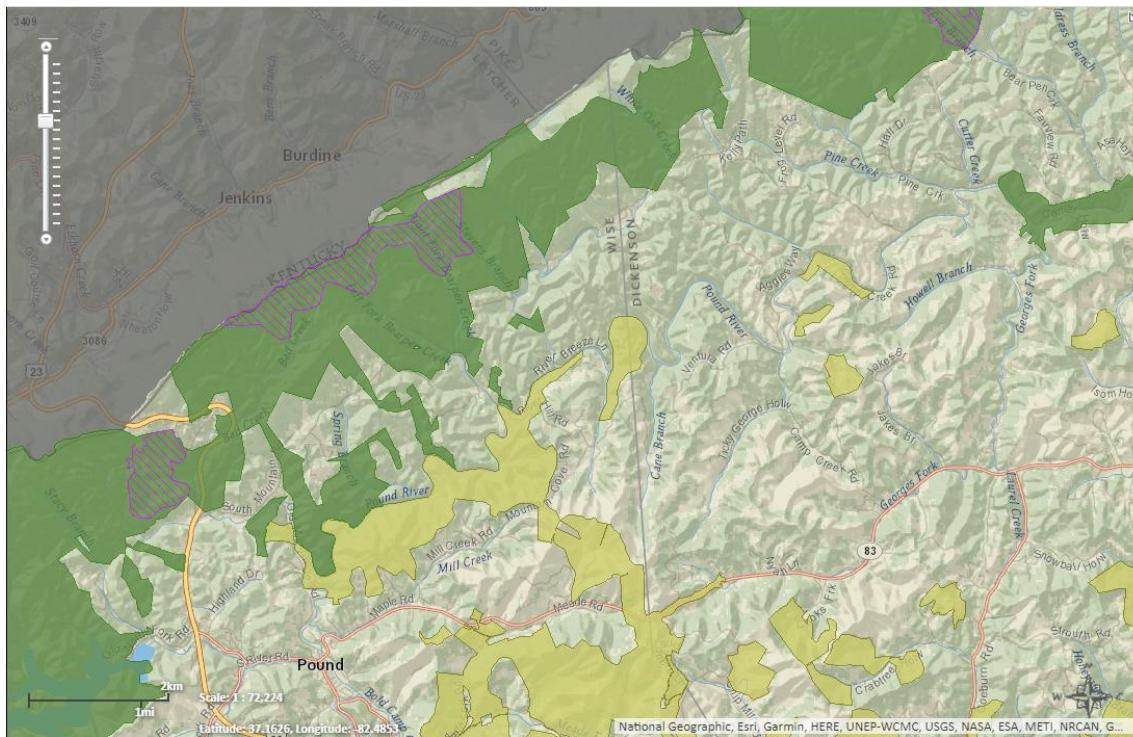
There exists an old, narrow gauge railroad that follows the Pound; there are plans to convert this railroad into a multi-use trail.



*Image 32. Kayakers on the Pound River in Wise County, near White Oak Creek. Photographer: Outdoor Adventure Centers (OAC).*

## M. Land Conservation

DCR's Natural Heritage Program provides information on managed lands and conservation easements. According to its inventory, the Pound River has a great amount of protection with land holdings next to the river by USFS George Washington and Jefferson National Forest to the west and Flannagan Reservoir- US Army Corps of Engineers. The lighter green is Cumberland Forest - The Nature Conservancy Land Holding. These holding provide protection from development (Map 7).



*Map 7. Land conservation along the evaluated section of the Pound River. The dark green area is USFS George Washington and Jefferson National Forest to the west and Flannagan Reservoir- US Army Corps of Engineers. The lighter green is Cumberland Forest - The Nature Conservancy Land Holding.*

## V. LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

Lands along the study corridor are either in private ownership, federally owned and managed or managed by The Nature Conservancy. Most of the land use is forested or residential. The abundance of forest along the shoreline is largely thanks to the presence of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest along the river (see **Section E: Landscape**).

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) concludes that the Pound River from the county/town border of Wise County and the Town of Pound—located along Old Mill Village Road—to the Pound River Campground in Dickenson County, a distance of approximately 17 miles, is hereby eligible to be a component of the Virginia Scenic River System. Scenic River designation is warranted because of the aesthetic and recreational qualities of the river section, its environs, and the unique flora and fauna.

Flowing through largely forested land, this river segment has a number of interesting aesthetic features including rock formations, islands, fallen logs, and rapids. Its winding course provides for interesting foreground and middleground views. River-goers at Jerry Branch can see the entrance to an underwater cave.

The Pound River is home to beavers, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, red foxes, Rhododendron

trees, and other flora and fauna. The 17-mile section of the Pound also has more than four plant and animal species with state-level or national-level conservation status. In addition, the studied segment features the Eddie “Poodle Joe” Stanley Bridge, which was named after a local resident. There are plans to convert an old, narrow gauge railroad that follows the river into a multi-use trail.

Considering the aspects of this segment of the Pound River as described in this report, DCR recommends that:

1. The section that starts from the county/town border of Wise County and the Town of Pound (along Old Mill Village Road), and ends at the Pound River Campground (next to Little Laurel Branch) in Dickenson County, a distance of approximately 17 miles, receive Virginia Scenic River designation, and
2. The Department of Conservation and Recreation be appointed the Administering Agency.

Proposed legislation for Scenic River designation is provided in **Appendix D**.

## **VII. CONSERVATION PLAN**

The following recommended conservation plan would involve local and state governments, individual and riparian landowners, and local stewardship initiatives.

### **A. Virginia Scenic River Designation**

Designation of the 17-mile section of the Pound would give riparian landowners, local citizens, and local governments a greater voice in the planning and implementation of federal and state projects that might affect the river. For other benefits of Scenic River designation, see **Section B: Benefits of Designation**.

The local government may create a local scenic river advisory committee to advise the local government on the protection or management of the scenic river segment within its jurisdiction. For more information about this process, see *Code of Virginia* § 10.1-401 and § 10.1-406.1.

### **B. Land Use Plans**

Wise County and Dickenson County can review their land use plans, to check whether they reflect citizens’ recognition, appreciation, and concern for the river and the role it plays in the region’s quality of life. Such plans could prioritize the protection of the river and its environs from potential development, or insuring that the development that does occur uses low impact strategies whenever possible.

### **C. Local and Riparian Landowners**

Stewardship by local and riparian landowners has been good over the years. If not for this stewardship, the attributes necessary for inclusion in the Virginia Scenic River System might have been lost. Through continuation of these efforts, the natural and scenic character of the

river can be protected.

#### **D. Local Stewardship Initiatives**

Several nonprofits are involved in the conservation and recognition of the Pound River. The following describes a few of them.

Ricky Barton and Scarlett Collie from Outdoor Adventure Centers (OAC) have organized river outings in order to promote the Pound for recreation. Debbi Hale, who represents the Pound for the Wise County Tourism Committee, has organized river cleanups for the Pound River.

### **VIII. ANTICIPATED COST OF DESIGNATION**

The only anticipated direct costs as a result of the designation would be those incurred by DCR as a result of its duties as administrator of the river. These costs are estimated to be within \$1,000 per year.

### **IX. AGENCY COMMENTS/ RESOLUTIONS**

A draft report was circulated in 2019 among DCR Divisions, other state agencies, Dickenson County, and Wise County. See comments and resolutions of support in **Appendix C**.

## **X. APPENDIX**

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## **Appendix A. Acronyms and Abbreviations**

<b>The Act</b>	Scenic Rivers Act, Title 10.1, Chapter 4 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i>
<b>BCR</b>	Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation
<b>DCR</b>	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
<b>DEQ</b>	Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
<b>DHR</b>	Virginia Department of Historic Resources
<b>DGIF</b>	Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
<b>OAC</b>	Outdoor Adventure Centers
<b>VA</b>	Commonwealth of Virginia

## Appendix B. Species Ranking Definitions of DCR Natural Heritage

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	FEDERAL STATUS	STATE STATUS
Villosa perpurpurea	Purple Bean	G1	S1	LE	LE

### Definitions of Abbreviations used on Natural Heritage Resource Lists

The following ranks are used by DCR to set protection priorities for natural heritage resources. Natural Heritage Resources, or "NHR's," are rare plant and animal species, rare and exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic features. The criterion for ranking NHR's is the number of populations or occurrences, i.e. the number of known distinct localities; the number of individuals in existence at each locality or, if a highly mobile organism (e.g., sea turtles, many birds, and butterflies), the total number of individuals; the quality of the occurrences, the number of protected occurrences; and threats.

- S1** Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 5 or fewer populations or occurrences; or very few remaining individuals (<1000).
- S2** Imperiled in the state because of rarity or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 6 to 20 populations or occurrences or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000).
- S3** Vulnerable in the state either because rare and uncommon, or found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations), or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation. Typically 21 to 100 populations or occurrences (1,000 to 3,000).
- S4** Apparently secure; Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the state. Possible cause of long-term concern. Usually >100 populations or occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- S5** Secure; Common, widespread and abundant in the state. Essentially ineradicable under present conditions. Typically with considerably more than 100 populations or occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- S#B** Breeding status of an animal within the state
- S#N** Non-breeding status of animal within the state. Usually applied to winter resident species.
- S#?** Inexact or uncertain numeric rank.
- SH** Possibly extirpated (Historical). Historically known from the state, but not verified for an extended period, usually > 15 years; this rank is used primarily when inventory has been attempted recently.
- S#S#** Range rank; A numeric range rank, (e.g. S2S3) is used to indicate the range of uncertainty about the exact status of the element. Ranges cannot skip more than one rank.
- SU** Unrankable; Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.
- SNR** Unranked; state rank not yet assessed.
- SX** Presumed extirpated from the state. Not located despite intensive searches of historical sites and other appropriate habitat, and virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered.
- SNA** A conservation status rank is not applicable because the element is not a suitable target for conservation activities

**Global Ranks** are similar, but refer to a species' rarity throughout its total range. Global ranks are denoted with a "G" followed by a character. Note GX means the element is presumed extinct throughout its range, not relocated despite intensive searches of historical sites/appropriate habitat, and virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered. A "Q" in a rank indicates that a taxonomic question concerning that species exists. Ranks for subspecies are denoted with a "T". The global and state ranks combined (e.g. G2/S1) give an instant grasp of a species' known rarity.

These ranks should not be interpreted as legal designations.

- G1** Extremely rare and critically imperiled with 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals; or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction.
- G2** Very rare and imperiled with 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals; or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extinction.
- G3** Either very rare and local throughout its range or found locally (even abundantly at some of its locations) in a restricted range; or vulnerable to extinction because of other factors. Usually fewer than 100 occurrences are documented.
- G4** Common and apparently secure globally, although it may be rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
- G5** Very common and demonstrably secure globally, although it may be rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
- GH** Formerly part of the world's fauna with some expectation that it may be rediscovered; generally applies to species that have not been verified for an extended period (usually >15 years) and for which some inventory has been attempted recently.
- GX** Believed to be extinct throughout its range with virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
- GU** Possibly rare, but status uncertain and more data needed.
- G?** Unranked, or, if following a numerical ranking, rank uncertain (e.g., G3?).
- G\_G\_** The rank is uncertain, but considered to be within the indicated range (e.g., G2G4) of ranks (also, T\_T\_).
- G\_Q** Taxon has a questionable taxonomic assignment (e.g., G3Q) and may prove to be invalid upon further study.
- G\_T\_** Signifies the rank of a subspecies (e.g., G5T1 would apply to a subspecies if the species is demonstrably secure globally (G5) but the subspecies warrants a rank of T1, critically imperiled.)

## **FEDERAL STATUS**

The Division of Natural Heritage uses the standard abbreviations for Federal endangerment developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Endangered Species and Habitat Conservation.

- LE** Listed Endangered
- LT** Listed Threatened
- PE** Proposed Endangered
- PT** Proposed Threatened
- C** Candidate (formerly C1 - Candidate category 1)
- E(S/A)** Treat as endangered because of similarity of appearance
- T(S/A)** Treat as threatened because of similarity of appearance
- SOC** Species of Concern species that merit special concern (not a regulatory category)

## **STATE LEGAL STATUS**

The Division of Natural Heritage uses similar abbreviations for State endangerment:

<b>LE</b>	Listed Endangered
<b>PE</b>	Proposed Endangered
<b>SC</b>	Special Concern - animals that merit special concern according to VDGIF (not a regulatory category)
<b>LT</b>	Listed Threatened
<b>PT</b>	Proposed Threatened
<b>C</b>	Candidate

For information on the laws pertaining to threatened or endangered species, please contact:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for all FEDERALLY listed species;
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Plant Protection Bureau for STATE listed plants and insects; and
- Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for all other STATE listed animals

## **CONSERVATION SITES RANKING**

Rank is a rating of the significance of the conservation site based on presence and number of natural heritage resources; on a scale of 1-5, 1 being most significant. Sites are also coded to reflect the presence/absence of federally/state listed species:

### Conservation Site Ranks

<b>B1</b>	Outstanding significance
<b>B2</b>	Very High significance
<b>B3</b>	High significance
<b>B4</b>	Moderate significance
<b>B5</b>	Of general Biodiversity significance

### Legal Status of Sites

<b>FL</b>	Federally listed species present
<b>SL</b>	State listed species present
<b>NL</b>	No listed species present

## Appendix C. Letters, Comments, and Other Support

### 1. Letters Requesting Designation

APR 25 2018

#### DICKENSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Supervisors

RON PETERS, CHAIRMAN  
SANDLICK DISTRICT

DAVID PERRY, VICE-CHAIRMAN  
CLINTWOOD DISTRICT

SHELBY WILLIS  
KENADY DISTRICT

DAVID YATES  
ERVINTON DISTRICT

JASON COMPTON  
WILLIS DISTRICT

County Administrator  
G. DAVID MOORE, JR.

P.O. Box 1098  
Clintwood, Virginia 24228  
Telephone: 276/926-1676  
Fax: 276/926-1649  
Email: dmoore@dickensonva.org



April 4, 2018

Lynn Crump  
Environmental Programs Planner  
DCR-Planning & Recreation Resources  
203 Governor St., Ste. 326  
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Field Examination

Dear Ms. Crump:

I am writing concerning the Pound River, located in Dickenson County. We are interested in obtaining Virginia Scenic Designation for the Pound River and wanted to check with your office to see if you could schedule a time in the future to come down and do an assessment to see if it would qualify for the designation.

We would appreciate your consideration in doing a field examination of the river at your convenience and will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

Sincerely,

G. David Moore, Jr.  
Dickenson County Administrator

c: Dickenson County Board of Supervisors  
Rita Surratt, Tourism Director

GDMjr/dl

# Wise County Board of Supervisors



## Office of County Administrator

TELEPHONE 276-328-2321  
FAX 276-328-9780

COURTHOUSE

P.O. BOX 570  
206 E. MAIN STREET

WISE, VIRGINIA 24293

March 28, 2019

Mr. Clyde Cristman, Director  
Department of Conservation and Recreation  
203 Governor Street, Suite 326  
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Designating the Pound River as a State Scenic River

Dear Mr. Cristman:

The Wise County Board of Supervisors requests the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to study the Pound River in Wise and Dickenson County for designation as a State Scenic River. This request is being submitted under the Virginia Scenic Rivers Act of 1970.

Please advise how we may assist the Department in this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael W. Hatfield  
County Administrator

C: Debbi Hale

## **2. DCR Designation Support**

At the October 2019 Board of Conservation and Recreation meeting, the Board voted unanimously to support the designation of the Pound River in Wise and Dickenson Counties as a Virginia Scenic River.

## **3. Agency Comments**

### **Re: Virginia Scenic River Support**

**Kittrell, William** <bill.kittrell@dgif.virginia.gov> Fri, Dec 6, 2019 at 10:45 AM

To: "Crump, Lynn" <lynn.crump@dcr.virginia.gov>

Cc: Williams Jeff mnmm85886 <jeff.williams@dgif.virginia.gov>, Pinder Michael pxu14812 <mike.pinder@dgif.virginia.gov>, Brian Watson <brian.watson@dgif.virginia.gov>

I've looked at the 17 mile reach of the Pound River in Wise and Dickenson Counties that is proposed for the Virginia Scenic River Program. This is the only river listed that is located in my administrative region (southwest Virginia). DGIF does support designation of this reach of the Pound River.

## 1. Resolutions of Support

### DICKENSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Supervisors

DAVID PERRY, CHAIRMAN  
CLINTWOOD DISTRICT

SHELBIE WILLIS, VICE-CHAIRMAN  
KENADY DISTRICT

RON PETERS  
SANDUCK DISTRICT

DAVID YATES  
ERVINTON DISTRICT

JASON COMPTON  
WILLIS DISTRICT



County Administrator  
G. DAVID MOORE, JR.

P.O. Box 1098  
Clintwood, Virginia 24228  
Telephone: 276/926-1676  
Fax: 276/926-1649  
Email: dmoore@dickensonva.org

#### RESOLUTION

Whereas, the Virginia Scenic Rivers Program was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1970 for the purpose of identification, protection, and preservation of certain rivers, or sections of rivers, which possess high quality natural beauty; and

Whereas, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has been charged with administering the Scenic Rivers Program and developing an objective evaluation process to judge the suitability of river segments; and

Whereas, several Dickenson County residents joined staff from the Virginia Department of conservation and Recreation to visit the Pound River and evaluate its eligibility for Scenic River designation; and

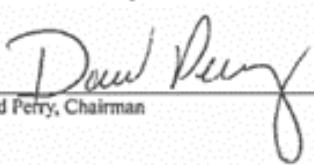
Whereas, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation completed its evaluation and determined that the portion of the Pound River under review in Dickenson County and Wise County was found to qualify as a Virginia Scenic River; and

Whereas, the Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation supported the endorsement for designation as a Scenic River of a portion of the Pound River; then

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the Dickenson County Board of Supervisors and the Wise County Board of Supervisors does hereby support the designation of the Pound River, from the County / Town border of Wise County and the Town of Poand (along Old Mill Village Road), to the Pound River campground (next to Little Laurel Branch in Dickenson County, which is approximately a seventeen (17) mile segment; and

Now, Therefore, Be it Further Resolved, that Dickenson County will contact our General Assembly representatives to request that they serve as patrons for the legislation that will codify the Scenic River designation.

Adopted this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of October, 2019.

  
David Perry, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Teresa Lyall, Clerk

# Wise County Board of Supervisors



## Office of County Administrator

TELEPHONE 276-328-2321  
FAX 276-328-9760

COURTHOUSE

P.O. BOX 570  
206 E. MAIN STREET

WISE, VIRGINIA 24293

## RESOLUTION REQUESTING A PORTION OF THE POUND RIVER BE DESIGNATED AS A SCENIC RIVER

WHEREAS, the Virginia Scenic Rivers Program was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1970 for the purpose of identification and preservation of certain rivers, or sections of rivers, which possess high quality natural beauty; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has been charged with administering the Scenic Rivers Program and developing an objective evaluation process to judge the suitability of river segments; and,

WHEREAS, staff from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation visited the Pound River and evaluated its eligibility for Scenic River Designation; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation completed its evaluation and determined that the portion of the Pound River in Wise County from the border of Wise County and the Town of Pound (along Old Mill Village Road), to the Pound River campground (next to Little Laurel Branch) in Dickenson County has been found to qualify as a Virginia Scenic River; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation supports the endorsement for designation as a Scenic River a portion of the Pound River.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Wise County Board of Supervisors does hereby support the designation of the portion of the Pound River from the border of Wise County and the Town of Pound (along Old Mill Village Road), to the Pound River Campground (next to Little Laurel Branch) in Dickenson County, as a Virginia Scenic River; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Wise County Board of Supervisors hereby requests that our General Assembly representatives serve as patrons for the legislation that will codify the Scenic River designation.

ADOPTED this 10th day of October 2019.

ATTEST:

WISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

  
Michael W. Hatfield, Clerk

  
Dana G. Kilgore, Chairman

## **Appendix D. Legislation for the *Code of Virginia***

**03/12/20 Governor: Approved by Governor-Chapter 316 (effective 7/1/20)**

### **VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- CHAPTER**

*An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered [10.1-411.5](#), relating to designation of a segment of the Pound River as a State Scenic River.*

[H 1145]  
Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered [10.1-411.5](#) as follows:

#### *§ [10.1-411.5](#). Pound State Scenic River.*

*The Pound River in Wise and Dickenson Counties, from the northern boundary of the Town of Pound near Old Mill Village Road northeastward to the Pound River Campground at Little Laurel Branch in Dickenson County, a distance of approximately 17 miles, is hereby designated as the Pound State Scenic River, a component of the Virginia Scenic Rivers System.*