

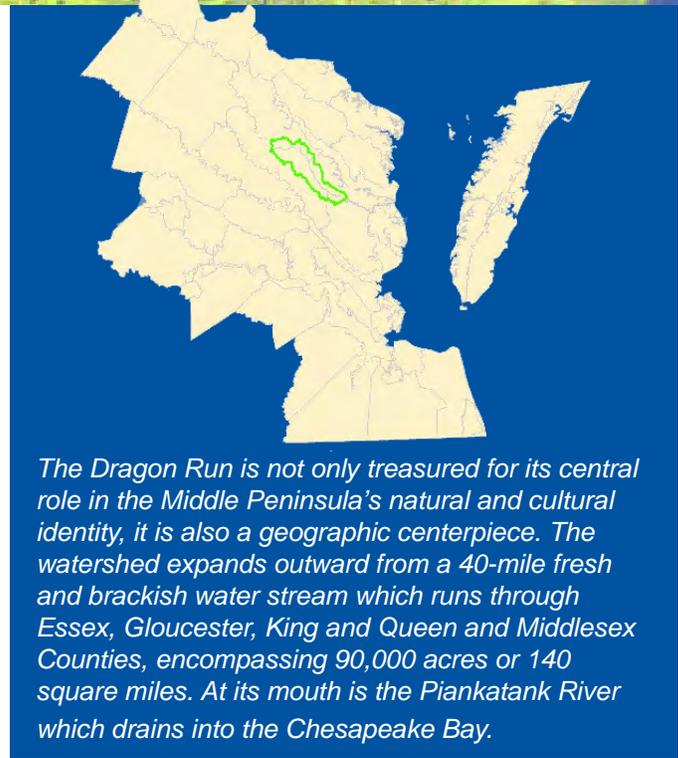
Keeping the Dragon Alive and Well: Special Area Management Planning in the Dragon Run Watershed

Photo courtesy of Friends of Dragon Run.

The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve have had a long-standing commitment to preserving the cultural and natural character of the Dragon Run watershed and its communities, while encouraging sustainable local economies. For over twenty years, the programs have partnered with the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, the Dragon Run Steering Committee, and Middle Peninsula localities in an effort to ensure that the nearly pristine Dragon Run Watershed remains well protected.

In 2001, this partnership led to the development of the Dragon Run Special Area Management Plan (SAMP), funded by the Virginia CZM Program through federal Coastal Zone Management Act grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Development of the SAMP successfully brought together landowners and others interested in preserving the traditional uses and rural character of the Dragon Run. Together the SAMP partnership developed and continues to implement a watershed management plan. This plan supports community-based efforts to preserve the cultural, historic, and natural character of the Dragon Run, while preserving property rights and traditional land uses. The SAMP is helping ensure a healthy environment and healthy communities.



This accomplishments fact sheet was originally produced by the Virginia CZM Program for a June 2012 event to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the CZMA and to highlight the accomplishments made possible through this federal funding.

Dragon Run SAMP Results

- Developed baseline Dragon Run Watershed Aquatic Living Resources Inventory.
- Completed Dragon Run Watershed Management Plan, adopted by Essex, Gloucester and King and Queen Counties.
- Revised King and Queen County zoning ordinance based on Watershed Management Plan recommendations.
- Incorporated substantial section on Dragon Run protection in Gloucester County's comprehensive plan.*
- Incorporated Watershed Management Plan recommendations in Essex County's comprehensive plan.*
- Adopted Middlesex County comprehensive plan that includes Watershed Management Plan recommendations and recognizes the importance of other land-use tools recommended by the SAMP.*
- Protected 1131 acres in the Dragon Run watershed through acquisition or easement, including 121 acres in King and Queen County, acquired with VA CZM funds, which is now part of the Virginia Estuarine and Coastal Research Reserve System and managed by CBNERRVA.
- Established annual Dragon Run Day to keep the community involved and updated in the protection of the watershed.
- Encouraged and increased dialogue between research and management community working in the watershed including a Dragon Run Natural Resources Symposium hosted by CBNERR and continued representation of CBNERR staff residing in watershed on the Dragon Run Steering Committee.
- Conducted multi-year, enhanced water quality monitoring in support of state and Bay program water quality standards assessment.

* pending adoption

For more details about the accomplishments of this initiative:
Beth Polak
Virginia CZM Program
(804) 698-4260
beth.polak@deq.virginia.gov
<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/CoastalZoneManagement/CZMIssuesInitiatives/VirginiaSpecialAreaManagementPlanning.aspx>



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