



Douglas G. Pons, Chair | Shannon E. Glover, Vice-Chair
Robert A. Crum, Jr., Executive Director

November 26, 2025

Memorandum #2025-157

TO: Regional Environmental Committee Members

BY: Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC Principal Water Resources Engineer

RE: Regional Environmental Committee (REC) Meeting - December 4, 2025

The next meeting of the HRPDC Regional Environmental Committee will be held on Thursday, December 4, 2025, at 10:00 AM. The agenda and related materials are attached. This meeting will be in person in Board Room A/B of the Regional Building, located at [723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23320](https://www.google.com/maps/place/723+Woodlake+Drive,+Chesapeake,+VA+23320/@37.18111,-75.71111,15z).

Lunch will be provided following the meeting, please RSVP if you plan to attend.

If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

EC/se

Attachments

AGENDA
MEETING OF THE
HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 4, 2025 at 10:00 A.M.
REGIONAL BUILDING BOARD ROOM, 723 WOODLAKE DRIVE, CHESAPEAKE, 23320

1. Summary of the October 2, 2025, Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee (REC)

The November 2025 meeting was cancelled. The summary and attendance sheets of the October 2025 meeting are attached.

ACTION: Accept the Meeting Summary and Attendance

Attachments: 1A Meeting Summary October
 1B Meeting Attendance October

2. Virginia Municipal League (VML) and Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Legislative Update

Mr. Mitchell Smiley, Policy Manager for Transportation and Natural Resources (VML), and Mr. James Hutzler, VACo Government Relations Associate, will brief the Committee on VML and VACo's legislative agenda for the upcoming 2026 General Assembly. Priorities will include legislation relevant to local governments in Hampton Roads such as local land use authorities, local revenue sources, and stormwater regulations.

3. Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) Legislative Agenda Update

Mr. Jay Ford, Virginia Policy Manager for CBF, will brief the Committee on CBF's legislative agenda for the upcoming 2026 General Assembly.

4. Regional Trail Network

The Hampton Roads region has unanimously endorsed advancement of a Regional Trail Network that will connect all localities across the region and for several years, support for trail development has been included in the HRPDC's legislative priorities. Mr. Bob Crum, Executive Director of HRPDC, will brief the committee on the progress and vision of the Regional Trail Network.

5. Information Sharing Session

Several localities in the region have pursued initiatives and designations related to pollinators and urban forestry (Bee City USA, Tree City USA), clean energy (SolSmart), active transportation (Bicycle Friendly Community) and more. PDC staff will facilitate a discussion on how these efforts can be shared and leveraged to support regional progress.

**SUMMARY OF THE
HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 2, 2025 at 10:00 A.M.
Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

1. Summary of the September 4, 2025, Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee (REC)

The summary and attendance of the September 2025 meeting were included in the agenda. There were no edits.

2. Norfolk Southern Living Shoreline Project

Norfolk Southern has completed a multi-year living shoreline restoration along the southern edge of its historic Lambert's Point coal terminal in Norfolk. Mr. Adam Lambert, Norfolk Southern, briefed the committee on this successful project.

The site, owned by Norfolk Southern for over a century, serves as a major hub for transporting coal from West Virginia to international markets. The project was developed to address severe shoreline erosion along the property. Norfolk Southern evaluated both traditional "hard" stabilization methods and more sustainable "green" alternatives, ultimately selecting a living shoreline design. Modeling conducted with Dewberry showed erosion rates exceeding two feet per year in some areas. The final design emphasized native vegetation, sustainable grading, and a lighter construction footprint compared to traditional armoring. Post-construction monitoring is required for ten years.

Phase I restored approximately 900 feet of shoreline using native plants and oyster sills. Early monitoring showed strong oyster growth, though invasive phragmites have begun to reappear. Following the success of Phase I, Norfolk Southern pursued additional funding for Phase II and explored Virginia's nutrient banking program as an opportunity to offset some of the project costs. Through collaboration with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), the project's co-located oyster reefs and living shoreline were approved for nutrient credit generation. This was only the second living shoreline in Virginia to be approved for nutrient mitigation in the Commonwealth. Phase II also incorporated a geoweb system to stabilize the eroding cliff face. This innovative approach allows Norfolk Southern to generate nutrient credits through a state-approved bank managed by ECOcap and the value of these credits has the potential to offset much of the project's construction costs. Mr. Motsinger emphasized that this project was made possible over several years by key partnerships with the City of Norfolk, the Elizabeth River Project, and state agencies.

Participants commended the project as an exemplary example of green infrastructure and innovation in shoreline stabilization. The project also supports the City of Norfolk's Green Infrastructure Plan and offers opportunities for continued monitoring through VIMS's SHOREWATCH program. Norfolk Southern noted the project was five years in the making and may serve as a model for future restoration or mitigation opportunities on other properties.

3. City of Chesapeake Trails & Connectivity Plan

The City of Chesapeake adopted the Chesapeake Trails and Connectivity Plan (TConn) in November 2024. The plan builds upon the City's 2050 Comprehensive Plan and was recently recognized with the 2025 Commonwealth Connectors Award by APA-Virginia. Mr. Kevin Finn, City of Chesapeake, provided an overview of the plan which focuses on expanding pedestrian, bicycle, and blueway networks to connect open spaces and enhance active transportation options across the city.

The plan began as a trails and open space connectivity initiative aimed at creating a citywide network that benefits residents of all demographics. Development was guided by strong community engagement, including participation from over 250 residents and nearly 400 map-based comments. The planning process identified key destinations, population centers, and park systems, and explored opportunities to utilize rail-to-trail corridors and utility rights-of-way to improve connectivity. Core network recommendations were established to guide implementation priorities. In addition to the citywide framework, the plan includes more detailed small area plans, such as those for Greenbrier, the Chesapeake Industrial Waterfront, and the Deep Creek area, which incorporates the Dismal Swamp Trail system.

The plan also assesses accessibility to parks, schools, jobs, transit, and the broader bike network. Design principles emphasize inclusivity for all users and adaptability to both urban and rural contexts. The plan's appendix provides detailed design guidelines to ensure facilities are accessible and appropriate for multiple activity types. A story map available on the City's website allows users to explore the trail network and proposed connections interactively.

Participants asked questions about surfacing materials and the balance between paved and unpaved trail options, particularly in rural areas where residents prefer natural surfaces to preserve the local character. These considerations will be addressed in future small area and design-phase plans. The strong community interest in expanding access to green spaces was noted as a key outcome of public engagement, echoing similar themes identified through other regional planning efforts.

4. Environmental Education Program Update

Each year, the region collaborates through askHRgreen.org to deliver outreach and environmental education to thousands of Hampton Roads residents. Ms. Katie Cullipher, HRPDC, provided an overview of FY25 program highlights and current initiatives led by the four askHRgreen subcommittees: Recycling & Beautification, Stormwater, Water Awareness, and Fats, Oils & Grease (FOG).

The askHRgreen program continues to serve as a leading regional platform for environmental education and community engagement. In 2024, the program received more than 70,000 website visits. This number was slightly fewer than in previous years but coincided with higher engagement per visit. Outreach efforts included participation in 29 community events and business engagement initiatives such as the "Foam Free" campaign, which provided toolkits and educational materials to help restaurants comply with Virginia's expanded polystyrene ban. The program also distributed new activity booklets for children and reached over 5,500 students through the Environmental Education Mini-Grant program.

A major achievement this year was the continuation of the three-year, \$1.96 million EPA Regional Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) Grant. This initiative supported the Feet on the Street cart-tagging program, which reached 32,000 households and achieved a 36 percent reduction in recycling contamination. The grant also funded the development of new educational tools such as the Waste Wizard search feature and an interactive sorting game, along with surveys and focus groups to refine public messaging.

Additional program highlights included the Great American Cleanup, which engaged more than 3,400 volunteers who collected 68 tons of litter and 661 tires, and the continued tour of the "Love" sign made from recycled materials. The Stormwater Committee hosted Stormwater Awareness Week, featuring social media campaigns, educational contests, and the installation of 39 new pet waste stations. The Water Awareness Committee introduced Hydro Joe, a new mascot appearing at community events, and the Imagine a Day Without Water campaign, which featured interviews with

major water users to share non-utility perspectives. The FOG Committee launched HRGFOG.com, a new platform that expands accessibility and will include Spanish and Chinese translations in FY26.

Media and outreach efforts also reached new audiences through partnerships with social media influencers and content creators, resulting in nearly 9 million engagements across all platforms. A featured influencer video received over 78,000 views, helping expand the program's visibility far beyond its traditional audience.

Looking ahead, HRPDC staff noted upcoming efforts including a complete website redesign, a new outreach trailer, and updates to the Bay Star Homes and Business programs. The FY2024–25 Annual Report includes additional details about these initiatives. During discussion, participants asked about the Bring Your Own To-Go initiative and noted that health code restrictions prevent outside containers from being brought into restaurants. Attendees also commended the influencer partnerships as an innovative and effective strategy for expanding public engagement.

5. Community Flood Preparedness Fund Update

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) announced awards for Round 5 of the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) on July 1, 2025. Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, provided an overview of the regional results and an update on the status of Round 6, including anticipated timelines and potential regional applications.

Hampton Roads performed very well in Round 5, with five localities receiving awards to support capacity building, studies, and project implementation. In addition, HRPDC received funding for its regional sensor network project, and HRSD was awarded both grants and loans to support its resilience initiatives.

The Round 6 grant manual has not yet been finalized, but DCR expects to open the next round soon, with the goal of announcing awards by the end of calendar year 2025. A 45-day waiting period is expected between application submission and award notification.

HRPDC submitted comments on the draft Round 6 manual focused on improving accessibility and alignment with regional needs. Recommendations included increasing the benefit-cost analysis (BCA) threshold from \$2 million to \$5 million, removing the \$200,000 cap on resilience plan grants, and ensuring consistency with federal regulations for repetitive loss and Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) properties. HRPDC also suggested that if a BCA is required, it should be reflected in project scoring.

Additional comments recommended allowing project capacity grants to fund new staff positions for up to five years, with the option for renewal, to help localities build long-term resilience capacity. HRPDC expressed concern over a proposed limitation that would restrict capacity-building grants to low-income communities, noting that this could limit overall regional participation. During discussion, it was noted that some localities had not yet received their official award packages from DCR.

6. Other Matters

HRPDC staff provided an update on the status of new LiDAR data for the region. Final revisions were submitted to USGS the previous week, and the data is expected to be available soon. Communities directly involved in the data collection effort will receive follow-up communication from HRPDC staff once the data is released. For other localities or partners interested in accessing the dataset, HRPDC will make the information available upon request.

Locality/Agency	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative
Chesapeake	Kevin Finn	Andi Kerley	David Mergen	Robert Lee						
Franklin										
Gloucester	Denise Mosca	Kevin Landry	Mike Hudgins							
Hampton	Hisham Al Masraf									
Isle of Wight										
James City	Emily Grojean	Tammy Rosario								
Newport News	Allison Watts	Louis Bott	Macon Whitson							
Norfolk	Casey Magruder	Christina VanLear	Gina Shaw	Seamus McCarthy	Zac Puryear	Chris Epes				
Poquoson	Caleb Kewitch	Sean Crawford								
Portsmouth	Eric Wooden									
Smithfield	Mark Kluck									
Southampton	Regan Prince									
Suffolk	Heather Baggett	Meg Pittenger	Erin Rountree							
Surry										
Virginia Beach	Hayden Zavareei									
Williamsburg	Heather Markle									
Windsor										
York	Charles White	Kent Henkel								
Nansemond Indian Nation										
HRPDC	Ben McFarlane	Whitney Katchmark	Eric Walberg	Quan McLaurin	Eric Walberg	Katie Culipher	KC Filippino	Rebekah Eastep	Sara Kidd	Tho Tran
HRSD	Jon Nelson									
HRTPO										
DCR										
DEQ	Grace Holmes									
DWR										
DHCD										
SWCD										
VDEM										
VDOF	Mary Bennett	Meghan Mulroy-Goldman								
VDR										
VDOT										
VMRC										
Fort Monroe Authority										
Virginia Port Authority										
Jefferson Lab	Trevor Long									
VACO										
NASA										
U.S. Navy										
U.S. Air Force										
NRCS										
USACE										
USGS										
USFWS										
NOAA										
ODU										
UVa										
VIMS	Jeryl Phillips									
W&M										
Virginia Sea Grant										
VT Tech Center										
CBF	Lisa Renee Jennings									
CCAN										
Ducks Unlimited										
EDF										
Elizabeth River Project										
IEN	Tanya Denckla Cobb									
Great Dismal Swamp Coll.										
James River Association										
Living River Trust										
Lynnhaven River Now										
SELC										
Wetlands Watch										
AECOM										
AES										
Anchor QEA	Joe Reiger									
AMT Engineering	Ginny Snead									
Arcadis										
Bay Environmental										
Brown & Caldwell	Priyanka Mohandoss									
Cardno										
Chesapeake Conservancy										
Clark Nexsen										
Contech ES										
Dewberry										
F&R										
Geosyntec										
GKY										
Fernleaf										
Hazen & Sawyer	Mike Barbachern									
Henrico Pierce Engineered Solutions	Jessica Evans									
Jackson Environmental	Shelly Frie									
Kent Environmental										
Kinney-Horn										
Louis Berger										
Michael Baker										
Opti RTC										
Parsons Brinckerhoff										
Pennoni	Philip Pilcher									
RK&K										
Timmons Group										
SGA										
Stantech										
Woolpert										
WPL Site										
Whitman Reardan										
Public										