CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE

# SHORELINE™

*A Journal of Natural Resources, Public Affairs and Culture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia*

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# Coping With Sea Level Rise

By Arthur Upshur

The science is pretty robust that the Eastern Shore is experiencing sea level rise. Our land is also sinking, partially due to after-effects of ancient geological changes (e.g., the melting of the glaciers and the meteor strike at the mouth of the Bay). These trends put our waterfront lands at risk. Sometimes, as is common on the seaside, the land's slope to sea level is gradual, and when there are astronomical high tides or storms surge ashore, there is space for marsh to expand and migrate landward; there are many examples of former potato fields that are now healthy saltwater marsh.

However, on land with higher elevation, especially with structures or infrastructure near the shoreline, the land is less resilient. A cliff can form, which storms or high tide events undercut, taking soil away. While that sand and soil migration is a natural process, if unmanaged, the effects of erosion can be catastrophic.

In Virginia, there are some areas that have historic shoreline erosion of as much as 30 feet per year. While most erosion is slower, there are places on the Shore that have lost 20 feet in a single Nor'easter. But solutions are not simple; increasing the resiliency of our land can cause further harm to fragile ecosystems.

Besides farming, I also serve as the Stewardship Manager at the Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust (VESLT). The VESLT has permanently protected 14,000 acres with conservation easements. VESLT staff visit each property annually, working with landowners to enhance the land's conservation and habitat value, as well as its use by future generations. As there are several landowners concerned about shoreline erosion, the VESLT organized a visit by Shoreline Erosion Advisory Service (SEAS) staff, who are part of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. They visited 3 properties with VESLT staff to educate landowners on options for managing erosion. SEAS engineering staff were also excellent resources regarding state and federal programs designed to help fund these efforts. The following is a synopsis of SEAS staff comments during those visits.

*A south-facing, eroding shoreline shows undercutting of the tree line.*

### Assessing the Conditions

The key to building a successful erosion plan is to account carefully for local conditions. One of the important variables is the "fetch," or horizontal distance over which wave-generating winds can blow. The more open water available from a given wind direction, the greater wave energy the wind can create against the shoreline.

On open bay-front, the large fetch means powerful waves, making it difficult to abate their energy against a cliffside of clay and sand. But even within some relatively protected creeks, there can exist open water from certain directions that allows sizable wave energy. The key is creating structures that can absorb the energy without damage. In nature, this is often accomplished in lower-energy environments by vegetation, which slows the progression of a wave, reducing its energy as it passes through marsh grasses or other salt-tolerant vegetation. In high-energy situations, dunes form a system that allows the waves to "roll up" the dune, releasing their energy and depositing sand to build the dune without damage to the shoreline.

*See* **Sea Level Rise,** *cont'd on p. 2*

## Contents

**Sea Level Rise,** *cont'd from p. 1*

## Hardening the Shoreline

Traditional man-made control techniques for erosion often focus on "armoring" or "hardening" the shoreline to absorb wave and tidal energy. A classic approach is to build a bulkhead of hard materials.

This approach has significant tradeoffs that limit their applicability. First, they can be prodigiously expensive, particularly if the energy they have to manage is very high. Storm events, ice in the winter, and the corrosion of time conspire to destroy bulkheads. They need to cover all of the eroding surface; if not, they can be compromised by erosion accelerating at the ends, then washing out behind the bulkhead. Since shoreline erosion does not follow property lines, often coordinated efforts are required by multiple landowners. Bulkheads can also be quite disruptive to the "normal" shoreline. Marsh grasses and beachfronts can be lost as the energy hitting against a bulkhead scours out nearby shoreline and undermines the natural features that provide shoreline habitat and resilience.

A related procedure is to use "riprap" or large rock piles against the bank to harden a shoreline against wave energy. These also must be carefully designed, with the size of the rock and the slope of the pile adjusted to the energy that needs to be absorbed. Large waves require large rock masses to prevent movement of the structures.

Managing the impact on the shoreline with riprap can also be environmentally difficult. The heavy equipment necessary for moving rocks into place can damage nearby areas. Riprap can cover up the remaining marsh, eliminating crucial shoreline marsh habitat that forms the nursery areas for much of the Bay's aquatic life.

## Living Shorelines

As the SEAS representatives explained, the preferred method in lower-energy situations is to build a "living shoreline," which expands the vegetative area and absorbs wave energy. While there are many approaches to building a living shoreline, the most common approach is to place some sort of "sill" material out in the water, then fill with sand back to the marsh line. Part of that fill can come from eliminating the cliff and replacing it with a more gradual grade. This can be vegetated by a variety of more salt-tolerant species, which are planted in the habitat created by that sand fill between the old shoreline and the sill.

In effect, a larger marsh boundary is being created that over time, can move the high tide line farther out from the existing shoreline, while allowing storm events to dissipate energy by waves rolling up a gradual slope. More marsh grass and vegetative buffer means more wave energy absorbed and a more naturally resilient and productive shoreline.

Commonly, these sills are made from rock, sized according to the wave energy conditions. But rock sills on the Eastern Shore are a relatively expensive alternative because of material transport costs. Also, as with riprap, getting rock into position at remote locations without damaging fragile shorelines is difficult. The Nature Conservancy has been experimenting with materials that can attract oyster formation, called oyster castles, to create their sills. These have the advantage of interlocking, so smaller and more transportable materials can be placed without heavy equipment.

Work has also been done using oyster shell-filled bags to create the sill. The benefit of using material such as oyster castles or bags of oyster shells is that they can be rapidly colonized by shoreline animals such as other oysters. Not only is this productive habitat, but it forms a "bio-skin" on the sill that locks it together and provides additional resiliency to absorb wave energy. A "living" sill also makes it more adaptive to sea level changes; oyster colonies can continue to grow upward as the water rises.

Before any work is planned on a shoreline, a detailed plan with drawings is required. This plan will take into account location, orientation of the shoreline (e.g., northern shorelines need sufficient sunlight to reach the marsh area), the "fetch," and other locally relevant factors. The base permit required is called the Joint Permit Application (JPA). This goes to the local Wetlands Board, Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), the Army Corp of Engineers, and Department of Environment Quality (DEQ). Often, cost-sharing and/or financial grants require an approved application in hand.

The SEAS service is available to coach landowners on evaluating a plan, and to assist with helpful advice in planning the project. For example, one of the VESLT properties is in a very active aquaculture area, with enormous amounts of clam netting washing up on the shoreline. The SEAS staff pointed out that this may prevent a successful living shoreline approach there, since those nets would smother the native marsh grasses

*See* **Sea Level Rise,** *cont'd on p. 5*

*ShoreLine* is published monthly by Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore and is distributed to members, public officials, and friends. 



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# New Technologies for Excess Manure: Promising, But Not There Yet

*The following was excerpted with permission from 2 articles from* Bay Journal: *"Biochar could be the hot new thing in addressing Bay's poultry litter" (Jeremy Cox, Nov. 2018) and "After millions spent, MD's solution for excess manure still elusive" (Jeremy Cox, online edition, Feb. 6, 2019).*

## Anaerobic Digestion

Jason Lambertson's farm near Pocomoke City, MD, received nearly $1 million in state funding to build a giant poultry waste converter that generates nutrient-rich fertilizer products and a type of gas that powers the entire system. But, since it started operating in the spring of 2017, the anaerobic digester has yet to realize 2 key potential profit sources: selling the fertilizer or generating enough electricity to send to the local power grid. The system is projected to lose about $123,000 a year.

**"People would ask, 'What is the benefit?' and I would turn it around and say, 'What is the benefit of the Chesapeake Bay to the state?'"**
**– Jason Lambertson, poultry farmer**

Since its 2014 inception, the Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA's) Animal Waste Technology Fund has handed out nearly $6 million to 8 projects to help farmers find uses for manure beyond fertilizing local fields. Its main target: the nearly 400,000 tons of chicken litter – the mixture of manure, feathers, and bedding materials – generated each year in Maryland, too much of which makes its way into the Chesapeake Bay. Four projects are still getting off the ground. Evaluations of the other 4 projects depict a trial-and-error environment in which equipment regularly failed and financial losses mounted.

Anaerobic digestion is a tried-and-true technology in Germany, where there are more than 10,000 working systems, said Stephanie Lansing, a University of Maryland agriculture researcher. But in the U.S., with fewer than 300, farmers struggle to find replacement parts as well as technical support for maintaining the systems, and lenders are less likely to make capital available to construct the systems. Litter's dryness can defeat the microbial process inside anaerobic digesters, she added. And its high-nitrogen concentration can produce less-than-optimal biogas, the system's methane-infused energy component.

## Composting

Green Mountain Technologies, based in Washington state, had some modest success with its Maryland projects, said Louise Lawrence, recently retired head of the MDA's Resource Conservation Office. The company received $388,000 to install composting units at a horse rescue farm in Howard County and a dairy farm in Frederick County. The technology uses a free-moving augur to stir the manure in a large bin, theoretically accelerating the natural decomposition process while providing a lighter, more usable compost material.

At the horse rescue farm, the composting unit was estimated to pay for itself within 14 years, when compared with spending thousands of dollars a year hauling manure to a landfill. Landfilling is seldom practiced by poultry operations. At the dairy farm, the original investment was predicted to be recovered by the 24th year of the system's estimated 25-year lifespan.

## Combustion

In December 2016, Bob Murphy fired up the combustion system at his sprawling poultry farm in Dorchester County. The $970,000 system (Fluidized Bed Combustion), made by Ireland-based Biomass Heating Solutions Ltd. (BHSL), is designed to generate electricity from poultry litter. According to BHSL's website, the system is "ideal for low value, variable moisture content fuels and is recognized for its ability to minimize harmful emissions and to maximize combustion efficiency." But, while BHSL has a long track record in Europe, its first U.S. foray has all but failed. The system broke down repeatedly, leading to "lengthy down times," according to an MDA analysis. By March 2018, it was shut down. Maintenance was a challenge from the beginning, because the parts had to come from overseas and required metric tools, Murphy said.

The system draws manure down a conveyer belt into a chamber, where it is burned while suspended by jets of air. The roiling action leads to better chemical reactions and heat transfer, experts say. The process generates electricity as well as ash that can be sold as a soil fertilizer. Before the breakdowns, the technology was yielding a net annual financial loss of about $2,500.

## Biochar

With the help of state and federal grants, West Virginia farmer Josh Frye installed a $600,000 gasifier in 2007. The gasifier doesn't incinerate the poultry litter; it heats the litter at temperatures up to 1,300 degrees in a low-oxygen environment to trigger a process called pyrolysis, with virtually no smoke or smell. The result is biochar, a black powdery substance.

*See* **Excess Manure,** *cont'd on p. 5*

# Local Taxes Run Northampton County….

## …where do those local $$$$s come from?

By Mary Miller

County services like public health and safety, emergency services, government administration, solid waste disposal, court services, land-use permitting and enforcement, school funding, etc., depend on local taxes to pay for the services. Northampton County will need to raise a little over $28 million from local sources for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 budget in order to fund its share of those essential services. An additional $3.4 million from state and federal governments, for school aid and constitutional offices, will be added to the final budget figure. John D. Chandler, Director of Finance, presented his report of Revenue Projections FY2020 to the Board of Supervisors on February 26, 2019.

Like most U.S. rural counties, Northampton raises more than half its local revenue by taxing real estate property – residential, commercial, and industrial. Taxes on personal property, sales and use, boats, equipment, food and beverage, and transient occupancy taxes, along with various fees, penalties, interest, charges for services, licenses, other payments, and a transfer from the county's undesignated fund balance, make up the remainder of local revenue available. In addition to funding county services, $2.9 million is immediately earmarked for the decades-long annual debt service for the sprawling county complex and "regional jail" construction.

**Tourism provides an increasingly significant source of tax revenue – a source that provides "outside" dollars to both county coffers and local businesses.**

### Comparing Counties

It is often useful to look at other rural county policies and their financial status to discover whether, and how, Northampton resembles them. Several Chesapeake Bay area counties* with similar populations and budget figures, and which have economic conditions similar to Northampton's, in agriculture/aquaculture, service, tourism, public, and retail sectors, were compared. Information from each county's budget, plus detailed data from the Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts *2018 Comparative Report of Local Government Revenues and Expenditures*,** were used for this comparison.

### Local Real Estate Taxes

As mentioned, county tax on real estate usually makes up most of the local revenue collected – ranging from 55% to 68% in the counties compared. The assessed value of real estate in Northampton is a little over $2 billion. Comparing the selected counties, Northampton and Essex counties collected the lowest percentage of local revenue from real estate tax – at 55% of the total.

### Personal Property Taxes

This tax, on motor vehicles, motorcycles, business equipment, etc., is often the second largest source of local revenue (boats, some equipment, and mobile homes are often a separate tax category) – ranging from 7% to 16% in the counties compared. Northampton, at 9% for personal property tax revenue collected, is the second lowest on the list of counties.

### Local Sales and Use Taxes

In general, all sales, leases, and rentals of tangible personal property, and some taxable services, are subject to local tax if the locality has implemented a Sales and Use tax – this revenue ranges from 3% to 8% of local tax dollars collected. Northampton falls in the middle, at 5%, of the 8 counties compared. The state mandates that 12.8% of the sale and use tax revenue, collected by the county and/or returned by the state, be transferred to the Towns.

### A Local Tax Revenue Difference for Northampton County?

When compared with similar Chesapeake Bay-area counties, Northampton appears to rely less than others on taxing real estate and personal property for local revenue – and this is in spite of carrying a heavier debt load than most of the other counties. There are several circumstances that might explain this.

Northampton, like most tourism communities, charges a Food and Beverage Tax – only 1 of the other counties compared raises any significant revenue with this tax. Although a Food and Beverage Tax and a Sales Tax are paid by both locals and visitors, Mr. Chandler's report to the Board indicates that Sales Tax revenue spikes in the summer months, when the county is crowded with tourists. This may also be true for Food and Beverage Tax revenue.

The county also collects a Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) on lodging in hotels, private campgrounds, B&Bs, and vacation rentals. None of the comparative counties raise significant revenue with this tax. The revenue from the TOT in Northampton has increased 74% over 5 years – and much of that revenue is earmarked for more tourism marketing and infrastructure. On the expense side of the budget, the vacant-house rate in the county is about 29% (2,000 units); almost half of them are seasonal, second homes, or vacation rentals. That means that for more than

*See* **Local Taxes,** *cont'd on page 5*

**Local Taxes,** *cont'd from p. 4*

half of the year, the vacant units used seasonally require fewer services from the county.

According to the sources cited below, Northampton County appears to put less property-tax stress on its residents than several similar Chesapeake Bay counties. Tourism provides an increasingly significant source of tax revenue – a source that provides "outside" dollars to both county coffers and local businesses. Independently funded initiatives – like the new Birding Eastern Shore, Inc., the Cape Charles Main Street project, the concert and festival venue in the Exmore Town Park, community events sponsored by The Nature Conservancy and the Barrier Islands Center, the Farmers Market, commercial event venues, the CBES Bike Tour, firehouse and non-profit oyster roasts and barbecues, art and historic cultural events, and the expanding live music scene in the county – are all big reasons why tourism, and its revenues, are growing. The county can keep this ball rolling by supporting and dynamically marketing its tourism industry.

*Lancaster, Essex, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Rappahannock, and Westmoreland counties
**http://apa.virginia.gov/data/download/local_government/comparative_cost/draftCost18.xls

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**Sea Level Rise,** *cont'd from p. 2*

before they can be fully established.

To learn more about SEAS and their work to support landowners suffering erosion, visit www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil-and-waters/seas. JPA permits are available online (Army Corp of Engineers Norfolk JPA). Accomack and Northampton Counties have environmental staff members that support their local Wetlands Boards and can guide landowners through the process (in Accomack, contact Chris Guvernator; in Northampton, contact Katie Spady).

While at first glance, the JPA is an intimidatingly long application, the reality is that only one section really applies – the shoreline stabilization projects section. There are also accelerated approval processes in place if your shoreline qualifies for a living shoreline approach. The SEAS team can review a number of potential funding opportunities for the work, with many covering as much as 75% of the total project costs. It is best to start with either SEAS, environmental consultants, or your local county environmental resource rather than a contractor. A contractor often has a bias towards the service that he or she is best able to provide. If they specialize in bulkhead or riprap, that is the solution they will recommend. But if a more natural option such as a living shoreline is appropriate, the benefits to water quality and the ecosystem are compelling arguments to consider.

**Excess Manure,** *cont'd from p. 3*

According to Johannes Lehmann, a soil scientist at Cornell University, raw manure contains about 2 to 3% phosphorus, one of the nutrients fouling the Chesapeake Bay. Converting manure to biochar boosts the phosphorus content to about 15%, on par with commercial-grade fertilizers. Biochar can also grip onto nitrate in the soil, preventing it from leaching into nearby waters. The charred material is porous, which helps it absorb and retain stormwater. Some evidence also suggests that biochar has the ability to lock carbon in the ground, perhaps for thousands of years, as plants decay.

Frye can produce 1,000 pounds of biochar per hour; he sells it primarily to golf courses, which mix it with soil to improve turf growth. Making biochar can bring in up to $2,000 per ton rather than the $10 per ton they get for raw poultry litter, Frye said.

Frye's profits are limited by the lack of a larger market. Part of the challenge is that the same "biochar" label can be used for a host of organic source materials, including wood, cow manure, and poultry litter, with widely divergent amounts of carbon and nutrients. A coalition, the Mid-Atlantic Biochar Working Group, is working to overcome such hurdles, including creating a regional processing facility for several chicken farmers, said Tina Metzer, Executive Director of the Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College's business startup arm. When she first toured Frye's operation, Metzer said, "It's a no-brainer. Why isn't it happening now?"

### The Bigger Picture

Lambertson said he never expected his digester system to make money at its current single-farm size. But he fully expects his expenses to plummet once he begins trucking in manure from other farms. In addition to the electricity he will be generating, Lambertson plans to sell 3 types of solid byproducts: a nitrogen-heavy soil amendment, a phosphorus concentrate, and a potting soil. The MDA recently awarded him another $220,000 to start bagging his potting soil, potentially for sale at garden centers.

But even if his expansion plans don't yield financial fruit, Lambertson has a loftier ambition in mind. "Early on, people would ask, 'What is the benefit?' and I would turn it around and say, 'What is the benefit of the Chesapeake Bay to the state?'" he said.

**ShoreLine *Comment.*** *Since our missions of environmental education align, CBES has long appreciated our relationship with the* Bay Journal*. We applaud their efforts to expand coverage in Virginia and encourage CBES members to check out this respected publication and consider a free subscription. (See information on page 6 of this issue.)*

# Keeping Track

## Accomack Issues Annual Poultry Report

The 2019 Annual Poultry Report was presented to the Accomack Board of Supervisors at the March 20 meeting. The updated numbers include an estimated 254 poultry houses prior to July 1, 2014, and 218 houses built or under construction since then. Permits may be submitted for an additional 10 houses in the near future. This adds up to 482 houses, down from the 2018 estimate of 539 houses; in addition, Rich Morrison, Deputy County Administrator of Building, Planning & Economic Development, acknowledged that many of the 254 older houses may have been decommissioned, and they are working to identify those.

The Report included discussion of the impact on groundwater; we are awaiting notice from DEQ on the groundwater withdrawal permits for all poultry operations on the Shore, and will provide updates as they become available. It also included a report from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, titled "Water quality in southern Accomack County watersheds," with analysis of stormwater runoff in relation to poultry farm locations. Although the study showed no impacts from the poultry operations, additional sampling will be conducted this year. We are awaiting further analysis of this study, which will be published in the May issue of *ShoreLine*.

## READ THE BAY JOURNAL

CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL

The *Chesapeake Bay Journal* invites CBES members to follow the latest environmental news on the watershed and all that affects it. Subscriptions to this non-profit newspaper are always free – in print or by email. Printed editions are published 10 times each year.

Quality, unbiased reporting since 1991 has earned the *Bay Journal* the distinction of being one of the most trusted sources of Bay-related information for educators, policymakers, researchers, students, environmental groups, and concerned citizens from all walks of life.

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Copies available at: Chesapeake Bay Field Station, Wallops Island; Cape Charles Memorial Library; Chincoteague Island Library; Eastern Shore Public Library, Accomac; Machipongo Trading Company; Northampton Free Library, Nassawadox, and Sundial Books, Chincoteague.

## Oysters

As if oysters didn't have enough challenges keeping up with the growing market for them.…Shellfish add millions of dollars to Virginia's economy. But as the pH value of the both coastal and ocean waters changes and more carbon dioxide is absorbed, shellfish and other sea life like coral struggle to harden their exteriors and build strong shells. Carbon produced by burning fossil fuels makes seawater more acidic as it absorbs the gases pumped into the atmosphere.

Some West Coast oyster hatcheries are dropping the equivalent of Tums and other antacids into the water to make it easier for naked mollusks to build their shells.

Reducing carbon emissions would be the logical way to reduce acidification in water – but growers are faced with finding short-term solutions to protect their industry.

Sources: Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Taylor Shellfish Company, Quilcene, WA

## …and Clams

Virginia ranks first in the nation in the production of hard-shell clams – a $40 million-dollar market value per year, and rising. The Eastern Shore produces most of that annual harvest. By nature, the industry is uniquely sustainable. Clams are filter-feeders, constantly cleaning the waters where they feed. The H.M. Terry Co., Inc. in Willis Wharf is one of the largest hard-shell clam producers in the country. Clam seed is spawned in their hatcheries, matured in nurseries over the spring and summer seasons, then planted out in submerged bottom and tidal flats. Like agricultural products, the clams are harvested by mechanical equipment, gathered into baskets, and transported by boat to the Willis Wharf facility. Eastern Shore clams are distributed all over the United States and are a growing industry in the community.

Source: Virginia Department of Agriculture

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## New Medicare Model for Emergency Room Trips

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced a program for alternative emergency transportation and treatment for Medicare recipients. Most 911 calls require that a Medicare patient be transported to the nearest hospital emergency room. The new Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport (ET3) model would allow participating ambulance providers to partner with healthcare providers to provide treatment in place when appropriate. Alternatively, ambulances could transport patients to their primary-care physicians or urgent-care clinics and avoid the stress and expense of an emergency room visit.

This is a voluntary, 5-year payment model that will provide greater flexibility to ambulance care teams to address emergency health care needs of Medicare beneficiaries following a 911 call. More information available at: www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/emergency-triage-treat-and-transport-et3-model.

## Short-Term Rentals...
## ...By Right or Minor Special Use Permit?

By Mary Miller

The Northampton Board of Supervisors will vote soon on this issue. A Public Hearing was held last August and ever since, the Board has been discussing where and how to permit short-term rentals and to create performance standards and guidelines for neighborhood compatibility. The county stands to gain additional Transient Occupancy Tax when vacation lodging options are increased. And more vacation rentals can accommodate more vacationers, which can lead to more tourism dollars for local businesses.

The flip side of the discussion concerns how residential neighborhoods are impacted by these transient rentals – by noise, parking, and increased traffic. If there is no county permit required, a house can become a short-term rental with no notice to neighbors. Some states with tourism destinations are now considering "full disclosure" on real estate sales about the proximity of vacation rentals. Noise, or the stigma of a "party house," is often the major problem. With or without a required permit, the county needs a clear, enforceable definition for the Use, with designated limits on numbers of occupants and parking spaces, and noise and fireworks standards – with a consequence for non-compliance. Relying on complaints to the Sheriff's Department to enforce the county Noise Ordinance* would not resolve an underlying zoning definition issue.

Will this new Use encourage the disappearance of yearly rentals for the community's workforce? Would the owners of affordable cottage or mobile home rentals succumb to market pressure and turn them into "fishermen's rentals" for seasonal use? Will neighborhoods continue to be hollowed out of year-round residents, when short-term rentals become a high proportion of the community? The pros and cons, and possible impacts, need careful consideration and balanced decisions need to be made.

*http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Virginia/northampton _co_va/northamptoncountyvirginiacodeofordinance?f=template


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**REGISTRATION**
**LAUNCH!**

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# Celebrating 30 Years of *ShoreLine*

## 2009

- Accomack County took a first step in managing stormwater runoff from development sites by proposing a Stormwater Management Ordinance.
- The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program announced, "Virginia's coastal areas face the highest relative rate of sea level rise on the East Coast." An EPA report called the Eastern Shore "uniquely vulnerable."
- Federal funds were directed away from early childhood/pre-school education in the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Concerns were voiced about conflicting goals in the Northampton County Zoning Ordinance revisions between staying rural, protecting property rights, and generating enough revenue to pay for essential services.
- The USDA and the EPA announced the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative – $23 million was designated for first-year technical and financial help to agricultural producers who voluntarily joined the clean-up effort.
- Accomack County Board of Supervisors voted to extend Chesapeake Bay protections to the county's seaside.
- Cape Charles was featured on a CNN segment of "State of the Union." Interviews with locals at Kelly's Pub concluded that the Shore was a pretty good place to live.
- NASA at Wallops continued to struggle with "shoreline retreat" as it once again decided to rebuild and expand a failed sea wall.
- *ShoreLine* featured a story about Auburn University's Rural Studio 20K Project (Alabama), which designs and builds small, sustainable, $20,000 homes to replace unsafe structures for poor rural landowners.
- Northampton County considered repealing the state-authorized "land use" assessment and taxing program – assessing property by its current use instead of its speculative development value. Overuse of the program by developers sheltering their properties from real estate taxes was stated as the reason for considering the change.
- The first stories started to circulate that the Shore's hospital would be leaving Nassawadox.
- The community was stunned when a citizen-filed FOIA request to the Northampton County Treasurer's Office revealed that more than $2.4 million in delinquent taxes was owed to the county.

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# SAVE THE DATES!

**Join TEAM CBES at the 31st Annual Clean the Bay Day June 1, 2019**

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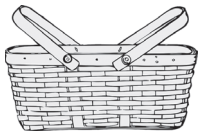

**CBES Annual Picnic June 2, 2019 4 - 7 PM**

*Look for more information in the May* ShoreLine!

# Community Calendar

***Note: Please verify times and places prior to traveling to meetings.***

### Accomack County
757-787-5700
www.co.accomack.va.us

| | |
|---|---|
| 1st Wed | **Board of Zoning Appeals** 10 AM, Accomac |
| 2nd Wed | **Planning Commission (PC)** 7 PM, Accomac |
| 3rd Tues | **School Board** 6:30 PM, Accomac |
| 3rd Wed | **Board of Supervisors (BOS)** 5 PM, Accomac |
| 4th Tues | **PC Work Session** 7 PM, Accomac |
| 4th Thur | **Wetlands Board** 10 AM, Accomac |

### CBES and Other Activities

| | |
|---|---|
| 1st Wed | **VIMS Public Seminar** 7:30 PM, Wachapreague |
| 3rd Tues | **ES Ground Water Committee** 10 AM, Accomac |
| 3rd Tues | **CBES Board Meeting** 7 PM, Eastville or Belle Haven |

### Northampton County
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| | |
|---|---|
| 1st Tues | **Board of Zoning Appeals** 10 AM, Eastville |
| 1st Tues | **Planning Commission (PC)** 7 PM, Eastville |
| 2nd Tues | **Board of Supervisors (BOS)** 6 PM, Eastville |
| 3rd Wed | **Wetlands Board** Meets as needed, Eastville |
| 3rd Wed | **PC Work Session** 5 PM, Eastville |
| 4th Tues | **BOS Work Session** 5 PM, Eastville |
| 4th Tues | **School Board** 6 PM, Machipongo |

For membership and other CBES information: www.cbes.org