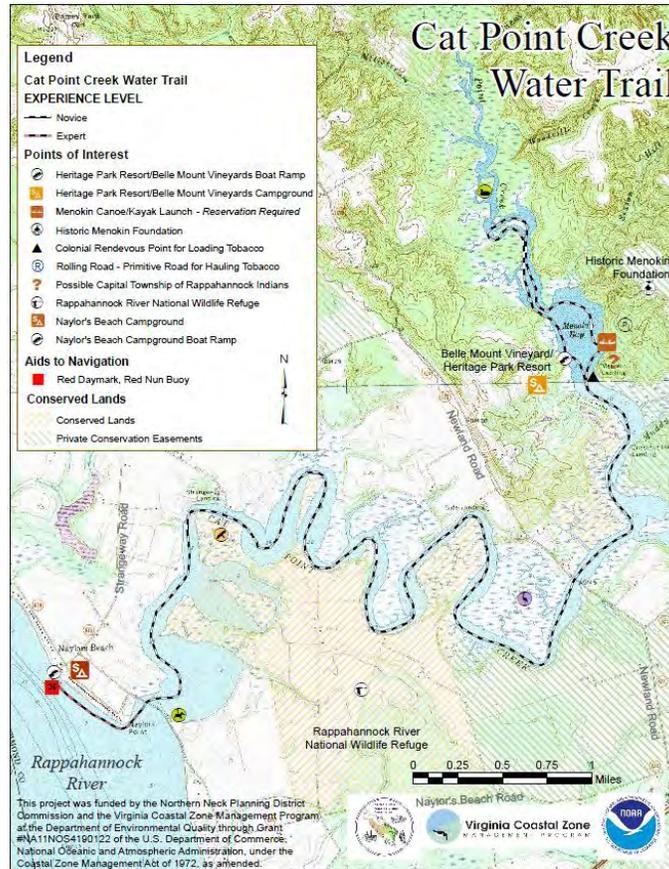


Northern Neck Planning District Commission Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program's PDC Technical Assistance Program Task #45 FY11-12 Final Report



This project was funded by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through Grant #NA11NOS4190122 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.

Northern Neck Planning District Commission FY11 Coastal Program Technical Assistance Grant, Task 45 Final Report

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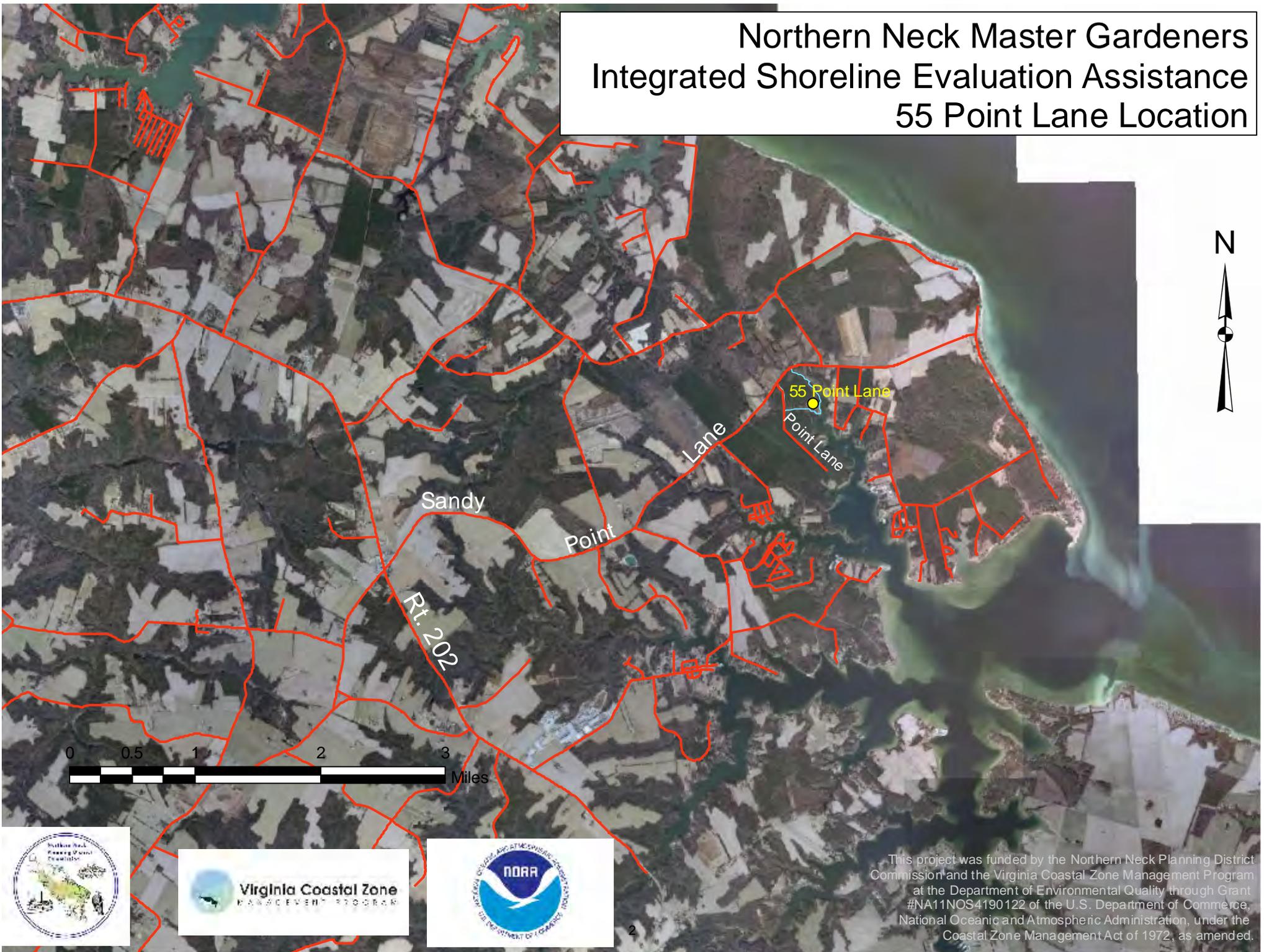
I. Coastal Management Support

Integrated Shoreline Evaluation Assistance Support

NNPDC staff, after learning at a VIMS workshop of the Northern Neck Master Gardeners new program to assist waterfront landowners, the Integrated Shoreline Evaluation Assistance program (I-SEA), reached out to the organization to see if they could benefit from NNPDC GIS mapping support for their shoreline evaluation program. NNPDC staff contacted the head of the program, offered mapping assistance and was told that the organization had twenty seven properties to evaluate before the end of the year and were too busy to meet. NNPDC staff continued the dialog, proposing that NNPDC staff could assist in making their job easier and end up with a better shoreline evaluation report by using site specific up to date geographic information. NNPDC staff further expounded that the PDC GIS contains information on soil type, elevation, wetlands, aerial photographs, tax parcels, E911 roads and address points as well as some information on oyster gardening and oyster aquaculture that the PDC got from the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program's GEMS interactive online web mapping site. NNPDC staff explained that NNPDC staff could work on sites that they had not visited so that the master gardeners preparing to do the assessment could look at the resources present and identify potential areas on the site from the maps for investigation once the staff conducts the field visit. The chairperson of the ISEA program agreed that one of the problems the volunteers had is actually locating the property. NNPDC staff responded that maps could be created from the E911 roads and show the E911 address point over an aerial photo so that staff can easily find the site in question. NNPDC staff also pointed out that the aerial photographs that the NNPDC has access to in their GIS were of a high resolution so that one can identify individual trees on a site. The chairperson of the ISEA program agreed that those type of maps might be useful, and asked the NNPDC staff to create four maps for two properties that they were going to be visited Saturday (the next day). NNPDC staff were able to produce two maps for one site, a location map and a zoomed in aerial map of 55 Point Lane in Westmoreland County. NNPDC staff delivered the two maps in PDF format to the chairperson, and have not received any feedback from the organization since. NNPDC staff, in the future, plans to re-establish contact with the organization and reiterate the offer of mapping support for the shoreline evaluation assessments. The two maps for the pilot project that NNPDC created for the Northern Neck Integrated Shoreline Evaluation Assistance program follows.

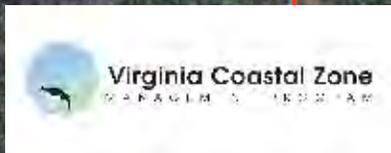
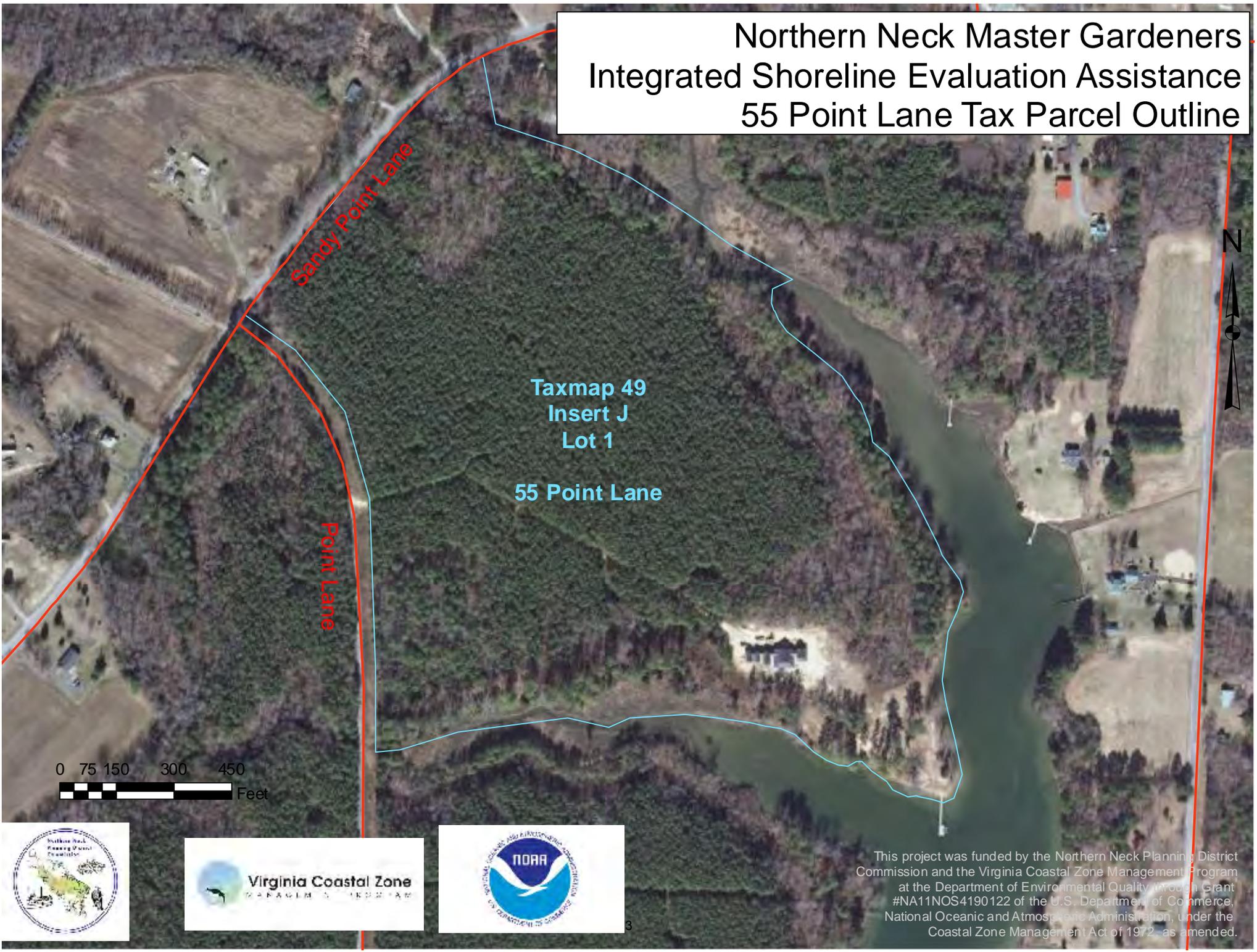
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Northern Neck Master Gardeners Integrated Shoreline Evaluation Assistance 55 Point Lane Location



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Northern Neck Master Gardeners Integrated Shoreline Evaluation Assistance 55 Point Lane Tax Parcel Outline

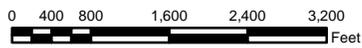
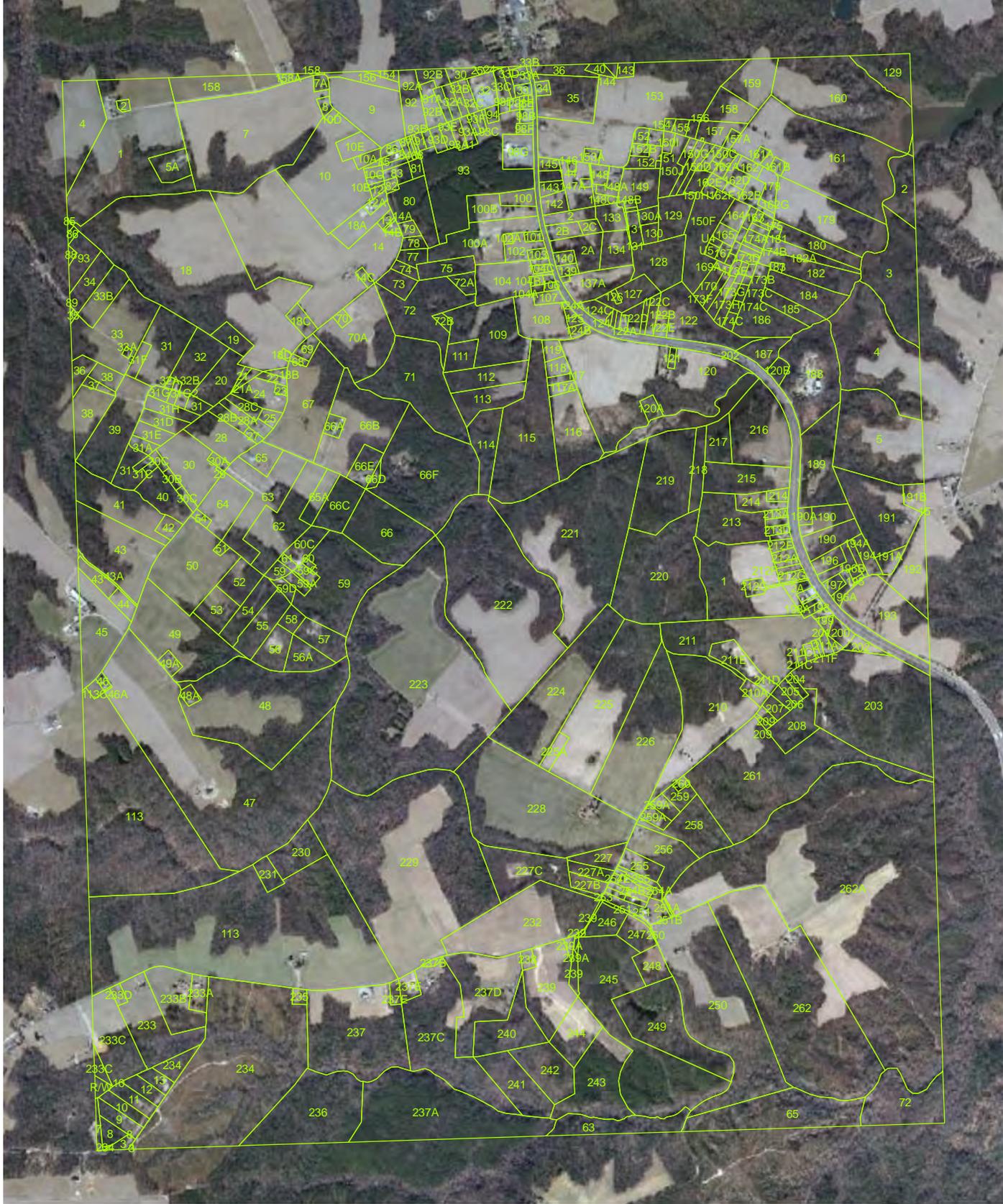


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Northumberland County Support

In FY2010, under a previous Virginia Coastal Management Program PDC Technical Assistance Grant, NNPDC staff revised five Northumberland County tax maps. These tax maps revised in FY2010 are tax map numbers 15, 16, 17, 19, and 37. Usually the NNPDC would incorporate the revised digital tax maps into the countywide composite tax map after revision which includes checking with corrections and then deliver to Northumberland County staff. NNPDC staff used the latest aerial photography from the State (2009), and the scanned tax maps available online through the Northumberland County website. Since Northumberland County staff have ready access to the county deed books, County staff are well positioned to investigate areas in the tax map that are not consistent with the property description on the deed. Therefore, NNPDC staff thought that an additional final review of the completed tax maps by Northumberland County staff would help make sure all parcels are represented in correct relation to each other, and there are no omissions or parcels mis-labeled. To that end, NNPDC staff printed out large hard copies of the five newly revised digital tax maps over top of the 2009 Virginia Base Mapping Program's Aerial Photos on the PDC's large format plotter and delivered to Northumberland County staff for review. NNPDC received the corrections from Northumberland County Staff, and made those corrections. Due to file size constraints, NNPDC staff have downsized the images to 8.5" x 11" and have included only two of the revision check tax maps over aerial photos in the following pages.

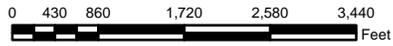
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Taxmap 15



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Taxmap 19

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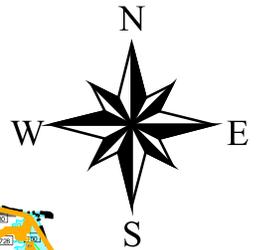


Richmond County Support

To improve fire and rescue service to the northern part of Richmond county, the Richmond County Fire Department requested map data to show the overlap between the coverage of Richmond and Westmoreland fire and rescue squads. The fire and rescue service area coverage was defined using the insurance industry standard rate reduction area of a five mile road radius service area from the specific fire or rescue station. NNPDC staff gathered from each county the E911 addresses of each fire and rescue department and located those addresses in the E911 point database. After loading the regional road centerlines for the NNPDC, compiled by VDOT and served by the Virginia Division of Geographic Information, of the Virginia Information Technology Agency, NNPDC staff generated five mile road radius service areas using ArcView's Network Analysis extension for three rescue squads, four fire departments in Westmoreland County and one rescue squad, three fire departments in Richmond County, for a total of eleven separate five mile road radius service areas. NNPDC then superimposed those fire and rescue squad service areas, each in a different color, over the Virginia Department of Highways digital road map to create the eleven departments five mile service areas. The map was well received and Richmond County Fire Department staff indicated that they had never before had this type of information to use for planning mutual aid agreements, and possibly for use in siting new public safety service facilities. The regional five mile service area map created follows this page.

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Westmoreland and Richmond Counties Select Fire Departments and Rescue Squad Five Mile Road Service Areas



LEGEND

Colored areas represent 5 mile road distance from each Rescue Squad/Fire Department

-  Westmoreland Vol. Rescue Squad Carmel Church Substation
-  Westmoreland Vol. Rescue Squad Station 3 - Montross
-  Westmoreland Vol. Rescue Squad Station 2 - Mt. Holly
-  Westmoreland Vol. Fire Department Engine Company 5 - Mt. Holly
-  Cople District Fire Department Engine Company 3 - Kinsale
-  Cople District Vol. Fire Department Substation - Coles Point
-  Westmoreland Vol. Fire Department Engine Company 2 - Montross
-  Richmond Emergency Services Rescue Squad - Warsaw
-  Richmond Vol. Fire Department Station 3 - County Bridge Rd.
-  Richmond Vol. Fire Department Station 2 - Farnham
-  Richmond Vol. Fire Department Station 1 - Warsaw

2.5 0 2.5 Miles



Data Sources: Facility locations provided by Westmoreland County Emergency Coordinator.
Roads - 2001 VDOT County Road Map Series

Map Prepared by:



Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



December 2011

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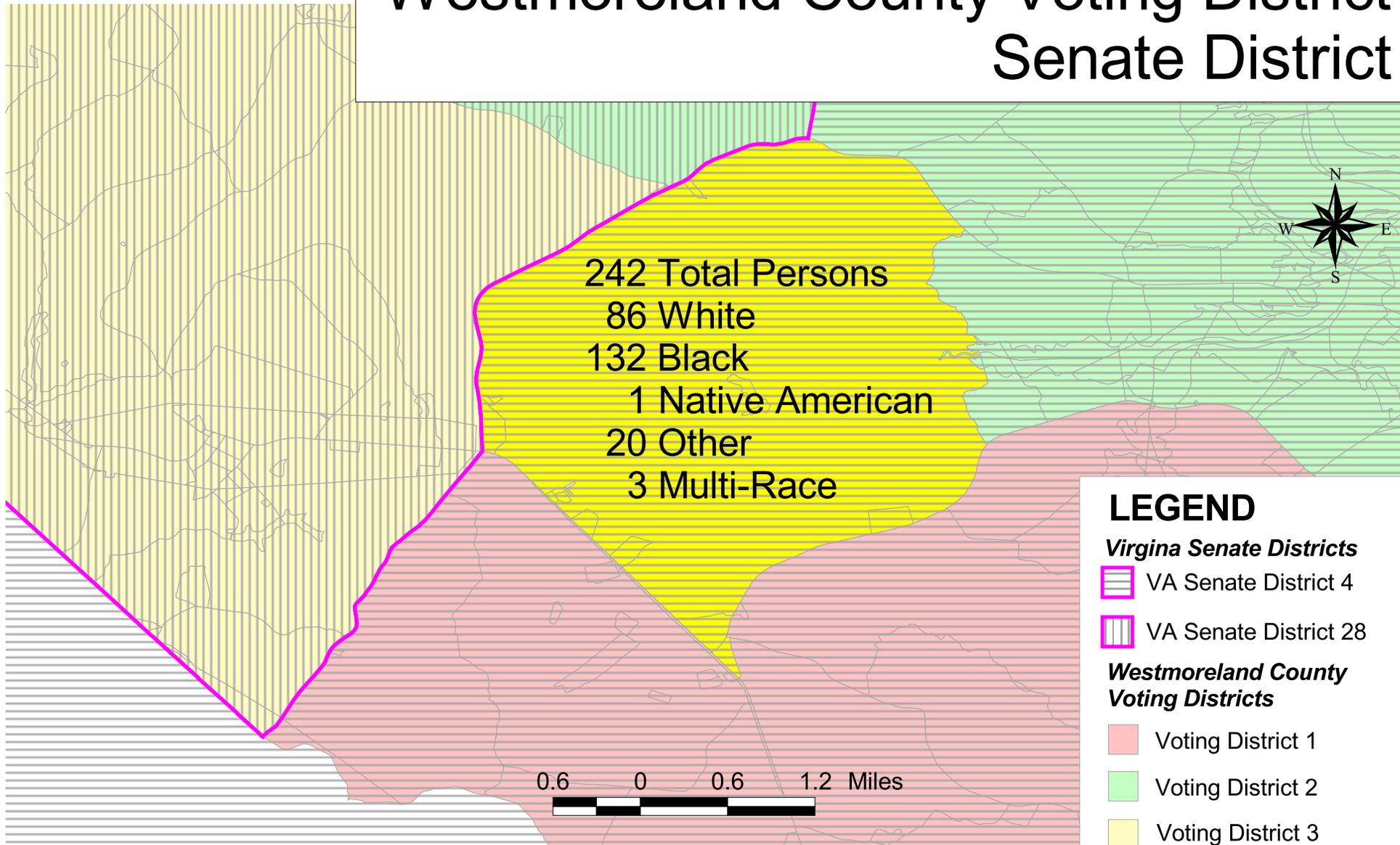
Westmoreland County

Westmoreland County requested several maps during the course of the year, some of which dealt with the new voting districts developed after redistricting using the 2010 U. S. Census data. While the county redrew its voting districts, the Virginia Congressional Districts in the Northern Neck also shifted boundaries. Therefore, citizens in specific parts of Westmoreland County were shifted to new local voting districts as well as being shifted to a new U.S. Virginia Senate District. In order to better understand how these changes affected citizens in Westmoreland County, the County registrar requested two maps to show two sections of voting districts that shifted U.S. Virginia Congressional Districts. NNPDC created a map that showed the Westmoreland County Voting Districts in different colors, overlaid with the U.S. Virginia Senate District Boundaries shown with vertical hatch for Virginia Senate District 28 and horizontal hatch for the Virginia Senate District 4. The two voting district maps created follow this narrative page.

Westmoreland County staff were examining the possibility of extending the Coles Point Sewer system across the Lower Machodoc Creek, and wanted to know the number of potential rate payers in order to calculate the funding available for debt service on the sewer expansion project. To that end, Westmoreland County staff requested maps that showed the population of the U.S. Census blocks that contain two large subdivisions (Glebe Harbor and Cabin Point), and the village of Tidwells on the western bank of Lower Machodoc Creek. NNPDC created the requested map and calculated from the 2010 Census Data that 668 persons live in the census blocks highlighted on the map. A copy of the population map follows the voting district maps.

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Westmoreland County Voting District 3 Senate District 4

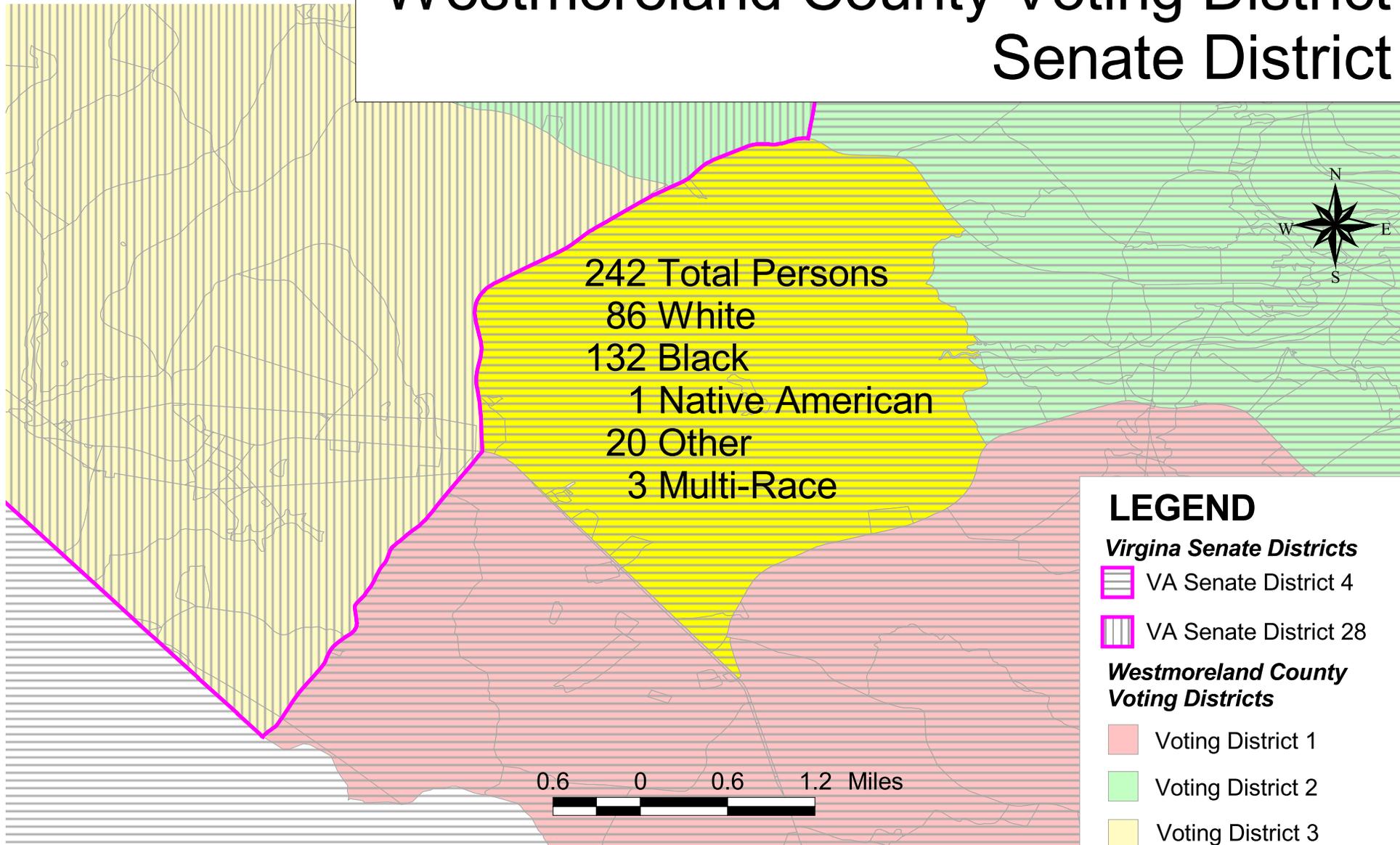


Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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Westmoreland County Voting District 3 Senate District 4

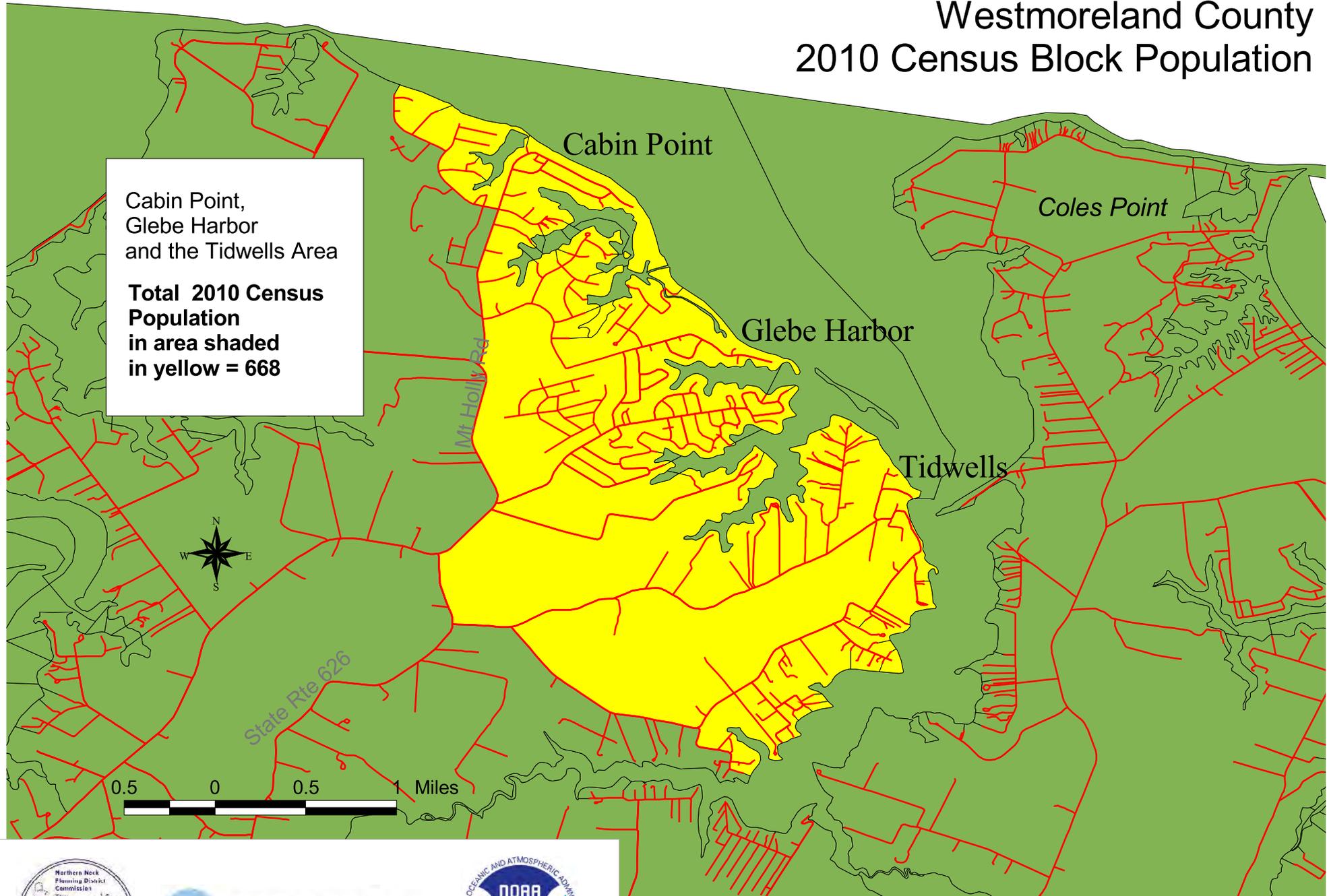


Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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Westmoreland County 2010 Census Block Population



Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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II. Local Government Coordination and Training

Northern Neck Planning Commission (NNPDC) staff held a Land Use Administrator's meeting on January 18, 2012. Staff persons from all four Northern Neck counties were in attendance. The training session began the meeting and was a direct result of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan Phase II and the requisite local government reporting of progress towards the nutrient and sediment reduction goals. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), in cooperation with other Bay states and agencies, created the Virginia Assessment Scenario Tool (VAST), which is an online data entry portal for localities to report nutrient progress and set nutrient reduction targets to meet the Chesapeake Bay TMDL nutrient reduction goals into the future. NNPDC staff conducted the training session, opening the VAST tool online and running through the various menus and web pages that were available for reporting. Each of the various options for reporting reductions were shown, including identifying and explaining all of the nutrient reduction best management practices that are available for nutrient reduction credits. NNPDC staff explained that in the VAST tool (and the Chesapeake Bay Computer Model) a majority of BMPs can only be applied to a set number of land use classes (sometimes only one). In addition, if a planner has already allocated a majority of a specific land use to one particular BMP, another BMP cannot be added on a land use class already allocated to another BMP.

County staff noted that in real life, BMPs can work together, such as a grassed waterway and split nitrogen application in corn, soybean, and wheat rotation agricultural field. However, the VAST tool does not allow 'stacking' of more than one BMP, thus limiting the options for nutrient reduction in each locality. NNPDC staff polled all county staff present and all agreed that this problem with VAST (and the Chesapeake Bay Computer Model) should be fixed in order to better reflect the real world nutrient reduction of multiple BMPs. NNPDC staff told local county staff in attendance that this issue regarding multiple BMPs effectiveness would be brought to DCR staff as a suggestion for Bay Program model updates into the future.

NNPDC staff continued the training on the VAST tool by completing all the requisite inputs to compile a test scenario with a mix of BMPs. NNPDC then demonstrated how all of the inputs were calculated into nutrient reduction loads, reductions accomplished to date, and then how to save that input deck into a scenario for either future revision or submitting to DCR. This ended the training session, and the local coordination meeting began.

NNPDC staff presented information that was delivered at the November 2011 Virginia Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting on the problems with the most recent Chesapeake Bay Computer Model, version 5.3.2. The new version of the model increased nutrient loads in some counties with nutrient management planning, instead of reducing them, as logic would suggest. Since the Virginia Nutrient Reduction Watershed Implementation Plan Phase I relied heavily on nutrient management planning to achieve sizable nutrient reductions, it will be very hard for Virginia to meet the Bay TMDL target goals with the version 5.3.2 model as it is. To complicate matters, the version 5.3.2 model shows that other counties in Virginia have already met their nutrient reduction goals, and thus need no additional nutrient reduction efforts implemented. County staff persons noted that counties where the model shows that no additional nutrient reductions are needed were not located in the Northern Neck. County staff shared their disdain for the new version of the Chesapeake Bay Model Version 5.3.2. County staff questioned if the

model is accurate enough to use for TMDL target loads at the county level. NNPDC staff noted that while the model is not entirely accurate, nutrient reductions will have to be made, regardless of the exact target reduction number. NNPDC staff encouraged local county staff to start thinking of ways to reduce nutrients flowing off the land on both private and public lands.

NNPDC staff held the second Northern Neck Land Use Administrator's Meeting on Monday May 7, 2012. Several of the Northern Neck counties have had new hires or have replaced staff recently, so NNPDC staff started off the meeting by explaining the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program's (VACZMP) goals, the networked of partner agencies that form the VACZMP, as well as the role of eight coastal PDC's in the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program.

NNPDC staff then gave an update on the current NNPDC Technical Assistance Grant, explaining that most of the work in the grant is for public water access via water trails, as well as continuing work on digital tax map revisions for Northumberland County. NNPDC updated local county land use staff on the working waterfront grant, explaining and discussing the definition of working waterfronts and detailing the inventory phase of the grant. NNPDC staff reminded local county staff of the draft working waterfront inventory done by NNPDC staff in a FY 09/10 Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program PDC Technical Assistance grant. NNPDC staff distributed copies of the draft working waterfront inventory maps and tabular data to local county staff, noting that this inventory included dilapidated, unused seafood houses and associated waterfronts. NNPDC staff noted that in this upcoming revision of the working waterfront inventory, operating businesses are the focus of the inventory effort and that the run-down, non-operational sites would be dropped from this inventory. Discussion ensued regarding whether with the increase in oyster aquaculture production a need might arise, once again, for these abandoned seafood processing sites to process shellfish. NNPDC staff explained that working waterfront inventory is based on the premise that policies may be changed in the future to allow incentives to the land/business owner to keep the land as a functional working waterfront. If there is not an operating working waterfront business on site, then no incentives could be offered. NNPDC staff then noted that while the new revision of the working waterfront inventory will not include these sites, the original version of the first inventory will be saved and backed up, in case that information is needed in the future. NNPDC staff notified the county land use administrators that he would be contacting them in the near future for their help in filling out the survey.

NNPDC staff then convened the training session portion of the meeting, conducted by David Fridley, Environmental Health Manger, Three Rivers Health District, Virginia Department of Health (VDH). The subject for the training session was New Alternative On Site Wastewater Regulations and Update on Identified Failing Septic System Repairs. Mr. Fridley noted that all alternative septic systems must file a document with the local health department which details an operator licensed by the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR), to perform, at a minimum, annual performance checks of the system to make sure that it is working properly. The report, which must be filed annually at the local VDH office, will detail whether the systems is working properly, whether there was a problem that the operator fixed, or whether there is a problem that the operator cannot fix. Mr. Fridley elaborated that there is no grandfathering of alternative septic systems, and that all alternative systems must have an annual system status report into the local VDH office by December 2012.

Mr. Fridley then discussed the requirement for nitrogen reducing septic systems which reduce the nitrogen released by conventional septic systems by 50% in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The requirement to install these nitrogen reducing septic systems, which by their very nature are alternative septic systems, in the Chesapeake Bay Act localities have been delayed two years but will be required after December 2013. The reasoning for the delay is to allow for supply to be generated and a cost efficient market to develop.

Mr. Fridley noted changes in some of the septic regulations. Previously, the Virginia Department of Health prohibited septic systems in marshes, bogs, and anywhere groundwater contacts the surface. However, in 2008, there was a change in the law that allowed wastewater discharge into these sensitive coastal water interfaces if they met certain performance requirements, thus removing the Virginia Department of Health's oversight. Mr. Fridley explained that systems that discharge directly into groundwater must adhere to Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) groundwater standards. In addition to the DEQ standards, VDH added very strict fecal coliform bacteria and nitrogen limits to the requirements for a permit, which currently are unobtainable under current technology. Mr. Fridley then explained the regulations involving septic system wastewater discharge into wetlands. Any discharge of wastewater to a surface water (Virginia's definition of surface water, includes wetlands as surface water) cannot be permitted by VDH and must be permitted under a Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permit from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. The determining criteria regarding approval or disapproval of the permit is whether the discharge has the potential to impact shellfish production. If the system is located proximate to an already permanently condemned shellfish area, such as a sewage treatment plant, industrial facility or marina, there is a possibility it could be permitted. Previously, this was not possible, but under the new regulations, it is now permissible.

Mr. Fridley gave an update on identified failing septic system repairs. Mr. Fridley noted that within the entire Three Rivers Health District that two-thirds of the known failing septic systems were repaired (out of 306, 122 have been fixed. Mr. Fridley noted that most of the progress was the Middle Peninsula, but the focus is now shifting to the Northern Neck Peninsula. Mr. Fridley noted that there are 62 known failing septic systems in the Northern Neck counties, with 24 in Lancaster, 24 in Northumberland, 10 in Richmond and 4 in Westmoreland. Mr. Fridley noted that some of the most difficult cases are hard-luck cases where either the owner has no money to repair, has no clear ownership of the land, or where there are no sewage facilities on lots. Mr. Fridley then queried the local county land use staff on how best to proceed in these hard luck cases (or cases when the owner does not readily comply). The consensus among those present was that the last resort would be to take the owner to court, but that a certified letter from the county attorney often would be enough impetus to get the most stubborn landowners to take action. Local land use staff offered to talk to each of their respective county attorneys to see if they would be amenable to sending such letters out with assistance from VDH staff for known failing septic system owners. This concluded the May 7 training session and local coordination meeting.

The next Northern Neck Land Use Administrator's training and local coordination meeting was held on August 22, 2012, and the topic was the impending implementation of the new Virginia stormwater regulations. The training session began the meeting, with Xing Lin and Joan Salvati,

staff from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, presenting the timetable of implementation for the new local stormwater regulations. After the DCR presentation, local land use staff asked questions about the new stormwater regulations. One local staff person asked about whether there would be a rural as well as urban model stormwater ordinance (DCR staff stated that there is only one model ordinance). A local town staff person asked about holding homeowners and property owner associations liable for stormwater maintenance, when oftentimes, the association becomes defunct and nonfunctional a few years after forming (DCR staff response was that it was incumbent for localities to make membership (and associated fee payments) mandatory.) Another local town staff person asked if towns are included in the new stormwater regulations. (DCR staff stated that towns have the option of adopting their own stormwater program, but if they choose not to, and are not a MS4 locality, then the county is required cover the town stormwater management.) A local county staff person asked about projects that are currently being developed. (DCR staff stated that DCR staff will take care of stormwater permitting until the county takes over the program.) All local staff questioned whether single family residences not part of a common plan of development would be subject to the new stormwater regulations. (DCR staff gave conflicting responses, one staff said that if the project is in a Chesapeake Bay Management Area and the land disturbance is less than 2,500 square feet and the total project area is less than one acre, then it would be exempt; while the other DCR staff person stated that under the same scenario, it would require coverage under the Virginia Stormwater Management Programs (VSMP) general permit.) NNPDC staff requested DCR staff clarify this question of the conflicting interpretations so in the future all Northern Neck localities would be informed of the correct interpretation. A follow up question from local staff inquired as to whether an agreement in lieu of a permit would be permissible for single family residences. (DCR staff noted that an agreement in lieu would be sufficient; however, the owner would still have to pay the VSMP permit fee.) Local county staff asked who will be accepting the registration statements. (DCR staff stated that the localities will be accepting registration statements but that all developers will also need to use the E-permitting online registration database.) County staff inquired as to whether it was prudent to combine Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control Program with the Stormwater Management Program (DCR staff indicated they were not sure if that was a good idea, as there are pros and cons for each option.) Local county staff, following on the previous question, asked if DCR was considering consolidating the compliance reviews for E&S, the Chesapeake Bay Act and Stormwater Management. County staff indicated that with the current staggered schedule, it seems as if the county is constantly under compliance review. (DCR staff stated that the Director is for it; however, a pilot project on the Eastern Shore showed that there wasn't really a benefit.) DCR staff concluded the training session by outlining the three tiered outreach/education plan that DCR was following, first to the Commonwealth's Planning District Commissions, then regional stormwater rollout meetings for county staff, and then to six regional training workshops that offer technical hands on work calculating volume and nutrient reduction from stormwater plans. DCR staff also relayed that in October 2012, a stormwater implementation toolkit will be released, which will contain a sample BMP maintenance agreement, a model ordinance, as well as the criteria to be used to show substantive progress in order for a county to receive an one year extension from the state.

After DCR staff concluded their presentation, NNPDC and local county staff discussed what was presented earlier regarding stormwater implementation. Unforeseen consequences that might

result from the new stormwater regulations were discussed, as well as potential backlash from citizens on the increased fees for developing land. NNPDC staff suggested that since all counties in the Northern Neck have similar characteristics, that it might be advantageous to band together to apply for grant for assistance in implementing the new stormwater management program. County staff that were in attendance agreed that banding together as a region would be helpful as the counties navigate the new stormwater implementation rules. In addition, those attending the meeting felt that the bonus points added for regional cooperation in the stormwater assistance grant program scoring criteria would be beneficial by putting the Northern Neck localities in a better position to receive grant funding for implementation.

NNPDC staff held the fourth and final Northern Neck Land Use Administrator's training and local coordination meeting on September 18, 2012. The meeting began with a training session on the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) Shoreline Guidance for County Comprehensive Plan Revisions, given by MS. Marcia Berman, Program Manager of the Comprehensive Coastal Inventory Program at VIMS. Ms. Julie Bradshaw with the VIMS wetland program accompanied Ms. Berman. Ms. Berman told those present that this was the first training session they have held in the Commonwealth.

Ms. Berman began the training session relating the history of the Comprehensive Coastal Resources Management Plan (CCRMP), which began as Virginia Senate Bill 964, sponsored by Senator Northam. The bill was passed into law by the Virginia General Assembly in 2011 and states that beginning in 2013 every locality in Tidewater Virginia must have a CCRMP included in their Comprehensive Plan when they next review their plan (which is required by Virginia Law to be every five years). The intent of the CCRMP is to promote living shorelines as the preferred shoreline erosion control option over hardened shorelines such as rip rap and bulkheads. This would be accomplished by VIMS, in cooperation with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers, by creating a statewide living shorelines general permit that would streamline the shoreline protection permitting process for those who want to install living shorelines on their property. Ms. Berman stressed that in the past, with hardened shorelines, we have separated the land water interface, creating barriers between the upland and estuarine environment. These barriers block food sources, energy and animal movements in the nearshore environment. Ms. Berman stated that the new initiative is not all about planting grasses, but more strategically combining elements of shoreline control to get the best of both worlds using structural and vegetation mixes which are custom tailored to fit each location along a jurisdiction's shoreline. Ms. Berman further elaborated that living shorelines are the preferred shoreline erosion control measure throughout the state. The only exceptions to living shoreline control measures are areas where the fetch and wave heights are too great, thus requiring stone rip rap for shoreline protection, where waterway navigation will be impacted if bottomland is used for vegetation planting, and finally where there is insufficient near shore area to grade the shoreline to a grade an acceptable slope to support vegetation plantings.

Ms. Berman informed those present that VIMS could not possibly complete CCRMPs for every locality in Virginia before the required 2013 deadline, so there is a provision in the law that allows VIMS to create an issue statement that can be included into Comprehensive Plans which would make them compliant with the new law. Ms. Berman went on to detail the elements which

constitute a CCRMP: the aforementioned issue statement (for compliance purposes), shoreline best management practices that use an ecosystem approach and includes a list of appropriate and recommended shoreline best management practices, a current shoreline and tidal marsh inventory, and finally a manager's toolbox that includes a risk assessment with vulnerability to sea level rise, a maps viewer (for the shoreline inventory and tidal marsh inventory), as well as links to resources and relevant studies on the web for research.

Ms. Berman stated that while most all localities have a somewhat recent shoreline inventory, most of the tidal marsh inventories date from the 1970s and 1980s. Ms. Berman informed the local county staff present that VIMS is currently seeking funding to update these essential data layers need to complete each county's CCRMPs. Ms. Berman noted that the only Northern Neck county that is currently scheduled to be completed is Westmoreland County. Ms. Berman noted that the other counties would be completed as funding and staffing allowed. Ms. Berman then proceeded to demonstrate the CCRMP online atlas, using Westmoreland's site as an example since most of the data had been collected and entered into the atlas. After the presentation, county staff asked if a locality disagrees with a particular area of shoreline in their jurisdiction's shoreline assessment that is shown in the model what happens. Ms. Berman responded that there is no law that says a landowner cannot apply to install rip rap or bulkheads to protect the shoreline. Ms. Berman continued to explain that the applicant may have to go through the complete shoreline permitting process, instead of the streamlined general permit process to have that project permitted.

After the training session, NNPDC conducted the local coordination portion of the meeting, explaining to county staff the details of the Northern Neck Regional Stormwater Grant Application that the NNPDC put forth on behalf of its member counties. As mentioned earlier, there had been some turnover in some county's staff, so NNPDC staff presented on the progress on the current Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program's PDC Technical Assistance Grant, the Rural Working Waterfront Coalition Grant, and the Northern Neck Working Waterfront Inventory Grant. After answering questions relating to the current grant, NNPDC staff requested ideas for projects for next years VACZM PDC Technical Assistance Grant, as that grant application would be due sometime in March 2013. NNPDC staff also reminded those in attendance of the Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority's existence and whether the counties needed PDC assistance with any type of public water access projects within their counties. NNPDC staff mentioned that there would be a possibility of applying for VACZM's PDC Competitive Grant for funding of public water access projects which would likely be due sometime in June of 2013. NNPDC staff offered assistance to the counties that are members of the NNCBPAA in any work needed to get a county public access project defined so that it would be developed enough in order to be considered for funding by VACZM. Before concluding the meeting, NNPDC staff informed county staff present of the VIMS Recurrent Flooding Study workshop that NNPDC staff were attending in a few days on September 20. NNPDC staff described the history behind this study, commissioned by the Virginia General Assembly, and then solicited from each county any information they would like to be conveyed to VIMS staff regarding recurrent flooding in their county. Each county had some comments, and each county identified areas in the county where recurrent flooding is a problem. NNPDC

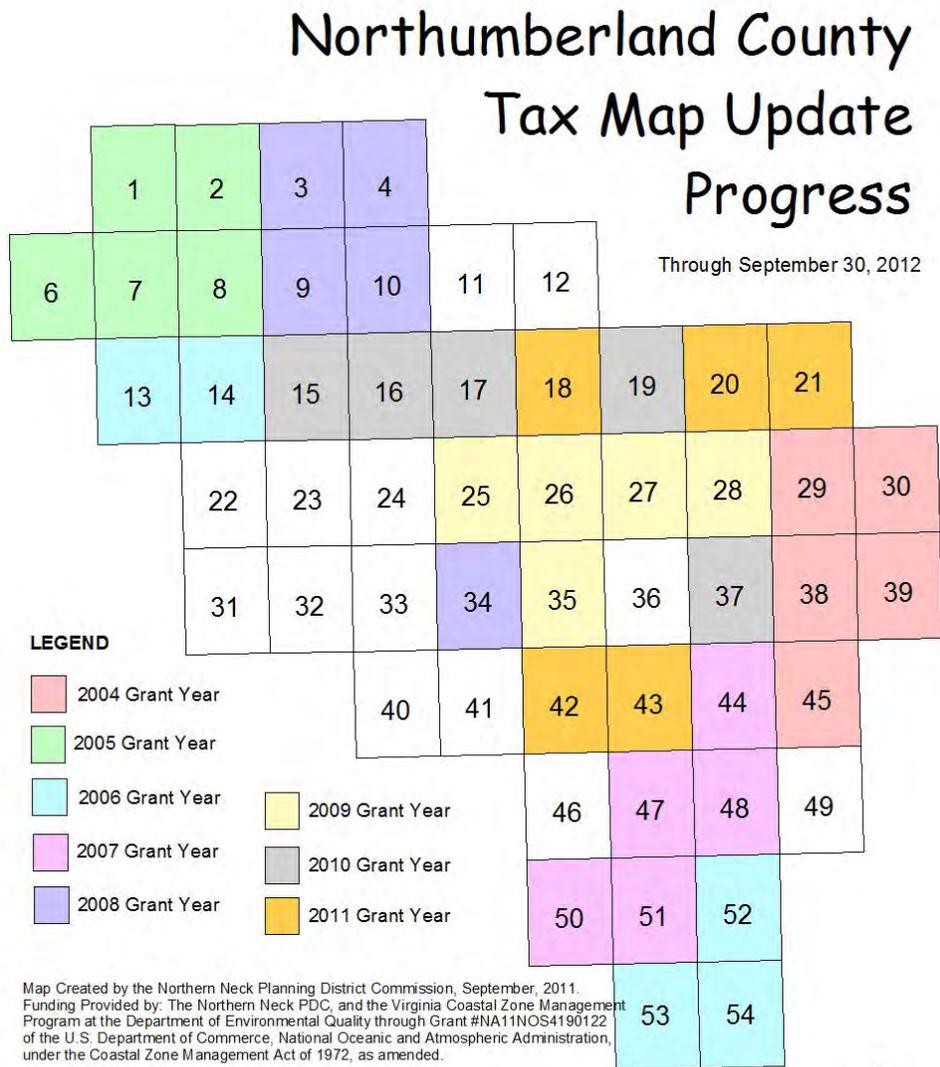
made notations on each of the issues and conveyed them at the stakeholder advisory group meeting later that week.

In addition to local coordination NNPDC staff also participated in regional and state coordination by attending the quarterly VA Coastal PDC Meetings at Crater PDC, GWRC, HRPDC, Virginia Coastal Policy Team Meetings in Richmond, all supporting the networked Virginia Coastal Management Program. NNPDC staff also participated in the Virginia's BAY TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan Phase II Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings, Department of Conservation and Recreation's Virginia Scenario Tool (VAST) Training, and Stormwater Rollout Meetings, as well as VIMS Recurrent Flooding Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting.

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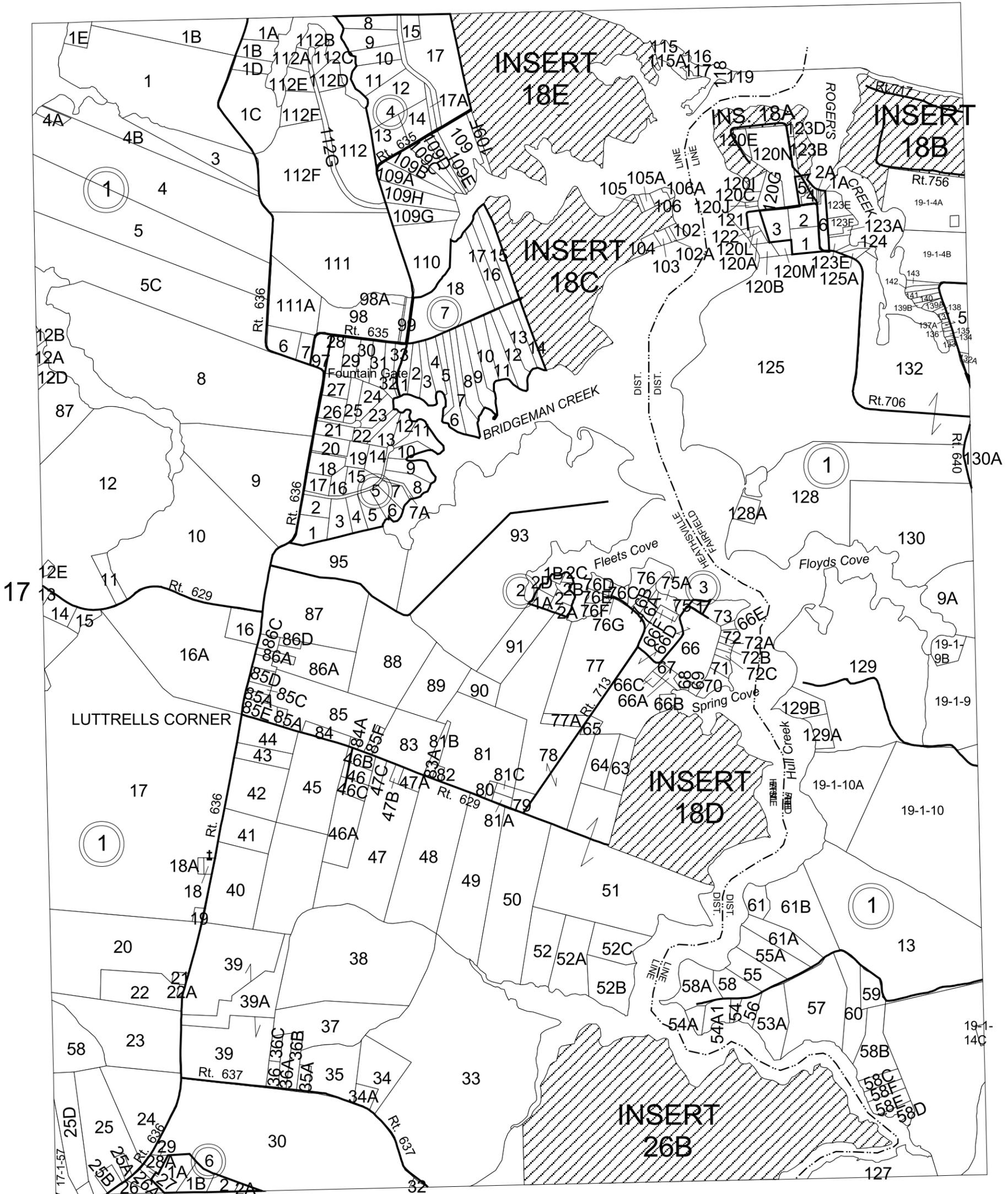
III. Northumberland County Five Revised Digital Tax Maps

NNPDC staff have been updating Northumberland Counties tax maps since 2005. The existing digital tax maps are being revised using Virginia Base Mapping Program's 2009 Aerial photography. Northumberland County has chosen this approach to update their digital tax maps to reduce the cost of having the maps revised by an outside vendor. NNPDC staff have extensive experience with digital tax maps revision, and was employed by the vendor that created the first digital set of tax maps for the county. This grant year, the five tax maps that were revised were 18, 20, 21, 42 and 43. (Due to file size limitations, only two of the five revised digital tax maps are included, with one example map of revisions made to tax map 43).



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY

36



17

19

25C

47

SECTION 18

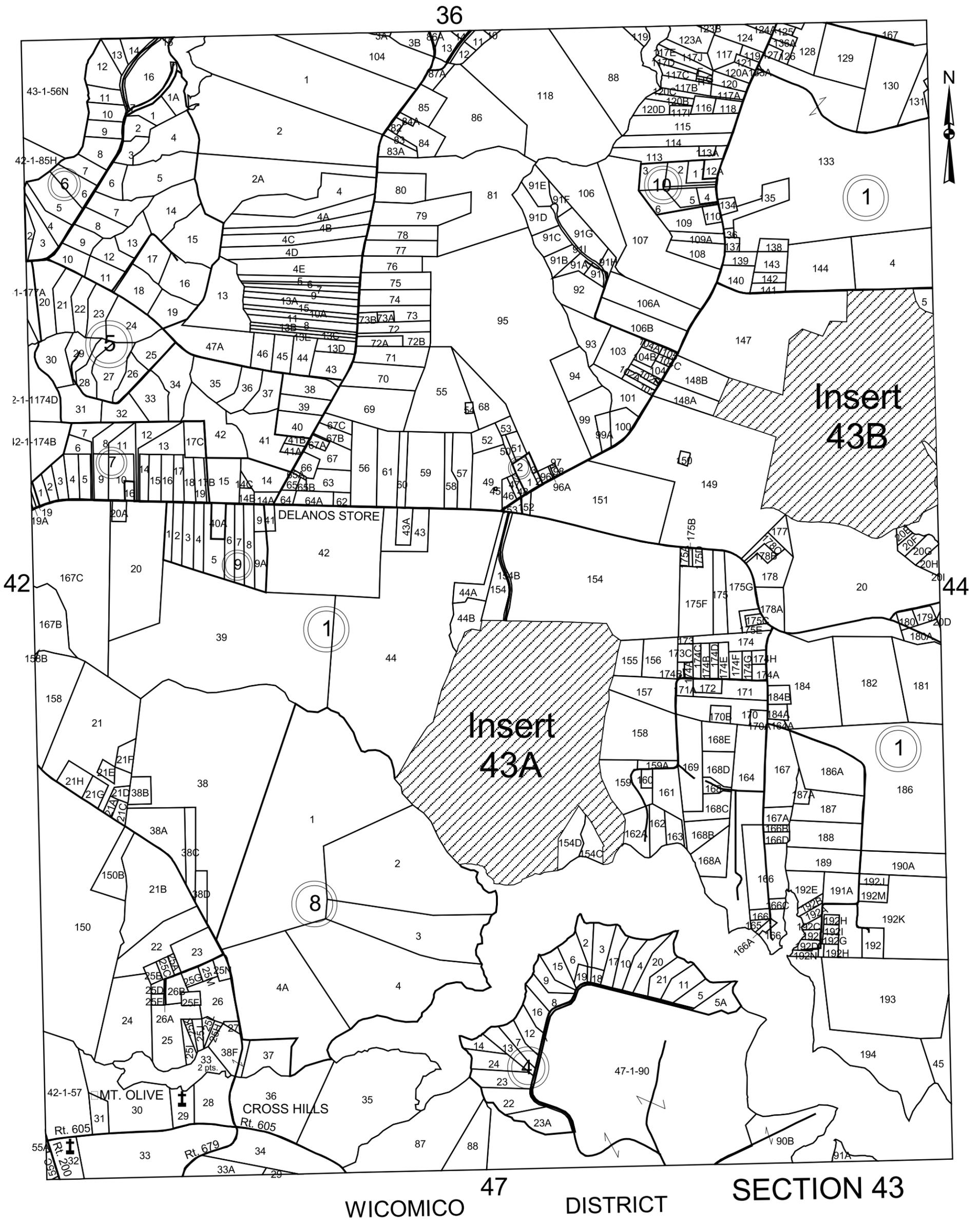
HEATHSVILLE
FAIRFIELD

DISTRICT

1000 0 1000 2000 Feet



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY



Northumberland Tax Map 43 Revision Example



Legend

-  Tax Map 43 After Revision
-  Tax Map 43 Before Revision

0 300 600 1,200 1,800 2,400 Feet



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IV. Lancaster, Richmond and Westmoreland Water Trail Maps

With the abundance of tributary creeks that lead to the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, the Northern Neck is ideally suited to paddling adventures. NNPDC staff have witnessed the increased use of paddle craft in the Northern Neck waterways. Fishing from kayaks is becoming more popular, as kayaks allow a silent approach to shallow water fishing areas. At least one local charterboat captain ferries both fishermen and their kayaks to and from productive fishing areas. Another paddling phenomena that NNPDC staff have seen is an increase in stand up paddleboarding.

NNPDC staff and Northern Neck Tourism Commission staff had discussed the need for creating a regional network of water trails in past years. In 2008, the Northumberland Association of Progressive Stewardship (NAPS), a local non-profit group, published a paddler's guide to Northumberland County with a county-matched Virginia Recreational Trails Program Grant. The guide was available on the NAPS website for download. (http://napsva.org/paddlers_guide.html) With a Northumberland Paddlers Guide in place, NNPDC staff decided to focus their water trail work on the other three counties. County representatives from Lancaster, Richmond, and Westmoreland counties were contacted and asked to submit two creeks in their county for water trail development. The creeks in the Northern Neck chosen for water trail development are: Deep and Mulberry Creek, Little Oyster Creek and Fleets Island in Lancaster County; Cat Point Creek and Morattico Creek and Lancaster Creek in Richmond County; and lastly, Monroe Bay and Monroe Creek and Currioman Bay in Westmoreland County. All creeks chosen have public water access points and four of the six access sites offer launch facilities for canoes, kayaks or other watercraft at no charge.

NNPDC staff, for background information and photographic opportunities went on a guided canoe trip, sponsored by the Northern Neck Land Conservancy on Cat Point Creek in Richmond County on June 18, 2012. NNPDC staff met the group at Belle Mount Vineyards/Heritage Park Resort on Menokin Bay, Cat Point Creek. Kayaks and canoes were launched at the boat ramp present and the group traveled upstream from Menokin Bay stopping at various points along the way to discuss flora, fauna and possible effects of sea level rise. After approximately an hour, the group of canoes and kayaks made their way around an island in the middle of the river and arrived back at the boat launch ramp.

NNPDC staff contacted the managers at Belle Mount Vineyards/Heritage Park Resort and asked their permission to list Belle Mount Vineyards/Heritage Park Resort as an access site in the NNPDC Cat Point Creek Water Trail. The manager was amenable to listing Belle Mount Vineyards/Heritage Park Resort as a put in point for boaters interested in exploring Cat Point Creek. NNPDC staff also contacted Naylor's Beach Campground, located next to the mouth of Cat Point Creek, on the Rappahannock River to inquire about inclusion in the water trail, and they agreed, reasoning that canoeists and kayakers often camp on their trips.

NNPDC staff also contacted the Menokin Foundation, located on the opposite bank of Menokin Bay, whose mission is to preserve and interpret the home and life of patriot Francis Lightfoot Lee, as a focus for better understanding the fields of history, architecture, archaeology, ecology and other areas of the humanities, by developing innovative scholarship and new practices in

conservation. Francis Lightfoot Lee was one of the original signers of the Articles of Federation and the Declaration of Independence and was related to Robert E. Lee of nearby Stratford Hall. The Executive Director of the Menokin Foundation met with the NNPDC Executive Director and staff to outline the projects that are currently underway at Menokin. The Menokin Executive Director announced that Menokin has a several different grants examining the topography of the site, archeological digs, as well as plan for a constructing a canoe/kayak launch point on Cat Point Creek at Menokin Bay, almost directly across from Belle Mount Vineyards/Heritage Park Resort. Currently there is a road that goes from the ruins of Menokin down to Menokin Bay, and the landing is a simply a mud bank. The Menokin Executive Director noted that in the interim, before they build the canoe launch, ramp and pier, that they would allow visitors to land at the unimproved Menokin landing by boat, provided they had made reservations with Menokin staff beforehand. NNPDC staff were enthusiastic that this historic attraction would be available for visitation by water and was given permission to include Menokin in the Cat Point Creek Water Trail as a historical and educational stop on the trail.

NNPDC staff also contacted Belle Isle State Park staff about permission to include the boat launch and camping facilities in the Deep and Mulberry Creek Water Trail, and was pleased to find out that Belle Isle State Park had recently completed construction of a four site canoe access only camping site at Belle Isle State Park near the mouth of Mulberry Creek. NNPDC staff had asked Belle Isle State Park staff identify the location of the new canoe campsite so that it would be located accurately on the water trail guide. In addition to the four campsites, there is a bathroom and a fire pit available for campers. Of course, as with all state parks, the camping site must be reserved, and there is a fee for the use of the campground, but this amenity is of tremendous importance to anyone who is interested in long distance kayak or canoe trekking distance down the Rappahannock River.

NNPDC created the water trail routes by digitizing over aerial photos, so as to avoid submerged obstacles, sandbars, and piers present in the waterways, but used the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 1:24,000 topographic maps as a background for the actual water trail map guides. NNPDC staff felt that the aerial photos would be too dark too display all of the needed symbology on a water trail guide map. In addition, the USGS maps already had rivers and creeks labeled, some with bathymetry as well as the roads and village labeled for easy location recognition. The narrative accompanying the second page of each water trail map guide was developed by NNPDC staff who has years of experience on the waters of the Northern Neck, starting out in a canoe, graduating to a skiff and the powerboat. On many of the open water sections of certain water trails, wind and waves can be dangerous to small craft, especially in the Fall of the year when strong cold fronts roll through the area, so those dangers were accounted for by classifying the water trail routes into beginner/novice trails and advanced/expert trails. All of the water trails have beginner (sheltered) sections, with some of the trails having expert trails. On each water trail guide NNPDC staff attempted to note local historical accounts, environmental education, information on the local flora and fauna, local fishing opportunities as well as some of the complex interactions that occur within these estuarine environments.

Northern Neck Planning District Commission staff were planning originally to host the online, downloadable water trail map guides on the NNPDC website, but while discussing that idea, the idea to primarily host the water trails on the Northern Neck Tourism site came up, since that

website has a larger number visitors, especially tourists looking to enjoy the scenic nature of the Northern Neck. The NNPDC website and possibly the three county websites will also host the water trail maps, but the Northern Neck Tourism Commission website will be the primary website to host the downloadable water trail maps. The web links to the water trail maps follow.

The main page, under the Northern Neck Tourism Commission website, under the Recreation Section, under the banner "Water Trails". The web link to the main page is:

<http://www.northernneck.org/NNTC-PAGES/recreation.htm#natureandwatertrails>

The web links to the individual maps by county follow:

Lancaster County

Deep Creek and Mulberry Creek Water Trail Guide

http://www.northernneck.org/MAPS/lc_mulberry_&_deep_creek_water_trail_guide_web.pdf

Little Oyster Creek and Fleets Island Water Trail Guide

http://www.northernneck.org/MAPS/lc_little_oyster_creek_water_trail_guide_web.pdf

Richmond County

Cat Point Creek Water Trail Guide

http://www.northernneck.org/MAPS/rc_cat_point_creek_water_trail_guide_web.pdf

Morattico Creek and Lancaster Creek Water Trail Guide

http://www.northernneck.org/MAPS/rc_morattico&lancaster_water_trail_guide_web.pdf

Westmoreland County

Currioman Bay Water Trail Guide (mouth of Nomini Creek)

http://www.northernneck.org/MAPS/wc_currioman_bay_water_trail_guide_web.pdf

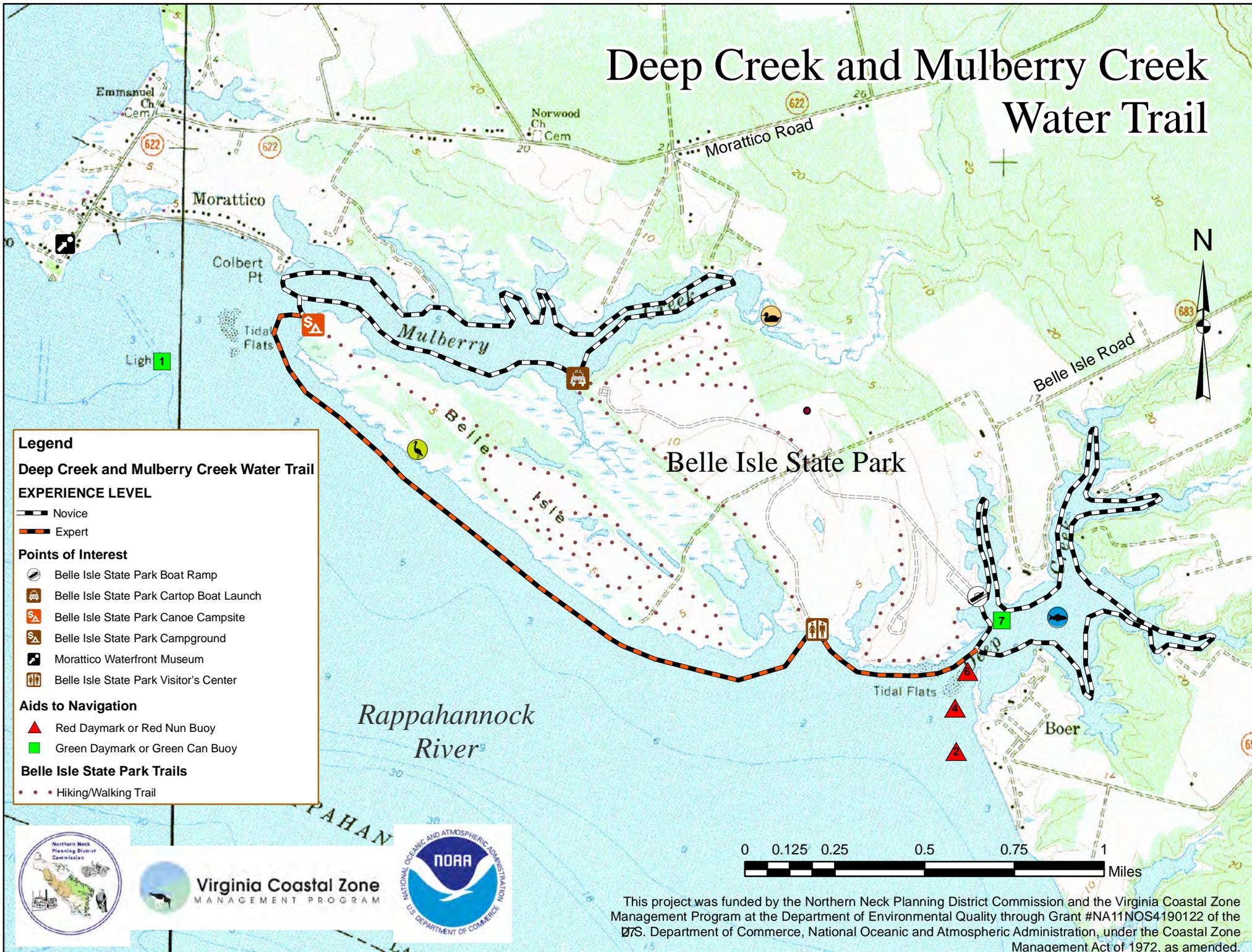
Monroe Bay - Monroe Creek Water Trail Guide (Colonial Beach Area)

http://www.northernneck.org/MAPS/wc_monroe_bay_monroe_creek_water_trail_topo_guide_web.pdf

The PDF versions of six water trail maps produced during the grant and posted online at the above cited URLs follow.

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Deep Creek and Mulberry Creek Water Trail



Legend

Deep Creek and Mulberry Creek Water Trail

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Novice
- Expert

Points of Interest

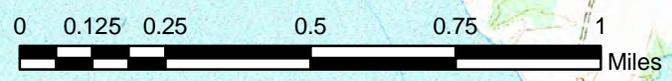
- Belle Isle State Park Boat Ramp
- Belle Isle State Park Cartop Boat Launch
- Belle Isle State Park Canoe Campsite
- Belle Isle State Park Campground
- Morattico Waterfront Museum
- Belle Isle State Park Visitor's Center

Aids to Navigation

- Red Daymark or Red Nun Buoy
- Green Daymark or Green Can Buoy

Belle Isle State Park Trails

- Hiking/Walking Trail



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The two water trails located in Mulberry and Deep Creek are sheltered enough for novice paddlers, however the water trail that extends out into the main stem of the Rappahannock River is designed for expert paddlers only.

Mulberry and Deep Creek are relatively sheltered from waves of the main stem of the Rappahannock River. However, if the wind blows, then waves can be driven into these creeks, causing large waves. These large waves make it difficult to navigate small vessels such as canoes and/or kayaks without capsizing. Always check the weather and wind forecast to be sure that conditions are safe to venture out. Click on the Rappahannock River polygon on the National Weather Service local website: <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq/>

Paddlers need to consider the possibility of hypothermia when paddling in colder water temperatures. Paddling with others is strongly encouraged, as is a dry change of clothes in case of accidental immersion. Waterproof dry bags are available in sizes large enough to accommodate a change of clothes. Other safety recommendations are a cell phone and marine VHF radio for contacting help, should it become necessary.

Boaters also need to be in compliance with Virginia boating equipment regulations such as personal floatation devices, sound producing devices and visual distress signals. More information can be found here: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/boating/wog/equipment-regulations.asp>

Boating hazards that paddlers may encounter in this stretch of the lower Rappahannock River are crab pot buoys, gill nets, pound nets as well as dangerous wakes from large powerboats that can easily swamp a canoe. It is best to avoid large powered vessels.

The main attraction of the Mulberry and Deep Creek water trails is, of course, the relatively easy access to both creeks from Belle Isle State Park. The Car Top Boat Launch offers easy access to Mulberry Creek while the Boat Ramp offers quick access to Deep Creek.



Photo courtesy of the Northern Neck Planning District Commission.

Belle Isle State Park has just completed a new canoe camping facility on the shoreline near the mouth of Mulberry Creek. The campsite is accessible by canoe and offers four campsites and a pit privy. This facility is a welcome addition to Belle Isle State Park and a much needed amenity for paddlers, who paddle on the lower Rappahannock River. Reservations are required to use this facility and can be made by calling Belle Isle State Park at 804-462-5030 or by visiting the DCR Belle Isle State Park website at: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/bel.shtml

In addition to the boat ramp, camping facilities, and the car top boat launch, Belle Isle State Park has numerous hiking trails, a small fishing pier, cabin and houses to rent, canoes, kayaks, and small powerboats to rent, as well as scheduled guided tours and events.

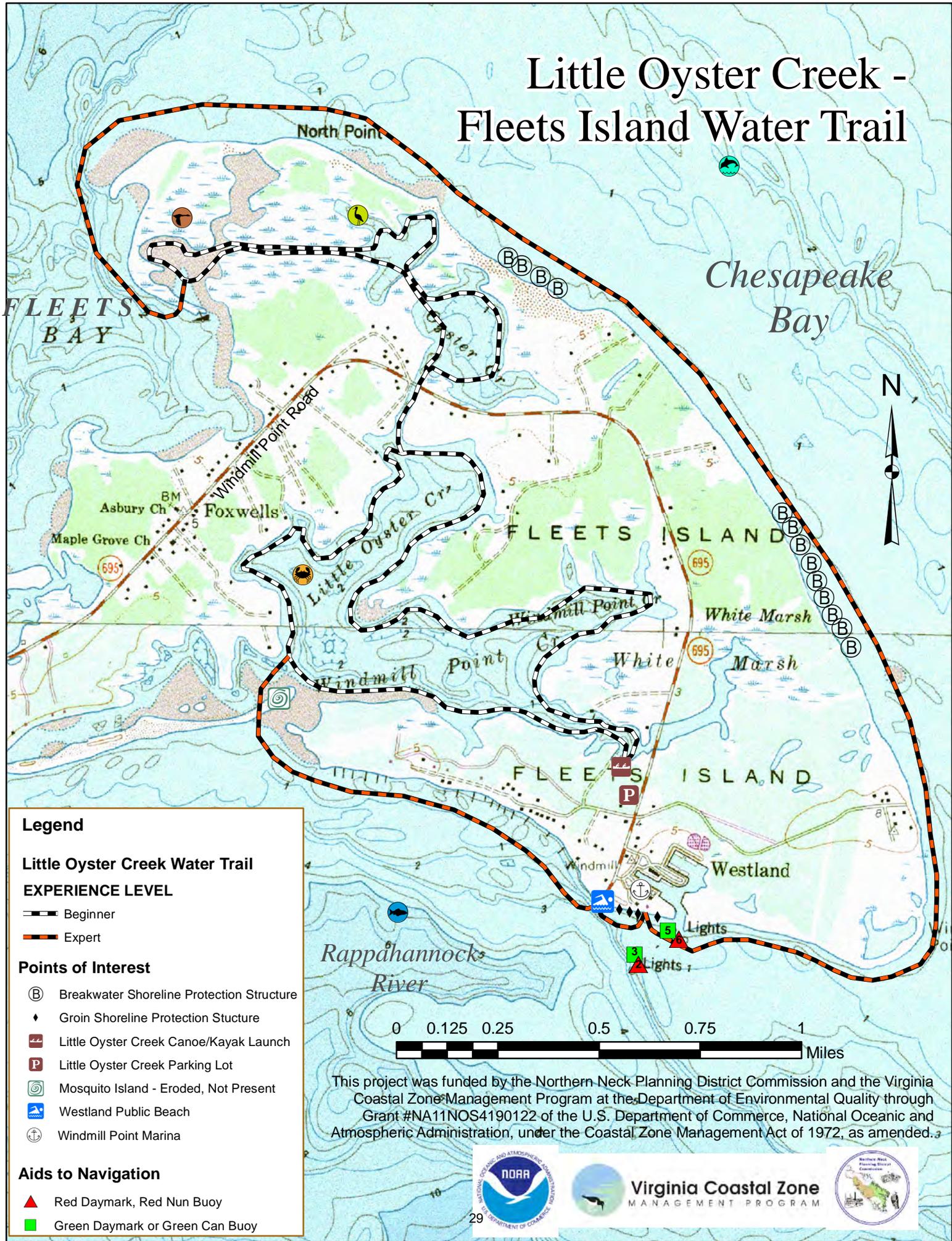
One can expect to find numerous species of birds: ospreys, bald eagles, hawks and blue herons. Terrestrial creatures that can routinely be found in or near the park include white tailed deer, turkey, groundhogs, moles, rabbits, and squirrels. In the warmer months reptiles as well as amphibians also can be spotted roaming about.

Species of fish that can be found in the water off Mulberry and Deep Creek include croaker, striped bass, perch, bluefish, and possibly puppy drum.

Directions to Belle Isle State Park from Warsaw travel south on Rt 3 to Rt. 354 (River Road) for three miles. Turn Right onto Rt 683 (Belle Isle Rd) to park entrance. From Kilmarnock take Rt 3 North to Lively, then left on Rt. 201 (White Chapel Rd) for three miles then right on Rt 354 for three miles, then left onto Rt. 683 to the park entrance



Little Oyster Creek - Fleets Island Water Trail



Legend

Little Oyster Creek Water Trail EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Beginner
- Expert

Points of Interest

- Breakwater Shoreline Protection Structure
- Groin Shoreline Protection Structure
- Little Oyster Creek Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Little Oyster Creek Parking Lot
- Mosquito Island - Eroded, Not Present
- Westland Public Beach
- Windmill Point Marina

Aids to Navigation

- Red Daymark, Red Nun Buoy
- Green Daymark or Green Can Buoy

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The Little Oyster Creek Water Trail Outer Loop is intended for expert paddlers only.

The Little Oyster Creek Water Trail has a sheltered section for beginners and novices to practice and fine tune their coastal paddling skills, while also having an expert paddler's loop that circumvents the entire Windmill Point peninsula and represents a more challenging and longer route (the expert loop is a little over 6 miles). The expert paddle trail is located in the open water of the Chesapeake Bay, so there is no shelter from the winds and waves generated on the open Bay, and should only be attempted by those with advanced paddling experience. Little Oyster Creek is located next to the Chesapeake Bay, therefore the salinity of the water is very close to that of the Chesapeake Bay. Little Oyster Creek has a very shallow mouth although it is relatively wide. This shallow depth prohibits most vessels of any size from entering or leaving the creek except at high tide. The limiting depth of Little Oyster Creek does not affect canoes or kayaks, however it does serve to limit the amount of power boat traffic. Less powerboat traffic provides a more natural setting for observing the terrestrial and aquatic inhabitants of Oyster Creek.

Interspersed throughout the shorelines of Little Oyster Creek and Windmill Point Creek are residential homes, some with traditional workboats at their docks like the one in the photo to the right. On Oyster Creek (north of the Windmill Point Rt. 695) bridge, there are few houses and mostly marsh and emergent vegetation. If you are interested in observing nature, Oyster Creek is the best place to go, but be careful of the low bridge. Waterfowl in this area varies according to the season, but expect to find blue herons, pelicans, ospreys, ducks and geese. Most water creatures are difficult to spot, except in very shallow water. Sea turtles, porpoises, dolphin are known to frequent the area in and around Windmill Point.



During the War of 1812, the British blockaded the Chesapeake Bay and sent raiding vessels up the rivers and creeks to plunder and destroy property. The lookout at Windmill Point (about a mile east) on Fleet's Island reported that on 23 April 1814, the enemy "landed near Windmill [Point] or North Point (about 2 miles northwest) and plundered a poor man & of a boat, everything he was worth." A detachment of the 92nd Regiment of Lancaster Militia posted in the vicinity fired across a creek nearby and drove the British back to their ship. This was the final raid of the War of 1812 in Lancaster County.

Fishing in the area of Windmill Point is some of the best fishing found in the Bay. In the early spring, speckled trout will bend the pole of eager anglers waiting for the more traditional species to migrate into the Bay. Mid Spring Rockfish and Croaker arrive and often are found in the warming shallows, eating minnows. As summer hits full tilt, toothy bluefish and spanish mackerel enter the waters around Windmill Point. Bluefish will hit any lure that is shiny as well as a few that aren't. A fast retrieve is needed for bluefish and mackerel to bite, however trolling is the preferred method. Smoked bluefish is a local favorite in the summer time. Some area restaurants will smoke customer caught bluefish for their patrons, with advance arrangements.

Access to Little Oyster Creek, Windmill Point Creek and Oyster Creek is located at the Windmill Point Canoe and Kayak Launch site, which is very near the end of Rt. 695, Windmill Point Road. Another attraction at the very end of Windmill Point is Westland Public Swimming Beach. Parking for the public beach is provided at the Windmill Point Canoe Kayak Launching site. Also located at the end of Windmill Point Road is a marina with a restaurant and a boat ramp which serves as an alternate put in/take out point for watercraft.

To reach the Windmill Point Canoe/Kayak Launch travel State Route 3 to the town of White Stone, Virginia. Take Route 695 East (Windmill Point Road) and follow almost to the end. You will know you are getting close to the end of the road when the speed limit is reduced. Once you cross a small bridge (crossing Windmill Point Creek), look to the right for the sign for the Windmill Point Canoe Kayak Launch site.



Cat Point Creek Water Trail

Legend

Cat Point Creek Water Trail

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

 Novice

 Expert

Points of Interest

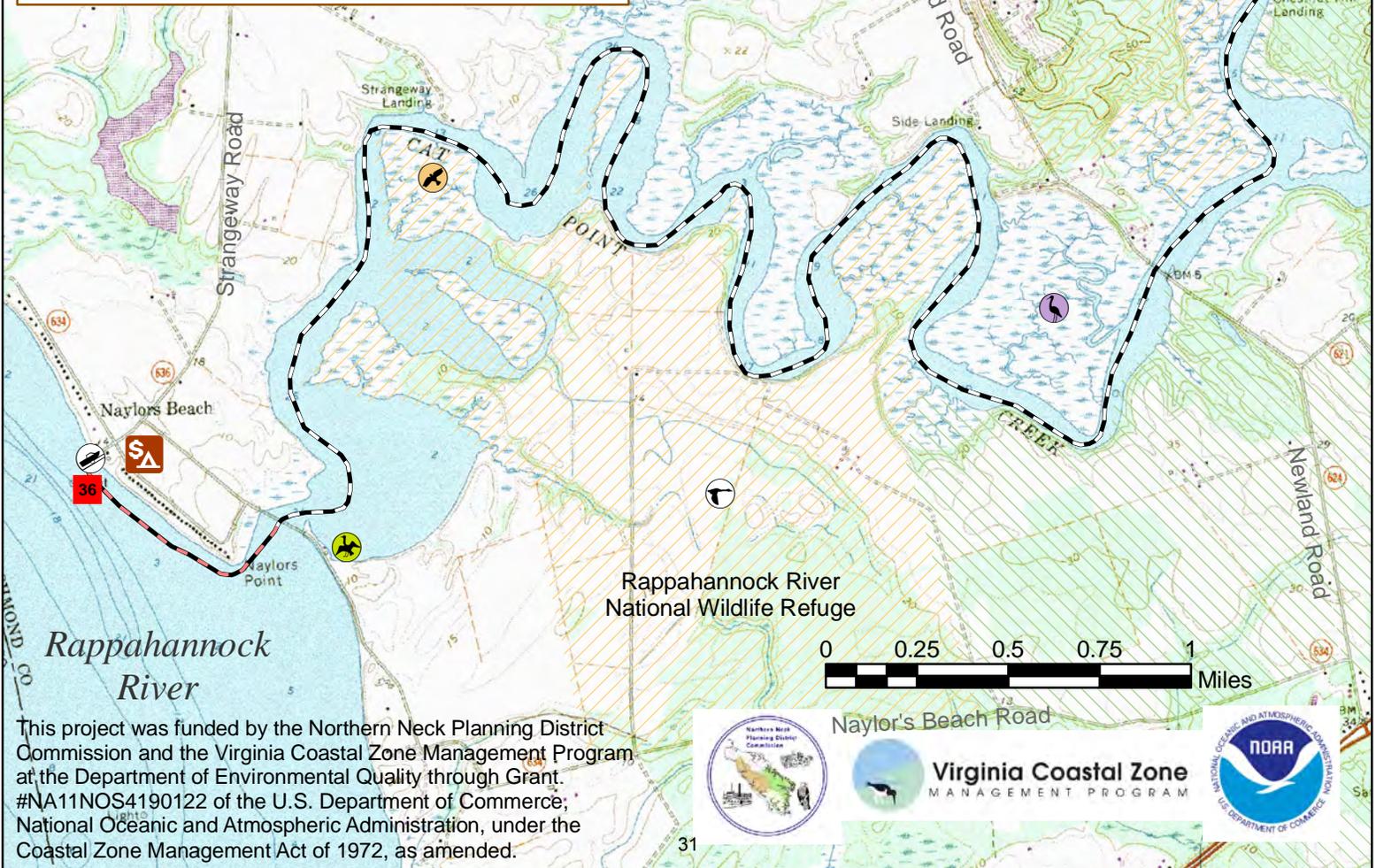
-  Heritage Park Resort/Belle Mount Vineyards Boat Ramp
-  Heritage Park Resort/Belle Mount Vineyards Campground
-  Menokin Canoe/Kayak Launch - *Reservation Required*
-  Historic Menokin Foundation
-  Colonial Rendevous Point for Loading Tobacco
-  Rolling Road - Primitive Road for Hauling Tobacco
-  Possible Capital Township of Rappahannock Indians
-  Rappahannock River National Wildlife Refuge
-  Naylor's Beach Campground
-  Naylor's Beach Campground Boat Ramp

Aids to Navigation

-  Red Daymark, Red Nun Buoy

Conserved Lands

-  Conserved Lands
-  Private Conservation Easements



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Naylor's Beach Road



Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



The majority of the Cat Point Creek Water Trail is sheltered and ideal for novice paddlers. However, the lower section of the trail from Naylor's Beach Road Bridge out into the Rappahannock River to the Naylor's Beach Boat Ramp is recommended for expert paddlers due the possible high wind and wave exposure in this area.

The Heritage Park-Belle Mount Vineyards launch ramp is visible in the background of the photo on right. To contact Heritage Park - Belle Mount Vineyards contact them at 804.333.4038 or find them on the web at <http://www.heritagepark.com>.



Across Menokin Bay from the Heritage Park launch ramp is Menokin. Menokin was the home of Francis Lightfoot Lee, who was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. To access Menokin from Cat Point Creek, you need to make a reservation with Menokin by calling 804.333.1776.

The canoe landing point has a trail leading upland to the ruins of Menokin.

Staff at Menokin will be glad to show you the ruins, explain how life was back in colonial times and describe some of the features of the nearly 500 acres that the Menokin Foundation owns.

From historical records, there is indication of a major Indian settlement that was located on Cat Point Creek in pre Colonial times. While the exact location is unknown, the area of was on the banks of Cat Point Creek a mile or so upstream. That area is near where Heritage Park and Menokin are located. It is interesting to note that the Cat Point Creek area has been an ideal habitat for humans for at least several centuries!

Cat Point Creek is one of the most pristine creeks on the Northern Neck Peninsula. There is little development on the creek, due in part, to the low bridges that cross the creek. In addition, some of the land bordering Cat Point Creek is part of the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge, and as such, will not be developed into the future. Near Menokin Bay, the water is tidal freshwater and you can catch crappie, bluegill, perch, catfish, as well as largemouth bass. In the Spring, shad and herring migrate upstream to spawn, as well as striped bass. In the lower sections of Cat Point Creek, where the water is saltier, you can catch spot, croaker in the summer months.

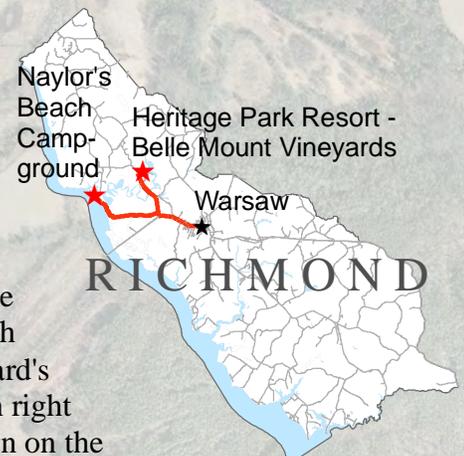


The upper portion of the Cat Point Creek Water Trail near Menokin Bay is tidal freshwater, while the lower portion of the trail near Naylor's Beach is brackish water. Therefore, you will see a marked change in the type of vegetation found on the banks of Cat Point Creek as you progress upstream or downstream the creek.

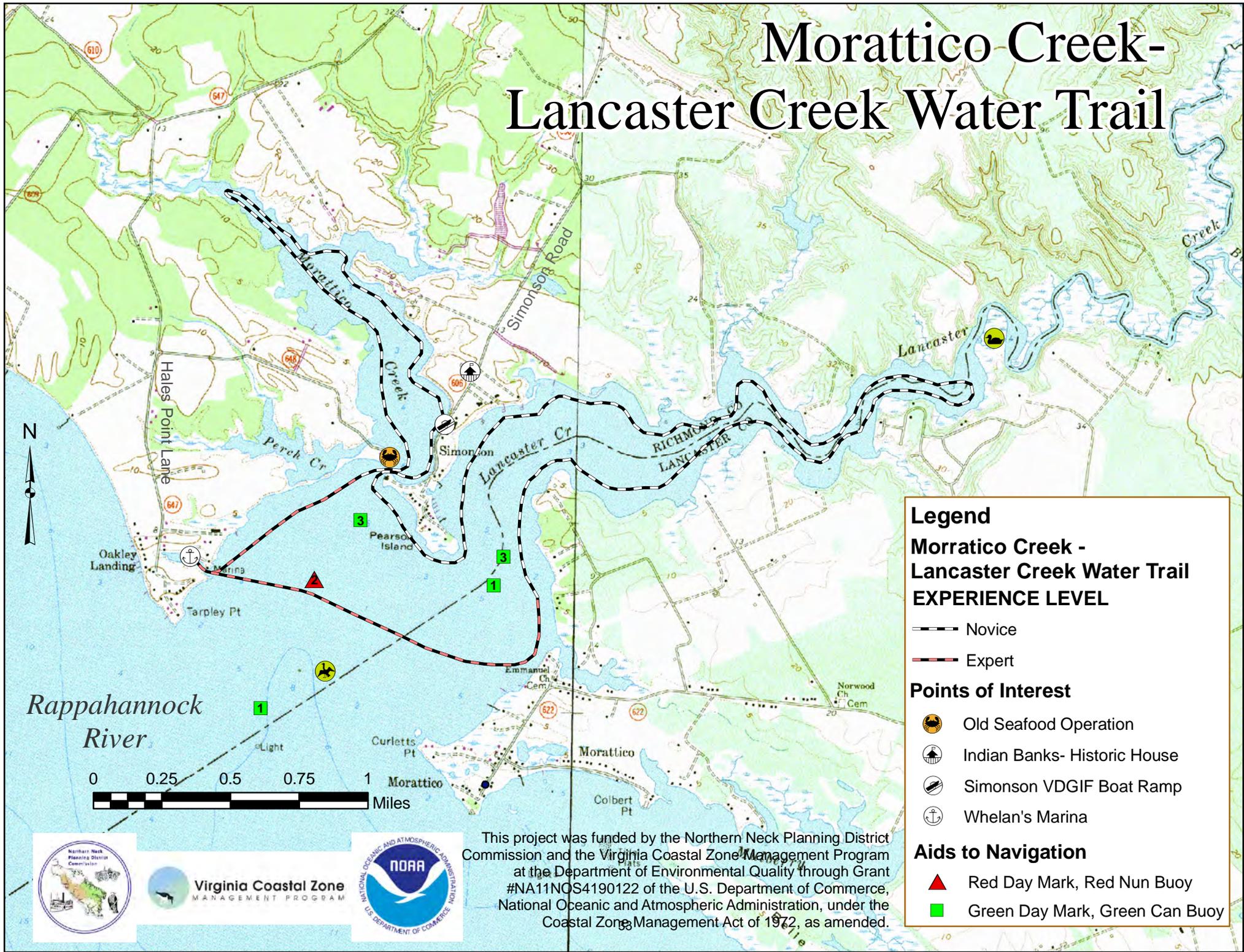
At right is a photo from Menokin Bay in upper Cat Point Creek. The vegetation is thick in this tidal freshwater habitat and includes Arrow Arum, Pickerelweed and Yellow Pond Lily in the foreground. In the background you can see some trees that are dying, most likely from sea level rise inundating their root system.

There are two launch/retrieve points for the Cat Point Creek Water Trail, one upstream on Menokin Bay (Heritage Park) and one near the mouth of Cat Point Creek (Naylor's Beach Campground). To contact Naylor's Beach Campground call 804.333.3951 or visit them on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/naylorsbeach>

To arrive at Naylor's Beach Campground from the town of Warsaw, travel west on US 360 approximately 2.4 miles and take a right onto Rt. 624 (Newland Rd.). Travel around 1/8 of a mile and take a left onto Rt. 634 (Naylor's Beach Rd.) Travel 3.9 miles to the intersection with Rt. 636 (Strangeway Rd.) Take a right at this intersection (you will still be on Naylor's Beach Rd.) and travel 1/10th of a mile to the boat ramp. To reach the Heritage Park Resort - Belle Mount Vineyard's boat ramp travel to Warsaw, then west on US 360 for approximately 2.4 miles, turn right onto Rt. 624 (Newland Rd.) for 2.5 miles and look for the Heritage Park Resort sign on the right side of the road.



Morattico Creek- Lancaster Creek Water Trail



Legend

Morratico Creek - Lancaster Creek Water Trail EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Novice
- Expert

Points of Interest

- Old Seafood Operation
- Indian Banks- Historic House
- Simonson VDGIF Boat Ramp
- Whelan's Marina

Aids to Navigation

- Red Day Mark, Red Nun Buoy
- Green Day Mark, Green Can Buoy

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The Morattico-Lancaster Water Trail is relatively sheltered and ideal for beginning paddlers, except for the mouth of the creek where advanced paddling experience is recommended except on the calmest days.

The Morattico-Lancaster Water Trail is located on the border of Richmond and Lancaster Counties; in fact, Lancaster Creek forms the boundary between the two localities. The area around these counties is steeped in history from early Indian settlement, to a visit by John Smith on his second voyage in August of 1608, to colonial settlement. The Moraughtacund Indians settled this area and met with Captain John Smith when he traveled up the Rappahannock River. Over the many years, Morgaughtcund morphed into Morattico, which became the name of a creek and a nearby village in Lancaster County.

In this area of the Rappahannock River, the salinity begins to lessen. Crabs and oysters can still be found in this area; however, this is near the upper limit of their habitat. The salinity levels are highly dependent on the amount of rain that occurs upstream, in dry years, the upper limit extends further up the Rappahannock, while in wet years the upper limit creeps downstream.

Morattico and Lancaster Creeks pass on both sides of the Simonson Peninsula, where the public boat launch ramp is located. The Simonson public boat launch ramp, owned by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries was closed in 2001 due to its deteriorating condition and state budget cuts to funding that would have rebuilt the boat ramp. A local fund raising drive in Richmond County raised \$18,935 towards rebuilding of the boat ramp, as the citizens recognized the importance of public access to state waters for their county. Simonson was rebuilt in 2002, and is one of three public boat launch ramps in the county, and the closest to the mouth of the Rappahannock River.



Currently unused seafood processing facility on Morattico Creek

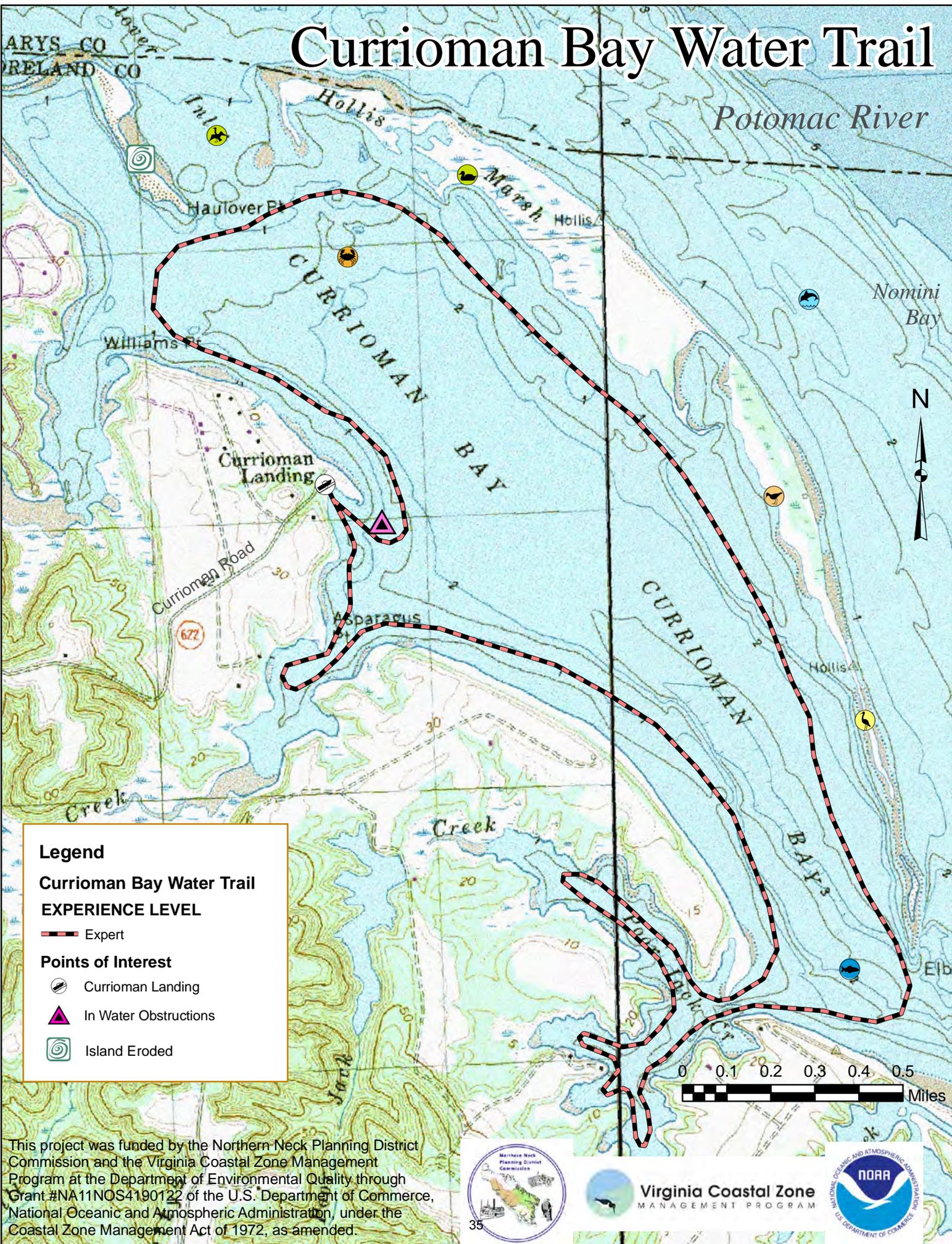
When launching at the boat ramp and heading downstream, visitors can see an old seafood processing building located on the right bank of Morattico River. The white cinderblock building was built sturdy and will probably be around for many more decades. Watermen still crab in this area; however, most are small owner operator outfits that operate from their residences. Oyster aquaculture is the newest innovation that local watermen are embracing. Growing out oysters in cages placed on the creek bottom, in floating cages, or in bags and baskets allow watermen to eliminate any loss of oysters from natural predation, most notably from the cow nose ray. By growing out oysters that have been genetically modified to not reproduce (called triploid oysters), the oysters reach market size sooner, since the oyster does not expend any energy trying to reproduce. Another benefit of the triploid oyster is that it reaches maturity before oyster diseases that have decimated natural Chesapeake Bay oyster beds (MSX and Dermo) have a chance to infect the oyster. Oyster aquaculture is likely to increase as most local experiments have proven to be profitable.

If you are interested in angling, Morattico and Lancaster Creeks are home to perch, catfish, rockfish, as well as spot, croaker and bluefish near the mouth of the creek in the summer. Live bait is especially effective; however, small artificial grubs and spoon lures can entice some of the more aggressive gamefish to attack. In the upper reaches of Lancaster Creek, the extensive marshes that line both sides of the creek offer excellent habitat for waterfowl.

To reach the Simonson Public Boat Launch Ramp, travel out of the Town of Warsaw on Rt. 3 East approximately 12 miles and take a right turn onto Rt. 608, Farnham Creek Road. Travel a mile on Farnham Creek Road and take a left onto Rt. 606, Simonson Road. Simonson Public Boat Launch Ramp is located on the right of Simonson Road, while parking is located on the left side of the road, approximately one eighth of a mile from the end.



Currioman Bay Water Trail



Legend

Currioman Bay Water Trail

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

 Expert

Points of Interest

-  Currioman Landing
-  In Water Obstructions
-  Island Eroded



This project was funded by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through Grant #NA11NOS4190122 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.



The Currioman Bay Water Trail is intended for advanced to expert paddlers.

Although Currioman Bay is partially shielded by Hollis (Sharktooth) Island from the large waves of the Potomac River (which is approximately 4 miles wide at this point), this area can be dangerous for inexperienced boaters in small vessels when winds increase. In addition to exposure from waves from the Potomac River, the mouth of Nomini Creek is also approximately 4 miles wide, which can allow large waves to form when windy from a variety of directions. Further compounding the problem, Currioman Bay is relatively shallow which can amplify wave heights. Be sure to check the marine forecast from the National Weather Service for the Potomac River from Cobb Island to Smith Point area by clicking on the Potomac River polygon on the map at : <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq>

Boaters also need to be in compliance with Virginia boating equipment regulations regarding personal flotation devices, sound producing devices, and visual distress signals. More information can be found here: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/boating/wog/equipment-regulations.asp>

This area of the mouth of Nomini Creek is home to many species of fish, shellfish, and birds as well as the possibility of seeing marine mammals in the summer months. The winter months are the best times to observe waterfowl, as this area is the wintering area for many species of arctic ducks, geese and diving birds. If you are interested in fishing, late spring, summer and early fall are all good times to sample the local fisheries. Species that frequent this area are perch, spot, croaker, rockfish, bluefish and an occasional flounder or puppy drum in the mix. When fishing within Currioman Bay, Virginia saltwater fishing regulations apply. Go to the Virginia Marine Resources Commission for the latest recreational fishing regulations: <http://www.mrc.virginia.gov/regulations/swrecfishingrules.shtml>



Two flounder caught at one time!



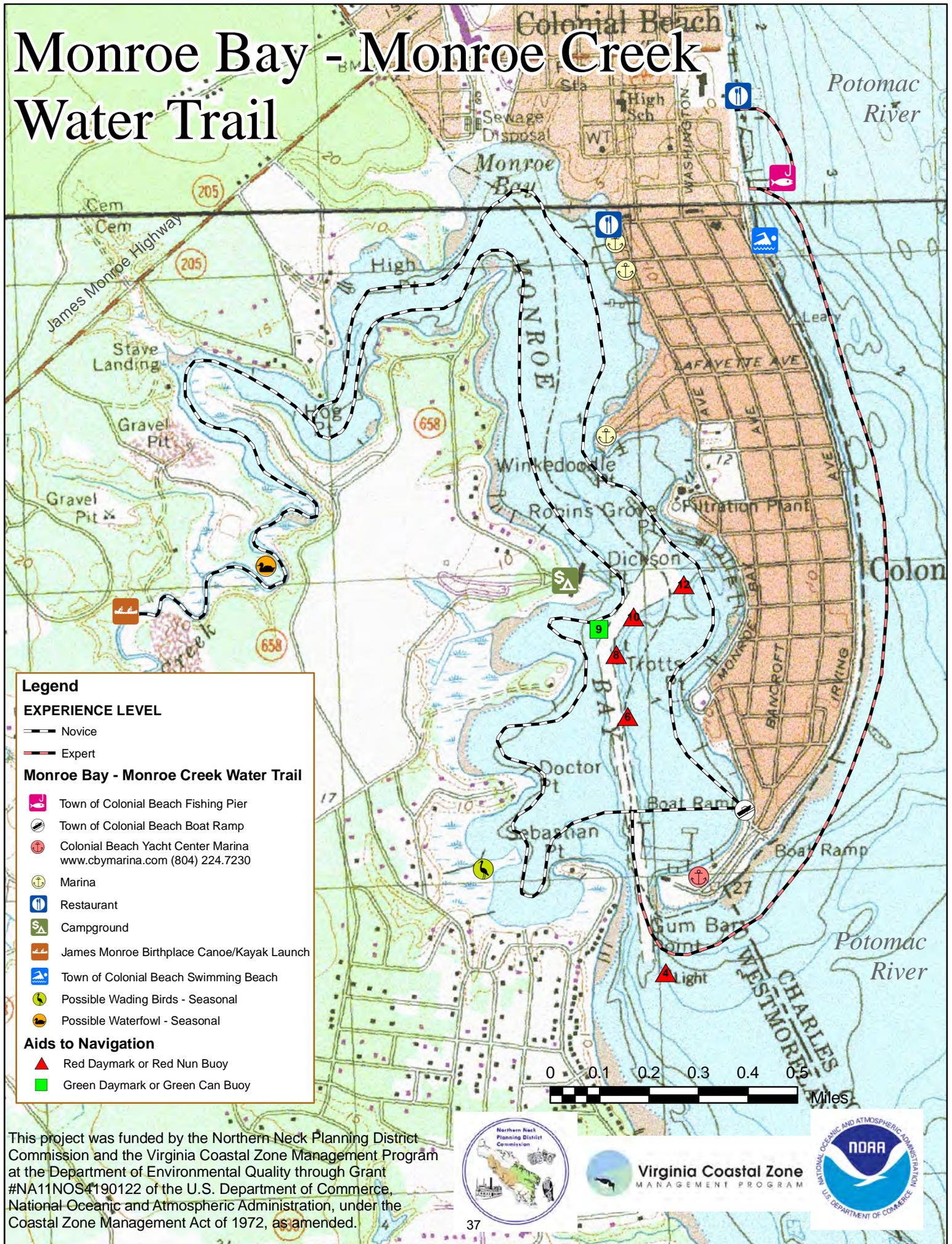
During the War of 1812, there were numerous raids by the British on the shores of the Northern Neck. One such raid was the raid on Nomini Ferry, inland and upstream from Currioman/Nomini Bay on July 20, 1814. British forces outgunned and outmanned the local militia, finally forcing the Americans to retreat back to what is now the town of Montross. Bushfield, a historic house that was built in the 18th century south of Currioman Bay was also shelled that same year by British naval forces. The house, in its current form, still exists on the shores of Nomini Creek.

Directions to the Currioman Landing launch point follow.

Travel to the Town of Montross in Westmoreland County, turn on to Polk Street which turns into Panorama Road (Rt.622). Follow Panorama Road to its intersection with Stratford Hall Road (Rt. 214) and take a left turn. Travel a short distance and take a right turn at Currioman Road (Rt. 622) and follow to the end of the road to Currioman Landing.



Monroe Bay - Monroe Creek Water Trail



Legend

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Novice
- Expert

Monroe Bay - Monroe Creek Water Trail

- Town of Colonial Beach Fishing Pier
- Town of Colonial Beach Boat Ramp
- Colonial Beach Yacht Center Marina
www.cbymarina.com (804) 224.7230
- Marina
- Restaurant
- Campground
- James Monroe Birthplace Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Town of Colonial Beach Swimming Beach
- Possible Wading Birds - Seasonal
- Possible Waterfowl - Seasonal

Aids to Navigation

- Red Daymark or Red Nun Buoy
- Green Daymark or Green Can Buoy

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The Monroe Bay portion of this water trail is suitable for novice paddlers while the outer loop beach water trail (Potomac River portion) is intended for expert paddlers due to the potential exposure to wind and waves in that area.

Monroe Bay, and especially Monroe Creek, is shielded from large waves from the Potomac River and thus is recommended for less experienced paddlers. The Potomac River is approximately four miles wide at Colonial Beach, and when the wind blows, large waves often form and crash on the shores of Colonial Beach. These large waves make it difficult to navigate small vessels such as canoes and/or kayaks without capsizing.

In addition, Monroe Bay, especially near the entrance to the Bay in the summer, can get congested with power boat traffic. Small vessels should maintain distance between large powerboats as the large wakes generated by them can be hazardous. In addition, personal watercraft may be operated in these waters and should also be avoided due to the high speeds they can achieve.

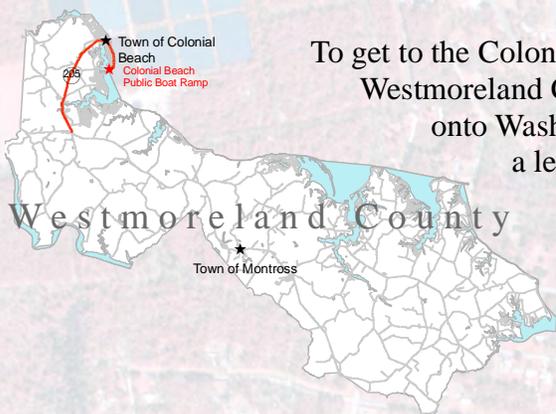
Paddlers need to consider the possibility of hypothermia when paddling in colder water temperatures. Paddling with others is strongly encouraged, as is a dry change of clothes in case of accidental immersion. Other recommendations for safety are a cell phone and marine VHF radio for contacting help, should it become necessary.

Boaters also need to be in compliance with Virginia boating equipment regulations by wearing a personal flotation devices, sound producing devices, and visual distress signals. More information can be found here: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/boating/wog/equipment-regulations.asp>



Near the upper reaches of Monroe Creek, James Monroe's Birthplace has a rudimentary dock in place. This dock was completed by a Boy Scout for his Eagle Scout project, and is usable in its current form although it is narrow and short for a public pier. Westmoreland County has secured a grant from VDOT to build a road and trail system at James Monroe's Birthplace that will replace the old trail to the canoe dock. Westmoreland hopes to obtain additional grant funding to replace the existing dock with a larger dock and und retrieving point. More information, as well as seasonal closings and hours of operation, is located here: <http://www.monroefoundation.org/monroe-birthplace.html>

In the upper reaches of Monroe Creek, you will likely see blue herons, various species of ducks, as well as other birds such as the smaller green heron and if you are very observant, the quick flying and often diving kingfisher. Other winged creatures that could be spotted, depending on the time of year, are mallard, wood, or bufflehead ducks. In addition to waterfowl, Monroe Bay is home to many fish species. Catfish can be found year round, and in the early spring, striped bass and croaker are among the first species to arrive in large numbers. Later in the spring, spot, puppy drum, and an occasional bluefish can be caught by skilled anglers. For those who desire more amenities, the western shore of the Colonial Beach peninsula has several restaurants and overnight accommodations. On the Potomac River side of the water trail is the swimming beach and fishing pier for expert paddlers.



To get to the Colonial Beach Public Boat Ramp, travel to the Town of Colonial Beach in Westmoreland County on Rt. 205. Turn on to Colonial Avenue (Rt. 205Y), turn right onto Washington Avenue, take a slight left onto North Irving Avenue, then take a left onto Boundary Street. Take the 1st right onto South Irving Avenue. Follow to the end of the South Irving Avenue, looping around onto Monroe Bay Road. The Colonial Beach Public Boat Ramp is located on the left after you turn onto Monroe Bay Road.