

February 27, 2025

**Memorandum #2025-32**

**TO: Regional Environmental Committee Members**

**BY: Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC Principal Water Resources Engineer**

**RE: Regional Environmental Committee (REC) Meeting – March 6, 2025**

The next meeting of the HRPDC Regional Environmental Committee will be held on Thursday, March 6, 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/@37.08111,-75.91111,17z). Lunch will be provided following the meeting.

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

EC/tj

Attachments

**AGENDA**  
**MEETING OF THE**  
**HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**  
**MARCH 6, 2025 at 10:00 A.M.**  
**REGIONAL BUILDING BOARD ROOM, 723 WOODLAKE DRIVE, CHESAPEAKE, 23320**

**1. Summary of the February 6, 2025, Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee (REC)**

The summary and attendance sheets of the February 2025 meeting are attached.

**ACTION:** Accept the Meeting Summary and Attendance

**Attachments:** 1A Meeting Summary February  
1B Meeting Attendance February

**2. Microplastics**

Ms. Meredith Sealey, Assistant Professor in the Ecosystem Health Section at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, will provide a presentation on microplastic pollution, including the following topics:

- Overview of global plastic pollution
- How do macroplastics become microplastics?
- Microplastic pollution sources to Hampton Roads
- Environmental effects of plastics and related stressors (plastic additives, tire wear, microbial communities)
- Seeley lab research at VIMS
- Perspectives on where the field is moving, and the importance of engaging with municipalities

**3. Coastal VA Offshore Wind Update**

Mr. John Larson, Director of Public Policy and Economic Development with Dominion Energy, will provide an overview of the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) project. Dominion Energy leveraged the experience it gained from two pilot wind turbines operating off the coast of Virginia Beach since the fall of 2020 to embark upon the installation of the largest offshore wind project in the United States. The project consists of 176 turbines that can power almost 25% of the company's residential customers, but it is also powering economic growth and job creation in the Hampton Roads area by developing an offshore wind supply hub.

**4. Legislative Update**

HRPDC staff will provide a brief update on recent developments in the General Assembly session.

**5. Regional Building Parking Lot Retrofit**

Thanks to grant funds from DEQ, the HRPDC/HRTPO parking lot has been transformed into an environmental showcase that helps meet regional objectives while providing convenient parking for guests. The project includes practices to 1) mitigate downstream

flooding, 2) treat stormwater runoff, 3) reduce the heat island effect, 4) reduce carbon emissions, and 5) incorporate recycled materials. The parking lot is now open for use. Ms. Jill Sunderland, HRPDC, will provide an update on the parking lot project, including a demonstration of the Stormcrete porous concrete panels and a walking tour to showcase the green infrastructure features incorporated into the design.

**SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE  
HRPDC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 6, 2025  
Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

**1. Summary of the December 5, 2024, Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee (REC)**

The meeting summary and attendance of the December meeting were accepted.

**2. Beneficial Use of Dredge Material and Thin Layer Placement Guidance**

Ms. Ella DiPietro from the Elizabeth River Project (ERP) presented an overview of their initiative to advance thin layer placement (TLP) in the Elizabeth River Watershed, which is part of a broader push to provide guidance on the beneficial use of dredge material (BUDM) in Virginia. The project aims to develop a technical guidance document and a GIS-based matchmaking tool to align restoration site owners with potential dredging efforts. These will both be available by the end of February and the tool will be beta tested to stakeholders willing to input projects. ERP is also planning to design up to three demonstration projects within the Elizabeth River. The statewide guidance document is being developed by the Virginia Marine Resource Commission (VMRC) and other partners. It is under review by various stakeholders across the Commonwealth.

Ms. Katchmark asked how Virginia is doing compared to other states that have BUDM programs. Ms. DiPietro noted that Virginia is very conservative and sharing best practices and case studies from Maryland and other states will be helpful once the guidelines are finalized. Once the GIS tool is developed, partners are seeking interests from anyone willing to host and maintain this tool. Interested stakeholders are asked to reach out to Ms. DiPietro with suggestions. Another participant asked what the limitations are to matching marsh restoration locations in small rivers and creeks with proximity to dredge material. Ms. DiPietro noted that this is a challenge and something to be considered when developing projects.

**3. EPA Recycling Grant Update**

Ms. Katie Cullipher, HRPDC and askHRgreen.org, provided an update on the Recycling Education and Outreach grant, which was awarded \$1.96 million to support recycling education initiatives. The project focuses on reducing waste generation, increasing awareness of recycling practices, and minimizing contamination in recycling streams. While the grant is currently on hold due to a federal funding freeze announced by the EPA, Ms. Cullipher shared updates on the progress made so far. The team has developed and working on growing web-based recycling and disposal tools, the [Waste Wizard tool](#), and the [Ready Set Sort game](#). She also discussed the Feet on the Street project, which aimed to reduce contamination in recycling programs by educating households on proper recycling practices.

#### **4. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Update**

Ms. Whitney Katchmark provided an update on the region's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) and recent public engagement efforts. The first public informational webinar was held on January 20<sup>th</sup>, attracting 94 participants, and focused on reviewing the plan goals, encouraging survey participation, and answering questions. The [survey](#) covers various sectors including energy supply, buildings, transportation, waste management, agriculture, and industry. Initial results from 147 respondents show high importance placed on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and priorities such as transitioning to renewable energy. Major barriers identified include high costs and limited access to alternative transportation options. Ms. Katchmark encouraged further survey participation to gather more diverse input and mentions that an FAQ will be posted soon based on questions received during the webinar.

Currently, the project is still funded but there are no promises of future funding for implementation. But this plan will allow the region to synthesize programs and information. A similar effort is being undertaken by the state, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has taken the lead on their CCAP. Mr. Quan McLaurin, HRPDC, added that the plan is specific to the Hampton Roads region and will help in future partnerships with DEQ's plan.

#### **5. Legislative Update**

HRPDC staff provided an update of bills moving through the General Assembly related to resilience, stormwater, planning, solar, trees, data centers, and the budget. Many bills of concern have either been laid on the table or amended. The team agreed to continue monitoring the progress of these bills throughout the session. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) and Wetlands Watch are tracking legislation closely as well. They mentioned that for the first time, the Virginia Sea Grant has a budget line item in the Senate's budget bill, environmental literacy currently has \$750,000 allocated and CBF is distributing a letter of support, and that George Mason University is named as a potential the State Climatologist.

#### **6. Updates and Other Business**

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, CBF is hosting Senator Tim Kaine for their Brock Climate Lecture Series. Find more details and register [here](#). CBF is also hosting a legislative debrief on March 27<sup>th</sup>, more details to come.

Locality/Agency	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative	Representative
Chesapeake	Charlie Jones	Dave Mergen	Susan Talbott								
Franklin											
Gloucester	Kevin Landry	Mike Hudgins									
Hampton	Olivia Askew										
Isle of Wight											
James City	Tammy Rosario	Mike Woodson	Leslie Bowie								
Newport News	Angela Hopkins	Chris Williams	Alison Watts	Louis Bott	Macon Whitson	Sheila McAllister					
Norfolk	Gina Shaw	Jack Dearstine	Lily Bether	Justin Shafer	Chris Epes	Seamus McCarthy					
Poquoson	Sean Crawford	Caleb Kewitch									
Portsmouth	Brittany Collins	Debbie Gaskins									
Smithfield	Mark Kluck										
Southampton	Regan Prince										
Surfolk	Sadiq Omer	Meg Pittenger	Erin Rountree								
Surry											
Virginia Beach	Diana St. John	Tim Egan	Tarig Omer	Angela Rivas							
Williamsburg	Heather Markle										
Windsor											
York	Kent Henkel	Charles White									
Nansemond Indian Nation											
HRPDC	Eric Walberg	Tho Tran	Jill Sunderland	KC Filippino	Eric Walberg	Katie Culipher	Whitney Katchmar	Emma Corbitt	Rebekah Eastep	Quan McLaurin	Sara Kidd
HRSD	Jon Nelson										
HRTPO											
DCR											
DEQ	Craig Nicol	Grace Holmes									
DWR											
DHCD											
SWCD											
VDEM											
VDOF											
VDH											
VDOT											
VMRC											
Fort Monroe Authority											
Virginia Port Authority	Scott Whitehurst										
Jefferson Lab											
VACO											
NASA											
U.S. Navy											
U.S. Air Force	Cecilia Boyd	Suzanne Dyba									
NRCS											
USACE											
USGS											
USFW'S											
NOAA											
ODU											
UVA											
VIMS											
W&M											
Virginia Sea Grant											
VT Tech Center											
CBA	Christy Everett	Lisa Renee Jennings									
CCAN											
Ducks Unlimited											
Elizabeth River Project	Ella Dipietro										
Great Dismal Swamp Coll.											
James River Association											
Living River Trust											
Lynnhaven River Now											
SELC											
Wetlands Watch	Ian Blair										
AECOM	Noelle Crowley										
AES											
AMT Engineering											
Arcadis											
Bay Environmental											
Brown & Caldwell											
Cardno											
Chesapeake Conservancy											
Clark Nexsen											
Contech ES											
Dewberry											
F&R											
Geosyntec											
GKY	Doug Fritz										
Fernleaf											
Hazen & Sawyer											
Jacobs	Shelly Frie										
Kerr Environmental											
Kimley-Horn	Endicott Parks										
Louis Berger											
Michael Baker											
Opti RTC											
Parsons Brinckerhoff											
RK&K											
Timmons Group											
SGA											
Stantech											
Whitman Requardt											
Wolpert											
Jefferson Lab											
AMT Engineering											
Public	Katherine Hafner										