

Promoting Ecotourism to Support Conservation of Conserved Lands and Resilient Communities

NOAA Grant: NA20NOS4190207

Grant Year 2020, Task 72



Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission
Northern Neck Planning District Commission
Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission
PlanRVA (Richmond Regional Planning District Commission)

This project was funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through Grant #NA20NOS4190207 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.

**Fiscal Year 2020 Promoting Ecotourism to Support
Conservation of Conserved Lands and Resilient
Communities Report**

November, 2021

Prepared For:

Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
629 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Prepared By:

Accomack – Northampton Planning District Commission
23372 Front Street
Accomac, Virginia 23301
(757) 787 - 2936

NOAA Grant No. NA20NOS4190207
Grant Year 2020
Task 72

Prepared by:



Jessica S. Steelman
Coastal Planner

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Summary | 4 |
| Products and Outcomes..... | 5 |
| Ecotourism Steering Committee Outcomes..... | 5 |
| Implementation of Marketing Strategies and Development of VTC Application..... | 7 |
| Water Trails Website Maintenance..... | 10 |
| Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide Course | 10 |
| Ecotourism Business Resiliency Training | 12 |
| Integration of Lower Chickahominy into Water Trails Website | 13 |
| Development of the Virginia Oyster Trail Communities Program..... | 13 |
| Water Trail Launch Sites Enhancement Plan | 14 |
| Appendix A..... | 17 |
| VTC Recovery MLP June 2021 Application..... | 17 |
| Appendix B | 27 |
| New Region On-Boarding Packet..... | 27 |
| Appendix C | 35 |
| VWT Boiler Plate Response for Joining..... | 35 |
| Appendix D..... | 36 |
| VOT Communities Program..... | 36 |

Summary

The first year of this project focal area has continued to build off and expand upon efforts developed and created in years 1 – 3 of the Ecotourism initiatives through grant numbers NA17NOS4190152, NA18NOS4190152, and NA19NOS4190152 has combined tourism, stewardship, and economic development in a sustainable way to grow the economy while minimizing ecological impacts and planning for and implementing resiliency. The Eastern Shore, Middle Peninsula, and Northern Neck Planning District Commissions (PDCs) welcomed and onboarded Plan RVA (Richmond Regional Planning Commission) this year. Together, the four Coastal PDC partners focused on diverse coastal ecosystems, engaged local stakeholders to avoid use conflicts, and created a sustainable plan for economic, resilience, and educational initiatives that need long-term planning in order to survive and thrive. The primary means of sustainable planning during this year included implementation of the marketing matrix initiatives through the awarded Virginia Tourism Corporation Marketing Leverage Program (VTC MLP) grant, the development and implementation of Ecotourism Business Resiliency Trainings, and the expansion of the Virginia Water Trails website and associated assets through to the Lower Chickahominy region.

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) staff continued to organize the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (CVEA) Steering Committee (the Committee), manage the VTC MLP contract, facilitate the [Virginia Ecotour Guide Certification Program](#), host the ESVA Business Resiliency Training, and ensure continuity among all aspects of the overall project. The Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC), known as Virginia's River Country, continued to partner with local organizations and stakeholders to identify assets and plan for continued water trail expansion and ecotourism improvement. MPPDC staff participated in Committee reviews of marketing materials, implemented a region-specific Ecotourism Business Resiliency Training, and engaged with a marketing consultant to promote the region's ecotourism assets. The Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC) staff focused on the development of outreach materials such as blogs for the Virginia Water Trails website and promotion of the Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide (VCEG) course, presented on tourism and marketing as a guest speaker for the VCEG course, engaged with the Committee to develop agendas and guest speakers, and developed an Ecotourism Business Resiliency Training for the region. PlanRVA took this first year to learn about the Virginia Water Trails website and associated assets, begin development of their water trails, and engage stakeholders regionwide to ensure no use-conflict, and receive feedback on their efforts to feature water trails and public access points. PlanRVA also participated in Committee quarterly meetings, offering insight on marketing materials and providing outreach to the region for promotion of resiliency efforts and the VCEG course.

Positive impacts of this project (built off a previous 3-year focal area) continued to be realized in the regions and through implementation of the marketing matrix through the VTC MLP grant and partner efforts, increasing traffic to the VWT website through various social media

platforms and advertisement in region-wide publications such as the Blude Ridge Outdoors Magazine and National Association for Interpreters Chesapeake Chat. The synergistic effect of working together across regional boundaries produced results on a large scale, created a sustainable ecological and economic model, and showed an environmental and economic return on investment for years to come.

Products and Outcomes

The following sections describe the activities completed during grant year 2020 and their current and anticipated outcomes.

Ecotourism Steering Committee Outcomes

A-NPDC staff continued to organize and facilitate collaborative meetings of the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (formerly the Rural Coastal Virginia Alliance) Ecotourism Steering Committee (the Committee) established during grant number NA17NOS4190152 in grant year 2017. Minutes can be found on the [Water Trails page](#) of the A-NPDC website.

Mission

“The Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance exists to present unique ecotourism activities and destinations for locals and visitors to easily enjoy. The alliance partners embrace sustainable, vibrant, healthy ecosystems, and a resilient, diversified, nature-based economy.”

Vision

“Connecting locals and visitors to world-class ecotourism destinations.”

The Committee held four quarterly meetings during the grant year. The Q1 meeting involved discussion of future plans for ownership/maintenance of the Virginia Water Trails (VWT) website asset and identified the Committee’s new name – Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (CVEA) – to be inclusive of non-rural regions, such as Richmond where PlanRVA (Richmond Regional Commission) is a new member to the CVEA and VWT initiatives, along with any potential new partners that may not be located in a rural area.

The Q2 meeting featured guest speakers from Virginia Trails Alliance (VTA), Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), United for a Chesapeake National Recreation Area, and Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC). A standard “appropriate use” statement was drafted and finalized (after the meeting) by Committee members for social media posts from external users.

The Q3 meeting involved discussion of the VWT advertisement opportunities, how to interpret and use website, including site analytics and additional analysis tools such as keyword hits and

analysis of competitive sites. Ecotourism Business Resiliency Trainings were discussed, where the Middle Peninsula completed their training, the Eastern Shore was in final planning stages and invitations were sent for the upcoming training, and the Northern Neck was in planning stages with training anticipated for later in the third quarter. Additional topics of discussion included VWT blog updates, development and submission of the Summer 2021 VTC Marketing Leverage Program grant application (Appendix A), Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide course curriculum and upcoming 2022 iteration, and preliminary sign design for launch site enhancement plan deliverable.

The Q4 meeting resulted in high productivity and product status updates. Discussion included setting a VWT Events Policy featuring Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide events and adding a link to the VWT Events website page for non-Certified Ecotour Guides to request posting of their event(s). Regarding VWT News posts, the Committee designated two new categories for blog posts – *History & Culture*; and *Wildlife & Birding* – to align with efforts promoted by the VWT. The Committee created the 2022 Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide course and reviewed and finalized the advertising flyer; advertising will be scheduled for the Fall. The Committee also reviewed the design of the VWT rack card (a Virginia Tourism Corporation [VTC] Marketing Leverage Program [MLP] deliverable as part of the VWT marketing matrix), including visual and graphic updates, rewording, and adding partner logos. The Committee was not awarded the Summer 2021 VTC MLP grant, but discussed potential marketing efforts for upcoming MLP funding rounds, including video footage for a more experiential VWT website and travel influencer consultant.

This group worked with the regional partners, including the Virginia CZM Program, Virginia Tourism Corporation and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, to guide the Virginia Ecotour Guide Certification course, expanding it to include past certified guides as guest speakers to share their experience since becoming a certified guide with an ecotourism business. The Committee also developed a *New Region Onboarding Packet* (Appendix B) and a boiler plate statement (Appendix C) for potential new regions joining the CVEA and Virginia Water Trails.

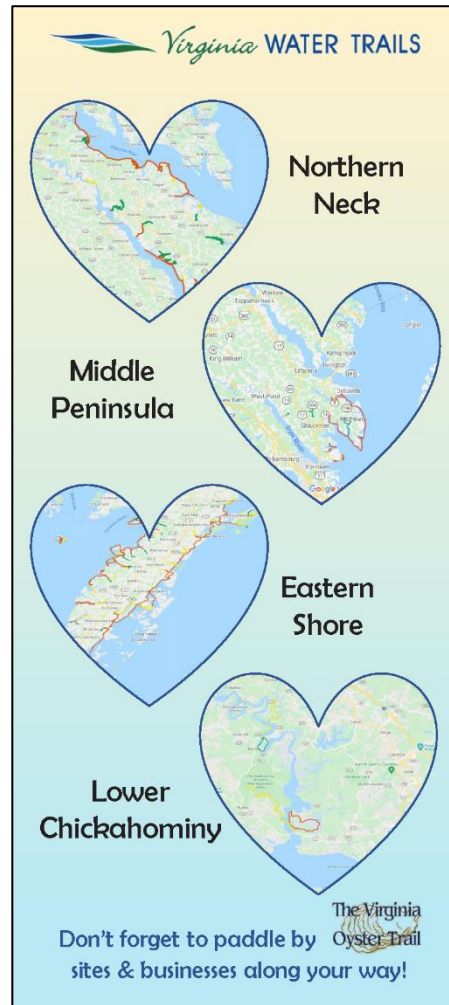
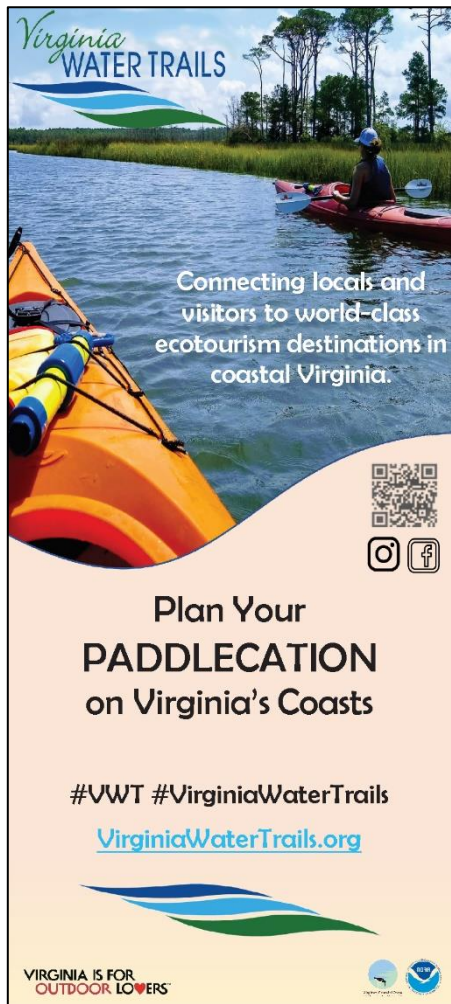
This Committee ensured that all projects emphasize community development, environmental stewardship, entrepreneurial growth, health attributes, resiliency, and the cultural integration of the coastal communities. Fundamental to their outreach, economic, and educational attributes, is a focus on increasing the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and therefore the ecological and economic benefits of wetlands, waterways, oysters, and wildlife.

The Steering Committee met quarterly throughout the grant year on the 12th day of the following months: November, 2020; February 2021; May 2021; and August 2021. Meeting agendas can be viewed [here](#) and meeting minutes can be viewed [here](#).

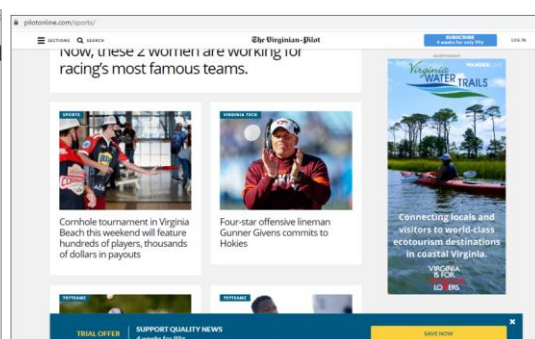
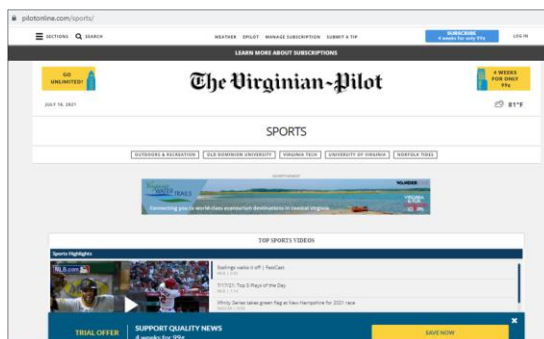
Implementation of Marketing Strategies and Development of VTC Application

A-NPDC staff contracted a media consultant with Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) Marketing Leverage Program (MLP) grant funds that were awarded in October 2020. The media consultant – Scharle Outdoor Recreation, LLC (SORC) – was contracted for a portion of the VTC MLP grant period, March 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022. During this time, SORC delivered 24 blogs that included on-site visits to the coastal regions of the VWT for blog content, published these blogs to the [Virginia Water Trails Trail News](#) webpage, provided website content management and social media management to include: three (3) [Facebook](#) posts per week, one article share, one VWT blog/website content share, and one original content post. Also delivered were three [Instagram](#) posts per week, two photo shares, and one original content post per week, along with weekly comment monitoring and follower engagement for both social media platforms. Design layout was completed for a Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine advertisement, a digital VWT ad, and a digital VWT event ad. Five GoPro videos were edited and published as 1-2 minute experiential trail videos from the viewpoint of the bow of a kayak. These were featured in blogs on the VWT website and hosted on [YouTube](#). SORC has embraced the mission and vision of the Virginia Water Trails, offered tutorials to Committee members for posting partner blogs, and responded effectively to constructive criticism, all with punctuality and positive communication throughout the grant year. In addition to these achieved marketing milestones, the MPPDC staff also contracted with a media consultant (Consociate Media) to implement a portion of the Marketing Strategy and Action Plan for the Middle Peninsula, including posting at least seven (7) blogs to the Virginia Water Trails *Trail News* webpage. In total, they delivered eleven (11) posts in all, which were also shared on Facebook channels for [Virginia Water Trails – Middle Peninsula](#) and MPPDC.

In addition to these marketing efforts, each of the PDC partners of the Committee has published four (4) blogs for their region to the [Virginia Water Trails Trail News](#) page. The Committee has fabricated Virginia Water Trail rack cards to be distributed to tourism centers and chambers of commerce across the coastal region. These rack cards are still in design phase, with updates to include the use of the Virginia Water Trails design package aligning font and colors with the VWT logo for brand consistency. Advertisements promoting the Virginia Water Trails were featured in the Rappahannock Record and as digital impressions (333,333 total) in a 4-day span across the pilotonline.com, dailypress.com, and virginia gazette.com suite of sites. Additional marketing initiatives included an article featured in the [National Association for Interpreter's Newsletter: Chesapeake Chat](#) Summer 2021 edition, titled *How to Be an Eco-Friendly Paddler: Kayaking Virginia's Environmentally-Sensitive Areas*. The final marketing material produced during this grant year were high-quality, UV resistant, VWT decals for distribution at events, to guides, etc.



Above: Draft images of the front & back of the VWT Rack Card



Above: Screenshots of VWT Digital Impression from The Virginia Pilot, Summer 2021

Kinnamoak - Virginia **RAPPAHANNOCK RECORD** July 15, 2021 • B3

Go Native—Grow Native

Submitted by Betty Washington, Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

Narrow-leaf mountain-mint, *Pyrolanthus tenuiflorus*

All of the species of mountain-mints are vernal pollinators and highly fragrant. They are always "burning" with hot, spicy, and sometimes medicinal fragrance and their hardworn foliage and long-lasting flowers make them a favorite in the garden. Of the 12 species in Virginia, narrow-leaf mountain-mint is one of the most attractive and is the easiest to grow. It is found in both full sun and in the shade, in moist and most other situations in Virginia.

It is common in the mountains and piedmont but more frequently in the coastal plain. Narrow-leaf mountain-mint is a native perennial wildflower found in a variety of habitats from wet to dry meadows, fields, fields, open woodlands, prairie and scrub, and even along roadsides and in the garden. It is tolerant of a variety of soils from dry to wet, sandy to clay, rocky to loam, and even in shade.

Although it will tolerate shade, a perfect full sun and has long and in shade with purple, to dark purple, aromatic foliage that is often used for medicinal purposes.

For the common name suggest, this species can be distinguished from other mountain-mints by its stem, linear leaves that are almost oval-like. The leaves are less than 1" wide (not other much narrower) and are soft, smooth with no hairs, rarely being the opposite. Each leaf has a distinct notch and pair of 12-pointed, very long, almost oval-like, which contains hair-like other along the stem.

Narrow-leaf mountain-mint typically grows 2 to 3 feet tall and is a delicate, very bushy plant. It is a delicate, very bushy plant with many other perennials that prefer light, moist soil. It has the narrow roots that can spread to form solid colonies, attractive to pollinators that prefer light, moist soil.

The small white to pale lavender flowers are held in dense clusters of small flowers. The flowers have numerous stamens and are long and tubular. The petals of each flower are two lips, an upper and lower lip, and a long and in shade with purple, to dark purple, aromatic foliage that is often used for medicinal purposes.

The narrow-leaf mountain-mint is a delicate, very bushy plant with many other perennials that prefer light, moist soil. It has the narrow roots that can spread to form solid colonies, attractive to pollinators that prefer light, moist soil.

Narrow-leaf mountain-mint is a delicate, very bushy plant with many other perennials that prefer light, moist soil. It has the narrow roots that can spread to form solid colonies, attractive to pollinators that prefer light, moist soil.

Kids aboard Fridays at Steamboat Era Museum

From 10:30 a.m. to noon on Friday, youth ages 3-16 are having fun aboard the Steamboat Era at the Steamboat Era Museum, 156 King Charles Drive, Irvington.

During the age-appropriate tours, everyone gets a chance to turn the wheel and ring the bell in the pilot house, play games popular during the Steamboat Era and make a wood steamboat which they put in the water, and examine historic Stone Harbor.

Children must be accompanied by an adult. Kids' activities will be held Friday through August 20. The fee is \$5 per child. Adults pay for the tour. To reserve a space, call 828-6881 or email shops@SteamboatEraMuseum.com.

Children and unaccompanied adults are asked to wear masks indoors. Seating stations will be available before turning the wheel in the pilot house and playing with the toys, said Hampton.

AREA EVENTS

Carnival grand prize raffle

Raffles are set for the 6th Kinnamoak Forum's 2021 Grand Prize Drawing, 2021 Cheryl Coleman Q&A Book Launch.

Three-day tickets will be sold at the Kinnamoak Forum from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday through Sunday, 24 at the Kinnamoak Forum, 71 School Street, Kinnamoak. Tickets are \$10 each and also may be purchased from any Kinnamoak dealer and at most stores throughout Kinnamoak.

Ward sale

The Loudoun Virginia Historical Society (LVHS), 8346 Mary Hall Road, Leeswater will hold a yard sale from 8 a.m. to noon July 31. Individuals can rent a space for \$10 to accommodate one standard vehicle—on speciality vehicles, van, or pickup—and 10 feet of the width of the vehicle to display their goods. Tables are not provided. Vendor space must be reserved in advance.

The main yard sale will feature a large inventory of kitchen and bathroom small items, toys, decorative accessories and other household goods from multiple homes. LVHS is not collecting any more donations. To rent a space, visit www.loudounva.org or call chairwoman Barbara George, 703-1245, or the LVHS Office, 703-1245.

Warm, dry growing season is beneficial for blackberries

Virginia grown blackberries made their mark in July and local forums are reporting an excellent crop this year despite a sweltering start to summer. The Virginia Fruit Bureau (VFB) reports that the 2021 season is off to a great start.

Blackberry bushes produce fruit biennially, and the outcome of weather over the past 18 months has dictated the quality of this year's crop, said Cheryl Coleman, VFB's executive director. "The weather in 2020 was a perfect storm of events that resulted in a large quantity of berries, but the quality was not as good as we would like to see," she said.

"A lot of good things fall into place, but the most critical part is that temperatures were moderate in spring," Coleman said. "Virginia's climate is well-suited for blackberries, which are very similar to sweet corn and tomatoes in that they don't need the hot weather."

Agribusiness grows up to seven types of blackberries each year. Low-mountain varieties like Cherokee and Black Magic allow them to harvest blackberries through October.

Agribusiness sells its berries mostly in Harrisonburg, where the berries are sold for north to Baltimore. Cooper and his team will harvest 100,000 pounds of berries from July 17 to 11.

Local farmers of Washington County and Harrison County are also growing blackberries as a large and sweet crop of the season. However, who grows a 12-inch variety, which is usually ready to eat with processing, but is not ready for eating and allowing them to grow in the garden.

Kim Williams, County Extension Director, said she has seen a lot of interest in blackberries as a large and sweet crop of the season. However, who grows a 12-inch variety, which is usually ready to eat with processing, but is not ready for eating and allowing them to grow in the garden.

Above: Screenshot of VWT Ad in the Rappahannock Record, July 2021

Virginia WATER TRAILS

Connecting locals and visitors to world-class ecotourism destinations in coastal Virginia.

VirginiaWaterTrails.org

WANDER.LOVE

15 Jumps | 2 Drops | Advanced Rappelling | Big Falls

HOOCH

Virginia WATER TRAILS

Connecting locals and visitors to world-class ecotourism destinations in coastal Virginia.

VirginiaWaterTrails.org

WANDER.LOVE

Open for LEPIC FAMILY FUN IN HAGERSTOWN & WASHINGTON COUNTY

Get Adventures at our 5 National Parks and 8 State Parks

Visit HAGERSTOWN

301-791-3246 / VISITHAGERSTOWN.COM

STARR HILL BREWERY

SAY IT AIN'T SOUR VARIETY PACK

StarrHill.com

Thurmont, Maryland - Get Away to the Mountains!

WE'VE BEEN SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR DECADES!

Wineries | Dining | Shopping | Hiking | Orchards

ThurmontMainStreet.com

Above: Screenshots of VWT Ad in the Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine, June & July 2021

Water Trails Website Maintenance

A-NPDC staff contracted a website maintenance and IT consultant – Precision Legal Marketing (PLM) – for the length of this grant year. PLM was first tasked with transitioning the VWT website to a new server and updating user accounts. PLM managed back-end website updates, security, and plugins for the VWT website. Additional services included tracking analytics and reviewing with A-NPDC staff to relay to the Committee, minor updates such as adding links to email sign-up forms and a new event calendar with the accessibility to “add event to my calendar”, and larger tasks such as adding two new pages – one for the [Virginia Oyster Trail](#) and one for the [Lower Chickahominy Region](#) – and updating the comprehensive list of [Virginia Certified Ecotour Guides](#). A-NPDC staff implemented minor website maintenance such as updating the mission statement, CVEA name, and VWT hashtags (#VWT #VirginiaWaterTrails). PLM was available to address any IT questions or concerns expressed by the Committee and was able to maintain smooth operations of the VWT website throughout the grant year. Efforts to ensure sustainability of the website also included development of cost-estimates for expenses and a *New Region On-Boarding Packet*, as well as a generic response for regions that inquire how they can join the VWT website and map asset ([all can be found here](#)).

Throughout the grant year, each PDC continued to maintain, as needed, their regional pages and map assets. The MPPDC staff made updates to the Middle Peninsula landing page and map as needed throughout the project; photos were added to a handful of launch sites and launch site details were updated. The A-NPDC updated their Eastern Shore map asset to reflect current launch site photos for each site, updated launch site details, and updated hyperlinks (notably for the change in agency name for the Department of Wildlife Resources). One additional launch site was added to the Eastern Shore map asset – Saxis Kayak Beach with the ability to join an advanced trail or take a beginner trail around North End Point.

Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide Course

The A-NPDC facilitated the 2021 iteration of the Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide Course. The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program has helped develop and fund several Ecotour Guide certification courses since 1992, with curriculum input from the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Division of Natural Heritage and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. The program continues to grow in collaboration with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, local coastal planners, community colleges, State Park interpreters, Virginia Green, and private stakeholders. Ecotourism connects people to the natural resources that the Virginia CZM Program is striving to protect and - hopefully - instills a strong will to take care of these life-sustaining resources. Having continuity in a certification program helps Virginia stand out as a destination for ecotourism and ensures quality guided experiences in sensitive coastal ecosystems. The 2021 iteration of this course saw nine new Virginia Certified Ecotour Guides from a wide span of coastal regions and a variety of ecotourism to include aquaculture

operators who intend to offer tours, charter captains, students, paddling club leaders, ecotourism consultants, and retired teachers. In addition to newly certified guides, there were five recertification requests. These requests are part of the recertification process through independent continuing education where guides are given the option to log continuing education hours through independent studies for recertification. Each guide is given access to their own *Recertification Portal* ([sample here](#)), which is complete with guidelines and steps required for completion and qualification of recertification.

The program continues to grow in collaboration with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, local coastal planners, community colleges, State Park interpreters, Virginia Green, and private stakeholders. From 2018-2020 the A-NPDC facilitated the course annually, resulting in almost 50 new Virginia Certified Ecotour Guides and inspiring the establishment of new ecotourism focused businesses and events. A draft plan for long-term sustainability is in progress with [multiple tools](#) created to aid in the ease of sustaining this course, including [cost-estimates for course maintenance](#), course materials, course curriculum documents, and virtual course platform (Google Classroom).



Above: VCEG Spring Field Trip 2021

Right: Ad for course

VIRGINIA CERTIFIED Virginia WATER TRAILS ECOTOUR GUIDE COURSE



Every Tuesday (VIRTUAL) from 5:30 – 7:30PM

January 25 – March 15, 2022

Mandatory Spring Field Trip April 2nd or 9th

Course Cost
\$175

Discounts For:
Student, Military,
Partner

Independent
Continuing Edu.
Recertification Cost
\$88

The class focuses on various aspects of ecotourism, including: ecosystem science, customer service, business marketing, interpretation skills, culture, and natural history. Fee includes mandatory spring field trip hosted in one of Virginia's coastal regions.

We are proud to partner with the Virginia Green Travel Program! Certified individuals and the tour businesses that they operate will also earn Virginia Green Travel Certification.

REGISTER NOW!

www.tinyurl.com/guide2022



For discounts & info:
jsteelman@a-npdc.org



Ecotourism Business Resiliency Training

Each of the three original Committee partners - A-NPDC, NNPDC, and MPPDC - coordinated with partners to organize a business resiliency training event in their respective region. This training catered to each region according to their needs and utilized guidelines identified in the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Resilience in a Box as a resource](#). This program educates businesses on hazard resiliency by partnering with various foundations, including, but not limited to, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the World Economic Forum. The resilience trainings educated small businesses on building a foundation for preparedness and taking action when faced with a hazard, determining specific actions for resilience and how to ensure business continuity. The trainings modeled the [Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency's](#) previous trainings to aid in the planning of these events and used their [business resilience self-assessment](#) tool.

The A-NPDC hosted its *ESVA Business Resiliency Training* virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions through two (2) half-day events. Day One – titled *What is Resiliency? Everything You Need to Know to Get Started Planning Ahead!* – focused on defining resiliency, educating about the history and types of threats faced on the Eastern Shore, taking a closer look at how to identify a business's level of resiliency, and providing outreach on regional, state, and federal assistance resources. Day Two – titled *Resiliency & Tourism, Training Opportunities, & Customer Service* – focused on educating how to remain resilient through the tourism lens, address economic disruptions caused by COVID-19, identify ways to be proactive and how to get involved in hazard mitigation planning, learn what local business sectors have to say about resiliency, and provide outreach on customer service basics and principles. The video recordings for the full *ESVA Business Resiliency Training* can be found on the A-NPDC YouTube channel [here](#). The living Resiliency Database can be found on the A-NPDC Coastal Resiliency web page [here](#).

The NNPDC utilized the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) process to address ecotourism business resiliency needs with those participating localities that identified business resilience as a priority resilience action item. Two of those communities, Northumberland County and the Town of Warsaw, were chosen to pilot business resilience tools created by the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency (CCRFR). The efforts were guided by the CCRFR's [Tourism Business Resilience for Coastal Virginia Assessment Report](#) and utilized CCRFR's [Coastal Virginia Small Business Resilience Self-Assessment and Guide](#) which consists of four parts: A [Workbook](#), a [Guide to Business Planning and Digital Marketing and Online Selling](#), a [Guide to Exit Planning](#), and a [Succession Planning Worksheet](#). Due to the success of the pilots the NNPDC and NNTC will use the developed tools and lessons learned from to conduct a regional business resilience training workshop in the subsequent grant year.

MPPDC utilized their media partner to create the *Learn How to Protect Your Business Before Disaster Strikes Virtual Training Program* based on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Resilience in a Box resource. The training was hosted on [YouTube](#) and promoted both on MPPDC's [Fight the Flood](#) website in order to directly target and invite businesses in the coastal

resiliency realm as well as on [MPPDC's Facebook](#) page as a live virtual training event (viewed 542 times as of this report). An invitation was also sent directly to businesses and community members by email.

Integration of Lower Chickahominy into Water Trails Website

PlanRVA (formerly known as RRPDC), added the Lower Chickahominy River water trail assets to the VWT website and developed a Google Map that aligns with other maps created through VCZMP efforts and incorporated into the VWT website in previous grant years. This map was embedded in the new section of the *VirginiaWaterTrail.org* website on the [Lower Chickahominy page](#).

The Lower Chickahominy River boasts beautiful tidal freshwater shorelines, various public access options, and a spur of the [Captain John Smith Water Trail](#) which runs up the Chickahominy River. Since the water trails in the NNPDC, MPPDC, and the A-NPDC were updated during the 2017-2019 grant years, they served as templates for the development of the PlanRVA Lower Chickahominy River water trail map. The map includes information about local and state parks, indigenous cultural landscapes, Natural Area Preserves and Wildlife Management Areas. Additionally, the map includes a link to the Captain John Smith (Chesapeake) National Trail, the VDGIF Bird and Wildlife Trail, and the Virginia Oyster Trail (VOT).

PlanRVA staff brought together stakeholders and partners with whom they worked to inventory and assess recreational assets in the region as part of the [Lower Chickahominy Watershed Collaborative](#) project. Staff solicited stakeholder input in designing the trail and Google map. They accounted for possible use-conflicts and potential dangers/hazards and also included existing knowledge and links to programs, referring to the [National Water Trail System Best Management Practices](#) toolbox when needed.

Development of the Virginia Oyster Trail Communities Program

The Virginia Oyster Trail (VOT) focuses on increasing awareness of the benefits Virginia Oysters have on local economies, with emphasis on connecting community, environmental stewardship, entrepreneurial growth, health attributes and regional cultural assets through an active engagement programmatic methodology. The Virginia Oyster Trail Communities Program is designed to cultivate resiliency by intentionally identifying a community's "[Merroir-Terroir](#)" attributes as in alignment with the diversity of its oyster-related businesses and turning cultural

assets into a cohesive marketing brand identity. The program's intent is to actively engage community residents, local businesses, and Trail members to identify priorities that leverage the Virginia Oyster Trail brand, encouraging entrepreneurial interaction, project collaboration, and heightened awareness as an essential part of their sustainable economic growth plan.

Partially funded through a recent VCZMP TA Grant, Grant # NA17NOS4190152, the VOT Communities program methodology had been beta-tested on the Northern Neck in the communities of Reedville, Heathsville, and White Stone. Evolving its development to incorporate: the VOT's newly launched trip planning and itinerary building tools; creation of aligned "Ask A Local" community narratives; its business-to-business connectivity structure; and Search Engine Optimization mechanisms, VOT refined and finalized the VOT Communities Program plan (Appendix D) and is in the process of identifying potential communities within the Eastern Shore, Middle Peninsula, Lower Chickahominy, and Northern Neck regions (as represented by the four participating PDC regions) for future program development. Over the course of the three-year grant, the Program will also be updated, if needed, to reflect the needs of these rural Coastal Virginia communities, based on input from the Committee and lessons learned during development. VOT will maintain an inventory of communities with whom this program has been discussed, including development of an assessment tool to determine their level of interest in becoming a VOT Community.



Sample/Customizable Roadside Designation Signage


Water Trail Launch Sites Enhancement Plan

To further promote ecotourism and public access to launch sites, the Committee designed graphic content consistent water trail launch site signage within the Eastern Shore, Northern Neck, and Middle Peninsula regions. This product is transferable to the Lower Chickahominy and any other participating region in the future. The draft design signage is a template and can

easily be edited for each region and launch site, accordingly. Each of the PDCs representing the aforementioned regions developed a tiered priority list for launch sites that need signage installed. Each PDC coordinated with the public access owners/managers (e.g. localities, VA CZM, VDGIF, VDOT, PAA, VMRC, DCR) to obtain a commitment to install signage in subsequent years and coordinate acknowledgement language, pending funding. This effort has allowed each region to include the Virginia Water Trails logo at water trail launch sites and any updated information or logos the region sees fit for chosen launch site updates. Further efforts in subsequent years would aim to have launch sites confirmed and the design of individual signs, using the standard template, to be drafted and shared with owners and funders of the launch sites for review. Having consistent signage across each region and across the coastal zone in its entirety improves visibility of the Virginia Water and Oyster Trails and the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program. Increasing the visibility of these and other coastal recreational assets help drive traffic to partner sites and go a long way in supporting conservation and economic development efforts.


The A-NPDC developed an excel spreadsheet for assessing launch sites in need of signage, along with their current facilities and amenities for both Accomack County and Northampton County ([view tables here](#)). Staff visited each site to conduct a visual assessment, then reached out to property owners for input on any further assessment updates and needs. Once this site assessment was completed, the Eastern Shore priority list for launch sites in need of signage was developed based on those which had no interpretive signage across both counties ([view table here](#)). The NNPDC and NNCBPAA conducted an assessment of all public access sites in the region (partially funded under VCZMP grant # NA19-----NOS4190163). The assessment focused on access site maintenance needs, amenities improvements, and included a prioritization of sites in need of signage. In the subsequent grant year, the NNPDC and NNCBPAA will utilize the assessment to prioritize sites in each locality identified as needing new or improved signage. Finally, the MPPDC staff assessed the signage needed at water access locations within the Middle Peninsula Region. Based on a previous water access assessment in the region and the knowledge of these sites, four locations have risen to the top as having the most need for signage. The water access locations are Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority (MPCBPAA) lands, including the Captain Sinclair Recreational Area, Brown Tract, Clay Tract and the Hayworth Track. Additionally, due to the close working relationship with MPPDC and the MPCBPAA, the MPCBPAA has already committed to install signage at these sites.

Harborton



Public Access Launch Site Along The *Virginia*
WATER TRAILS


#VWT #VirginiaWaterTrails




Paddling
Is a wonderful, low-impact way to experience nature.


Get the most out of your water trail trip:






- Use a Certified Ecotour Guide.
- Keep a respectful distance from wildlife.
- Be mindful & practice boater safety.





Before You Head Out...
Be Sure to Check Out VWT Trail Tips for **Safety Measures** and **Reporting** marine debris, derelict fishing gear, & abandoned/derelict vessels!



This sign, [Task #](#), was funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program led by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality through [Grant #](#) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.
The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA, or any of its sub agencies.

Above: Sample Draft Design for Launch Site Signage

Appendix A

VTC Recovery MLP June 2021 Application

| Contact Information | |
|--|--|
| Business/Organization Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission | |
| FEI # 540886952 | |
| Name of Marketing Program Wanderlove through Coastal Virginia | |
| Contact Name Jessica Steelman | |
| Title Coastal Planner | |
| Mailing Address PO Box 417 23372 Front Street Accomac, Virginia 23301 United States | |
| Phone (757) 787-2936 | Email jsteelman@a-npdc.org |
| Anticipated Date of Completion 02/01/2023 | |
| Requested Funds | |
| Requested Funds \$20,000.00 | |
| DMO Information | |
| DMO Northern Neck | |
| Partner Hub and Spoke (20 Points) | |
| Lure Coastal Virginia Regional Water Trails are the main hub of our marketing campaign to promote #Wanderlove through the Coastal Virginia Region. The intrigue and draw of ecotourism has increased significantly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, denoting outdoor recreation and natural resources as a main draw for tourism. This trend has not decreased with the lessening | |

of Virginia’s emergency mandates and orders; in fact, it has continued to increase as the spring and summer seasons are upon us. Ecotourism in the Coastal Virginia region is travel and related hospitality services that are based on experiences shared with flora, fauna, and cultural heritage of the places within the coastal region. Responsible ecotourism has a positive impact on the ecology and the economy of these coastal regions.

Across the coastal region of Virginia – areas including the Eastern Shore, the Northern Neck, the Middle Peninsula, and the Lower Chickahominy – ecotour guides have been obtaining certification and taking this state-recognized accreditation to join (or rejoin) the workforce, build upon their already existing businesses, and to self-educate out of a love for the special and scenic ecosystems and habitats these coastal Virginia regions have to offer. In an effort to promote the concept of “Leave No Trace” and share the hidden natural gems of coastal Virginia with locals and tourists alike, the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (CVEA) facilitates the Certified Virginia Ecotour Guide Course annually, with guest speakers from DCR, VTC, TNC, collegiate level educational institutions, and more! Many certified guides go on to be water trail tour guides, taking visitors out by kayak, motor boat, for sunset cruises, fishing, birding, and even photography.

Across the coastal Virginia region, these water trails draw many visitors to engage in these activities and learn about the migratory birds, the history, and the sights the water trails in these areas have to offer. The Virginia Water Trails believes strongly in the safety of our visitors - ranking our water trails as beginner, intermediate, and advanced using the trail rating system listed on the Trail Tips page of the Virginia Water Trails website. The interactive maps provided on the Virginia Water Trails website are to highlight the trail routes; they are not intended for navigational use. Virginia Water Trails encourages visitors to obtain NOAA navigational maps when planning your trip. Visitors range from families with children to groups of retirees and even students seeking thesis projects and internships. The wide array of educational, professional, and leisure opportunities the Coastal Virginia Water Trails offer is what makes it a traveler’s paradise and destination for all.

| Partner Name | Describe your partner's role in your marketing campaign. | Have you contacted this partner? |
|--|---|---|
| Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC) | The NNPDC is a founding partner of the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (CVEA) – the group which developed the Coastal Virginia Regional Water Trails. Through the CVEA and efforts of their own, the | Yes |

NNPDC has contributed numerous hours working to not only promote ecotourism, but educate Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide students about tourism initiatives, methods, and water trails in the Northern Neck coastal region. The NNPDC continues to update and review their water trails map for the region and partake as a guest speaker for the Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide course.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Partner Name Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC)</p> | <p>Describe your partner's role in your marketing campaign. The MPPDC is a founding partner of the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (CVEA) – the group which developed the Coastal Virginia Regional Water Trails. Through the CVEA and efforts of their own, the MPPDC has contributed numerous hours working to not only promote ecotourism, but educate Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide students about tourism initiatives, methods, and water trails in the Middle Peninsula coastal region. The MPPDC continues to update and review their water trails map for the region and partake as a guest speaker for the Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide course.</p> | <p>Have you contacted this partner? Yes</p> |
| <p>Spoke Name PlanRVA</p> | <p>Describe how this spoke compliments your marketing campaign. PlanRVA is the newest partner of the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance (CVEA) – the group which developed the Coastal Virginia Regional Water Trails. Through the CVEA and efforts of their own, PlanRVA has contributed numerous hours working to not only promote ecotourism and the water trails, but work closely with the three counties of the Lower Chickahominy (Charles City County, James City County, and New Kent County) to offer many recreation assets for human enjoyment and appreciation of the area's natural resources. PlanRVA continues to update and review their water trails map for the region and offer insight for the facilitation and development of the Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide course.</p> | |
| <p>Spoke Name Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission</p> | <p>Describe how this spoke compliments your marketing campaign. The ESVA Tourism Commission has designed and is in</p> | |

the process of distributing rack cards that are focused on water trails to bring in regional and out of state visitors for outdoor recreation and road trips or paddle-cations.

Spoke Name

Northern Neck Tourism Commission

Describe how this spoke compliments your marketing campaign.

The Northern Neck provides tourism amenities and experiences that complement the other regions' paddling and tourism offerings. Located between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers with Chesapeake Bay frontage, the Northern Neck's experiences are primarily on rivers or creeks that meander through landscapes that would be familiar to John Smith in 1608, or the indigenous tribes that lived in the Northern Neck at that time. The Northern Neck also offers historic sites with paddling options, such as Menokin, who is working with the Town of Warsaw as an outfitter to provide equipment needed if someone wishes to paddle locally for the day. Wineries, boutique lodgings, and waterfront eateries all leverage the paddling experience to allow folks to get outside, explore small towns, and our waterfront, most of which can be characterized as a "hidden gem".

Spoke Name

Coastal Wilds (Properties owned by the Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority)

Describe how this spoke compliments your marketing campaign.

Publicly owned properties that provide launch access and outdoor land use through an interactive app. By putting these public lands into public use it opens up more options for repeat visitors. New areas to paddle and explore.

Top Three Feeder Markets and Research (15 Points)

Feeder Market Location/Description

Washington DC - Maryland

What research do you have to validate this as your feeder market?

Google Analytics indicates that the past month's (May 2021) compared to the previous month (April 2021) organic traffic to the Virginia Water Trails website (virginiawatertrails.org) has increased in sessions in this feeder market by 19.01% with an increase of 29.79% new users and a 19.10% increase in average session duration.

VATC Data Research (source: TNS - TravelTrakAmerica, VA Module, FY2019) indicates the following statistics from Washington, DC for each of the Coastal Virginia Regions identified in our Hub Lure.

Accomack and Northampton Counties (Eastern Shore Coastal Region): 13% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 21% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years

with an average spending of \$779 per trip and 31% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Essex, Gloucester, King & Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, and Westmoreland (Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula Coastal Regions): 24% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 20% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$735 per trip and 29% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Charles City, James City, and New Kent Counties (Lower Chickahominy Coastal Region): 19% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 25% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$694 per trip and 36% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Feeder Market Location/Description
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News

What research do you have to validate this as your feeder market?

Google Analytics indicates that the past month's (May 2021) compared to the previous month (April 2021) organic traffic to the Virginia Water Trails website (virginiawatertrails.org) has increased in sessions in this feeder market by 38.46% with an increase of 45.16% new users.

VATC Data Research (source: TNS - TravelTrakAmerica, VA Module, FY2019) indicates the following statistics from Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News for each of the Coastal Virginia Regions identified in our Hub Lure.

Accomack and Northampton Counties (Eastern Shore Coastal Region): 13% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 21% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$779 per trip and 31% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Essex, Gloucester, King & Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, and Westmoreland (Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula Coastal Regions): 8% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 20% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$735 per trip and 29% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Charles City, James City, and New Kent Counties (Lower Chickahominy Coastal Region): 13% of travelers

originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 25% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$694 per trip and 36% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Feeder Market Location/Description
Richmond-Petersburg

What research do you have to validate this as your feeder market?

Google Analytics indicates that the past month's (May 2021) compared to the previous month (April 2021) organic traffic to the Virginia Water Trails website (virginaiwatertrails.org) has increased in sessions in this feeder market by 46.91% with an increase of 53.97% new users.

VATC Data Research (source: TNS - TravelTrakAmerica, VA Module, FY2019) indicates the following statistics from Richmond-Petersburg for each of the Coastal Virginia Regions identified in our Hub Lure. Accomack and Northampton Counties (Eastern Shore Coastal Region): 7% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 21% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$779 per trip and 31% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Essex, Gloucester, King & Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, and Westmoreland (Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula Coastal Regions): 14% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 20% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$735 per trip and 29% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more. Charles City, James City, and New Kent Counties (Lower Chickahominy Coastal Region): 10% of travelers originate from this feeder market. Top activities include beaches, historic sites, and rural sightseeing. This feeder market ranks as 25% planning to visit for leisure in the next two years with an average spending of \$694 per trip and 36% of visitors averaging an annual household income of \$100K or more.

Your In-Kind Match Value (20 Points)

In-Kind Match Value

| In-Kind Match Item | Description of In-Kind Match | Estimated Value of In-Kind Match (Enter whole number only) |
|--|---|--|
| CVEA Ecotourism Steering Committee Staff Efforts from Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and four PDCs in Coastal Virginia | Distribution of Virginia Water Trails rack cards to regional partners, outfitters, businesses, and local visitor centers. | 2500 |
| Virginia Water Trails Website Posting and Boosting | Hosting and maintenance of Virginia Water Trails website; organic posts on social media platforms featuring the website (66 posts to 1000 followers through Facebook and Instagram). | 4200 |
| Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide Course and Promotion of Hiring Virginia Certified Ecotour Guides for Group and Individual Tours | Advertisement of the 2022 course and certified guides; coordinate with Rappahannock Community College & Eastern Shore Community College to promote the course to develop more outfitters. Distribution of Ecotour Guide rack cards to promote hiring of local certified ecotour guides when planning trips to the Coastal Virginia region. | 2500 |
| Eastern Shore Tourism Activity Guide 2021 and 2022 | Virginia Water Trails specific ad in the annual Eastern Shore Tourism Activity Guide distributed through welcome centers and local visitor centers and out of state. | 1500 |
| Eastern Shore Tourism Website | Virginia Water Trails specific profile and listing with link backs to the Virginia Water Trails website. | 500 |
| Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Rack Cards | Rack cards featuring water trails and outdoor recreation activities along the water. | 1075 |
| Social Media Followers from Facebook and Instagram | Currently a reach of 1,122 followers. | 561 |
| Virginia Water Trails Website Users | Currently 2,663 users. | 1332 |
| Drone Footage Development & Editing | In kind match for development of promotional videos for water trails in each of the four Coastal Virginia regions. | 2000 |
| Parksley Downtown Revitalization "LOVE" sign and alleyway | Design and development of the "LOVE" alleyway in Parksley, VA as part of the VTC LOVEworks campaign. | 50000 |
| PlanRVA Better Together Webinar about the Virginia Water Trails | Better Together webinars are held monthly by PlanRVA staff for the benefit of local leaders and the general public. They highlight projects completed or underway by PlanRVA staff and/or regional partners. The webinars are promoted on Facebook and cast to the PlanRVA YouTube channel where they are saved for on-demand viewing by the public. This webinar will promote the Virginia Water Trails site in the Richmond market. | 1200 |

Total Value of In-Kind Match

67368.00

Marketing Plan, Calendar and Budget Amounts (25 Points)**In-Kind Match Value**

| Marketing Plan Item | Description of Marketing Plan Item | Date of Placement or Activity | Budget Amount (enter whole number only) |
|--|--|--|--|
| Drone footage and videos of the Virginia Water Trails across the 4 Coastal Virginia Regions (Eastern Shore, Northern Neck, Middle Peninsula, Lower Chickahominy) | A total of 8 videos developed from drone raw footage, edited into promotional marketing videos and a sizzle reel of various creeks and water trails identified by the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance Steering Committee. Purpose is to provide a more experiential element to the Virginia Water Trails website and act as promotional and outreach material. Virtual tours will be boosted out on social media. | August 2021 - December 2022 | 9300 |
| Virtual Tours the Virginia Water Trails across the 4 Coastal Virginia Regions (Eastern Shore, Northern Neck, Middle Peninsula, Lower Chickahominy) | A total of 4 virtual tours of various creeks and water trails identified by the Coastal Virginia Ecotourism Alliance Steering Committee. Virtual Tours will feature historic sites, flora, fauna, and wildlife along the trail as the video is shot from the bow of a kayak. Purpose is to provide a more experiential element to the Virginia Water Trails website and act as promotional and outreach material. Virtual tours will be boosted out on social media. | August 2021 - December 2022 | 1400 |
| Recreation News Leaderboard Ad | Ad is run in the top banner of the Recreation News homepage and all pages on the site in a rotation and are linked to the advertised website. Leaderboard is 728x90 pixels. | August 2021 - August 2022 | 2400 |
| Recreation News 'Weekend Update' eBlast | Every Wednesday more than 60,000 subscribers receive the Recreation News 'Weekend Update' eBlast filled with events, travel specials, links, contests, tours, & more. Virginia Water Trails advertisement in 4 per year during the paddling season. | August - September 2021; March - December 2022 | 3600 |
| Facebook Boosts | Monthly paid boosts for Facebook posts and events to build social engagement and increase website visits during the paddling season to boost the new content, including virtual tours and drone footage. | August - September 2021; March - December 2022 | 1350 |
| Social Media Posts | Social media posts to build social engagement, link back to Virginia Water Trails website, feature Virginia Water Trail blogs and videos, and increase website visits from social media, increase social media followers, and social media sharing of posts. | April 2022 - November 2022 | 1950 |

Total Budget Amount

20000.00

Performance Measures (20 Points)**Performance Measures**

| Measure/Metric | Where are you today? | Where do you want to be in one year? |
|--|---|---|
| Eastern Shore Meal Tax Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$357,222.00 | \$367,939.00 |
| Eastern Shore TOT Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$468,790.00 | \$482,854.00 |
| Northern Neck Meal Tax Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$1,347,408.00 | \$1387,830.00 |
| Northern Neck TOT Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$303,936.00 | \$313,054.00 |
| Middle Peninsula Meal Tax Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$3,466,226.00 | \$3,570,213.00 |
| Middle Peninsula TOT Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$14,318,971.00 | \$14,784,540.00 |
| Lower Chickahominy Area of Richmond - Charles City, James City, and New Kent counties meal tax Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$2,068,551.00 | \$2,130,068.00 |
| Lower Chickahominy Area of Richmond - Charles City, James City, and New Kent counties TOT Revenue (based on VTC Research Data available through FY19) | \$30,146.00 | \$31,050.00 |
| Growth of Virginia Water Trails Facebook Community | 161 Followers; 649 People Reached with Posts | 800 Followers; 2,000 People Reached with Posts |
| Growth of Virginia Water Trails Instagram Community | 473 Followers | 1,700 Followers |

Virginia is for Lovers Brand Campaign Tie-In: (5 Bonus Points)**WanderLove Brand Campaign Tie-In**

| VTC Campaign Name | Description of Tie-in to YOUR Campaign |
|------------------------------|--|
| Share What You Love Campaign | This campaign will be tied into digital and print advertisements featured in our target feeder market areas. Additionally, it will be shared via hashtags, slogans, and logos on our social media platforms and in our blogs on the Virginia Water Trails website. |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| EAT.DRINK.LOVE | This campaign will be tied into digital and print advertisements featured in our target feeder market areas. Additionally, it will be shared via hashtags, slogans, and logos on our social media platforms and in our blogs on the Virginia Water Trails website that feature restaurants and bars along our water trails. |
| WanderLove Campaign | This campaign will be tied into digital and print advertisements featured in our target feeder market areas. Additionally, it will be shared via hashtags, slogans, and logos on our social media platforms and in our blogs on the Virginia Water Trails website. |

Save and Submit

Acceptance of Terms

By clicking this checkbox and submitting this form, you are confirming that all information is final.

I have read and agree to the terms and conditions.

Appendix B

New Region On-Boarding Packet



New Region On-Boarding Packet

#VWT #VirginiaWaterTrails

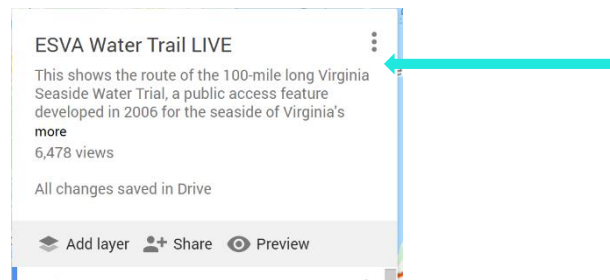
virginiawatertrails.org

Virginia Water Trails Development Guidelines

(please see the ES Map as a reference, bearing in mind that it is currently being refined and updated as well)

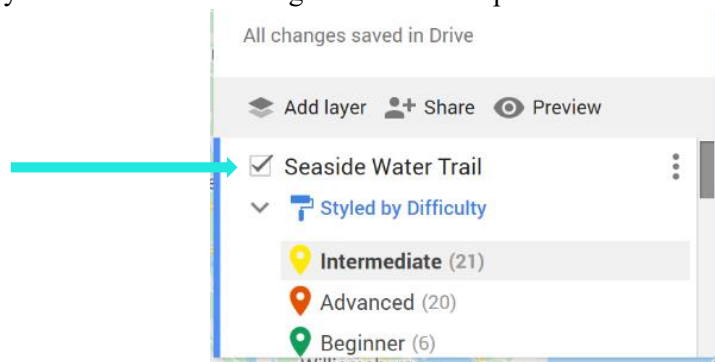
1. Base Map

- The base map should be the basic google map. The satellite map is not allowed for the base per CZM regulations where this map is not intended for navigational purposes.
- Set your default view to hone in on your region - *this will eliminate the default view being zoomed way out as a result of having the National Trails layer as part of the map.*
 - When editing your map, zoom in to the view you would like as your default.
 - Select the 3 vertical dots at the top right corner of the layers editor, then select “set default view”... all set!



2. Trail Layers - *in this order with capitalization*

- Regional Water Trails
 - **NOTE:** this should be the only layer that is set to be on when a person first visits the website and sees the map. Set this layer to be on upon initial view by checking the layer's box when in editing mode of the map.

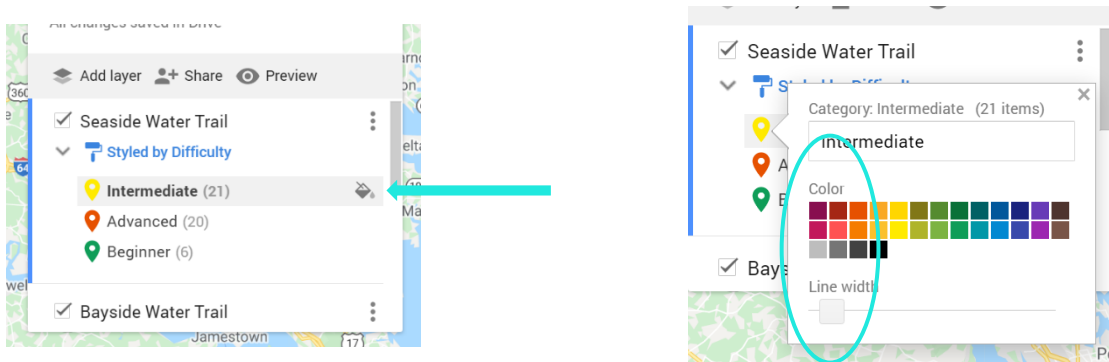


- Public Access
- Virginia Oyster Trail Sites
- Points of Interest - *i.e. historical and cultural sites, museums, etc.*
- National Trails

3. Trail Components - *in this order with capitalization*

- Photos of the trail/surrounding scenery
- Trail description box should include and be in this order (with capitalization):

- Name
- Difficulty
- Length - *when measuring the distance of a trail, account for round-trip distance if there is no end-point destination; google maps will not do this for you, rendering their distance inaccurate.*
- Resources- *where you will describe the trail, any warnings/advisories, tidal info, bird watching/DWR sites, nature preserves along the way, points of interest, interesting facts, etc. and include links to websites (**especially DWR and Birding per CZM grant requirements**).*
- The trail segments are very difficult to click/choose on a desktop (non-touchscreen) when they are thin – default setting is the thinnest. Be sure to change lines to be a bit thicker, please reference the image below on the right. Adjust thickness by selecting the paint bucket when hovering over each difficulty level, then moving line thickness scale to be in line with the 2nd column of colors.



4. Trails should follow the below difficulty guidelines and be color coded as follows:

- Beginner = **green**
- Intermediate = **yellow**
- Advanced = **red**

Difficulty Guidelines

| Element | Beginner | Intermediate | Advanced |
|-----------------------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Trip Distance (miles) | ≤ 5 | 4-8 | ≥ 8 |
| Time on the Water (hours) | ≤ 3 | 3-5 | ≥ 5 |
| Avg. Paddling Speed (mph) | ≤ 2 | 2-3 | ≥ 3 |
| Wind Speed (mph) | ≤ 5 | 5-10 | ≥ 10 |
| Waves (feet) | ≤ 0.5 | 0.5-1.5 | ≥ 1.5 |
| Typical Current (mph) | ≤ 1 | 1-2 | ≥ 2 |
| Distance from Shore (miles) | ≤ 0.25 | 0.25-0.75 | ≥ 0.75 |

5. Public Access Components - *in this order with capitalization*

- Photos leading up to the Public Access, the launch/ramp, parking lot, signage, etc.
- Public Access description box should include and be in this order (with capitalization):
 - Name
 - Owner
 - Type
 - Watercraft
 - Description - *where you will include things such as fees, amenities, amount of parking, and any vital or informational links.*

6. Virginia Oyster Trail Site Components

- Use the icons below for their category, located [here](#)

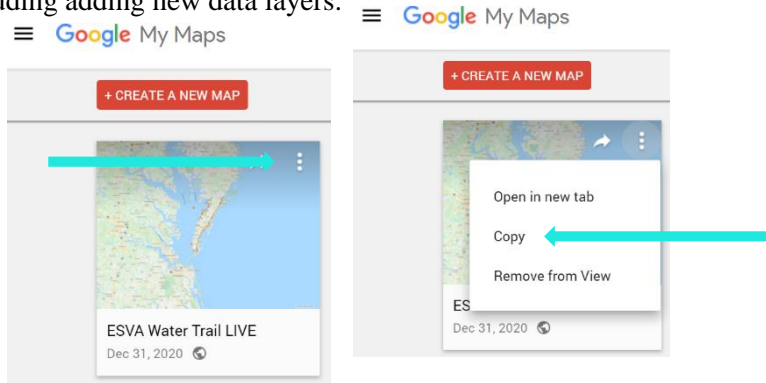
- Oysters 
- Restaurant 
- Agri-Artisan 
- Lodging 
- Artist Venue 
- Cultural 

- VOT description box components - *in this order with capitalization*
 - Name
 - Category
 - Description
 - Google Maps Info (*which automatically includes a phone number & website*)

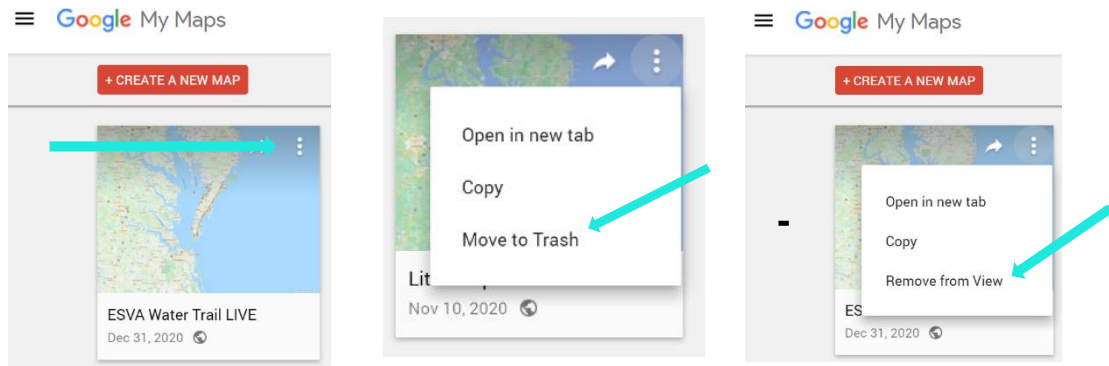
Google Maps Management

The purpose of this document is to capture lessons learned, learned limitations, and shortcuts to using the free Google Maps online application, specifically for the purpose of use with the VirginiaWaterTrails.org and CVEA partners.

It is not possible to “merge” maps or data layers without losing any images/photos that have been uploaded. For this reason, it is necessary to copy the “live map”, title it as a “backup map”. On your live map, make any and all changes, including adding new data layers.



Once it is ready to go live and you have checked the updates worked by visiting your page on virginiawatertrails.org, you can delete the backup map if you wish. *Note: If you are not the owner of the map, “Move to Trash” is not an option, but you can select “Remove from View”*



Renaming columns in the data attribute table (which also displays on the interactive map as the description box when that element is chosen by the user):

1. ALWAYS copy the “live map”, title it as “backup map” (*refer to above tip*)
2. Open Data Table

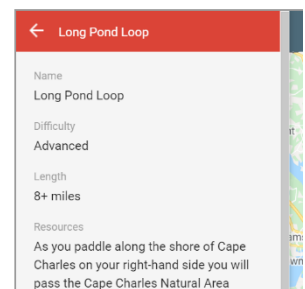
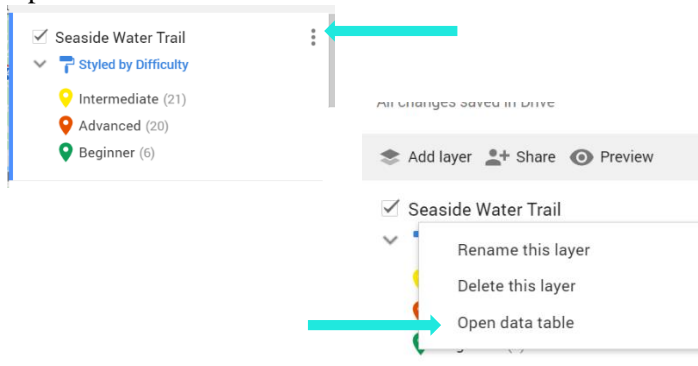
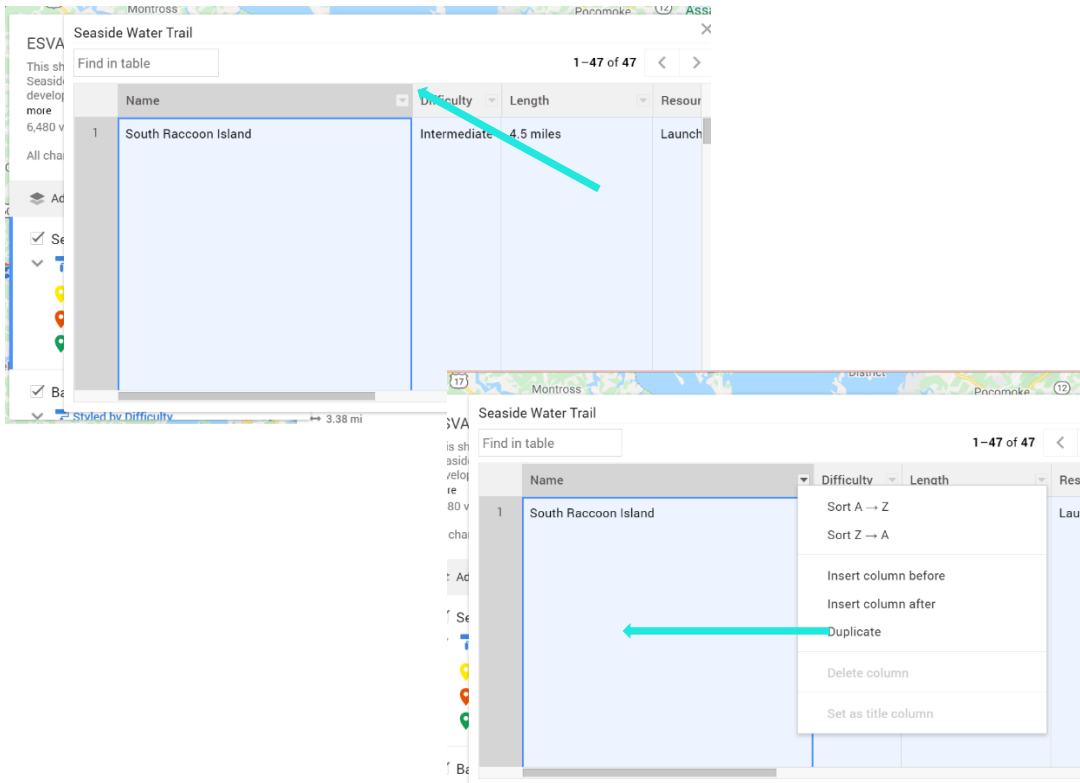
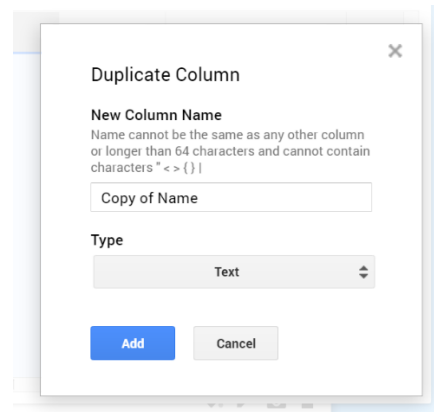


Image of description box featuring data from Data Attribute

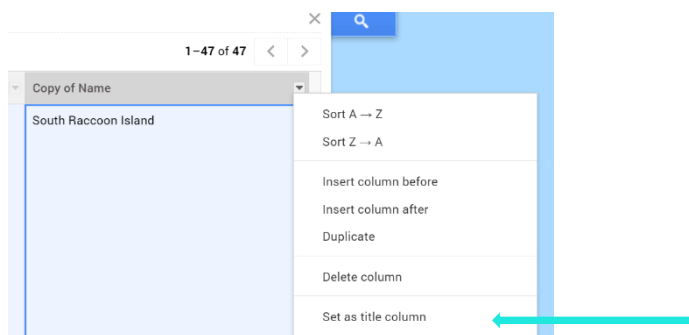
3. Duplicate entire column



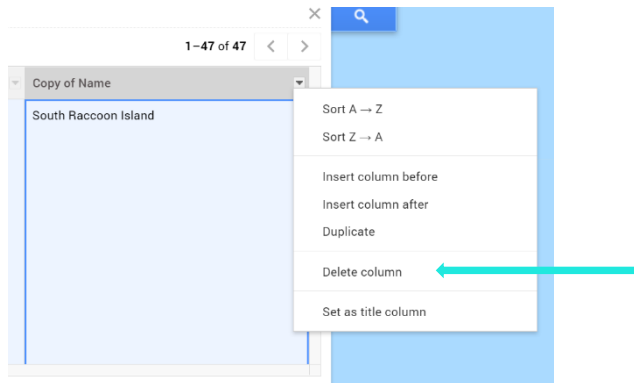
4. When prompted, rename the duplicate column



5. If it is the first column of the data table (i.e. the Title Column) you are duplicating and deleting, you must set your new (duplicate column) as the “Title Column” – you can skip this step if it is not the Title Column you are duplicating



6. Delete the old column



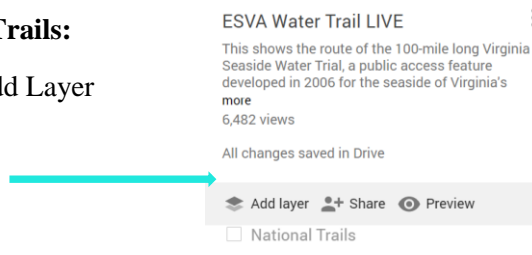
7. Go to [VirginiaWaterTrails.org](https://virginiawatertrails.org) to check your updated map
 - a. *Note: it may take several minutes for the live map on the VWT site to update. Try refreshing your screen a few times, or waiting several minutes before checking.*
8. Once you confirm your “live map” on the VWT site is correct, you can delete your “backup map” – the copy you made in *Step 1*.

Hyperlinks must be the full URL, there is **no way to hyperlink regular text** within the attribute table.

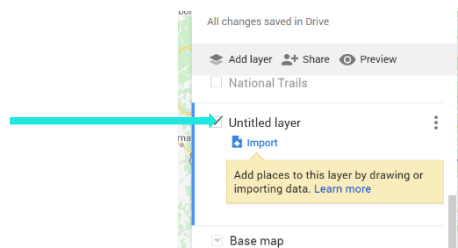
Map layers can be reordered by clicking the title of the layer and dragging to the new position. [See 2. Trail Layers](#) for more information.

National Trails:

1. Add Layer



2. Import National Trails map (kmz map file can be found [here](#) to download then import, or you can select Google Drive and search “National Trails.kmz” and select for import)



Drawing a Map Layer:

1. Add Layer

ESVA Water Trail LIVE ⋮

This shows the route of the 100-mile long Virginia Seaside Water Trial, a public access feature developed in 2006 for the seaside of Virginia's [more](#)

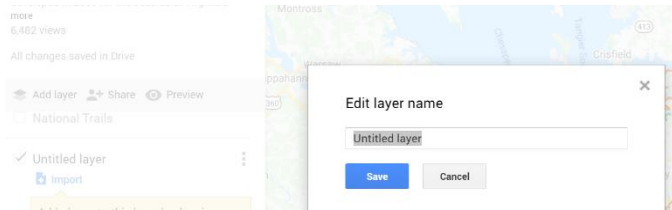
6,482 views

All changes saved in Drive

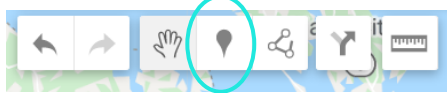
+ Add layer + Share 👁 Preview

National Trails

2. Name Layer by clicking “Untitled layer” – a pop-up will be displayed, allowing you to edit the layer name.



3. To begin drawing trail segments, select the marker



Then begin drawing by dropping the marker on your map!

Reminders

- Once your map is live, share a copy to the [Ecotourism Committee > Virginia Water Trails > Maps – LIVE folder](#) [here](#)
- Questions? Contact Jessica Steelman at jsteelman@a-npdc.org
- Be sure to update your map as information or trail/waterway conditions change

Appendix C

VWT Boiler Plate Response for Joining



Looking to Join the Virginia Water Trails?!

We are always excited to hear about new regions that want to share and promote their water trails... Please be patient with us as we work to develop an onboarding plan for interested regions. Reach out to us at hello@viriniawatertrails.org to let us know you're interested! Be sure to tell us a bit about your water trails and how you're currently promoting them!

Appendix D

VOT Communities Program

Developing Your Virginia Oyster Trail Community

*Cultivating Community Resiliency in
Virginia's Rural Coastal Regions*

The Virginia Oyster Trail



The Virginia Oyster Trail (VOT) is helping to build community leadership capacity and reinforcing collaborative communities across Virginia's Coastal region. The Virginia Oyster Trail Community program is designed to help communities actively engage residents and local businesses as they create thriving communities by leveraging Virginia's Oyster brand, encouraging entrepreneurial growth and heightening awareness in their communities as part of their sustainable economic growth plan.

Virginia leads the East Coast in oyster production and activities, featuring eight regions that each produce oysters with distinct and unique flavors based on the water in which they grow. Virginia Oysters are a vital component to the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and to Virginia, as they naturally clean the Chesapeake Bay and attract visitors from all over the world to the region.

Virginia oysters and the watermen who grow them hold a distinguished place in the Commonwealth's rich coastal heritage and history. Virginia's share of voice in the oyster sphere—59 percent of the conversation on social media and in the news—dramatically outpaces competitor states, with New York trailing in second place at 17 percent. Not only are oysters a critical product of Virginia's seafood industry, they are an important diversifier for the new Virginia economy, and a unique differentiator for Virginia as a travel destination.

The Virginia Oyster Trail rallies local communities all across the Commonwealth and invites visitors to participate in "journey of discovery," eco-tourism experiences, exploring the "flavors" of Virginia's distinctive oyster, its watermen/aquaculture and coastal way of life.

Intentionally defining "Merroir-Terroir" ... *"The palate celebration that occurs when the textures and flavors of the sea are paired with regional, companion-grown products of the land,"* the Trail is uniquely positioned to synergize Virginia's rich aquaculture and agriculture relationship.

With invitational narratives, trip planning and itinerary building tools, and its business-to-business connectivity, the Trail will tell the story of the Virginia Oyster in ways never done before. The Trail's statewide, oyster-centric, membership offers hospitality, creative, culinary, cultural, and environmental, eco-adventure experiences for the marvel of visitors, however the Trail is not only a conduit for leisure and fun, it is also an opportunity.

Elevating the impact Virginia oysters have on the health and well-being to our Chesapeake Bay combined with the shared responsibility of its watershed communities from Virginia's farmlands through each healthy tributary affecting where oysters grow and thrive, represents a collaborative opportunity to enlighten and engage.

The Virginia Oyster Trail is dedicated to radiating everywhere these delicious bivalves are served!

In 2017 Virginia Oyster Marketing, to include the Virginia Oyster Trail reached 308.48 million people with a publicity value of \$648K.

Virginia Oyster Trail
P.O. Box 166, Greenville, VA 24440
getinvolved@virginiaoystertrail.com
540-377-6489
VirginiaOysterTrail.com

OPPORTUNITIES AND POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

- Engage community leaders to work together towards a goal of improving their community.
- Strengthen community leadership capacity through project planning and implementation, guided by needs-specific leadership training, to better facilitate current and future ventures.
- Formation of collaborative regional teams learning from one another and helping each other succeed.
- Completion of community projects in support of entrepreneurship aligned with a regional strategy.
- Development of a local plan that backed by potential regional and public investment.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Coaching for community teams to work together through work planning, consensus building, and strengthening leadership skills.
- Community commitment form and assessments to determine interest, needs and priorities

CRITERIA

- Completion of an official commitment form
- Create a steering team that consists of local government, existing business owners, and community members. Teams should preferably consist of at least 10 members.
- Completion of community assessments
- Connected potential projects to the region, county or town's master plan or vision, short-term, attainable, and supportive of entrepreneurship.
- Steering team to be responsible for project management throughout the program.

RECOMMENDED STEPS

1. Potential community and program coordinators will meet to discuss use of the Virginia Oyster Trail Community Toolkit and complete the Commitment form.
2. Community forms a leadership steering team to carry out the process and develop future community improvement projects. Team should consist of local government, entrepreneurs, and community members and members of the Virginia Oyster Trail.
3. An initial meetings is scheduled to introduce the program and determine project criteria. Team will complete leadership development assessment to build professional development curriculum based on community needs.
4. Typically meeting twice a month initially, the team will determine project focus and develop a plan for implementation. During meetings, teams will enhance leadership capacity through team building and leadership development exercises, as well as working through project implementation.
5. As the process moves forward, meetings can occur less frequently and will be scheduled as needed based on team needs and project progression. It is recommended that the team continue to communicate throughout the process and that meetings occur at least once a month.
6. Option: Should the program may be in process with multiple communities at the same time collaboration is encouraged among adjacent communities. Steering committee informational tours community are recommended to include networking with community leaders, visiting community assets, and learning about community improvement plans.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

4-5 month process with workshops occurring twice monthly. Timing can vary and be extended based on community dynamics.

Month # 1

- 1st Steering Team Meeting
 - Program introduction, Community assessment plan, project criteria determined, project brainstorming

Month # 2

- 2nd Steering Team Meeting
 - Project selection based on reviewing compiled Community Assessment results
 - Decision Making Model discussion, Group Development

Month # 3

- 3rd Rally Meeting
 - Project development to include outlining details, assigning responsibilities, etc.
 - Leadership topic from needs-assessment

Month # 4

- 4th – 7th Rally Meetings
 - Project implementation - status updates and next steps
 - Leadership topics from needs-assessment

Month # 5

- Project celebration and program evaluation

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND GOAL SETTING

The program is designed to guide a community's steering team through an asset assessment process that helps to identify what's working and where new innovations, ideas and projects might be developed to maximize use of the Virginia Oyster Trail Brand, Trip Planner Engagement and Itinerary Building Tools. The toolkit includes:

- Community Engagement Introduction
- 3 Community Assessment Worksheets
- Community Action Planning Grid/Worksheet
- Itinerary Building Form

Each community will develop its own timeline within a context of adapting use of the Virginia Oyster Trail brand in alignment with their related assets and in tandem with their community's existing charter, community and economic development goals.

Process Components

- Convene a Steering Team
- Complete the three Community Assessment Worksheets
- Evaluate, Identify and Prioritize Needs
- Create a Timeline to Achieve Priority Guides
- Host "town hall" and/or "workday" Gatherings to engage Community Input and Support.
- Attend and/or Host Entrepreneur/Business Training Workshops in the Community
- Encourage and Leverage Virginia Oyster Trail Participation Among Local Businesses
- Integrate and leverage the Virginia Oyster Trail Brand into the Community's Promotional Plan
- Create a Mechanism and Benchmarks to Track Progress



The Virginia Oyster Trail

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT FORM

Community Steering Team

Team Coordinator's Name:
Backup Contact's Name:
Community:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

Community Vision

What is the Community Vision?

When and how was the vision developed?

Who helped create the vision?

Virginia Oyster Trail Community

Proposed First Workshop Location:
Proposed First Workshop Date and Time:
Proposed Invitees (List all names - limited to 20):
Current number of Virginia Oyster Trail members in the community:

Short summary of why you are ready to participate in becoming a Virginia Oyster Trail community:



The Virginia Oyster Trail

VIRGINIA OYSTER TRAIL COMMUNITY DESIGNATION & ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

“Developing Your Virginia Oyster Trail Community” is a simple but effective program launched to attract additional revitalization resources, support local revitalization and entrepreneur resiliency efforts, and build a cohesive marketing brand identity around a community’s Virginia Oyster aligned assets.

Participating communities will be asked to complete dynamic and engaging tasks that ultimately better position the Virginia’s rural coastal regions as a better place to live and conduct commerce.

The Virginia Oyster Trail rallies local communities all across the Commonwealth and invites visitors to participate in “journey of discovery,” eco-tourism experiences, exploring the “flavors” of Virginia’s distinctive oyster, its watermen/aquaculture and coastal way of life.

Fundamental to its visitor experience attributes, the program focuses on increasing awareness of the benefits Virginia Oysters have on local economies; with emphasis on community development, environmental stewardship, entrepreneurial growth, health attributes and the cultural integration of Virginia’s distinctive coastal way of life.

Let’s Get Started!

1. Schedule a meeting with the Virginia Oyster Trail Communities Steering Team to assess community successes to date.

LOCAL CONTACT PERSON INFO GOES HERE

2. Complete and return the three community assessment worksheets provided
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Recreational Opportunities
 - Town-wide Visual Assessment
3. Attend identified workshops
4. Become engaged in local regional training opportunities
5. Promote the Virginia Oyster Trail and your community as a high quality destination.
6. Check back in with your advisors and make things happen

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT WORKSHEETS

Why complete the Virginia Oyster Trail Community Assessment Worksheets?

Each completed worksheet is designed to create a baseline of knowledge from which to ignite the community engagement process. The information to be garnered focuses on community areas and is designed to engage community members from a place of unified understanding of what is already in place and/or needed so that they can build a guide for future action.

Depending on your resources (time, money, and people) the task of completing the worksheets can take on different forms. The designated steering team may choose to take the lead and answer the questions on behalf of the community; they may choose to informally interview key individuals in the community one-to-one or if time permits the team may create a survey instrument that can be distributed through the community at-large. You might also conduct observations, study community records, or previous surveys that may have been conducted among your community.

Overall, the goal is to acquire the most authentic and accurate picture of the community's status and needs focusing on the in the areas of:

- Entrepreneurial Support and Enhancement Assessment
- Recreational Opportunities Visual Assessment
- Town-wide Visual Assessment

What are some reasons why the questionnaires are important to your community?

- To supplement what you already know and observe by getting different perspectives from others in your community.
- To provide an honest description of what is needed so that the community can communicate the needs to others, publically.
- So the steering community and other decision makers can become more aware of what others in the community think and believe are solutions to community needs.
- To identify possible needs that you never saw as particularly important or knew existed.
- To document and prioritize needs with consensus from the community as you go forward seeking funding.
- To ensure actions you take resonate with your community at large in a positive way.

By trying to involve as many people in the undertaking of the assessment worksheets, you will be more likely to garner broad support the long-term endeavor because you have intentionally been inclusive. As an added benefit, inclusion can lead to more people in your community becoming actively involved in solution and consensus building as their input is valued and validated through the process.

Town-Wide Visual Assessment

Public Spaces

Streets

Downtown

Community Entry Points

PARKING: What type of parking is available to aid people wishing to visit the community? Are parking lot surfaces in good repair and sized for current or future demands? Are parking spaces clearly marked and organized when necessary?

SIDEWALKS: When appropriate, are sidewalks in town available and in what condition are they?

LIGHTING: When appropriate, is street lighting available and in what condition is the lighting? Are parking lots lit appropriately? (Consider safety, night time walking, etc.)

TRASH AND CLEANLINESS: Overall, are the streets clean and free of unwanted trash? Are trash receptacles available that meet current demands? Are there receptacles that need to be emptied? Does the town have a plan in place to periodically patrol for trash and debris?

STREETSCAPE AMENITIES: Is the Town streetscape comfortable and welcoming to visitors? Are benches available and in good repair? Are bike racks available and in good repair?

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING: Are the current signs sufficient for visitors to find the Town? Are they numerous and large enough to welcome guests into the community? Are the signs easily read and in good repair?

MAPS AND BROCHURES: Are maps readily available throughout the community and online? Is the content of these materials up-to-date and current?

ADJACENT PRIVATE PROPERTY TO PUBLIC SPACES: Are adjacent private properties welcoming and in good repair? Do adjacent buildings complement or detract from the public space?

BUILDING FACADES: Are there any building facades in a state of disrepair (torn awnings, peeling or chipped paint, broken windows, structural instability, etc.)? Are there particular buildings in need of repair? If so, list them. Are the referenced property owners engaged and readily available?

PUBLIC RESTROOMS: Are public restrooms available to visitors either as a stand-alone structure or housed within a local business? Are the restrooms cleaned regularly and generally in good repair?

SURROUNDING ASSETS: What opportunities are there to capitalize on surrounding creative assets that may or may not be within the town limits? What efforts are available to improve connectivity from the downtown area to these assets? Are they listed in community/ business promotional material?

Entrepreneurial Support and Enhancement Assessment

Hospitality Training

Business Incentive Packages

Community Communication Systems

What type of community outreach system is in place? Does it rely on special services, such as the internet? Is there sufficient access to the relevant services in the community for the communication system to be effective? Are community members aware of the communication system, and how often is it utilized?

How does a community member access entrepreneurial or business support? Are support resources easily accessible and how are they marketed to the community?

List locations in the business district that are vacant as well as their overall condition so that future businesses might be recruited to occupy them. Describe what type of businesses would be best suited for each of these locations.

What type of business incentive packages does the community offer? How could this information be improved upon and made more accessible? What new incentives could the community provide to new or existing businesses?

What effort has been made to attend business training programs (local or within the region) in the last year? How are local officials and businesses encouraged to attend these training programs? In the future, what types of programs and topics need to be offered in order to improve entrepreneurship in your community?

Recreational Opportunities Visual Assessment

- Trails
- Water Access Points
- Campgrounds
- Public Parks and Playgrounds

PARKING: What type of parking is available to aid people wishing to visit the space? Are parking lot surfaces in good repair and sized for current or future demands? Are parking spaces clearly marked and organized when necessary?

PUBLIC RESTROOMS: Are public restrooms available to visitors? What type of restroom is available? Are the restrooms cleaned regularly and generally in good repair?

TRASH AND CLEANLINESS: Overall, is the space clean and free of unwanted trash? Are trash receptacles available that meet current demands? Are there receptacles that need to be emptied? Does the town have a plan in place to periodically patrol for trash and debris?

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING: Are the current signs sufficient for visitors to find the space? Are they numerous and large enough to welcome guests into the community? Are the signs easily read and in good repair? Would someone who has never visited the area be able to find the space? Are the Virginia Oyster Trail locator signs visibly posted on the exterior of participating businesses for recognition by travelers?

MAPS AND BROCHURES: Are trail/river maps readily available throughout the community and online? Is the content of these materials up-to-date and current? Are trailhead/put-in locations clearly marked? Would someone who has never visited the area know how to find and navigate the space?

TRAIL MAINTENANCE: What type of surface is the trail? Who are the intended users of the trail? Is the type of surface sufficient for its intended purpose? Is the trail in good repair and clear of vegetation?

WATER ACCESS POINT MAINTENANCE: Is there an access point available and if so, what kind of launch is it? Who are the intended users? What type of material is the put-in constructed of? Is the put-in in good repair and adequate for the needs of the community?

SURROUNDING ASSETS: What opportunities are there to capitalize on surrounding outdoor assets that may or may not be within the town limits? What efforts are available to improve connectivity from the downtown area to these assets? Are they listed in community/ business promotional material?

PLANNING GRID/WORKSHEET

The following tracking sheet will be provided to the Community Steering Team in Excel format for ease of use.

| Virginia Oyster Trail Communities | | | | |
|--|---|---|---------|-------------------------------|
| Project Category | Task | Task Completion Opportunities | Contact | Community Specific Benchmarks |
| Town Contact Information | | | | |
| Identify primary community contact | | | Name | |
| | | | Phone | |
| | | | Email | |
| | | | Website | |
| Assessment Worksheets | | | | |
| Identify 1 project or strategy from any of the assessments that an active committee can work on over the next year | Town-wide visual assessment | Strategy: | | |
| | Recreational / Virginia Oyster opportunity assessment | Strategy: | | |
| | Entrepreneurship assessment | Strategy: | | |
| Entrepreneurship | | | | |
| Choose 3 | Attend or host entrepreneurial/business training workshops in your community (at least 3). For each completed, it is expected that experiences learned are shared with the community. | Entrepreneur Workshop | | |
| | | Watermen/Grower Tourism Workshop | | |
| | | VOT Lunch N' Learn | | |
| | | Tourism Development Training - VTC | | |
| | Other: | | | |
| | Become an entrepreneurial community by providing incentive packages to new or existing businesses | The way this task completion is left up to the community | | |
| | Engage in membership or support of the Virginia Oyster Trail | | | |
| | Organize regular local meetings that focus specifically on business development | | | |
| Engagement | | | | |
| | Attend Virginia Oyster Trail Initiative in-person meetings | Join email listserv | | |
| | Participate in regional economic development training event | Join email listserv | | |
| | Organize clean-up/volunteer events to enhance the community/waterways | Record when, how many attend, age groups, what is cleaned/accomplished | | |
| | Hold regular meetings that focus on tourism and community revitalization | | | |
| Promotion | | | | |
| Choose three and complete | Create point of sale for Community Branded Virginia Oyster and/or Virginia Oyster Trail merchandise | | | |
| | Provide tourism resources in community (3 of 5) | Kiosk | | |
| | | Flyer | | |
| | | Apps | | |
| Map | | | | |
| | Website | | | |
| | Implement VOT branding materials where appropriate | | | |
| | Organize Developmental Workshops | How to create a community brand Package or integrate the Virginia Oyster (trail) brand into your current community brand. How to Leverage the benefits of membership and use of virginiaoystertrail.com | | |
| | Create "Local Entrepreneurs/Business Owners" profiles | VOT member provided and/or display on town website | | |
| | Organize "Local Entrepreneurs/Business Owners" celebration event | | | |
| Data Tracking | | | | |
| Provide Numbers | # of businesses started since designation | | | |
| | # of businesses closed since designation | | | |
| | # of new jobs created | | | |
| | Additional public/private investments | | | |
| | # VOT members since designation | | | |
| | # of businesses taking advantage of incentives | | | |