

Final Report

FY 2016 Task 1.02

Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program –
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Virginia CZM Program Outreach & Social Marketing

October 2016 – September 2017
(extension to December 31, 2018)



Funding for the Virginia CZM Program Outreach Coordinator staff position and the outreach and social marketing products outlined in this report were funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through Grant # NA16NOS4190171 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended. The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program is a network of state agencies and coastal localities. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality serves as the lead agency for the network.



FY 2016 Task 1.02

Virginia Coastal Program Outreach and Social Marketing Final Report

October 1, 2016 – December 31, 2018

The FY 16 Virginia CZM Program Outreach and Social Marketing grant supported the following products:

Social Marketing to Reduce Marine Debris:

One of the near term actions identified in the Virginia Marine Debris Reduction Plan was design and implementation of a social marketing campaign targeting behaviors that will reduce balloon litter in the marine environment.

Balloons were identified as one of the most harmful items to wildlife. The Virginia CZM Program received \$50,000 grant from the FY14 NOAA Marine Debris Program to pursue this work. After conducting research to better understand who plans balloon release events – and, most importantly, why – the FY 16 Task 1.02 CZM Program Outreach and Social Marketing grant enabled the Virginia CZM Outreach Coordinator to work with Clean Virginia Waterways and other Virginia CZM partners to design and implement a pilot campaign, Joyful Send-off. This campaign encourages couples to select litter-free alternatives to balloon releases. The pre-campaign research and findings, and the design and implementation of Joyful Send-off as well as preliminary results is documented in a final report to the NOAA MD Program - [Balloon Release Research in Virginia & Reducing Balloon Debris through Community-Based Social Marketing](#) - which is also submitted as a Virginia CZM grant product under FY16 Task 1.03.



Specifically, the Virginia CZM grant enabled the Outreach Coordinator to work with partners to produce the following:

- A campaign strategy to convey positive messages and behavior to a bridal audience, which will also engage other wedding planners and venues.
- Printed campaign media, including a Venue Kit for in person delivery to venues primarily in Virginia Beach and Norfolk area.



- Digital media, including a website - www.JoyfulSendoff.org, as well as a balloon debris webpage on Virginia CZM website; posts to campaign Facebook page; and a series of videos which can be viewed on the campaign website.



- Display panels highlighting the Joyful Send-off campaign and balloon debris.

- Articles on the Joyful Send-off campaign, such as for Virginia Beach Hotel Association Fall 2017 newsletter - <http://files.constantcontact.com/511b18e6301/e5c084c9-1cc7-44d6-b9e2-9adc36e2df1a.pdf?ver=1506710518000>, Fall/Winter issue of Virginia Coastal Bride magazine - <http://www.coastalvirginiamag.com/Bride-Virtual-Magazine/> and CVW staff were interviewed for an article in the Sept 2017 issue of Chesapeake Bay magazine - <https://www.chesapeakebaymagazine.com/columns/2017/9/15/a-ballooning-problem?rq=balloons>.

- A final report for the FY14 NOAA MD grant for the Joyful Send-off campaign.
- Submission of an abstract to present on the Joyful Send-off campaign at the International Marine Debris Conference in March 2018. Funds remaining in the grant enabled the Outreach Coordinator to participate in the 6th International Marine Debris Conference.



The Outreach Coordinator also helped draft a successful Letter of Intent to the NOAA Marine Debris Program for FY18 funding to continue the Joyful Send-off campaign in Virginia and expand to the other Mid-Atlantic states of New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware.



Social Marketing to Increase Native Plant Use:

The Outreach Coordinator continued to co-chair and coordinate the activities of the Virginia Native Plants Marketing Partnership, working with members to implement an Action Plan, which describes the activities that partners are collectively taking, or can take, to leverage resources and the diversity of our partnership to advance the mission of the partnership (www.plantvirginiannatives.org/virginia-native-plant-marketing-partnership-action-plan/). The mission is *to identify and prioritize opportunities to collaborate on Virginia native plant communication and marketing efforts and form cohesive and coordinated messaging and strategies to increase local availability and use of native plants state-wide for their many ecological benefits.*

Below are highlights of this work:

- Organized a Virginia Native Plants Marketing Partnership meeting in January 2017 to brief and request feedback from state agencies on the Partnership's draft Action Plan and working together on a process for implementing protocols or guidelines for native plant use on state lands, with the Commonwealth leading by example. Growers and plant providers at the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show said demand for natives is increasing, in part due to government requirements. In follow-up, worked with VA Department of Conservation and Recreation and VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to draft recommendations for VA Department of Environmental Quality Director to forward to the Secretary of Natural Resources to increase native plant use on state owned and managed properties through development of shared protocols or guidelines.
- Participated on the State Pollinator Protection Strategy Plan Committee and shared through a presentation and discussion, Virginia CZM Program's native plant marketing efforts and opportunities for collaboration on recommendations as laid out in the plan. The Committee submitted their report to the Virginia General Assembly in July 2018.
- Designed new website – <http://www.PlantVirginiaNatives.org> – home for the Virginia Native Plants Marketing Partnership, a central hub for Virginia native plant information and host to the Plant ES Natives and Plant Central Rapp Natives campaign pages. A native plant marketing issue page is still available on the Virginia CZM Program website and links to the new website. A post on the DEQ Facebook page to highlight the availability of the new website was “performing better than 95% of other posts on the page” according to DEQ PR staff.

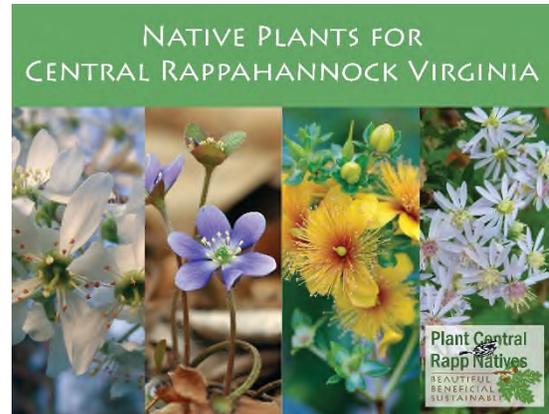
- Distributed Summer Edition of Virginia Native Plant Marketing E-News, highlighting launch of the Central Rapp campaign and guide, and revision and reprinting of the ES, SEVA, and NOVA guides.
- Presented a webinar in Jan 2017 on native plant benefits and marketing for the Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association (posted on VNLA website for continuing education credit).
- An ad on habitat benefits of natives, designed and funded by CZM, appeared in the Jan/Feb/Mar 2017 VNLA newsletter.
- Presented to the HRPDC Regional Environmental Committee in December 2016 on the Virginia Native Plants Marketing Partnership and coastal regional marketing efforts, including the Southeast native plant guide.

The screenshot shows a newsletter page with several sections of text and a large advertisement at the bottom. The text includes updates on regional coordinators, a webinar, and upcoming events. The advertisement, titled "We all need pollinators, and they need more Virginia natives!", features four images of pollinators on native plants and provides information on the benefits of native plants for wildlife and agriculture. It includes a website link: www.dgcr.virginia.gov/habitat. At the bottom of the advertisement, it states: "All sponsored by the Virginia Wildlife Conservation Program with funding from NOAA and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, members of the Virginia Native Plant Marketing Partnership." The date "January / February / March 2017" is printed at the bottom of the newsletter page.

The Outreach Coordinator continued to work closely with the coordinators and steering teams of the current regional native plant campaigns to provide assistance where needed and to encourage communication and sharing of resources between the campaigns. An overview of the regional marketing efforts is available at <https://www.plantvirginianatives.org/virginia-regional-native-plant-campaigns/>. All regional native plant guides noted below are downloadable from this website.

- Revised design and coordinated printing of the 3rd edition of Native Plants for Accomack and Northampton guide in December 2016. Virginia CZM Program funds to print the guide (FY14 Task 1.03 - \$4,921.54) leveraged DEQ water quality grant funds (\$1,699.46). Availability of the Eastern Shore guide, as well as the Southeastern Virginia guide were highlighted in an article in Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore Newsletter in February 2017.

- Completed design and coordinated publication of the 1st edition of Natives Plants for Central Rappahannock in April 2017 (printing of 5,000 copies funded through FY16, Task 50 to George Washington Regional Commission). Virginia CZM Program funds to print the guide leveraged \$4,000 in funds from Stafford County, Prince William Wildflower Society, and an anonymous donor. In addition to the guide, also worked with regional partners to prepare for the Plant Central Rapp Natives campaign launch in April 2017, including design of the campaign logo, a campaign exhibit, and website (www.PlantCentralRappNatives.org).



- Coordinated printing of 3rd edition of the Native Plants of Northern Virginia guide in May 2017. Funds for this printing of 5,000 copies were raised through sales of the guide by the regional campaign partners, which leveraged \$3,500 in funds from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the local chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. Appeared with Northern Virginia Regional Commission staff on the cable TV program “Virginia Report” in September 2017. The show focused on the Plant NOVA Natives campaign. An article in the Northern Virginia Community Foundation newsletter about the campaign, which is now a recipient of private donations through the foundation, mentioned CZM funding support for the campaign.



- Coordinated a 2nd edition printing of the Native Plants for Southeast Virginia guide in June 2017, just months after the first edition was published in October 2016 (design of the guide was funded under FY16 Task 1.02, and printed with funds remaining in FY13, Task 1.03). Regional partners contributed all funds needed for the 2nd edition (from the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Hampton Roads Storm Committee, Lynnhaven River Now, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Wetlands Watch, local chapters of Virginia Native Plants Society, and Virginia Tech). A regional partner agreed to serve as the fiscal agent for sales of the 2nd edition as well as future editions. With publication of the first edition in October 2106, an article appeared in the Virginian-Pilot in Nov (http://pilotonline.com/life/greener-living-book-on-native-plants-is-a-gift-for/article_58e0b6ff-

da36-505a-9983-57ea4b29ccef.htm). The Outreach Coordinator received over 1,000 e-mails within a week with requests for a copy of the guide. The guide also received a favorable review in the Botanical Society of America's Spring 2017 *Plant Science Bulletin* (<http://cms.botany.org/file.php?file=SiteAssets/publications/psb/issues/PSB-2017-63-1.pdf>). Over 23,000 copies have been distributed.

- Funds remaining in this task were used to print the 1st edition of the new Native Plants for Virginia's Capital Region guide for the upcoming Plant RVA Natives campaign (designed through FY18, Task 1.02). Virginia CZM Program funds leveraged \$7,000 in partner contributions to print 17,000 copies. The guide is downloadable from <https://www.plantvirginianatives.org/plant-rva-natives>.



General Virginia CZM Program Outreach:

The Outreach Coordinator worked with Virginia CZM staff and partners to produce the following publications:

- Coordinated with Virginia CZM staff to provide the Virginia CZM Program Chapter for the 2016 DEQ 305(b)/303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report.
- Worked with The Nature Conservancy staff to reprint the Eastern Shore beach nesting bird brochure in December 2017.
- Worked with Virginia CZM staff to provide content for the CSO fact sheet on Virginia's FY15 funding.
- The Outreach Coordinator began production of the Fall 2017 issue of *Virginia Coastal Zone Management* magazine (this issue postponed and completed as Spring/Summer 2018 issue under FY17, Task 1.02).

The Outreach Coordinator worked with Virginia CZM staff and partners to coordinate the following events, trainings and exhibits between October 2016 and September 2017:

- Organized and presented at a session on native plant marketing projects at the

November 2016 Coastal Partners Workshop – all PP’s from the workshop posted at www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/CoastalZoneManagement/ReportsPublications/2016VirginiaCoastalPartnersWorkshopPresentations.aspx

- Partnered with CVW staff to coordinate Community-Based Social Marketing Workshop led by Doug McKenzie-Mohr in June to build capacity of partners engaged in future marine debris reduction campaigns – 38 partners from across the Mid-A region attended the workshop, and another 40 participated in a CBSM overview provided by McKenzie-Mohr.

Exhibits included:

- Back to the Bay event in June 2017, during Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week, at Mason Neck State Park with DEQ and Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW) (public action)
- Garden Club of Virginia Symposium in September 2017 with CVW (marine debris)
- Annual VNLA Field Day in Smithfield in July 2017 (native plants)
- Virginia State Fair in September and October 2017 (native plants).
- Provided CZM handouts for the annual Environmental Education Conference attendee bags – metal straws and joyful Send-off info sheet and calling card.

The Outreach Coordinator maintained the Virginia CZM Program website - www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/CoastalZoneManagement.aspx – including updates to better highlight program successes. Also worked with Virginia CZM Program staff to provide feedback on NOAA pages highlighting VACZM’s project successes, and drafting additional possible stories for the site. The coordinator also provided content for DEQ Twitter and Facebook posts highlighting Virginia CZM’s efforts, including in native marketing and ocean planning. Attended DEQ Social Media-Communication Planning Training in March 2017.