



Shore Conservor

Eastern Shore Soil & Water Conservation District • *promoting locally led conservation*
22545 Center Parkway • Accomac, VA 23301 • (757)787-0918

November 2011

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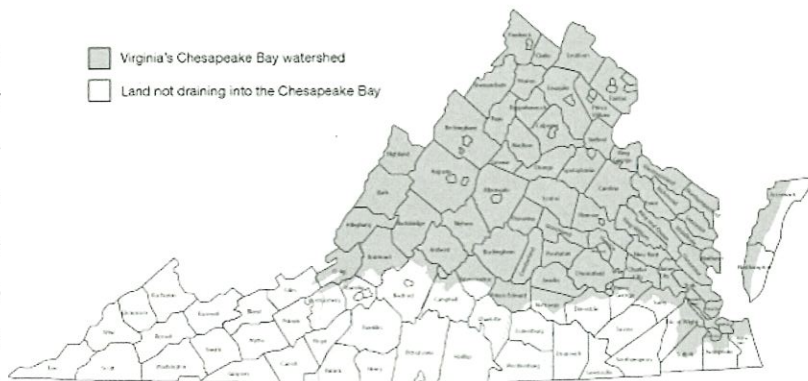
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Chesapeake Bay TMDL Process to Date

The tidal waters of the Bay continue to be enriched with the nutrients nitrogen and phosphorus, and sediment. This excess of nutrients and sediments leads to problems such as annual dead zones, loss of habitat for aquatic species in the Bay and tidal waters, as well as localized water quality concerns in many upstream rivers.

As a result, in accordance with the federal Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is directing the Chesapeake Bay states and the District of Columbia to develop and implement a "pollution diet" for the Bay and its tidal

■ Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed
□ Land not draining into the Chesapeake Bay



waters known as a Total Daily Maximum Load. In short this "TMDL" establishes how much nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment can flow into the waters of the Bay while maintaining a water quality standard that will allow for improved water quality and aquatic habitats. EPA announced its initial TMDL in Dec. 2010. To meet the reduction goals in the TMDL, Virginia developed an initial *Watershed Implementation Plan*. The plan has strategies and outlines programs and resources needed to reach the TMDL.

EPA announced the Bay TMDL and approved Virginia's initial Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) at the same time. This initial plan is known as the Phase I WIP. It was developed by DCR, DEQ and other state agencies with help from local governments, conservation groups, and the agricultural, development and business communities. In the next phase of the process, Phase II WIP, the TMDL and implementation plan will be localized across the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. Most of Virginia's land mass is in the bay watershed, which is made up of all or part of 68 counties and 28 cities.

For Phase II WIP, the TMDL's load allocations, or legally binding reduction goals, have been established for 39 Virginia Tidal Water Segments. State staff has initiated an intensive stakeholder process engaging 16 planning district commissions, 96 localities, 32 soil and water conservation districts and numerous other stakeholders to develop an implementation plan that addresses conditions in all tidal

For updates on this ongoing process and how you can be involved visit the following link to the Department of Conservation and Recreation's website: <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/vabaytmdl/index.shtml>.

Chesapeake Bay TMDL—Where the Shore Is Now

By Elaine Meil, A-NPDC

The Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) is a policy tool used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to establish planning guidelines to clean up the Chesapeake Bay by 2025. The EPA maintains that the TMDL was established to "initiate sweeping actions to restore clean water in the Chesapeake Bay and the region's streams, creeks and rivers" (Chesapeake Bay TMDL Executive Summary). Every locality in the watershed, ranging many states, is being asked to establish new practices that will remove nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment from the Bay. Sixty percent of the actions are required to be in place by 2017 with full clean up by 2025. The Commonwealth has already submitted the Watershed Implementation Plan Phase I (WIP I) to the EPA. In spring 2011, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) informed all Bay watershed localities that they had the opportunity to take part in the Watershed Implementation Plan Phase II (WIP II) but regardless of participation each locality would be assigned activities under the WIP II. A final WIP III will be required of the states in 2017 to make mid-course changes to clean the Bay up by 2025.

Accomack and Northampton counties have been asked to make substantial cuts. The latest version of the EPA model 5.3.2 shows Accomack with decreases in nitrogen (-30%), phosphorus (-22%), and sediment (-27%) of overall use. Northampton has even greater requested decreases in nitrogen (-39%), phosphorus (-19%), and sediment (-37%) of overall use. Much of these reductions are from agricultural land although town urban land, and wastewater septic systems are also included. Upon further investigation and like all jurisdictions in the watershed, the model does not reflect voluntary practices that protect water quality. Providing accurate information to DCR is a major priority of both counties, the Eastern Shore Soil & Water Conservation District, and the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission. Even if successful in providing acceptable information, it will not be incorporated into the EPA model until 2017. Formal submission to DCR from both counties will occur no later than February 1, 2012. While the debate over the TMDL is ongoing, with a major suit against it from the American Farm Bureau Federation, the cuts it outlines will have a significant effect on every resident of the Eastern Shore.

Public Invited to Chesapeake Bay TMDL Open Forum-December 7th, 6:30pm ESCC Workforce Development Center

Delegate Lynwood Lewis along with Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) announce a public dialogue on Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements and their impact on the Shore. On December 7, 2011 at 6:30 p.m., a panel will speak on TMDLs and take questions from the public at the ESCC Workforce Development Center, Melfa, VA. Speakers will include representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia State Farm Bureau, Virginia Department of Natural Resources, Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Virginia Institute on Marine Sciences. Each speaker will give a brief opening then questions will be taken from the audience with Lewis acting as moderator.

2011 Watershed Walk

The Watershed Walk is an educational festival with fun, hands-on activities that focus on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) and provides give-a-ways to children. The 2011 theme was "From Your Back Yard Shed to Our Watershed" and emphasized the close relationship of the Shore to the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean. After a rain, water is shed from the land into ditches which run into streams, then creeks and finally into the Chesapeake Bay or Atlantic Ocean. As it runs across the land, this water picks up litter, sediment, fertilizers, car oil along with many other pollutants and deposits them into our surrounding waters. Some of this contaminated water may move through the ground into our drinking water. If you live on the Seaside of Route 13 you are in the Atlantic Ocean Watershed and if you live on the Bayside of Route 13 you live on the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

This event was held in conjunction with the Onancock Harborfest on September 10, 2011 at the Town Park Gazebo and sponsored by the Environmental Education Council (EE Council) through the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District (ESSWCD). Over 1,500 people visited the 23 exhibitors from across the State which included the Ward Museum (performing a puppet show), the ES Agricultural Research Extension Center (who had Madagascar Roaches for people to handle) along with a 12-ft shed from T&K Dutch Barns (in Exmore). Next to this featured exhibit was a poster showing improper ways to store chemicals, fertilizers, and yard supplies, thus allowing them to end up in our watersheds. There was also a "good side" of the shed depicting proper methods of storage and disposal along with a "bad side" displaying wrong methods.

The event provided a fun day for everyone while giving the children a head start with school. Participants received a "Watershed Token" at each booth they visited. These tokens are similar to a baseball card and have a picture of an animal that lives (or lived) in the Chesapeake Bay on the front and interesting facts about this animal on the back. After visiting 8 exhibitors, the children could show these tokens to "Dr. Greenjeans" at the Garden Gazebo and pick out one of the prizes offered. Nine different animals are depicted and one of these tokens is the Spiny Horseshoe Crab (*Limulus polydora*). Other tokens are the Lined Seahorse, Ghost Anemone, Horseshoe Crab, Armhole Sand Dollar, and the Blue Crab. These tokens were created by the ESSWCD. **Please pull off your personal token attached to this page.** To receive a full set of these 9 tokens contact the ESSWCD at 22545 Center Parkway, Accomac VA 23301 or call 757-787-0918. The ESSWCD extends its thanks to the EE Council, the Onancock Harborfest Committee, T&K Dutch Barns, Hardees Restaurant in Onley, along with our exhibitors, volunteers, and all individuals and organizations involved in making this event a huge success.

2011 Birding Festival -Nothing Fowl About It



Above: A Cerulean Warbler painted by Annie Jones of Broadwater Academy

The Wildlife Birding Festival is a three day internationally recognized festival beginning on the first Friday of October each year. The Birding Festival celebrates the arrival of migratory birds to the Shore with tours, trips, exhibitors and vendors.

Coastal Zone Management of DEQ sponsors a contest between the local high schools on the Shore. The students are given a choice of several Eastern Shore migratory birds. The CZM committee chose artwork created by Annie Jones of Broadwater Academy, Exmore, VA this year as its signature look. She painted a Cerulean Warbler with an orange forested background which is featured on the front of the 2011 Family Passport. This Family Passport Program was started by ESSWCD in 2003 to get more children involved with the festival.



Other tokens
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created by ESSWCD

Eastern Shore SWCD Chair Robin Rich-Coates To Be Recognized

Robin Rich-Coates will be honored for 20 years of service on the Eastern Shore SWCD Board on Tuesday, December 6, 2011 in Richmond, VA by the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Acting Assistant Dean/Interim Chief Academic Officer and Associate Professor of Biology and Chemistry at the Eastern Shore Community College, Robin was the District's first female board member. She was an ESSWCD volunteer since 1985 and became a director in 1991. She holds a B.S. in Biology from Madison College (now James Madison University) and an M.S. in Human Genetics from the Medical College of Virginia. Robin has always been active in local environmental education activities, including work with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, the Nature Conservancy, the Arbor Day committee, Endowment committee and the Environmental Education Council. Each year Robin coordinates the College's science fair for students in Northampton and Accomack public and private schools. The District Board and Staff appreciate Robin's dedication and commitment to the District for so many years. Robin will be presented a 20-year service pin commemorating her 20 years of public service to the District.



Above: ESSWCD Chair Robin Rich-Coates

Farm Tour Day

Farm Tour Day is sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office. Over 600 third graders from Accomack County schools and Broadwater had an exciting field day outside learning about operations that occur on a farm. They learned how food gets on their table and that farmers play a major role in this process.

The ESSWCD did a presentation focused on several of the Standards of Learning (SOLs) concepts for 3rd graders. It was based on how soil is formed and what local farmers do to protect it.

Bruce and Fred Holland who own Duncan Farms, have hosted this event for over fourteen years. We extend our appreciation for their dedication to the youth of the Eastern Shore.

The Shore Conservator is published quarterly by the Eastern Shore SWCD to provide information to land users. The District customarily meets monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at 5:00pm at the USDA Service Center in Accomack, VA. The public is welcome to attend. To be added to the mailing list, please contact the District office at 757-787-0918 x119.

All programs and services of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

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