

October 25, 2018

**Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
Semiannual Section B.1 Report on Section 312 Evaluation and Metrics
For the Period from April 1, 2018 – September 30, 2018**

	Page
SECTION B.1.A: Section 312 Evaluation Progress	2
SECTION B.1.B: Section 312 Metrics	5

B.1.A. SECTION 312 EVALUATION PROGRESS

Virginia's most recent evaluation began in the fall of 2014 with the Virginia CZM Program responding to 36 evaluation questions regarding administration of the program, protection of coastal habitat, coastal hazards and sea level rise, coastal water quality, coastal-dependent uses, public access, governmental coordination, and descriptions of major achievements and challenges. NOAA then conducted an online survey of Virginia CZM stakeholders and partners, and in May 2015 conducted interviews of key partners on identified target areas. A public meeting was held on May 12, 2015.

Stakeholders interviewed by the NOAA team described the program as *partner-oriented* and *having effective partnerships with local communities and regional and non-profit groups*. "Flexible to meet the needs of locals" and "inclusionary" were some of the ways stakeholders expressed partnership demonstrated by Virginia CZM.

The three target areas identified by the NOAA team to evaluate the Virginia CZM Program were: 1) Restoring and Protecting Coastal Habitats and increasing Public Access, 2) Ocean Planning, and 3) Coastal Resilience. Preliminary accomplishments and recommendations identified by NOAA in each target area are as follows:

Restoring and Protecting Coastal Habitats and Increasing Public Access

Accomplishment: The Public Access Authorities are providing a new tool for public access acquisition and management through a local policy framework enabled by state legislation.

Accomplishment: The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program's place-based restoration efforts have been highly successful, leveraging significant funding from partners and resulting in "on the ground" coastal habitat improvements.

Progress This Period (April – September 2018): VA CZMP initiated a three-year focal area in October 2017 to be implemented by state agencies and Planning District Commissions - Promoting Sustainable Coastal Industries: Shellfish Aquaculture and Ecotourism. Working with two of coastal Virginia's economic strengths, aquaculture and tourism, the VA CZMP is supporting projects that will help boost the shellfish aquaculture and ecotourism industries through research, planning and visual tool development (see Section A report for Tasks 71-75). Working with a variety of stakeholders, grantees are looking at current industry conditions throughout the coastal zone as well as within specific areas to determine ways to improve, expand and create industry as well as public access opportunities. Program visibility is also included since this is a critical time for Congress and the public to understand the value of CZM funds. Ensuring that acknowledgement signs for projects that VA CZMP has funded over the years are still in place, and updated as needed, is critical to program visibility and is one of the subjects of this focal area. The FY17 grants are finishing up and contracts for FY18 grants have been executed. The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission through its CZM technical assistance grant (see Section A report for FY18 Task 41) continues to seek adoption of

a Water Access Authority however progress with each County Board of Supervisors has been slow. This focal area also includes protection of vulnerable natural and community coastal resources through Tasks 82-84 (see Section A report for progress on these tasks).

The Virginia CZM Program completed a FY15 grant for acquisition of about 50 acres on the Eastern Shore which is an addition to the Magothy Bay Natural Area Preserve and is also working on more land acquisition projects on the Eastern Shore of Virginia in Northampton County and the lower Chickahominy using FY 16, 17 and 18 funds. All of these acquisitions will protect migratory songbird habitat and provide public access for bird and other wildlife viewing as well as protect adjacent water quality.

Ocean Planning

Accomplishment: The VA CZMP's leadership in regional ocean planning has brought together diverse stakeholders to plan for the location of future offshore facilities while minimizing user conflicts and impacts to coastal resources.

Recommendation: The NOAA Office for Coastal Management encourages the VA CZMP to continue its leadership role in regional ocean planning and to plan for how the work will move forward over the next five years, including continued emphasis on ways to diversify and leverage funding.

Progress This Period (April – September 2018): The CZM Program Manager continued as the State Co-lead for the Mid-Atlantic RPB until the RPB was disbanded under Executive Order on June 19, 2018. These duties involve steering the direction of the RPB, planning and conducting monthly co-leads' calls as well as monthly calls with the full RPB. Virginia CZM hosted an August 1-2, 2018 in-person meeting of previous RPB members to discuss the possibility of creating a Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum to continue providing a venue for intergovernmental coordination. Throughout this period, the Virginia CZM Program Manager continued to lead the marine habitat data, shifting species, ocean acidification, marine debris and mapping & data work groups.

During this period the PM worked with The Nature Conservancy to develop an FY18 grant project to create visualization tools for the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal that will allow users to see shifts in the distribution of species both seasonally and over longer periods of time. The Marine Debris Work Group was successful in securing \$149k in FY18 grant funds from NOAA's Marine Debris program to expand Virginia's balloon release reduction social marketing campaign to the entire Mid-Atlantic region. The FY17 project to identify Ecologically Rich Areas in the Mid-Atlantic was cancelled in accordance with the new Executive Order's guidance to federal agencies prohibiting federal agency involvement in such efforts.

The VA CZM Manager continued to serve as the Virginia representative on MARCO's Management Board. Materials developed by MARCO are available on the MARCO website at <http://midatlanticocean.org/resources/>.

Coastal Resilience

Accomplishment: The VA CZMP's leadership in coastal resilience has enhanced the capacity of local partners for adaptation planning and promoted the use of living shoreline approaches to enhance community and ecological resilience.

Recommendation: The NOAA Office for Coastal Management recommends that the VA CZMP further define the program's "niche" as it relates to coastal resilience.

The Virginia CZM Program addressed this recommendation by focusing its efforts to build coastal resilience into two key areas identified in the Section 309 Coastal Hazards Strategy. The Strategy targets community resiliency (the built environment) and shoreline resiliency (natural and nature-based features). Projects funded through the Strategy should ultimately lead to new enforceable policies that advance coastal resiliency in these two areas. Resilience-building projects are also being funded through the Virginia CZM Program's Focal Area.

The first year of the Strategy (October 2016 to September 2017) focused on acquiring the data necessary to develop local shoreline management plans, and on providing training for shoreline contractors and local government officials responsible for shoreline management decisions. Two regional projects designed to improve community resilience in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads were also completed.

Progress for the second year (October 2017 to September 2018) included more work to promote better shoreline management and the use of living shorelines, but also two community resilience projects. The first was designed to promote local adoption or expansion of the community rating system under the national flood insurance program, while the second will provide coastal communities with a tool to comprehensively evaluate their current resiliency efforts.

New Coastal resilience projects (October 2018 to September 2019) include the following:

- evaluating living shoreline performance
- refining the shoreline management model and running new analyses
- supporting regional adaptation planning in Northern Virginia
- analyzing first floor elevations in Hampton Roads
- developing a Tidal Shoreline Policies Handbook
- shoreline management training for local officials
- shoreline evolution analyses, evaluating localities for Community Rating System participation
- promoting the beneficial use of dredged material

B.1.B. SECTION 312 METRICS

The Virginia CZM Program drafted new Section 312 metrics for the period of October 2018 to September 2023. The metrics address Government Coordination and Decision Making (Performance Measure 4.a), Public Access (Performance Measure 8.g), and coastal hazards (Performance Measure 11, as required by NOAA). In August 2018, the draft metrics were submitted to NOAA. The Virginia CZM Program is making revisions to the draft metrics based on NOAA comments and will submit final metrics in December 2018.