

Regional Strategic Plan for Public Access in Hampton Roads

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

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Background

Section 306a of the Coastal Zone Management Act authorizes construction and acquisition projects that improve coastal resources

Virginia CZM Program has funded several public access projects in Hampton Roads

- Bennett's Creek Crabbing Pier Extension, Suffolk (1990)
- Monkey Bottom Wetland Walkway, Norfolk (1991)
- Jones Creek Boat Ramp, Isle of Wight (1992)
- Powhatan Creek Canoe Launch, James City (1993)
- Riverview Farm Park Boardwalk, Newport News (1993)
- Elizabeth River Interpretive Path/Canoe Trail, Virginia Beach (1993)
- Alton's Creek Boardwalk Canoe Trail, Virginia Beach (1994)
- Canoe Access and Nature Trail, Virginia Beach (1994)
- King-Lincoln Park Beach Replenishment, Newport News (1994)
- White House Cove Pier Restoration, Poquoson (1996)
- First Landing State Park Walkway Renovations, DCR (2005)

Recent History

HRPDC has applied for and received grants for public access projects in the region

- Nansemond River Water Access at Constant's Wharf Park and Marina (grant expired)
- Lavalette Ave Canoe/Kayak Launch and Fishing Dock, Norfolk (2012 grant returned; expected completion in 2017 with 2015 grant)
- Carrollton Nike Park Canoe/Kayak Launch, Isle of Wight (expected completion in 2017 with 2015 grant)

Lessons Learned

Section 306a projects require more administrative steps than typical Section 306 or Section 309 projects

- Checklist
- Special Conditions on grants
- NOAA review

Timing availability of local funds with grant opportunities can be difficult

Potential Solution – A Regional Strategic Plan

Benefits:

- Identify needs and potential opportunities ahead of time based on sound and agreed upon methodology
- Work with localities to prioritize potential sites for various grant opportunities – not just CZM

Project Outline

Goal: develop a strategic plan for public access to region's waterways for active and passive recreation

Vision: a regional network of connected trails and access sites that improve the quality of life of residents and visitors

Project Outline

Four deliverables:

1. Assessment of Plans, Policies, and Locations for Public Access
2. Identification of Opportunities for Funding of Public Access Projects
3. Mapping of Existing and Planned Public Access Locations and Trails
4. Trails and Public Access Sites Maps/Pamphlets

Start date: October 1, 2016

End date: September 30, 2017

Next Steps

Identification of local government and other contacts for information and review

Data and information collection

- Local, state, federal and NGO data for public access locations and usage
- Local, state, federal and NGO plans for new public access sites or improvements