

Partnerships & Public Involvement



The Virginia Birding & Wildlife Trail Experience

Virginia Birding & Wildlife Trail

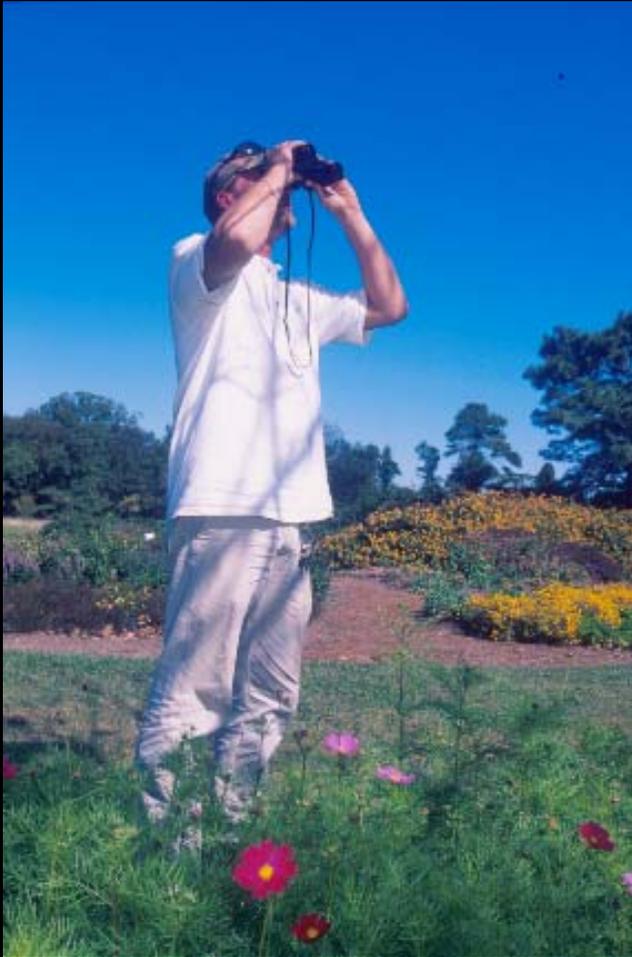
Statewide driving trail ... provide opportunities to see a wide variety of wildlife and have a quality recreational experience. Loop trails ... link some of Virginia's best wildlife watching areas for visitors to enjoy and observe wildlife.

Mike Pinder

1. Clear vision & commitment



Trail Challenges...



- Getting the word out...
- Selecting sites...
- Cost...
- Potential partners with seemingly conflicting purposes...
- Maintain interest of all partners as Trail is built...

Who Can Be A Partner?

- Researched all angles of the initiative
- Developed clear definition of all who stand to benefit (conservation, tourism, local communities, etc.)
- Identified specific potential partners and “umbrella” organizations to facilitate communications
- Extended invitations



2. Accurate identification of potential partners & sincere invitation to participate



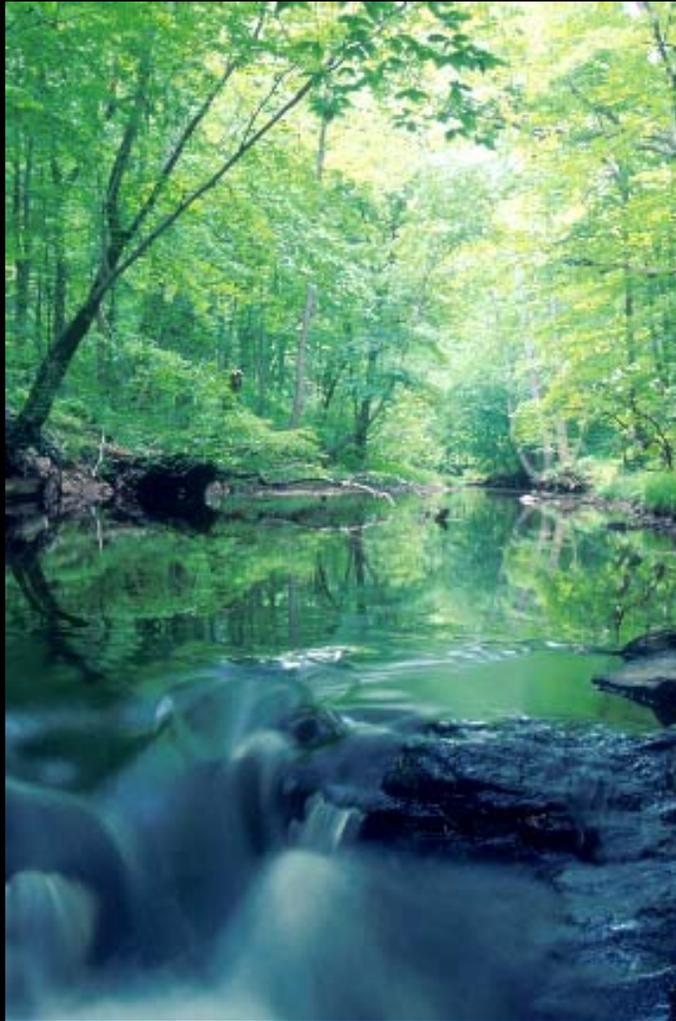
Meetings, Meetings, Meetings...

- 3 sets of meetings throughout the process - locations and times of convenience to participants
- Promoted through wide range of media – news, clubs/organizations, other partners
- Presented our proposal, identifying likely benefits to the resource and all potential partners
- Clearly defined the proposed processes with multiple open invitations to participate
- Follow up throughout with e-newsletter, Web sites, phone calls, letters



3. Effective and regular communication

Keeping 'em in this process...



- Invited partners to submit site nominations
- Invited partners to host meetings and events
- Responded to requests and inquiries in a timely manner
- Invited partners to review selected sites and loop organization and comment, comment, comment
- Gave partners credit at every opportunity

4. Build and maintain trust

- Convey importance of their participation**
- Respect opinions**
- Be responsive**
- Be candid, diplomatic & honest**





Results...

- 500 partner individuals, agencies, organizations statewide;
- Recognition and respect of each partner's specific interests;
- Partners serving as coalition for funding within state (>\$1.5 million); and
- Process and product that all partners enthusiastically support.