



Regional Environmental Managers Technical Committee

FY21 CZM & FY22 WIP Phase III

June 21st, 2022

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Digital Meeting and Conference Call

MEETING MINUTES

In attendance (14): Matt Gerhart (NVCT), Scott Rae, Tyler Gelles, and MacKenzie Bellimam (Fredericksburg), John Saunders (Stafford County), Adam Lynch and Sarah Kerner (Friends of Rappahannock), Alexis Butchers (King George County), Taylor Coxon (Spotsylvania County), Bryant Bays (VA Department of Forestry), Mike Rigdon (Lake Anna Civic Association), Michael Zehner, Luke Peters, Lindsay Edwards (Berkley Group)

Meeting Notes

June meeting of the GWRC Regional Environmental Managers Technical Committee, discussing the status of projects and goals in the GWRC Environmental Services Strategic Plan and to identify data gaps and needs for regional resiliency projects and the CZM resiliency “toolbox”.

Outcome 1: Sharing Information from State and Regional Environmental Groups

- The Berkley Group shared information from the Rappahannock River Basin Commission continuing the conversation on utility-scale solar siting and stormwater issues.
- Shared analysis from The Nature Conservancy on possible solar sites in Virginia, which took lands within 3 miles of transmission lines, undeveloped, with little slope, and overlaid with conservation cores to determine how many acres are potentially prime for solar development.
 - Preventing deforestation is another key goal, and 10-20% of state goals could theoretically be met if all rooftops were covered.
 - Current energy storage technology will not be satisfactory once the state meets 50% of its renewable energy goals, so there are some obstacles there.

Outcome 2: Review of Environmental Services Strategic Plan and Discussion on Relevant Projects and Goals

- The Strategic Plan has 10 years worth of projects laid out in a Gantt chart with relevant funding sources (WIP, CZM, other grant programs) applied to each.
- Because the projects have been incorporated into WIP and CZM optional and regionally specific deliverables, the Plan is on track to complete goals.

- Although there have been other recent grant funds to help complete projects (BRIC, Community Flood Preparedness Fund, etc.), there is not currently a huge need to reevaluate the Plan.
- Should keep certain projects on long-term radar, such as addressing high hazard dams.
 - The State Hazard Mitigation Plan set for release in 2024 will use some dam safety information gathered from regional plans.

Outcome 3: Discussion on Resilience Data Gaps and Needs for CZM Toolbox, Hazard Mitigation, and other Plans

- Conversation started on what data locality staff need during everyday activities for resilience planning, grants, etc.
- Overlap with GWRC Hazard Mitigation Plan 2022 update
- In particular, there is lack of data concerning heat islands and extreme heat events
 - Tree Fredericksburg has done some work to map and address urban heat islands
 - Recently there was a volunteer effort (~200 volunteers statewide) to map urban heat islands which covered Abingdon, Arlington, Farmville, Harrisonburg, Virginia Beach, Winchster, Salem, Richmond, and others (university towns)
 - Lara Johnson of DOF is also a good source of information
 - Opportunity for further citizen science events

Links and Information

- Virginia Mercury article on the 3/9/22 heat mapping study conducted by the VA Foundation for Independent Colleges, the Science Museum of VA, and other partners:
 - <https://www.virginiamercury.com/2022/03/29/heat-mapping-study-found-major-temperature-swings-within-virginia-localities/>
- Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Fairfax County both recently conducted heat map studies (for comparing methods):
 - <https://www.novaregion.org/1509/Urban-Heat-Islands>
 - https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/sites/environment-energy-coordination/files/assets/documents/resilient%20fairfax/nasa%20develop%20urban%20heat%20island%20final%20report_accessible.pdf
- The Coastal Resilience Master Plan can be used as reference material for hazards and identifying communities, especially in writing grants.
- The Nature Conservancy's map and resources on potential solar sites in Virginia:
 - <https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationByGeography/NorthAmerica/UnitedStates/virginia/Pages/solar-siting-va.aspx>

Next Meeting: Tuesday July 19th