



**Be River Friendly**  
It's Your Backyard  

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The Rappahannock River Basin Commission

December 30, 2014

The Honorable Terry McAuliffe  
Governor of Virginia

The Honorable Chris Jones,  
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Walter Stosch  
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Charles Colgan  
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

c/o Division of Legislative Automated Systems (DLAS)  
910 Capitol Square  
General Assembly Building, Suite 660  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Attention: Legislative Documents and Reports Processing

Re: 2014 Accomplishment of the Rappahannock River Basin Commission

Dear Governor McAuliffe:

As Chairman of the Rappahannock River Basin Commission, I am pleased to present this report to you on the accomplishments during 2014. I remain deeply appreciative of the continued membership and the work efforts expended by members of the House of Delegates and Senate as well as my colleague members of the local governing bodies of the basin.

Please do not hesitate to call upon me if I may be of further assistance.

With kindest personal regards and all best wishes, I remain

Sincerely,

Joseph Grzeika  
Chairman, RRBC and  
Member, King George County Board of Supervisors

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As defined in Section 61.1-659.27 of the Code of Virginia, the Commission's purpose and mission is to provide guidance for the stewardship and enhancement of the water quality and natural resources of the Rappahannock River Basin. The Commission is a forum in which the state, and fifteen local governments to include the city of Fredericksburg and the counties of Rappahannock, Madison, Fauquier, Culpeper, Orange, Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, Caroline, Essex, Westmoreland, Middlesex, Richmond and Lancaster and citizens of the Commonwealth work to affect the Basin's water quality, quantity and other natural resources. We continue to promote communication, coordination and education, and by seeking appropriate solutions to identified problems, the Commission promotes activities by local, state and federal governments and individuals that foster voluntary resource stewardship for the environmental and economic health of the Basin.

Since our last report, we are very pleased to report that, as in previous years, we have continued to carry out our designated work program with significant success. In 2014, we conducted four meetings in March, June, September and December in Spotsylvania County, Lancaster County, Madison County and the city of Richmond (in the General Assembly Building) respectively. Meeting materials are available on the Commission's website: [www.RappRiverBasin.org](http://www.RappRiverBasin.org)

The Commission devoted time at its March meeting reviewing the changes to the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) considered by the General Assembly. With the assistance of the RRBC Technical Committee the Commission provided legislative members with considerable input into VSMP legislation that was carried by Commission members Delegate Ed Scott, Delegate Keith Hodge, Delegate Margaret Ransone and Senator Emmett Hanger. Key legislative changes were considered favorably by the 2014 General Assembly: HB1173 (Hodges) and SB423 (Hanger).

The Commission and its Technical Committee has also worked extensively with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers on the follow up from two studies that began in 2012 and concluded in 2013. The proposal to begin implementing the Upper Rappahannock Stream and Rainfall Gauges Public Safety Project was the result of the work with the Corps of Engineers. Cost-share funding for implementation was considered but not approved by the 2014 General Assembly. The Commission continues to advocate for this important public safety project and cost-share may again be considered by the Assembly in 2015.

The Rappahannock River Basin Commission's Technical Committee met eight times over the course of the year. Serving as the Commission's technical advisory group their charge is to advise us on, among other things, how water quality measures can be implemented in a reasonable way with a high degree of success.

The Technical Committee supported the Commission in the production of a report entitled "River Friendly Capital Improvements." With key support and input of multiple partners the report represents phase one of an ongoing effort to identify cost-effective

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water quality improvement strategies that support meeting the Commonwealth's Ches-Bay obligations. Quoting from the report:

...(T)he purpose of the project was and continues to be the identification and exploration of opportunities to optimize planned investments to enhance water quality while achieving the purposes of the planned investments. We call these types of capital expenditures "River Friendly Capital Improvements." Investments in this context are considered broadly; it includes public sector capital projects as well as private sector projects whether new development or redevelopment. All capital projects that involve land-disturbing activities, whether public or private, are required to address water quality in a manner that results in no net increase in pollution loading as defined in the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP). This can be called "*maintaining the cap*." The current Chesapeake Bay TMDL WIP requires "*closing of the gap*" between current pollution loads and targets that need to be achieved by 2025. For the purposes of this project optimization of capital investments from a water quality perspective means addressing the Gap as well as the required Cap at least cost. Optimization can also include incentivizing investments that contribute to closing the gap by installing water quality practices on properties that are not currently required to install practices (i.e. non-regulated land).

Key partners in this project included the Center for Natural Capital, the George Washington Regional Commission, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission, Conservation Concepts, LLC, Northern Virginia Land Trust and the Department of Environmental Quality. A special thank you is extended to Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources Russ Baxter for his thoughtful input.

A short video produced as a part of the report can be viewed at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nokQBKnmg\\_M&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nokQBKnmg_M&feature=youtu.be)

Finally, the Commission has continued to engage the Department of Environmental Quality on the state of our groundwater supply in Tidewater Virginia, specifically the Potomac Aquifer. The Commission heard a report from Scott Kudlas, Director of the Office of Water Supply and reiterated the importance of addressing increased intrusion of salt water into our groundwater supply as well as the loss of artesian head pressure across the aquifer. The Commission also received a presentation from the Hampton Roads Sanitation District on the HRSD's studies of the potential for aquifer recharge and we look forward to the future findings of those efforts.

The Commission staff continues to maintain information on the website. In addition to a listing of members and events it contains information on Commission meetings and the continuing efforts of the Technical Committee.