



CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE **SHORELINE**

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TM

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Sea Level Rise – Update on RAFT

Submitted by Angela King, Assistant Director, Virginia Coastal Policy Center at William & Mary Law School

As described in the September 2018 *ShoreLine* (“Ongoing Efforts to Address Sea Level Rise”), the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) is a full-service tool to help localities improve their resilience to flooding and other coastal storm hazards, while at the same time remaining economically and socially viable, by prioritizing local knowledge and decision-making. The RAFT helps localities build their own capacity to support community-driven resilience efforts over time through the creation of the Resilience Action Checklist and the formation of local Implementation Teams.

The RAFT is managed by the Core Team, including the Virginia Sea Grant Resilience Program at Old Dominion University, the Virginia Coastal Policy Center at William & Mary Law School, and the Institute for Engagement & Negotiation at the University of Virginia. More information about The RAFT can be found at <https://raft.ien.virginia.edu/>.

The Core Team completed resilience assessments for localities on the Eastern Shore, and hosted The RAFT Eastern Shore Regional Workshop in August 2018. The goal of the workshop was for localities to develop Resilience Actions that could be undertaken within the next year to help improve the community’s resilience. Below is a summary of the projects that have been developed as we approach the 1-year mark.



Shore flooding events are on the rise.

Cape Charles

The Town of Cape Charles was 1 of 3 pilot communities for The RAFT project. One of the Cape Charles Implementation Team’s Resilience Actions was to provide an educational presentation to the Town Council, which led to a broader conversation about resilience and development of the Town’s first Resilience Plan.

Chincoteague

One focus of the Chincoteague Implementation Team has been educating residents about stormwater management at the parcel level. This included ways to incentivize residents and businesses to manage stormwater on their property and working with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Master Gardeners to develop a speakers’ list for a variety of topics – including how gardening choices can encourage resilience. The Team is also exploring ways to include additional data layers for the Town in the County’s existing GIS database so that property owners can easily obtain drainage information – such as the location of roadside ditches – for their specific parcel.

Onancock

The Onancock Implementation Team developed 2 communication materials, designed by Old Dominion University. One provides emergency management information such as the location of shelters, media resources for emergency alerts, and a simple checklist of items that might be needed in the event of an emergency; a second item clarifies the difference between flood zones and evacuation zones. The Core Team is working with the Eastern Shore Disaster Preparedness Coalition to finalize these materials and determine the best way to distribute the information. In another initiative, Zane Havens (Graduate Coastal Resilience Fellow at Virginia Sea Grant) worked with the Town to identify areas of intense flooding at the Onancock Wharf, offered advice on drainage back flow issues, and recommended a series of removable barriers to mitigate tidal and storm flooding.

See RAFT, cont’d on p. 3

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How You Can Help Your Public Schools

Submitted by Linda Schulz, PhD; Chair, Northampton Education Foundation

Ever wondered how you could help your public schools, but didn't know where to start?

The Northampton County Education Foundation (NCEF) has created the solution for you, with the development of its Community Schools Partnership. This program gives businesses, organizations, and individuals an easy-to-navigate vehicle for supporting the Northampton County Public Schools. The program was launched in August 2018 and can be accessed on the NCEF website.*

There are 3 components of the Community Schools Partnership:

- Adopt-A-Classroom provides a way for funds to be contributed directly to a specific classroom at any of the 3 schools.
- Fund-A-Project is a way for donors to contribute to a specific project that a teacher wishes to undertake. Projects funded over the past school year have included purchase of a 3D printer for the High School Science Department, a garden for the Culinary Arts Program, a field trip for the entire 7th grade to see

a professional production of *A Christmas Carol* across the Bay, and a Young Author's event at Kiptopeke Elementary, in which Kiptopeke 2nd graders hosted a book signing for the books they wrote and published.

- The 3rd component is the electronic Bulletin Board, where teachers can post classroom needs for materials and supplies that the community can provide. These can include almost anything that can be donated in-kind. Past listings have included catering equipment, Christmas ornaments, knitting supplies, and art supplies. Teachers or schools can also list volunteer opportunities or the need for a subject matter expert to speak to classes.

Companies, organizations and individuals can also post on the Bulletin Board, a way for members of the community to connect resources they have to the students or teachers who could use them. Members of the community are encouraged to offer items that the schools might use, such as used or surplus equipment or new classroom supplies and materials. New Ravenna recently posted the availability of mosaic tiles that could be used by an art class.

Community offerings could also include volunteers who would be willing to provide classroom or other assistance or to share their expertise in a particular area or who would like to talk to students about their careers.

Offerings could also include internships or volunteer opportunities for high school students. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science recently posted a summer internship opportunity for students.

At a recent round table, a group of Northampton County teachers talked about their classroom experiences. Many of them said they provide food

and clothes to needy students, which they pay for out of their own pockets. So, gently used clothing or non-perishable snacks would be welcome.



Once an item or a need is posted, teachers and community members connect using the information contained in the website posting. If an item or volunteer offering is posted that a teacher would like for their classroom, he or she will contact the person offering it. If a classroom need is posted that a community member would like to provide, he or she can connect with the teacher. The process for posting on the Board is simple and merely requires the creation of an account, which once logged into, can be accessed at anytime.

We encourage the community to take a look at the Community Schools Partnership on the NCEF website and become inspired to use it to partner with the Northampton County Public Schools. The possibilities are endless. And the potential benefits are priceless.

NCEF is a conduit for support to the public schools from the community. As well as the Community Schools Partnership, NCEF provides grants to teachers to encourage and facilitate approaches aimed at reshaping and improving classroom education for students; other initiatives, such as field trips that enhance students' educational experiences outside the classroom; and higher-education scholarships for graduating seniors. The NCEF is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. All donations made to or through the NCEF are tax-deductible. More information about NCEF and the Community Schools Partnership can be found at its website.*

*www.ncedufoundation.com.

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Cecil Watts

Editor/Design

Sarah Morgan, Savoy Studio

How to reach CBES

P.O. Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347

(757) 678-7157

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Saxis

The Saxis Implementation Team has been developing a proactive and comprehensive approach to understanding the needs of socially vulnerable populations in their community and to communicating emergency preparedness information to them both efficiently and in a meaningful way. In its last tax mailing, the Town sent a 1-page announcement that included relevant information on emergency preparedness and requested that residents follow up with information on their specific needs. The Team reported a 40% response rate, and is using this information to create a local database of vulnerable community members. They are also planning to go door-to-door to collect information from those residents who did not respond, in order to have a complete database of all vulnerable residents.

Tangier

For Tangier, an Implementation Team of regional experts on oyster reefs and other shoreline protection projects is developing a series of designs for several priority sites identified by the Town, to combat shoreline erosion.

Wachapreague

The Wachapreague Implementation Team has focused on emergency communications needs, planning for disaster recovery, and town-wide drainage issues. One of the most pressing and recalcitrant needs is for better cell phone coverage, since this limits their ability to communicate with residents during an emergency, makes county-wide alerts difficult, and also impedes economic resilience. The Team is looking to site a Town Emergency Operations Center that would assist with response and recovery during a flood or storm event. The Town is also addressing non-road flooding associated with the historic main drainage line, including obtaining an engineering assessment, searching for additional funds to fix the mostly covered culvert-and-pipe system, and conducting title research along the drainage line.

Accomack County

The Accomack Implementation Team is developing a list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding coastal storm hazards and how individuals can respond, to be posted on the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission's (ANPDC's) website; conducting a workshop with the County's Planning Commission to identify how coastal resilience can be incorporated into the next Comprehensive Plan update; and identifying coastal resilience topics that could be developed into a training module or resource packet for community events and public meetings.

Northampton County

The Northampton Implementation Team has focused on an in-depth county-wide vulnerability analysis

through the production of a series of maps designed by the Institute for Engagement and Negotiation at the University of Virginia. These maps document critical infrastructure and key assets that would face inundation with projected high tide and storm surge conditions in 2040 and 2065. The Team expects these maps to inform the County's new Comprehensive Plan, and to be used to guide decision-making around best management practices to mitigate flooding, including tree plantings and other green infrastructure projects.

Regional Meeting with VDOT

As part of The RAFT, the Virginia Coastal Policy Center organized a regional meeting for local representatives, ANPDC staff, and Virginia Department of Transportation staff to discuss locality-specific issues and projects, including the ANPDC 2015 Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Study (http://www.a-npdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/TIIVA-Report-ANPDC-May2015_final-no-appendices.pdf), dialogue about flooding in culverts and ditches, and trends with respect to sea level rise. 

Key Election Dates

The general election is Tuesday, November 5. There will be elections for State Senator and Delegate, Constitutional Officers in both counties, all 9 Supervisors in Accomack County, a new election for all 9 School Board seats in Accomack County, District 4 and 5 Supervisors in Northampton County, District 4 and 5 and At-Large School Board seats in Northampton County, and a special election for a Cheriton Town Council seat.



Key dates for this election are:

- Deadline to register to vote, or update an existing registration, is Tuesday, October 15.
- Deadline to request an absentee ballot to be mailed to you is Tuesday, October 29, by 5:00 PM. If you mail your absentee ballot, it must be received by 7:00 PM on Election Day.
- Last day to vote absentee in person is Saturday, November 2, by 5:00 PM.

For more information, and details on polling locations, visit the Registrars' websites for Accomack County (<https://www.co.accomack.va.us/departments/registrar>) and Northampton County (https://www.co.northampton.va.us/government/departments_elected_offices/voter_registration_and_elections).

Remember, all elections matter, and every vote counts – including yours! 

Northampton County

Supervisors Hire Consultants for Comprehensive Plan Review

By Mary Miller

After several false starts, Northampton County is moving forward again on its long-overdue 5-year review of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The Berkley Group, a Bridgewater, VA, local government consulting firm, has been retained to guide the Planning Commission, county residents, and property owners through the required review. The project is expected to take 14 months and cost about \$125,000. The Berkley Group produced the county's Comprehensive Land Use Policy Review/Diagnostic Report (see May 2019 *ShoreLine*) and is currently contracted to recruit candidates for the Zoning Administrator/Subdivision Agent position.

Virginia Code is very clear and concise about how the review is conducted, and its direction to the Planning Commission:

§ 15.2-2230. At least once every five years, the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.

Even though the county's timing is off, the process is clear. The review is to be done by the Planning Commission. The process is a review, not a mandated rewrite. And the result will be a determination by the Planning Commission whether or not to recommend amendments to the current Plan. Virginia Code § 15.2-2224 further instructs the local Planning Commission to survey and study the following issues, among others, as outlined for the creation of a Comprehensive Plan:

Use of land; preservation of agricultural and forestal land; characteristics of existing development; trends of growth or change; natural resources and historic areas; surface and ground water; population, employment, environmental and economic factors; drainage and flood control; and affordable housing.

The Role of the Consultants

This Code process appears to be supported by comments on The Berkley Group's website*: "A community may not need to re-write the entire plan in order to make it more relevant. Often, amendments to the plan and associated ordinances can greatly enhance a community's

land use program. Creating plans that accurately reflect the community's desires, are fiscally constrained, and are transparent and accountable is how good long-range planning is achieved."

Virginia Code § 15.2-2230. *At least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.*

According to the consultant's contract, a great deal of the "survey and study," which is also required by the Code, will involve intensive commu-

nity outreach by The Berkley Group to determine what county residents want for their future. From September through December, a series of public workshops, community surveys, and stakeholder interviews will be conducted. By April 2020, a draft of proposed amendments to the Plan and changes, if any, to the Future Land Use Map will be available for public review. This will be followed by 4 Board of Supervisor/Planning Commission work sessions, with a tentative public hearing date in July 2020. All meetings, workshops, and interviews are expected to be open to the public as per Code:

§ 2.2-3707.A. All meetings of public bodies shall be open, except as provided in §§ 2.2-3707.01 and §§ 2.2-3711.

Recent History Can Serve as a Caution

This detailed, consultant-guided process is in stark contrast to a recent Comprehensive Plan rewrite, created by a prior, unsupervised Planning Commission – a Plan that was devoid of rigorous community outreach to encourage meaningful citizen input, and presented to the Supervisors in 2018. It was rejected by the current Board and sent back to the Planning Commission for further consideration. It was then that the Board decided to hire professional planning help for further work on the 5-year review by the Planning Commission.

But in spite of this very recent breakdown of the review process, 2 retiring Supervisors and the County Administrator publicly stated in July that the County's Plan needs to be rewritten – not simply reviewed and amended as the Code requires – a disquieting position for the public to hear before the consultants even arrive, and before the first word of community input has been recorded.

Current Planning Commission members have been
See Supervisors, cont'd on page 5





Summer Fruit and Tomato Salad with Apricot-Basil Dressing

Peaches and nectarines, plums and melons – and tomatoes and basil? Sounds good from here. All the odds and ends that are left in the fruit bowl – and a great tasting dressing, made either tangy or creamy. Once again, here's a basic idea that uses whatever's on hand – and can be adjusted up or down to serve 2 or 20.

- Slice and cut fruit, add cherry tomatoes and toss in large bowl.
- In a small food chopper, place ½ cup apricot jam, 6-7 shredded basil leaves, some grated or dried ginger, salt and pepper and a little lemon juice – whirl into a paste.
- For a vinaigrette dressing, add your go-to vinegar and olive oil to the paste (1 part vinegar to 2-3 parts oil).
- For a creamy dressing, add Greek yogurt/sour cream/mayonnaise (one or a mix) to the paste.
- Drizzle over salad and serve remaining dressing on the side.

Reprinted with permission: The Kitchen Hive (<https://www.talkrealnow.com/category/kitchen-hive/>) 



Supervisors, cont'd from p. 4

well trained during their State certification programs, and certainly understand that they are the lead entity in the 5-year review process. The Berkley Group has outlined an inclusive agenda for the community. The public's role in this process will be critical – to ensure that any recommended amendments reflect diverse viewpoints, opinions, and expectations for the long-term future of the county. CBES will keep the community informed of opportunities to participate in the process.

*www.bgllc.net/planning 

Research Opportunity

The Virginia Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center's Food Microbiology Lab is looking for talented, hard-working, and motivated undergraduate or high-school level individuals to become part of our laboratory.

Past projects have included:

- Investigating how factors such as water temperature differential, submersion time, temperature, and relative humidity influence susceptibility of apples and tomatoes to pathogen infiltration
- Investigating the growth and survival of *Listeria monocytogenes* on whole and intact produce
- Isolating and determining the prevalence of human foodborne pathogens in fresh produce packing houses

Benefits:

- Flexible time commitment (full- and part-time positions)
- Flexible duration of the program (6-week and 12-week internships)
- \$10 – \$12 dollars an hour, depending on work and lab experience; or credits
- Learn about the research process
- Gain experience with basic and applied microbiological techniques (sampling, media preparation, plating, and polymerase chain reaction)
- Contribute to progression of the country's food safety

If you are interested in being a part of our amazing team, please send a copy of your resumé to Joy Zuchel (jjzuchel@vt.edu).

For more information about our lab activities and projects visit our Instagram page, [strawnlabvt](https://www.instagram.com/strawnlabvt).



RECYCLING CORNER

Plastics in Our Soil?

We've all been shocked by the news of plastics in our oceans, from garbage patches to microplastics throughout the water column. But what hasn't gotten as much attention is the effect of plastics in the soil as they break down. In fact, microplastic pollution in the soil is estimated at 4 to 23 times higher than that in the ocean. Of the 400 million tons of plastic produced each year around the world, an estimated one third ends up in soils or freshwater.

As plastic disintegrates, it breaks down into microplastics (smaller than 5 millimeters) and then further into nanoparticles (smaller than 0.1 micrometer). Effects from these micro- and nanoparticles include transmission of disease-carrying organisms and interaction with soil fauna, e.g., affecting the way earthworms make their burrows. These particles also gain new chemical and physical properties as they break down, including leaching of additives such as phthalates and bisphenol A, which have been shown to disrupt the hormone systems of both vertebrates and invertebrates. The particles bind with contaminants in the soil and work their way up the food chain. Nanoparticles can also cause inflammation, cross the blood-brain barrier or placenta, change cellular barriers, or trigger changes in gene expression and biochemical reactions.

Microplastics have been detected not only in fish and seafood, but also in tap water, salt, sugar, honey, and beer. Plastic particles can accumulate in yeasts and filamentous fungi.

Currently, there are no standardized methods to accurately assess microplastics in the soil, although these data should spur new research into this risk. In the meantime, we can focus on reducing single-use plastics, and keeping plastics out of the landfill – and out of our fields and ditches.

Sources:

- Daily KOS. Thinking outside the plastic box – going plastic free in rural America. April 8, 2019. <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2019/4/8/1848735/-Thinking-Outside-the-Plastic-Box-Going-Plastic-Free-in-Rural-America>
- Forschungsverbund Berlin. An underestimated threat: Land-based pollution with microplastics. ScienceDaily. February 5, 2018. <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/02/180205125728.htm>
- UN Environment Programme. Plastic planet: How tiny plastic particles are contaminating our soil. April 3, 2018. <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/plastic-planet-how-tiny-plastic-particles-are-polluting-our-soil>

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One More Photo from the CBES Annual Picnic in June



Participants had such a good time – and this image expressed the sentiment perfectly! (CBES Bike Tour Volunteer Sharon Whitman and CBES member Bill Mastyl) Staff photo



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Celebrating 30 Years of *ShoreLine* 2013



This is the last column for the current series. The historic ShoreLine archives conclude with the 2013 issues. In a few years, it will be time for another look back through CBES newsletters for items of note on the Shore.

- Northampton County financial advisers expressed concern that debt incurred by the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) could result in a “moral obligation bond” and make county taxpayers the payer of last resort. They recommended disbanding the IDA and creating an Economic Development Authority with a more stringent debt liability structure.
- A Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) Report on flood resistance suggested that rural counties “regulate new development to keep it away from flood plains.”
- The “Great American Migration,” from rural and suburban to urban areas, will continue for at least the next 20 years. The Weldon Cooper Center for Demographics and Workforce reported that 7 out of every 10 Virginians are urban residents.
- Northampton County’s real estate values plummeted 20.5% in assessed value – one-fifth of the county’s worth. Speculative holdings from the real estate bubble were the hardest hit.
- The US Department of Agriculture demanded a \$600,000 repayment of a negotiated agreement for the failed Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park in Cape Charles – Northampton County had not met agreement conditions.
- Virginia Tech’s Water Resources Research Center cited water supply concerns as a significant part of business relocation decisions. “Businesses looking at locating in Virginia are certainly going to examine water access,” according to Stephen Schoenholtz, quoted in *Virginia Business* magazine.
- While the Northampton County Planning Commission was conducting the mandatory 5-year review of the Comprehensive Plan, the Board of Supervisors got out ahead of the process and sent a “comprehensive rezoning of most of the county” out for a Public Hearing.
- The Shore was left with no inpatient mental health care when Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital closed its psychiatric unit. And then, “Riverside Health Services has announced that it cannot provide inpatient mental health services in a cost-effective manner...” at the new hospital in Onley.

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**August is
Membership Month**

Please don't forget to renew your CBES membership! If you are unsure of your membership status, you may contact us at info@cbes.org. or call 757-678-7157. Also, a gift membership to CBES is a lovely way to welcome new residents to the area.



This Month

RECYCLING PLASTIC

The landscape in recycling is shifting almost daily, so we're continuing a monthly post to keep everyone updated on the latest news from the field.

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

Northampton County

757-678-0440

www.co.northampton.va.us

- 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

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

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