



Virginia Wetlands Report



Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Plans

In its most recent session, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation (Senate Bill 964) that, among other things, requires VIMS to provide Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Plans (CCRMP) for each of Virginia's tidewater localities. These plans must be incorporated into localities' comprehensive plans at the next scheduled comprehensive plan review. CCRM is working to develop the CCRMPs and plans a series of outreach efforts to provide training and education in the various components of the CCRMPs.

The CCRMP draws information, strategies, and recommendations from a vast array of resource management tools and assessment methodologies developed within CCRM as well as tools and models available through open-source technologies, the public domain, and the scientific literature. Each locality's CCRMP is envisioned to include the following components:

1. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Erosion Control
2. Local Inventory Data for Tidal Wetlands and Shoreline Condition
3. Planning Information and Guidance for Climate Change Risks and Adaptations
4. Managers Toolbox



BMPs for Erosion Control



Tidal Marsh Inventory Data

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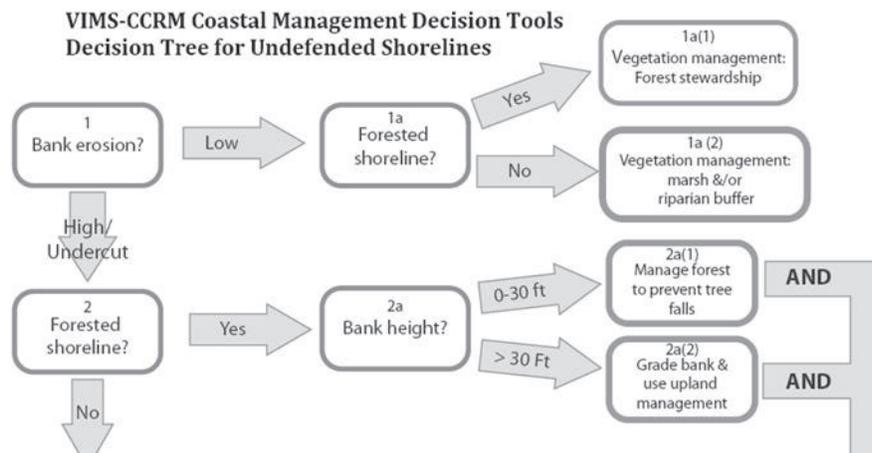
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BMPs for Erosion Control

Shoreline protection is a major component of the CCRMP. Erosion control is behind the majority of management challenges associated with shoreline protection. We have learned that traditional techniques for erosion control can have immediate adverse impacts on intertidal habitat, and longer-term impacts on resource sustainability. The choices made can severely impact the stability of adjacent shorelines and alter the ecosystem of the site indefinitely. Any action that severs natural processes and connectivity between the upland and the aquatic system will result in some impact.

Over the last decade, guidance has evolved to reflect the growing need to maximize long-term ecological services and sustainability of coastal resources. The challenge has been to achieve this while still providing the best possible solutions for erosion control. To that end, CCRM has developed a decision support model that

forms the foundation of the CCRMP. This Shoreline Management Model (SMM) is a logic model that follows the Decision Tree Guidance developed previously by CCRM (<http://ccrm.vims.edu/decisiontree/index.html>). The SMM gives preference to erosion control options that preserve the connection of the various habitats across the natural landscape profile, thus advancing the concept of living shorelines in an applied sense. This guidance is based on many years of research into ecological impacts of shoreline hardening, effectiveness of shoreline treatments to counter erosion, and advisory service to local governments and private citizens. The BMPs for erosion control will be delivered in map format and as an element within an online Data Viewer.



Local Inventory Data for Tidal Wetlands and Shoreline Condition

The CCRMP will also provide local governments with direct access to the best available data for tidal wetlands and shoreline condition. These data are generated from ongoing surveying programs within CCRM that map tidal shoreline condition and tidal wetland boundaries using field observations and remote sensing technology. These local scale mapping efforts survey conditions that pertain to riparian land use, bank morphology and stability, and shoreline characteristics including the location of all erosion control structures. Tidal marshes are delineated from high-resolution imagery where possible and verified in the field. A general community structure assessment is completed for each marsh polygon. All data will be delivered in a GIS format through a web-based interface.

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT



Tools for Coastal Resource Management Fall 2011 – Spring 2012 Locations and times to be determined.



Rather than having our traditional fall workshop at VIMS, we will be scheduling a series of local workshops throughout fall 2011 and spring 2012. Although open to all, the workshops are intended for local wetland board members and their staff, with the objective of teaching participants how to use the Decision Trees that are the basis for the CCRMPs and to introduce participants to inventory data that is available from VIMS for their locality. Workshops will include an indoor lecture and hands-on session and, with logistical assistance from the locality, will ideally also include on-site use of the Decision Trees at one or more sites within the locality. Depending on logistics, the free workshops should last approximately a half day. If neighboring localities would like to schedule a joint workshop, this can also be arranged. Local Wetlands Board Staff please contact Julie Bradshaw to schedule a workshop for your locality, (julieb@vims.edu or 804-684-7894).



Additional Outreach Education

Also planned is a series of workshops intended for local planners on the entire CCRMP, including incorporation of the components into the comprehensive plan.

Finally, an online education program in comprehensive coastal resource management is planned that will provide training for various audiences, including local wetland board members, local government staff, other government staff, property owners, and agents, contractors, and consultants.

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Tidal Wetlands News & Events

Harmful Algal Blooms in Chesapeake Bay. Sept. 29, 2011. VIMS. After-hours lecture, Dr. Kim Reece. Details at: <http://events.wm.edu/vims/2011/09/29/1742>.

Mad Lab: Crazy, Creepy, & Cryptic. Oct. 18, 2011. VIMS. Halloween-themed Discovery Lab. Details at: <http://events.wm.edu/vims/2011/10/18/184/>.

Secrets of the Sea Floor. Oct. 27, 2011. VIMS After-hours lecture, Dr. Steve Kuehl. Details at: <http://events.wm.edu/vims/2011/10/27/2477/>

Environment Virginia: Annual Conference, April 10-12, 2012. VMI, Lexington, VA. Details at: <http://www.vmi.edu/Content.aspx?id=32347>

Society of Wetland Scientists – Joint meeting with INTECOL “Wetlands in a Complex World.” June 3-8, 2012, Orlando, FL. Details at: <http://www.sws.org>.

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