

## Region 10: Thomas Jefferson Planning District

The Thomas Jefferson Planning District comprises Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson counties and the city of Charlottesville. The region's western edge is in the mountainous Blue Ridge physiographic province. Forming the remainder, and the majority of the region, is the Piedmont physiographic province's rolling landscape.

The 1996 *Virginia Outdoors Plan* predicated that by 2010 the population in the region would exceed 200,000. According to the 2000 census, the population for the region was 199,648. The region will easily meet and far exceed this predication. Fluvanna County has experienced a 61.3% growth from 1990 to 2000. Only Loudoun County, in Northern Virginia, experienced more growth in the 10-year period.



This region is characterized by varied terrain, habitats, and vegetation types. It is primarily rural in nature except in the vicinity of Charlottesville, which is more urban and suburban. The presence of Lake Anna has provided the catalyst for the development of a large retirement community. Adding to the scenic beauty of the area are views of mountainsides, ridges and pastoral valleys. As a testament to the interesting character of the landscape, a number of roads have been designated as Virginia Byways, including Routes 6, 20, 22, 56, 250, 151, 231, 610, and 614.

The region abounds with scenic, natural, open space and historic resources; a legacy that Virginians have worked together to protect, as exhibited by Scenic River and Virginia Byway designations. Additionally, more than 28,110 acres in the region are under open space easements held primarily by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, thereby protecting the open-space qualities of the affected land.

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A number of rivers add to the scenic and environmental qualities of the area. Segments of the Rockfish, Rivanna and Moormans rivers have been designated as Virginia Scenic Rivers. The Rivanna River has been designated an official project of the Save America's Treasures campaign (November 16, 2000) by the National Trust of Historic Preservation. Other important rivers in the area include the James, Tye, Mechums, North Anna, South Anna, Hardware and Piney. As with most regions in the Commonwealth, there is a need for greater public access to the rivers.

Walking, driving for pleasure, water-related activities, use of playgrounds, and bicycling are activities experiencing high levels of participation in the region. See Table 12, page 245.

The 2000 *Virginia Outdoors Survey* indicates a need for soccer fields, river access points for fishing and boating, picnicking and camping facilities in the region.

The 2000 *Virginia Outdoors Survey* also ranked the top 39 activities that individuals participated in; visiting historic sites ranked 5th in this survey. Monticello, Historic Michie Tavern and the University of Virginia are located in this region, and their popularity with the general public should be used in marketing the region.

The following recommendations relative to resources in the region could contribute to regional open space and/or recreational opportunities for meeting current and future needs of area residents.

#### **Private sector**

This region has an abundance of scenic and historic resources. The private sector could consider making land available for hunting, walkers and bicyclists, thus increasing access to these important resources. Visiting gardens is also an activity experiencing high levels of participation and should be considered by the private sector. Considering the number of rivers in this region and the need for greater public access, opportunities exist for private investment in providing guide and outfitter services. There is a need to provide areas for the use of four-wheel-drive off-road recreational vehicles. This may be an opportunity for the private sector to make use of lands for recreation that may not be productive for other uses. There is a strong tradition in this region of farm-to-farm trail riding by the equestrian community. With changing landownership

patterns, this tradition is in danger of being lost. Efforts should be made to encourage dissemination of information about landowner protection from liability afforded persons who participate in providing trails for horseback riding across their lands.

#### **Federal facilities**

1. An effort should be made to reduce air pollution that obstructs viewsheds from **Shenandoah National Park** and the general vicinity. The issue of changing land use adjacent to the park also needs to be examined further. Local governments need to support efforts to encourage adjacent landowners, localities, and planning district commissions to develop a scenic overlay zone adjacent to and within the viewshed of the Shenandoah National Park as part of a multiregional park viewshed planning process.

2. There is a need to develop a **Blue Ridge Visitor Information Center/Services Center** in the vicinity of I-64 near the intersection with Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Shenandoah National Park received more than 1.3 million visitors in 1999 and the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia receives an estimated 10 million visitors annually. A partnership among the National Park Service, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the state of Virginia and surrounding localities could be created to plan, build, and operate a complex near Rockfish Gap or Afton Mountain that would complement the visitor centers envisioned in the Shenandoah Battlefield National Historic District. Local governments also need to support efforts to encourage adjacent landowners, localities and planning district commissions to develop a scenic overlay zone adjacent to and within the viewshed of the Blue Ridge Parkway as part of a multiregional parkway viewshed planning process.

#### **State parks**

Projects identified in approved master plans need to be funded. State park master plans must be revisited by DCR staff every five years; any significant changes not identified in the original master plan, or improvements/additions costing in excess of \$500,000, must go through the public participation process.

3. The **Middle Valley** area beyond Charlottesville has been identified as a desirable location for the development of a state park.

### Natural areas

The Department of Conservation and Recreation has, as of March 2001, documented 134 occurrences of 59 rare species and natural communities in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District. Eleven species are globally rare and three are federally threatened or endangered. Twenty-five conservation sites have been identified in the district; 17 (68%) have received some level of protection through ownership or management by state, federal and nongovernment organizations.

DCR recommends that the eight unprotected conservation sites be targeted for future protection efforts. The appropriate method of protection will vary with each site but may include placing the site on Virginia's Registry of Natural Areas, developing a voluntary management agreement with the landowner, securing a conservation easement through a local land trust, acquiring the site through a locality or local land trust, dedicating the site as a natural area preserve with the current owner, or acquiring the site as a state natural area preserve. For a discussion of the Natural Heritage Program, see page 133.

### Other state properties

The following state-owned properties contain significant acreage of undeveloped land that may have recreational potential. Each site should be assessed, and cooperative use agreements should be developed where appropriate.

4. The **Birdwood** property in Albemarle County is a 148-acre tract of land owned by the University of Virginia.
5. Undeveloped portions of the **Piedmont Community College** campus in Albemarle County may have recreational potential.
6. Undeveloped portions of the **Blue Ridge Hospital** property in Albemarle County may have recreational potential.
7. The **Virginia Department of Corrections** owns a 194-acre tract in Louisa County, which may have recreational potential.
8. The Milton Airport property located in Eastern Albemarle County on the Rivanna River, owned by the University of Virginia, has tremendous potential as a riverside park. The property's 172 acres, which is flat, could be a key to meeting open field space needs.

A cooperative venture between the university, the city and county could help meet needs in the region.

9. The **Hardware** and **James River wildlife management areas**, owned by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, offers the potential for partnerships in developing trails and possible linkage with the James River.

### Regional parks

10. Fluvanna County's publicly owned, 960-acre **Pleasant Grove** site is being partially developed for the following recreational purposes: athletic fields, the heritage trail that will link up the historic village of Palmyra and a riverside old mill and lock, along with equestrian trails, an historic preservation area, and natural habitats. The county is currently working on the master plan for this area, which will be completed by fall 2001.

### Public water access

Access to Virginia's rivers and streams is necessary for meeting water-related recreational demands. Access considerations for the region include the following:

11. The feasibility of providing picnicking and primitive and canoe-in camping should be investigated for the **Hardware** and **James River wildlife management areas**, as well as other large tracts of land on major rivers in the region. Where appropriate, portages should be created around dams and other river obstacles.
12. A canoe put-in should be considered on the Rivanna River between Palmyra and the Town of Columbia.

### Scenic Rivers

The following river segments should be evaluated to determine their suitability as a Virginia Scenic Rivers:

13. The **James River** in Nelson, Buckingham, Albemarle, Fluvanna and Cumberland counties.
14. The **South River** in Greene County.
15. The **Hardware River** in Fluvanna County.

### Scenic highways and Virginia Byways

There has been a tremendous interest in thematic trails including, Civil War trails, the Wilderness Road

Trail, the Birding and Wildlife Trails, the Revolutionary War trails, the African-American Heritage Trail system, and other driving tour routes. The next logical step after the *Scenic Roads in Virginia* map would be to develop a series of regional maps or booklets that describe and help locate the resources and services found in all sections of the state.

The following roads have been recommended for consideration as Virginia Byways:

16. The designation of a **James River Byway** consisting of roads that closely parallel the James River Bateau Festival trail should be considered. The corridor would include Route 6 in Fluvanna County, Route 626 in Albemarle and Nelson counties.

17. Scenic **Route 15** corridor from the Fluvanna County line to Culpeper.

18. **Route 810** from Stanardsville in Greene County to Crozet in Albemarle County.

### Trails and greenways

Local and regionally initiated trail and greenway planning is important for identifying and providing communities with these resources. The Department of Conservation and Recreation recommends that each locality develop a trail and greenway plan as part of its comprehensive plan. In this plan, an effort should be made to link existing and proposed trails and greenways into a regional greenways network connecting existing and proposed recreational, natural, cultural, water, business/commercial, and other resources the community deems desirable. Localities, counties and cities should also determine appropriate roads for bicycle routes, and should work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to develop these routes by adopting local comprehensive pedestrian and bike-way plans as a component of their transportation plans. The Virginia Department of Transportation can include funds for bike trail construction projects only if the bikeway plan is included in the locality's approved transportation plan.

The following are greenway/trail proposals for this region:

19. **Appalachian National Scenic Trail** is in need of additional protection.

20. A **Rivanna River Trail** in Fluvanna and Albemarle counties should be developed to connect the Town of

Columbia and the Trans-Virginia Trail with the Appalachian Trail.

21. A land trail, **James River Trail**, along the entire length of the James River should be considered.

22. The abandoned rail line through **Fluvanna** should be developed into a multi-use trail.

23. The C&O Line between **Clifton Forge** and **Charlottesville**, presently operated as a "short-line railroad," should be acquired, if abandoned, and developed as a greenway. It has potential as a multi-use trail corridor, while providing linkage to several major recreational systems.

24. **Interstate Bike Route 76** should be enhanced and properly identified.

25. The **Nature/Wildlife Trail to Long Island Creek** located near Palmyra. This site has been named an American Treasure by the White House Millennium Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

26. The Rivanna Conservation Society's **Rivanna River Water Trail** is being developed under a grant from the National Park Service. Also, the Fluvanna County Historical Society and the Virginia Canals Society are attempting to have all the locks on the Rivanna Canal added to the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

27. The **Holland-Page House**, owned by the Historical Society in Fluvanna County, is being developed as a museum of rural life from 1865-1900. A nature trail is in the planning stages from the log cabin to the Long Island Creek. This site has been declared an American Treasure and could be linked at some stage to a future Rivanna River Trail.

### Hostels

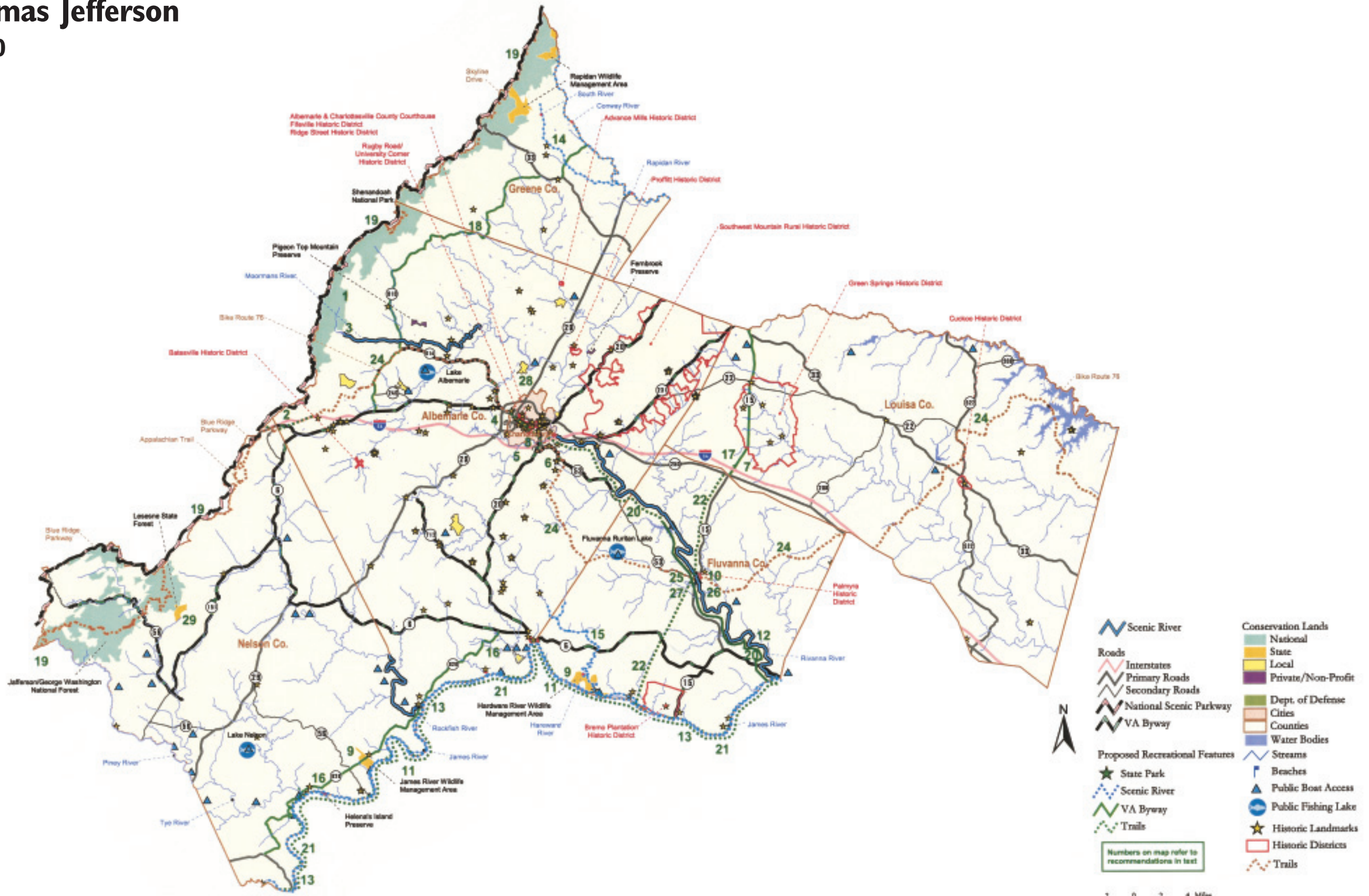
28. The **Charlottesville area** is suggested as a hostel location.

### State forests

29. Expand demonstration and research opportunities, as well as facilities for hiking and outdoor study at **Lesesne State Forest**.

# Thomas Jefferson

## PD 10



**Table 12  
Existing and Projected Needs  
Thomas Jefferson (PD #10)**

ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY DAYS	DEMAND	UNITS	TOTAL SUPPLY	PRIVATE SUPPLY	2000 NEEDS	2010 DEMAND	2010 NEEDS
Baseball	303,465	60	fields	64	4	-4	70	6
Basketball	551,028	131	goals	104	14	27	152	48
Bicycling	574,986	41	miles	NI			48	
Lake, River, Bay Use (combined)	1,483,584	18,172	water acres	14,990		3,182	21,122	6,132
Power Boating	384,322	9,263	water acres	S			10,767	
Sailing	13,177	114	water acres	S			133	
Lake Fishing	740,694	4,166	water acres	S			4,843	
Salt Water Fishing	166,706	938	water acres	S			1,090	
Jet Ski/ Personal Watercraft (PWC)	121,785	1,908	water acres	S			2,218	
Water Skiing / Towed on Water	56,900	1,783	water acres	S			2,072	
Camping (*)	243,571	1,436	sites	1,531		-95	1,670	139
Tent camping	59,096	349	sites	471	147	-122	405	-66
Developed camping	184,475	1,088	sites	1,060	863	28	1,265	205
Fitness Trail use	29,947	2	mile trails	18	5	-16	3	-15
Fields (combined)	784,617	165	fields	84	2	81	192	108
Football	359,366	76	fields	NS			88	
Soccer	425,250	89	fields	NS			104	
Stream Use (combined)	702,362	436	stream miles	488		-52	507	19
Stream Fishing	582,972	410	stream miles	S			476	
Human-powered boating	83,852	21	stream miles	S			25	
Rafting	11,180	2	stream miles	S			2	
Tubing	24,357	3	stream miles	S			4	
Golfing	539,050	18	courses	12	11	6	21	9
Hiking/ Backpacking	154,727	79	trail miles	190	22	-111	92	-98
Horseback Riding	85,250	37	miles	43	26	-6	43	0
In-Line Skating	200,646	14	miles	NI			17	
Jogging/Running	1,453,437	116	mile trails	NI			135	

S - same as combined NS - not inventoried separately NI - not inventoried (-) - indicates surplus

\* - 79.6 % of 2000 Virginia Outdoor Survey respondents preferred developed campsites

20.4 % of 2000 Virginia Outdoor Survey respondents preferred primitive campsites

Note: Demand multipliers used to create this chart are based on the findings of the Virginia Outdoors Survey as measured at the regional level. In regions with significant contrasts in population density and demographics, need results may show surpluses where none exist, especially in sparsely populated counties. Additional analysis will be required to adjust these results to local conditions.

**Existing and Projected Needs  
Thomas Jefferson (PD #10) Continued**

ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY DAYS	DEMAND	UNITS	TOTAL SUPPLY	PRIVATE SUPPLY	2000 NEEDS	2010 DEMAND	2010 NEEDS
Nature Study/ Programs	68,679	10	sites	3		7	11	8
Picnicking Away from Home	179,084	465	tables	633	148	-168	540	-93
Skateboarding	44,721	14	sites	NI			16	
Snow Skiing or Snowboarding	51,509	1	ski lifts	8	8	-7	2	-6
Softball	239,578	43	fields	51	5	-8	50	-1
Sunbathing/ Relaxing on Beach	507,306	36	beach acres	9	3	27	42	33
Swimming Outdoor Area	397,699	41	beach acres	9		32	47	38
Swimming Outdoor Pools	506,307	21	pools	44	37	-23	25	-19
Swimming Indoor Pools	215,620	2	pools	6	2	-4	3	-3
Tennis	237,581	148	courts	170	77	-22	173	3
Used a Playground	762,655	109	sites	113	32	-4	126	13
Visiting Gardens	54,304	6	sites	NI			7	
Visiting Historic Sites	180,881	15	sites	NI			18	
Visiting Natural Areas	131,169	22	sites	NI			26	
Volleyball	93,835	28	courts	4	0	24	32	28
Went Hunting	543,043	89,053	acres	34,984		54,069	103,510	68,526
Went Shooting Total	198,849	112	fields	NI			131	
Target	152,731	86	fields	NI			100	
Skeet or Trap	44,721	25	fields	2		23	29	27
Other	33,541	19	fields	NI			22	
Drive for Pleasure	1,393,543	na	na	NI			na	
Motorcycle/ATV (combined)	546,037	249	miles	0	0	249	290	290
Driving All-Terrain Vehicle	431,240	197	miles	NS			229	
Driving Motorcycle Off-Road	114,798	52	miles	NS			61	
Driving 4-Wheel-Drive Off-Road	91,838	na	na	NI			na	
Walking for Pleasure	3,923,083	na	na	NI			na	
Other	33,940	na	na	NI			na	

S - same as combined NS - not inventoried separately NI - not inventoried (-) - indicates surplus