

RAGGED ISLAND CREEK

Boundary Description*

Ragged Island Creek and its tributaries in Isle of Wight County from its confluence with the James River, including Batten Bay, from a line drawn across the creek mouth at N36°56.306'/W76°29.136' to N36°55.469'/W76°29.802', upstream to the Route 17 bridge, and to the following boundary points on each unnamed tributary for a total area of approximately 1.7 square miles:

N36°56.579'/W76°29.454', N36°56.971'/W76°29.680',
N36°57.231'/W76°30.070', N36°57.341'/W76°30.334',
N36°57.514'/W76°30.705', N36°57.159'/W76°31.065',
N36°56.631'/W76°30.676', N36°56.512'/W76°30.260,
N36°56.342'/W76°30.141'.

*(Final language adopted contains an alternative boundary description as noted on the last page of this document)

Observations

On November 12, 2002, David C. Whitehurst as required by DEQ Exceptional Waters guidance conducted a site visit to Ragged Island Creek in Isle of Wight County. A relatively small percentage of the creek and associated marshland is readily accessible by foot. Heavy precipitation and tidal conditions prevented a survey by watercraft.

Ragged Island Creek is a somewhat large embayment on the southern side of the James River near its mouth. As one moves towards the headwaters the creek narrows quickly. The creek is surrounded by tidal marshland whose area is approximately 4.5 square miles and appears relatively unimpacted.



The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) manages the northern side of the creek as a Wildlife Management Area. There is the opportunity to hunt deer in the pine islands and other high ground. Other upland game animals on the area are raccoon, rabbit, fox and

squirrel. There is also the opportunity for waterfowl hunting. As with most other estuaries, Ragged Island Creek is an important nursery for anadromous and marine species of fish as well as seasonal feeding grounds for adult fish.

Boardwalk through DGIF Wildlife Management Area

Ragged Island Creek appears to provide an excellent opportunity to canoe or kayak through a seemingly secluded and remote marshland setting, yet is relatively close to Newport News and Hampton Roads. This close proximity to a metropolitan area while maintaining a feeling of remoteness is, perhaps, one of its most exceptional qualities.



Conclusions

After considering observations made during a visit to the site, staff has concluded that Ragged Island Creek satisfies two of the eligibility criteria to be considered for designation as Exceptional Waters. It possesses an exceptional environmental setting and provides for outstanding recreational opportunities. The aquatic life component of the eligibility criteria, while not exceptional, should be weighed as an important factor in consideration of this water body as Exceptional Waters.

View across the marsh



Alternative Boundary Adopted By State Water Control Board

Ragged Island Creek in Isle of Wight County from its confluence with the James River at a line drawn across the creek mouth at N36°56.306'/W76°29.136' to N36°55.469'/W76°29.802' upstream to a line drawn across the main stem of the creek at N36°57.094'/W76°30.473' to N36°57.113'/W76°30.434', excluding wetlands and impounded areas and including only those tributaries completely contained within the Ragged Island Creek Wildlife Management Area on the northeastern side of the creek.

