



**Virginia Coastal Zone**  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

# **FINAL REPORT: LEVERAGING ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE LOWER CHICKAHOMINY**

**Federal Fiscal Year 2019**

## **Grant Number NA19NOS4190163, Task 93**

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**PlanRVA**

9211 Forest Hill Avenue, Suite 200, Richmond, VA 23235

[www.planrva.org](http://www.planrva.org)

Phone: (804)323-2033

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## Executive Summary

### Maintain Online Project Presence

PlanRVA staff maintained and updated the project web pages on the PlanRVA website. Updates to the site included the addition of a [partners page](#) listing stakeholder and partner organizations for the project, the addition [of a recreation and ecotourism page](#) to house content about the Ecotourism Infrastructure Inventory (see below), and an infographic about and posting of a 2020 Target Industry and Value Chain Analysis Report produced by the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University. An [outreach page](#) was also added to detail the process and outcomes of the Lower Chickahominy stakeholder engagement process in years three and four. Small updates to other pages, maps, and images were also made throughout the grant period.

### Steering Committee Facilitation

PlanRVA staff maintained communication and collaboration with stakeholders in the region regarding progress of the project. Due to COVID, meeting and communications were via phone, email, or virtual meeting for most of the grant period. In working with the project Outreach Contractors, PlanRVA staff maintained communication with the project stakeholders to plan two key events of the grant period: a Tribal – Local Government Workshop and a Regional Policy Summit. PlanRVA staff maintained contact lists, invitations, and RSVPs for both events.

### Collaboration with Outreach Contractors

PlanRVA staff worked closely with Outreach Contractors, the University of Virginia Institute for Engagement and Negotiation, to plan and hold two key events for policy development during the grant period. Initially planned as in-person events for the spring, plans had to be altered given the COVID pandemic and associated social distancing precautions. In July, the project team hosted the a Tribal – Local Government Workshop focused on the relationship between the local governments of the study area and the Tribes who are based or own land in the study area. Previous discussions throughout the project indicated that there were opportunities to improve Tribal – local government relationships in the region for the benefit and clarification of natural resource policies. In August, the project team hosted a Regional Summit focused on policy development. A wide group of stakeholders were invited: local staff, Tribal staff, state agency staff, federal agency staff, NGO staff, and local businesses. A series of presentations was followed by a series of themed breakout rooms wherein stakeholders discussed policy ideas and the means of bringing them to fruition.

### Ecotourism Infrastructure Inventory

PlanRVA staff performed an inventory of ecotourism infrastructure assets in the three counties of the Lower Chickahominy study area. The core of the inventory is a collection of GIS data of public access points, signage, trails, etc. The public view of the inventory data sets is a series of StoryMaps, one for each county in the study area: [Charles City](#), [James City](#), [New Kent](#). The StoryMaps include pictures, maps and narrative about public and private access points to the water, trails, and other infrastructure. Details about amenities are also included. In the final year of this project, the inventory will be used for gap and opportunity analysis for an eco-tourism infrastructure plan.

## Maintain Online Project Web Presence

PlanRVA staff maintained and updated [project web pages](#) on the PlanRVA website. These pages serve as a resource of materials for project stakeholders as well as the general public. Several pages constitute the project portion of the website including: environment, history and culture, land and water use, economic study, and other pages added this grant year.

Additions to the Lower Chickahominy project pages included:

- a [Partners page](#) listing stakeholder and partner organizations for the project. Where possible, entity logos serve as links to the websites of partners
- a [Recreation and Ecotourism page](#) to house content about the Ecotourism Infrastructure Inventory. A blurb about conserved lands and easements with and without public access provides context and insight into how recreation and conserved lands can support the ecological integrity and ecotourism industry of the study area.
- [an Infographic](#) about and posting of a 2020 Target Industry and Value Chain Analysis Report for the watershed study area produced by the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University
- A page summarizing the stakeholder [outreach](#) efforts from years three and four of the project

Small updates to other pages, maps and images were also made throughout the grant period.

### **Process Outcome:**

The maintenance of a series of webpages devoted to the Lower Chickahominy project allows people to easily engage with the information. The pages are a useful resource for stakeholder and public outreach during the policy development and refinement phase of this project.

## Steering Committee Facilitation

PlanRVA staff maintained communication and collaboration with stakeholders in the region regarding progress of the Lower Chickahominy project. A list of stakeholders includes staff from relevant departments in local governments, state resource agencies, federal agencies, tribal governments, non-governmental organizations, as well as Tribal Council members, business owners, etc. While early meetings with some stakeholders were in person, due to COVID, meetings and communications during the grant period were largely via phone, email, or virtual meeting. Throughout the grant period, PlanRVA staff fielded questions via phone and email about project status and direction and to connect stakeholders with one another. A relationship has been built over the years of this project such that project stakeholders will reach out to PlanRVA staff with wide variety of questions related to issues associated with the project. PlanRVA staff field such questions and direct stakeholders to appropriate resources.

In working with the project Outreach Contractors, PlanRVA staff maintained communication with the project stakeholders to plan two key events of the grant period: a Tribal – Local Government Workshop and a Regional Policy Summit. PlanRVA staff maintained contact lists, invitations, and RSVPs for both events. Read more about these events in the next section.

## **Process Outcome:**

The maintenance of the project stakeholder roster ensures that all interested stakeholders have a primary point of contact about the project and that all are informed about the project as it unfolds.

## **Collaboration with Outreach Contractors**

PlanRVA staff worked closely with the Outreach Contractor team of staff from the University of Virginia Institute for Engagement and Negotiation (UVA IEN) to plan and hold two key events for policy development during the grant period. Initially planned as in-person events for the spring, plans had to be altered given the COVID pandemic and associated social distancing precautions. Both events were held virtually in the summer of 2020.

## **Tribal-Local Government Workshop**

A theme or undercurrent that repeatedly resurfaced during discussions with Tribal stakeholders as well as others throughout the project has been the importance of incorporating the Tribal governments of the watershed into policy discussions early in the process and with the full weight and respect they are due as nations. This theme became more apparent and important after Federal recognition of the two primary Tribes in the watershed study area. The Pamunkey Tribe received Federal recognition in 2015; the Pamunkey Tribe is based just north of the watershed along the Pamunkey River. The Pamunkey Tribe owns land in the watershed. The Chickahominy Indian Tribe and the Chickahominy Indian Tribe – Eastern Division both received Federal recognition in 2018; both Tribes are based in the watershed study area.

UVA IEN and PlanRVA staff proposed the idea of a workshop for local government and Tribal leaders and staff to gather and learn more about government structures, federal and state laws that dictate relationship dynamics, regulatory processes, and simply have face time with each other. Both Tribal and local government representatives expressed interest in such a workshop.

In July, the project team hosted a Tribal – Local Government Workshop focused on the relationship between the local governments of the study area and the Tribes who are based or own land in the study area. Previous discussions throughout the project indicated that there were opportunities to improve Tribal – local government relationships for the benefit and clarification of natural resource and other policies. The Workshop was led by the UVA IEN team and supported by staff from PlanRVA, VCZM Program, Virginia Coastal Policy Center at William and Mary Law School, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The agenda included the following elements:

- Background of the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and Lower Chickahominy Watershed Project
- Federally Recognized Tribes and the Role of Local Government
- Orientation to the Tribes
- Orientation to Local Governments
- Commonwealth of Virginia Archeological Discovery Protocol
- Collaboration Strategies for Local Governments and Tribes

A copy of the Workshop agenda is included as attachment A to this report. Overall, the Workshop was a productive step in strengthening the relationship between the Tribes and local governments of the

watershed. A few strategies for carrying the energy forward were proposed and will be considered as the project continues: regular meetings of Tribal and local government leadership and/or staff to discuss issues of concern and a “guide book” detailing contacts, methods, preferences, and best practices for engagement between the governments.

### Lower Chickahominy Watershed Policy Summit

In August, the project team hosted a Regional Summit focused on policy development. A wide group of stakeholders were invited: local staff, Tribal staff, state agency staff, federal agency staff, NGO staff, and businesses. A series of presentations provided background about the project and the outreach effort that occurred during year 3 including thought leader interviews, focus groups, and a public survey. The policy ideas gathered through that outreach process functioned as the starting place for participants to build a policy action framework through a series of breakout rooms. Each breakout room focused on a different policy theme, including: creating a watershed partnership, physical recreational infrastructure, sustainable economic development, river advocacy and education, and protection of Tribal historic sites and traditions. Participants were assigned to break out rooms based on interest and expertise. All attendees participated in 3 different break out rooms. Each break out room was assigned a facilitator and a series of questions to consider. A virtual chart was provided to collect feedback. Each chart requested action steps, deliverables and timeline, and potential partners for the policies in question. The completed charts are currently being used in year 5 of the project to prioritize and move forward a key policy recommendation: the creation of a Lower Chickahominy Watershed Partners Collaborative.

A [summary report](#) of the Summit and policy recommendations produced by it can be found on the PlanRVA website. A copy of the Summit Agenda is included as attachment B to this report.

#### **Process Outcome:**

Involvement of PlanRVA staff in the planning and implementation of the outreach effort ensures an informed, efficient, and productive process proceeds. This past grant year produced a long list of policy ideas that can all be considered, consensus appears strong behind the creation of a Watershed Partners Collaborative.

### Ecotourism Infrastructure Inventory

As part of the year 4 of the Lower Chickahominy Watershed (LCW) project, an ecotourism infrastructure inventory was completed to highlight the existing public access sites that contribute to the ecotourism industry. The inventory allows PlanRVA staff and other project partners to highlight the strengths and pinpoint opportunities for growth to increase both the ecological and economic value in the three counties: New Kent, James City, and Charles City. The outcome of conducting the eco-tourism infrastructure inventory was three separate ArcGIS StoryMaps, one for each county, to report the findings.

The process to complete the ecotourism infrastructure inventory can be divided into four major steps:

1. Define Pubic Access and Eco-Tourism Infrastructure
2. Data Collection
3. Review Data Points
4. Analyze Data and Report Findings

## Define Public Access and Ecotourism Infrastructure

Before any data collection took place, understanding what public access and ecotourism infrastructure looked like was a crucial first step. A consistent definition for both terms is important to the success of the inventory.

### Public Access Sites

For the purposes of this project, public access included locations where people can enter or touch the water (i.e., boat ramps, paddling craft put-ins, and docks or marinas). The inventory also includes locations where people can view waterways and interact with wetland or riparian areas (i.e., trails near waterways or boardwalks). Additionally, sites that require fees or memberships upon access were included due to their impact on the local economy (i.e., golf clubs, boat clubs, breweries, wineries, restaurants, etc.).

### Ecotourism Infrastructure

Ecotourism infrastructure includes those elements of physical or mapped infrastructure that support the ecotourism industry:

- Bike and pedestrian infrastructure
- Interpretive signage, including natural and cultural heritage information
- Land trails
- Water trails
- Location signage
- Parking
- Public and private access to waterways
- Public parks (state and local) and other publicly owned lands open to the public, such as a Wildlife Management Area or State Forest

## Data Collection

After the definition of public access and ecotourism infrastructure was understood, PlanRVA staff began to collect data points. Available ArcGIS layers (shapefiles) were downloaded from the localities official government websites, the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) webpage, and PlanRVA's existing GIS data. If any data was not available through these resources, PlanRVA staff contacted locality employees for further assistance. Additionally, some data points were created by PlanRVA staff to ensure all sites were displayed properly on the final map documents.

### Review Data Points

Once all data points were collected and displayed on ArcGIS Online maps, PlanRVA staff sent each map document to the respective localities for review. The request asked that locality staff members review the map documents for the accuracy of data points, as well as insight on any missing sites. Following the review, PlanRVA staff made the necessary changes to the map documents.

### Analyze Data and Report Findings

The final step of the ecotourism infrastructure inventory was to analyze the collected data and report the findings. PlanRVA staff created three separate word documents for each locality to list and organize each public access site. The public access sites were divided into specific categories:

- Parks and trails
- Historical and Educational sites
- Restaurants, Wineries, and Breweries
- Private Access Sites
- Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail (VBWT) Sites
- Interpretive Signage

The sites were separated into specific categories to provide clear and concise StoryMap documents for readers. PlanRVA staff then completed a write up (about 1 paragraph) for each public access site to be displayed in the final StoryMap documents. Under each site, the available on-site amenities (i.e., ADA accessibility, parking, restrooms, fishing, boat access, hiking trails, etc.) were inventoried to be displayed as well. Throughout this process, PlanRVA staff took note of the various strengths and weaknesses of the three localities to report. Lastly, the StoryMap documents were created and included an introduction, definitions, existing conditions, the six access categories, and conclusion. After each StoryMap was reviewed and edited, their links were added to the [project recreation and ecotourism page](#) on the PlanRVA website for the public to view.

You can access the StoryMaps by clicking on the county name below:

- [Charles City County](#)
- [James City County](#)
- [New Kent County](#)

### **Process Outcome**

A comprehensive collection of GIS data about the recreation assets and ecotourism infrastructure acts as a resource for project stakeholders and will form the basis of a plan to be created in year five of this project. The StoryMap format allows for easy engagement with the data by the public.



# **Attachment A**

## **Local Government/Tribal Workshop Agenda**

**Lower Chickahominy Watershed Project  
Local Government/Tribal Workshop  
DRAFT Participant Agenda  
July 22, 2020**

Virtual Connection Link:

<https://virginia.zoom.us/j/96262188453?pwd=S0p0dzJ6VmJ1bktLb3pQQ214R0taZz09>

**Zoom Meeting ID: 962 6218 8453**

**Password: 475797**

**MEETING PURPOSE**

- 1) Build understanding between the tribes and local county governments about how each governing entity works;
- 2) Explore and discuss preferred methods of working with each other;
- 3) Identify specific interests and potential areas for collaboration.

**AGENDA**

**9:15-9:30 Technology Checks and Orientation**

**9:30-9:45**

**Welcome**

Laura McKay, Program Manager, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program,  
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality  
Sarah Stewart, Planning Manager, Environmental Program, PlanRVA

**9:45-10:00**

**Introduction to the Workshop**

Tanya Denckla Cobb, Director, Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN),  
University of Virginia

**10:00-10:40**

**Federally Recognized Tribes and the Role of Local Government**

Angela King, Assistant Director, Virginia Coastal Policy Center (VCPC) at William & Mary Law  
School

**10:40-10:45**

**Quick Break**

**10:45-12:00**

**Orientation to the Tribes**

*Moderator: Tanya Denckla Cobb, Director, IEN*

- Chickahominy Indian Tribe,
- Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division Tribe
- Pamunkey Indian Tribe

Each of the three tribes will present for 15 minutes followed by 10 minutes each of questions and responses, on these

- Important points of history
- Highlights of Tribal government: location, Council size, meeting frequency, decision-making, liaisons, etc.
- Best methods of working with the Tribes and preferred methods of communication

**12:00-12:30 Lunch Break**

**12:30-1:15 Orientation to Local Governments**

*Moderators: Elizabeth Andrews and Angela King, VCPC*

- New Kent County
- James City County
- Charles City County

Each of the three local county governments will present consecutively for 10 minutes followed by a 15-minute question and response period at the end

- Structure, function, and decision-making bodies
- How to navigate the various functions of local county government
- Best methods of working with local county governments and preferred methods of communication

**1:15-1:30 Commonwealth of Virginia Archeological Discovery Protocol**  
Roger Kirchen, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

**1:30-2:30 Collaboration Strategies for Local Governments and Tribes**

*Moderator: Tanya Denckla Cobb, IEN*

- How do local governments and Tribes want to enhance their relationship and work better together?
- Share ideas heard through the day
- Utilize Zoom polling to prioritize ideas
- Next Steps?

**2:30 pm Adjourn**

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# **Attachment B**

## **Lower Chickahominy Watershed Summit Agenda**

# Lower Chickahominy Watershed Project

## Year Four Watershed-Wide Summit

### August 18, 2020

### Agenda

**Zoom link:** <https://virginia.zoom.us/j/93595627692?pwd=VldGUUhyZG1meGVUb3ZrbDZlMFEvUT09>

**Meeting ID:** 935 9562 7692

**Passcode:** 675005

**Phone for call-in participants:** 267-831-0333

#### MEETING PURPOSE

- Enhance watershed networking between stakeholders including local government, non-governmental organizations, private businesses, Tribes, and community members.
- Review core strategies for the watershed that emerged from the two-year stakeholder engagement process, and develop one-year strategic actions to implement these strategies.
- Prioritize the one-year strategic implementation actions, identify partners for implementation, and determine key milestones for each.

#### AGENDA

**9:00**      **Participant/Tech Opening and Orientation**

**9:30**      **Welcome**  
Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth

**9:35**      **Introductions and review agenda**  
Tanya Denckla Cobb, Director, Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN),  
University of Virginia

#### **Project History and Accomplishments**

Laura McKay, Program Manager, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program,  
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Sarah Stewart, Planning Manager, Environmental Program, PlanRVA

Mike Foreman, Special Projects Manager, Institute for Engagement &  
Negotiation (IEN), University of Virginia

#### **Questions?**

**10:15**      **Introduction of small group discussion + breakout rooms**  
Tanya Denckla Cobb

- 10:25**      **Breakout rooms, Round 1**
- 11:00**      **Break**
- 11:10**      **Breakout rooms, Round 2**
- 11:40**      **Breakout rooms, Round 3**
- 12:10**      **Lunch Break**
- 1:00**        **Breakout rooms, Round 4**
- 1:20**        **Summit Discussion of 1-Year Action Plans to Implement 8 Priority Strategies**  
Topic facilitators
- 2:10**        **Establish Implementation Work Groups**  
Tanya Denckla Cobb
- 2:20**        **Wrap-up and next steps**
- 3:00**        **Adjourn**

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