



Virginia Wetlands Report



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Spring 2015

Celebrating VIMS 75th Anniversary: A Look Back at Tidal Shoreline Management

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) was founded in 1940 as the Virginia Fisheries Laboratory. The past 75 years at VIMS included many milestones. This issue of the Virginia Wetlands Report provides an opportunity to reflect back on the history of Virginia's tidal shoreline management program over the past decades, particularly the number of times adaptations were made based on VIMS scientific investigations.

The history of Virginia's tidal shoreline management program illustrates that changing guidance is not uncommon. This process continues to be as important now and for the future of the Commonwealth's coastal resources as it was over the past 75 years. That is why VIMS continues to track shoreline management decisions to support advisory service, research, and outreach activities for the resource management community.

Adaptive management is a process of setting clear goals, closely monitoring progress, then making corrections as needed.

1960's & 1970's • Recognizing & preserving wetland services

VIMS scientists developed background information used by the legislature to justify passage of the Tidal Wetlands Act in 1972. Wetland services were documented through guidance for regulators. Tidal wetland inventories were completed.

1980's • Filling in gaps & confronting cumulative impacts

VIMS monitoring provided evidence to support new protection for coastal sand dunes and non-vegetated wetlands. The regulatory program was also alerted to cumulative impacts from multiple permit decisions, which led to new guidance and the Wetlands Mitigation-Compensation policy that was adopted by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission.

1990's • Learning the limits of compensation

Ongoing wetlands research and regulatory monitoring revealed mixed success with created wetlands as compensation for permitted losses. This led to the development of wetland mitigation banks and guidance that suggested even tougher scrutiny of permitted activities.

2000's • Moving to integrated shoreline management

New scientific evidence was collected that tidal wetland ecological services depend on natural linkages between riparian lands, wetlands, and shallow water resources. This led to the next generation of guidance, which highlights the need for integration between local and state regulatory programs across jurisdictions.

2010's • Facilitating comprehensive resource management

A new generation of shoreline and tidal marsh inventory updates by VIMS support the development of locality-specific maps, models, and other GIS tools. The associated guidance aims to facilitate collaborative, integrated shoreline management and promote resource sustainability.

Source: Rivers & Coast, Fall 2008, Vol. 3, No. 1

In This Issue

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

Friday, June 5, 2015 at VIMS

Look inside for more information

Visit the VIMS 75th Anniversary web site to learn more about all the milestones of the past and special events scheduled throughout 2015 to celebrate where we've been, where we are, and where we're going.

<http://75th.vims.edu/#milestones>

VIMS | WILLIAM & MARY
VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE





New Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement & Draft Management Strategies: *Roles & Responsibilities for Tidal Shoreline Managers*

In March 2015, the Chesapeake Bay Program partners released 25 collaborative plans for implementing the ‘next generation’ Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. These new management strategies explain how watershed partners will strive to reach various outcomes by 2025, plus how progress will be monitored, measured, and reported for transparency and accountability. The new management strategies aim to clarify what past efforts were successful and how to improve the effectiveness of other actions. Improved inter-agency and public-private collaboration are commonly cited as necessary to achieve the Agreement’s vision.

Two of these management strategies are of particular interest for tidal shoreline managers: **Riparian Forest Buffers & Wetlands**. Both have been included in Bay restoration plans since 1994 with mixed degrees of success.



The Draft Management Strategies begin with these desired outcomes:

Riparian Forest Buffer Outcome:

- 1. Restore 900 miles per year of riparian forest buffers, and*
- 2. Conserve existing buffers until at least 70 percent of riparian areas throughout the watershed are forested.*

Wetlands Outcome:

- 1. Create or reestablish 85,000 acres of tidal and nontidal wetlands, and*
- 2. Enhance the function of an additional 150,000 acres of degraded wetlands by 2025. These activities may occur in any land use (including urban) but primarily in agricultural or natural landscapes.*

Virginia’s tidal shoreline management community has important roles and responsibilities to help improve the preservation and restoration of these vital habitats. One of these duties is to participate in the review process. **A public comment period will be open until April 30, 2015.** Visit the Management Strategies Dashboard for more information about all of the draft management strategies and to learn how to participate in the public review and implementation process. <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/managementstrategies>

VMRC Now Serving Electronic Permit Records

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) now has a web site (<https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/public/habitat>) that displays pending and complete Joint Permit Applications submitted to the Habitat Management Division. For more recent projects you can view permit applications, the project status, a project description including dimensions, site photos and see an aerial photograph. VIMS Reports, agency comments, revisions, and other additional information received by VMRC are also posted. These public records can be searched by locality, waterway, local wetlands board actions, or by different structures and activities, such as living shorelines, shellfish aquaculture, and dredging. Use the VMRC website to access information regarding applications starting with the year 2010 to the current date.

The VIMS Shoreline Permit Application Records website (<http://ccrm.vims.edu/perms/newpermits.html>) will continue to serve historical permit records for years prior to 2010, including any additional information that may still be generated for those permit records.

Contact Christine Tombleson for tidal wetlands advisory information, living shoreline assessments or assistance with retrieving public permit records. christine@vims.edu / 804-684-7912

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

Looking Backward & Forward: Adaptive Management for Virginia's Tidal Shorelines

Friday, June 5, 2015

Watermen's Hall Lobby & Auditorium
Virginia Institute of Marine Science,
Gloucester Point, VA

8:00 am - 9:00 am Check in and Coffee

9:00 am - 3:00 pm Workshop

Workshop Web Site: ccrm.vims.edu/Spring2015

A workshop will be held at VIMS with a focus on how the lessons learned from 50 years of coastal resource management can inform and direct future management initiatives. Presentations and interactive group discussions are planned to share different perspectives and to develop collaborative ideas to promote sustainable shoreline management in the Commonwealth.

This workshop is for local, state, and federal government staff, local wetlands board members, marine contractors, permitting agents, environmental consultants, and anyone else interested in coastal resource management.

Planned Workshop Topics

- History & Future of Adaptive Management for Tidal Shorelines
- Status of BMP credit approval for shoreline management projects
- Update on proposed living shoreline General Permit
- Field sessions at VIMS Teaching Marsh & VIMS Beach

Workshop Registration: Please **register online** at ccrm.vims.edu/Spring2015

Deadline: 11pm, Monday, June 1st

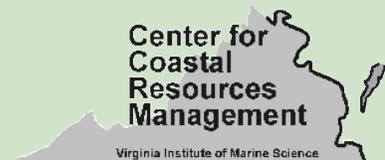
Fee: \$25.00 includes lunch

Payment Options:

Credit Card (VISA, MasterCard or Discover) Pay online here ccrm.vims.edu/CreditCardPayment
(there is a live link on the registration page)

Check

Payable to: VIMS Tidal Wetlands Workshop
Mailing Address: Tidal Wetlands Workshop/CCRM
P. O. Box 1346
Gloucester Point, VA 23062



Questions: Contact Dawn Fleming at dawnf@vims.edu / 804-684-7380



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Tidal Wetlands News & Events

VIMS Marine Science Day Open House. May 30, 2015 10am–3pm. Gloucester Point campus. Fun-filled event for the whole family including a sea level rise exhibit & guided tours of the Teaching Marsh. Free. This year's theme is VIMS 75th anniversary. <http://www.vims.edu/public/msd/index.php>

2015 Society of Wetland Scientists: Changing Climate, Changing Wetlands. May 31-June 4, 2015. Providence, RI. This conference will examine the role that wetlands play in the global carbon cycle, how they are affected by our changing climate and how they can provide adaptation services. <http://swsannualmeeting.org>

7th Mid-Atlantic Stream Restoration Conference September 23-25, 2015. Baltimore, MD. For individuals involved with streams to share ideas and lessons learned in stream restoration planning, assessment, design, construction, and evaluation and other topical stream issues. <http://midatlanticstream.org>

American Shore & Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) 2015 National Coastal Conference: Broadening Coastal Perspectives. October 14-16, 2015. New Orleans, LA. An opportunity for all coastal stakeholders to learn together and develop collaborative networks and resources to maintain and improve the health of our coasts. <http://www.asbpa.org/conferences/conferences.htm>

Virginia General Assembly 2015 – Tidal Wetlands Related

HB 1734: Living shorelines; loans for creation Authorizes the State Water Control Board to provide loans from the Virginia Water Facilities Revolving Fund to (i) a local government for the purpose of establishing living shorelines that protect or improve water quality and prevent water pollution or (ii) a local government that has developed a funding program to provide low-interest loans or other incentives to individuals to assist in establishing living shorelines. **Passed House & Senate, approved by Governor. Effective July 1, 2015.**

SB 1443 Comprehensive plan; strategies to combat projected sea-level rise. Provides that any locality included in the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission shall incorporate into the next scheduled and all subsequent reviews of its comprehensive plan strategies to combat projected sea-level rise and recurrent flooding. Such review shall be coordinated with the other localities in the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. The Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Marine Resources Commission, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science shall provide technical assistance to any such locality upon request. **Passed House, House substitute agreed to by Senate, approved by Governor. Effective July 1, 2015.**

SB 1079/HB1817: Flood protection plan Directs the Department of Conservation and Recreation to regularly update the flood protection plan for the Commonwealth and to make the plan accessible online. This is a recommendation of the Joint Subcommittee to Formulate Recommendations to Address Recurrent Flooding. **Passed House & Senate, approved by Governor. Effective July 1, 2015.**