

Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

FY 11 Task 95.02

## Virginia Marine Debris Summit Final Report

*Submitted by the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center*



**Virginia Coastal Zone**  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



*The Virginia Marine Debris Summit was funded by 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.*

## Summary

The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center provided the facilities to host the **Virginia Marine Debris Summit - Exploring Solutions: Educate, Motivate, Innovate** on February 27-28, 2013.

A planning committee comprised of Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program staff and representatives from the Virginia Aquarium, Clean Virginia Waterways/ Longwood University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Sea Grant, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and the Department of Environmental Quality Office of Public Communication and Outreach and Office of Pollution Prevention Program worked together to develop the agenda, secure speakers and facilitators, and undertake all logistics.



The goal of the summit was to lay the groundwork for development of a Virginia Marine Debris Management Plan for the Commonwealth. Having a plan in place also will help Virginia meet one of its goals as a member of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO). Management options from the summit will be presented to the Virginia Coastal Policy Team and to MARCO for consideration.

The summit engaged 75 professionals from federal, state and local governments, nonprofits, community groups, industry, and academia who work to prevent and mitigate the litter and waste that degrades our coastal and ocean waters. (*Photo above shows attendees gathered during one of the Summit's plenary sessions*). *A list of Summit attendees is provided in Appendix B.*



Together Summit attendees identified and reviewed the sources and impacts of marine debris of particular concern in Virginia - plastics (food and beverage containers and plastic bags), recreational and commercial fishing gear and cigarette butts and balloons - and then identified possible solutions for each type of marine debris. These proposed solutions included new ways to educate people and change their behavior, motivate them through new incentives, and to innovate products and technology that help the marine environment.

Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources, Doug Domenech, opened the Summit by reminding attendees of the importance of addressing the debris issue at its source as well as once trash enters the marine environment. Invited speakers included staff from NOAA and EPA, university scientists, NGOs, industry stakeholders, and state and local governments. There were more than 15 individual

presentations, expert panel discussions, and breakout working sessions. Partner exhibits highlighting marine debris prevention and reduction efforts circled the main meeting space (*photo above*). *The Summit agenda, including links to presentations, is provided in Appendix A, and also available on the Virginia CZM Program Marine Debris web page at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/CoastalZoneManagement/CZMIssuesInitiatives/VirginiaMarineDebris.aspx>.*

Media coverage of the summit included a photo and caption in **Inside Business**. The Summit also was highlighted in the **Virginia Beach City Manager's Update**. See Appendix C.

The Virginia Marine Debris Summit was sponsored by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and the Virginia Aquarium, as well as the Virginia Seafood Council and the Virginia Aquaculture Oyster Growers. Logistical support provided by the Aquarium and its catering subcontractor (Sodexo) included registration management and fee collection, host hotel arrangements, onsite coordination, food and break services, break-out space for workgroups, set-up and cleaning services, and audio-visual equipment use and support. Of particular note, the food service provided by the Aquarium and its caterer, and all activities during the event, generated zero landfill waste – the limited amount of waste from the event was entirely recycled or composted. As a result of the sustainability planning, the Marine Debris Summit received the highest rating from the state as a Virginia Green Certified Event.

# Appendix A – Virginia Marine Debris Summit Agenda

## ***Welcome and Goals of the Workshop***

Mark Swingle, Director of Research & Conservation, Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center (remarks only - no presentation)

### **[Exploring Solutions that Educate, Motivate and Innovate \(pdf\)](#)**

Laura McKay, Program Manager, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

### **[Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Remarks \(pdf\)](#)**

Doug Domenech, Secretary of Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Virginia

### ***Marine Debris – Global Perspectives*** (presentation to be posted soon)

Nicholas Mallos, Conservation Biologist & Marine Debris Specialist, The Ocean Conservancy

### **[Microplastics: Is smaller bigger? \(pdf\)](#)**

Dr. Robert Hale, Professor of Marine Science, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary

## ***Fishing Gear: Commercial and Recreational***

### **[Virginia Fishing Line Recycling Program \(pdf\)](#)**

Alicia Nelson, Fisheries Management, Virginia Marine Resources Commission

### **[Marine Debris: Lost Commercial Fishing Gear in Virginia Waters \(pdf\)](#)**

Dr. Donna Marie Bilkovic, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary

## ***Items of Special Concern: Cigarette Butts & Balloons***

### **[Cigarette Butts as Litter \(pdf\)](#)**

Katie Register, Executive Director, Clean Virginia Waterways of Longwood University  
Bronwen Evans, Director of Litter Programs, Keep America Beautiful

### **[Balloons as Litter: A Rising Concern \(pdf\)](#)**

Christina M. Trapani, Stranding Information Specialist, Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response

## ***Plastics in the Marine Environment: Food and Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags***

### ***Convenient Trash: On the go, on the beach, in the ocean*** (presentation to be posted soon)

Nicholas Mallos, Conservation Biologist & Marine Debris Specialist, The Ocean Conservancy

### **[Marine Debris Solutions: Creating Effective, Collaborative Partnerships to Reduce Litter \(pdf\)](#)**

Ashley Carlson, Consultant, American Chemistry Council

### **[Keep Virginia Beautiful Plastic Bag Campaign \(pdf\)](#)**

Mike Baum, Executive Director, Keep Virginia Beautiful

### **[Recycling Polyethylene Film: Trex Plastic Recycled Lumber \(pdf\)](#)**

Samara Norman, Trex

### ***The Power of a Nickel: The Story of the DC Plastic Bag Fee*** (presentation to be posted soon)

Matt Robinson, Environmental Protection Specialist, Stormwater Management Division, District of Columbia Dept of Environment

## ***Stemming the Tide of Trash: Highlights of Innovative Programs, Solutions and Actions***

### ***Solutions: A Toolbox of Options (pdf)***

*Katie Register, Executive Director, Clean Virginia Waterways of Longwood University*

### ***Do You Sea What I See? (presentation not available)***

*Cris Ausink, HRStorm, Hampton Clean City Commission (presentation not available)*

### ***Stream to Sea (pdf)***

*Wade Blackwood, Director, American Canoeist Association*

### ***Pilot Project to Assess Behavior and Attitudes Regarding Discarded Trash and Ocean Health (pdf)***

*Mark Swingle, Director of Research & Conservation, Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center*

### ***Implementing the Anacostia River Trash TMDL (pdf)***

*Matt Robinson, Environmental Protection Specialist, Stormwater Management Division, District of Columbia Dept of Environment*

### ***NOAA Action to Reduce the Impacts of Marine Debris: Responses to Pervasive Problems and Natural Disaster Events (pdf)***

*Jason Rolfe, Southeast and Caribbean Regional Coordinator, Marine Debris Program, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*

### ***EPA National Trash Free Waters Program: A Strategic Approach to Reduce Trash and Debris in Aquatic Ecosystems (pdf)***

*Robert Benson, Senior Advisor for Aquatic Ecosystem Strategies, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds, United States Environmental Protection Agency*

## Appendix B – Virginia Marine Debris Summit Attendees

### Virginia Marine Debris Summit – February 27 & 28, 2013 - Attendees

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**Total Attendees - 66**

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## Appendix C – Virginia Marine Debris Summit Media Coverage



City of Virginia Beach

March 8, 2013

### *Virginia Marine Debris Summit Nets Plan During Virginia Green Certified Event*



The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center hosted a two-day Virginia Marine Debris Summit, February 27 and 28. Sponsored by the **Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and the Aquarium**, the summit welcomed seventy attendees to Virginia Beach and brought together marine debris experts and target audiences.

**Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Doug Domenech** opened the summit reminding attendees of the importance of addressing the debris issue at its source as well as once trash enters the marine environment. Invited speakers included staff from **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association** and the **Environmental Protection Agency**, university scientists, non-governmental organizations, and state and local governments. The goal of the summit was to begin development of a Marine Debris Management Plan for the state as part of an overall water quality strategy of the **Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO)**. Management options from the summit will be presented to the **Virginia Coastal Policy Team** and to MARCO for consideration. Of particular note, the Aquarium food service provided by Sodexo, and all activities during the event generated zero landfill waste. This means the limited amount of waste from the event was entirely recycled or composted. As a result, the event received the highest rating from the state as a Virginia Green Certified Event.



**Jr. Memorial Commission of the Virginia General Assembly and the Richmond Symphony** will present a public concert on Saturday, April 13, at 8 p.m. at Richmond CenterStage's Carpenter Theater, 600 E. Grace St in Richmond.

The choral and orchestral production will tell the story of the emancipation in historical context and feature national and state performers and music written during and after the Civil War by Virginia composers and artists. A highlight will be a choir of 200 voices from university and college groups across Virginia, together with Richmond's One Voice Chorus and the Richmond Symphony Chorus. Included in that performance will be choral groups from the College of William and Mary, Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University and Regent University.

The concert is free to all but tickets are required. Tickets are limited to two per person and are available on a first come, first served basis from the symphony at [www.richmondsymphony.com](http://www.richmondsymphony.com), (804) 788-1212 and [patronservices@richmondsymphony.com](mailto:patronservices@richmondsymphony.com) through April 5.

Regional event organizers and [askHRgreen.org](http://askHRgreen.org) have designated March through May for the task of cleaning up and greening up Hampton Roads as part of the **Great American Cleanup**.

Cleanup events from Williamsburg to Virginia Beach will be posted during those months at [askhrgreen.org/the-great-american-cleanup-2013/](http://askhrgreen.org/the-great-american-cleanup-2013/).

The Great American Cleanup is a **Keep America Beautiful Initiative** and the largest grassroots community involvement program in the country, according to a press release.



**PROS PONDER A PLAN** The Virginia Aquarium in Virginia Beach hosted a two-day summit last month with the goal of beginning development of a marine debris management plan for the state as part of an overall water-quality strategy of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean. Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Doug Domenech, third from left, opened the summit, reminding attendees of the importance of addressing the debris issue at its source as well as once trash enters the marine environment. He is shown here with, left to right, Laura McKay, program manager, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program; Virginia Aquarium Director of Research & Conservation Mark Swingle; Virginia Witmer, outreach coordinator of the zone management program; and Christiana Trapani, stranding information specialist.