

# Virginia's Wildlife Action Plan and How We Keep Species From Becoming Endangered

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# While I am here...

- Talk about the Endangered Species Conservation
  - (Important but not sufficient.)
- Why keep species from becoming endangered?
- Introduce the Wildlife Action Plan.
- What does updated action plan say about the Hampton Roads PDC?
- Answer Questions/Get Feedback



# What does it mean for a species to be “Endangered”?

A species has a high likelihood of becoming extinct.

- 1973 Federal Endangered Species act
- 1979 Virginia Endangered Species act



“We don’t want to lose our wildlife heritage.”

# A Brief History of Endangered Species Conservation

- Mixed Results
  - Sometimes it works
  - Sometimes chaos ensues
  - Sometimes things don't work out

## Commonalities:

- Takes a long time
- Is Expensive
  - Few animals
  - Conservative Management
- Social/Cultural/Economic Turmoil
  - Lots of lawyers involved



Photos courtesy of USFWS

# Wouldn't it be nice if we could keep species from becoming endangered?

- Existing Infrastructure:
  - State Wildlife Agencies;
  - USFWS;
  - Federal, State, Private Partners
- Developed **State Wildlife Grants**
  - **To Keep Species From Becoming Endangered**
- Requires a Wildlife Action Plan



We are Updating Virginia's Wildlife  
Action Plan

# Not A Regulatory Document

If We Want To Keep Species From Becoming Endangered, Here Are the Things We Need to Do.

# Collaborative

We work to keep problems from becoming a crisis



The goal is to do good things for wildlife and also do good things for people.

The good news is that there are lots of opportunities.

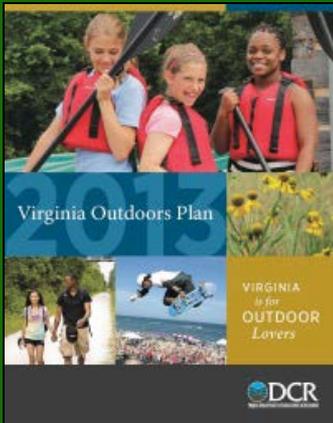
# What We've Found

- 884 Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- Habitat loss is the greatest threat
- Most important habitats:
  - Rivers, Wetlands, Caves
  - Riparian forests,
  - Open habitats (young forests, old fields, savannas, glades, etc.)
  - Upland Forests
  - Beaches



# Locally Relevant

Virginia Outdoors  
Plan Format



Stand Alone Chapters for  
the 21 Planning Regions

Define Local Actionable Priorities

- Identifying priority species
- Identify problems impacting action plan species
- Actions that can be taken to address those problems
- Places where those actions should be implemented first

# What Does the Wildlife Action Plan Have to Say About the Hampton Roads PDC?

- Isle of Wight
- James City
- Southampton and
- York Counties.
- Cities of Chesapeake,
- Franklin,
- Hampton,
- Newport News,
- Norfolk,
- Poquoson,
- Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and
- Williamsburg.



- 139 Action Plan Species
  - 120 Local Priorities
- Important Habitats
  - Beaches
  - Wetlands
  - Aquatic/Riparian
  - Forest
  - Open
  - Developed

# Beaches

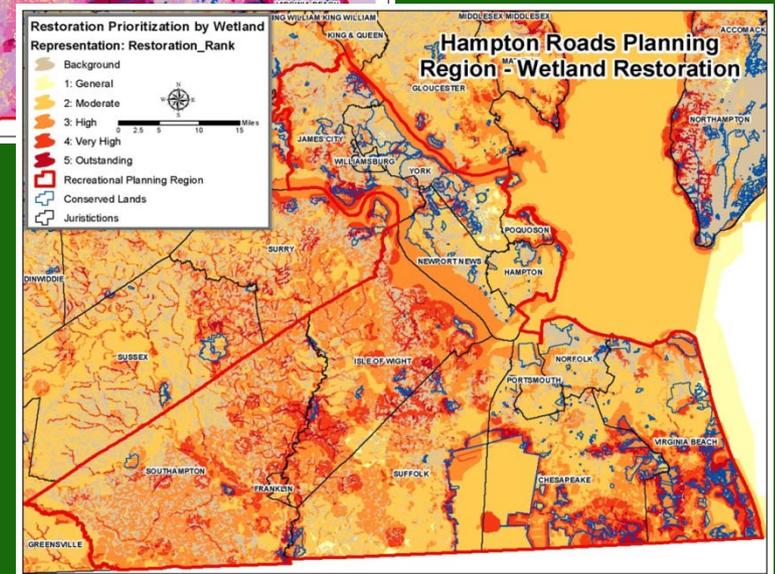
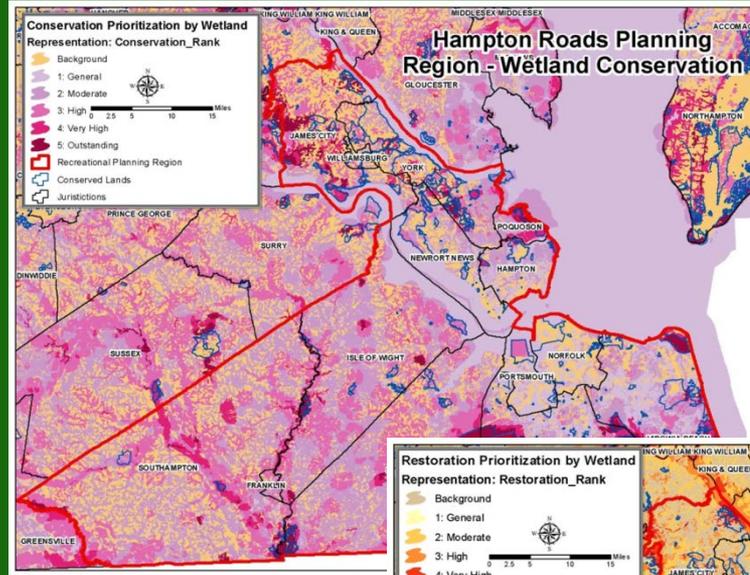


- Beaches, dunes, maritime forests
  - Most existing patches already conserved
  - Climate-smart opportunities
    - Conserve areas adjacent and inland
    - Try to identify likely migration opportunities

# Wetlands

Loss, Fragmentation,  
Pollution, Sediment,  
Invasive Species

- Permitting
- Conservation Status
- Buffers around wetlands
- Control Invasive Species

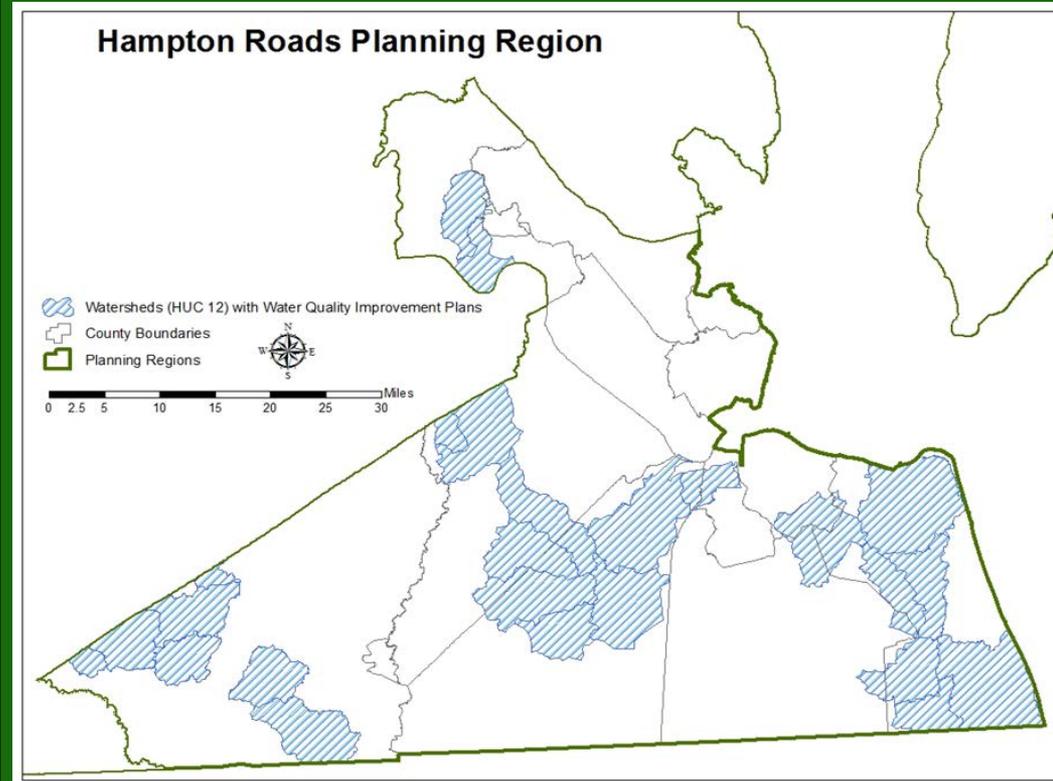


Wetlands Data from Virginia  
Wetlands Catalog.

# Rivers

## Bad Stuff Flowing Into Rivers and Tributaries

- Healthy riparian buffers;
- Stormwater management;
- Address human, livestock, and pet waste,
- Deer control programs,
- Address erosion issues,
- Invasive species control



Watersheds with TMDL Plans, DEQ

# Forests

## Maritime Forests

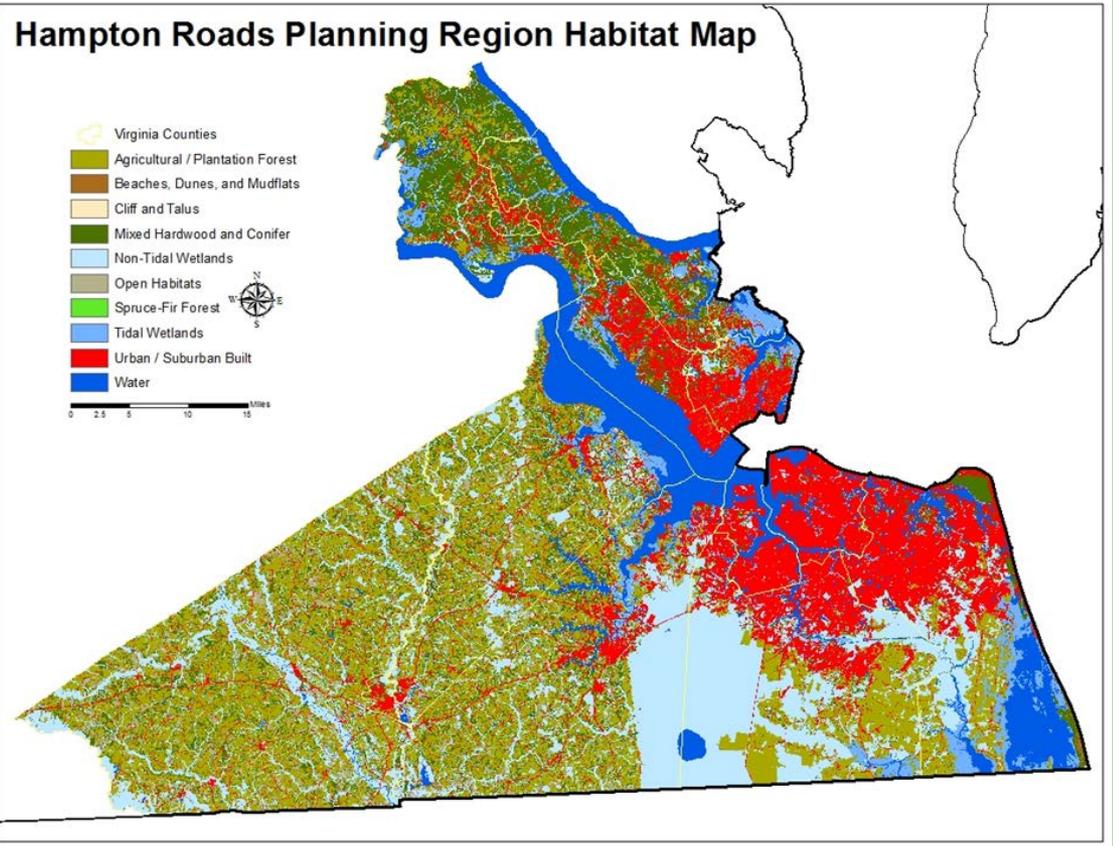
- Appear to be conserved



## Conversion and Fragmentation

- Conserve large patches
  - Riparian forests
  - Adjacent to conserved lands
- Implement BMPs
  - Manage for forest health
  - Control invasive species

Hampton Roads Planning Region Habitat Map



# Open Habitats

Increasingly rare and managed in ways that exclude wildlife.

- Control Invasive Species
- Management after timber harvest



# Developed Habitats

Some species adapting to human habitats.

- Least Terns nesting on the Craney Island Dredge Material Management area.
- Yellow Crowned Night Herons nesting in residential neighborhoods.

Managing problems and encouraging landowner tolerance.



# How Other States Have Used Their Action Plans



- Collaborative Conservation
- Finding Funding
  - Use the action plan to write grants and tap into new resources.
  - Or redirecting existing spending.

# Next Steps



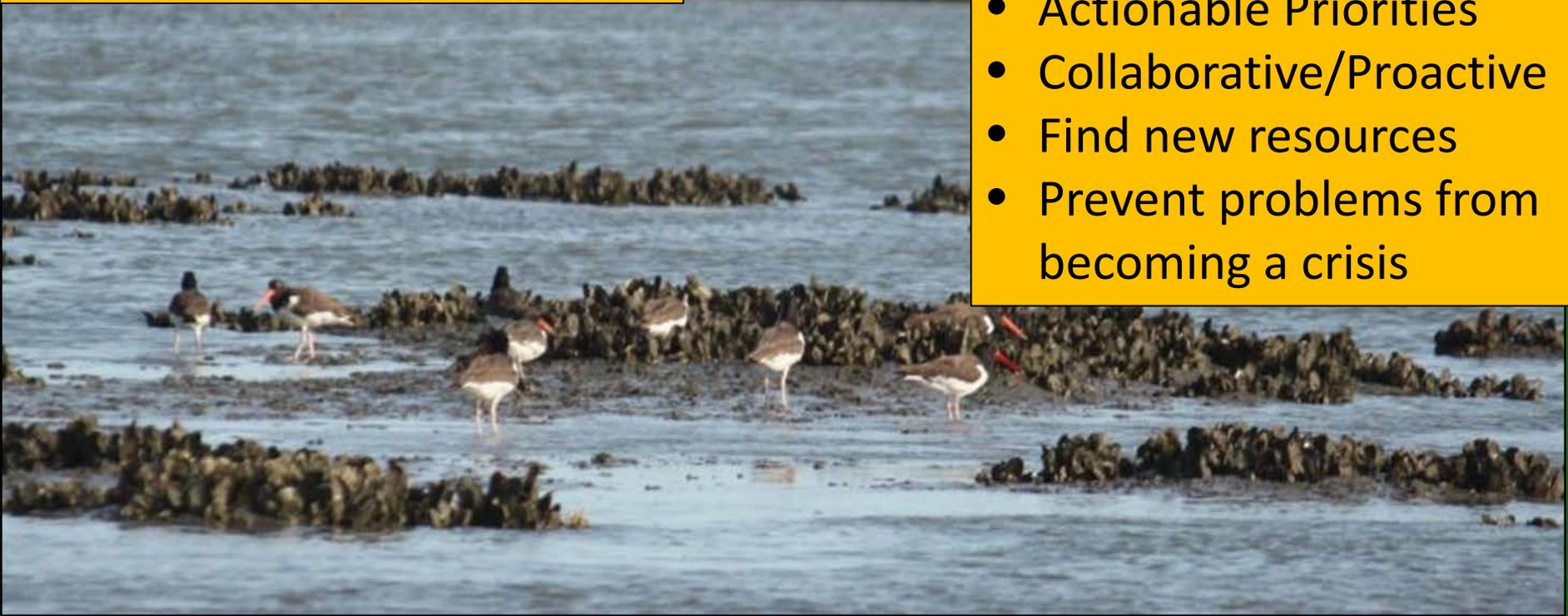
- Waiting for Review and Approval by the USFWS
- Working to create online version

# Wrap Up

I encourage you to take a look at what we've done and consider its local utility.

Keep Species From Becoming Endangered By:

- Locally Relevant
- Actionable Priorities
- Collaborative/Proactive
- Find new resources
- Prevent problems from becoming a crisis



# Thank You



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