From James Madison’s Montpelier, to Civil War battlefields and trails, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Region has a wealth of cultural and historic assets. Tourism is an important source of economic development for counties and towns across the region, attracting increasing numbers of visitors to the area each year.

The objective of the Regional Cultural Assets Model is to identify the Rappahannock-Rapidan region’s lands with the highest relative historic and cultural value. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation partnered with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to develop the state-wide Cultural Asset Model in 2006. It is one of the data layers within the Virginia Conservation Lands Needs Assessment (VCLNA) GIS tool. The Commission then updated the state model for the region.

The Commission’s update to the VCLNA state-wide model consisted of incorporating new easement data, local parks data and updated listings from the National Register of Historic Places. Parcels in the region that are owned under easement by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Civil War Trust, etc. were included in this update and were assigned cultural values based on the methodology set forth in the VCLNA Cultural Assets Model Report.

The Region’s Cultural Assets Model incorporates the following components:

- Archaeological Sites & Architectural Sites
  - National Historic Districts
  - National Historic Landmarks
  - National Historic Register Sites
  - State Inventoryed Sites (Eligible for possible National Register and Easements)
- American Indian Areas

This model has many applications for local governments, land trusts, regional and community organizations, and state partners. The data can be used in land-use planning, reviewing development projects, prioritizing land for conservation, and public education. The Regional Cultural Assets Model can also be used together with the Commission’s other regional green infrastructure GIS layers and/or local and regional data to further inform historic preservation efforts with spatial information about cultural lands.

For additional information concerning the Rappahannock-Rapidan Region Cultural Assets Model, please visit RRRC’s website at www.rrregion.org/greeninfrastructure.html, or contact Michelle Edwards at medwards@rrregion.org or 540-829-7450. For information on the state model visit DCR’s website at www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/vclnacultural.shtml.
This project received funding from the Virginia Department of Forestry's Forestry Competitive Grant.