

TIDELINES

News & Notes From the Hampton Roads Office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation

MARCH 2019

General Assembly Concludes

The Virginia General Assembly concluded its 2019 session in late February by approving a budget with robust funding for the Clean Water Blueprint. Specifically, the final budget includes \$10 million in funding for the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund, which provides matching grants to localities for projects that reduce polluted runoff; \$89.7 million in total funding for the Virginia Agriculture Cost-Share Program, which helps farmers install conservation practices like fencing cattle out of streams and streamside buffers; and \$4 million for oyster restoration and replenishment efforts.

Another success this session included a bill to address the proper clean-up of coal ash ponds. Coal ash is the waste byproduct from coal-fired power plants, and much of it is currently stored in unlined pits near waterways and groundwater supplies, where it can leak harmful chemicals and other pollutants into our rivers and drinking water.

Senate Bill 1355, sponsored by Senator Frank Wagner, is a bipartisan agreement supported by CBF and other environmental groups that will require at least 25 percent of ash be recycled, with the remainder disposed of safely in modern, lined landfills. The bill also limits removal costs that Dominion can recover from ratepayers to do this work.

CBF is also pleased that Senate Bill 1588, patroned by Senator Lynwood Lewis, passed. This bill provides guidance to local governments on offering partial tax relief to homeowners and businesses that invest to protect their property from flooding.

Unfortunately, not all of the news was good this session. On the issue of urban trees, CBF worked with Delegate Mark Keam to introduce House Bill 2333. Under current Virginia law, Bay watershed localities may



From left to right: CBF Virginia Executive Director Rebecca Tomazin; Brennan Lane, eighth-grade student; Senator Glen Sturtevant; and CBF Educator Rick Mittler meet to discuss a bill to designate the oyster as Virginia's First Food.

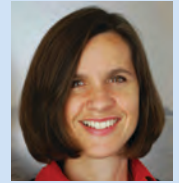
require developers to plant and replace trees, but only up to a very a limited number. House Bill 2333 would exempt localities in the Bay watershed from the tree limits currently in place and help achieve specific water-quality goals. Unfortunately, the bill failed to make it out of committee.

CBF also supported Senate Bill 1573, offered by Senator Bill DeSteph, that prohibits offshore gas and oil drilling. A major spill in the Bay would be devastating to wildlife, the fishing and tourism industries, military operations, and the hundreds of thousands of jobs that rely upon clean water in the region. Despite vocal support for the bill, it was defeated in committee.

CBF also collaborated with a Richmond-area student as he sought to bring attention to the native oyster by designating it Virginia's First Food. Unfortunately, despite teaming up with Senator Glen Sturtevant on Senate Bill 1259, the designation was not approved.

We thank the General Assembly and our diligent advocates for their work this session. It's terrific news that we have strong investments in programs and new laws that reduce polluted runoff and clean up our rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay.

From the Desk of
Christy Everett
HAMPTON ROADS
DIRECTOR



In February, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit upheld a decision requiring that Norfolk Southern Railway Company pay stormwater utility fees to the City of Roanoke. CBF intervened in this case on behalf of the city.

The Commonwealth of Virginia instituted a program allowing localities like Roanoke the ability to assess fees from landowners, including corporations and individuals, to address stormwater carrying pollution that runs into local streams and rivers.

The amount of the fee is determined by how much hardened surface, such as rooftops and parking lots, a landowner has. The city spends the collected fees on projects that help limit and slowdown polluted runoff.

This recent decision is an important precedent, upholding that all of us must do our fair share to reduce pollution to our waterways. Stormwater utility programs can ensure that properties that create polluted runoff help support projects that reduce this pollution.

The health of Virginia's waterways and the Chesapeake Bay depends on the success of the many local stormwater programs across the Commonwealth.

Christy Everett



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

Menhaden and Striped Bass Issues Considered

In February, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission met to consider several fisheries-related decisions that impact the health of the Bay and local economies. The commission, composed of representatives from states along the Atlantic Coast, coordinates and manages fishery resources along the coast.

The commission's Menhaden Management Board passed a motion requiring Virginia to maintain its menhaden harvest below the Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery harvest cap. The board has committed to further assessment of the Bay cap when additional research on the menhaden population concludes early next year.

For years, anglers and conservation organizations have recognized the

importance of the Bay's menhaden population as food for species like striped bass. Maintaining the Chesapeake Bay harvest cap is a critical management action that protects the menhaden population.

Also at its recent meeting, the commission discussed initial findings from its striped bass stock assessment, which shows declining numbers—especially in the number of large spawning fish.

These results confirm reports from many anglers that striped bass numbers are down significantly. Striped bass are an iconic Chesapeake Bay fishery and reversing this decline is vital to protecting this cherished species. Action by the commission to begin considering management options to address this decline is a step in the right direction.



Beverly Martin (left) and Robert Jennings present at the fourth edition of CBF's Brock Environmental Learning Series.

Brock Learning Series

Last month CBF welcomed an enthusiastic crowd for our latest Brock Environmental Learning Series event on Bay-friendly landscaping. Speakers included Beverly Martin, Landscape Design Consultant with Countryside Gardens; Dr. Laurie Fox, Horticulture Associate with Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension and Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional Certified Trainer; and Robert Jennings, CBF Grassroots Field Specialist. The event offered Bay-friendly gardening and landscaping ideas in time for spring planting.

Shumadine Shell Station

Last year, CBF installed the Anne Ballard Shumadine Shell Recycling Station at CBF's Brock Environmental Center. The station serves as a storage and transfer site for recycled oyster shells. Shells are dropped off from various community oyster roasts and picked up from local restaurants, and are then cured, washed, and used for oyster restoration activities such as building reefs.

The station also acts as an educational and marketing tool for our shell recycling work. For example, a recent Brock Center visitor noticed the station and donated approximately 4,000 used shells from his neighborhood oyster roast!

The Anne Shumadine Shell Station was constructed by Signature Wealth Management Services in honor of Anne Shumadine, its owner and a CBF friend who passed away in 2018.

If you would like to learn more about our shell recycling program, please visit cbf.org/shellrecycling.

CBF in the Community

RESTORATION

Shell Recycling

CBF is looking for volunteers to assist with collecting used oyster shells from two Virginia Beach restaurants: Catch 31, located at 3001 Atlantic Avenue, and Calypso Bar and Grill, located at 1101 Atlantic Avenue. Volunteers pick up shells three times per week, increasing to five times per week in the summer. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Heather Lockwood at 757-644-4125 or hlockwood@cbf.org. Collected shells are a valuable part of our restoration efforts. To learn more about our shell recycling program, please visit cbf.org/shellrecycling.

COMMUNITY

Great Bridge Fisherman's Association Fishing Flea Market

Saturday, March 9, 8:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Chesapeake Conference Center
700 Conference Center Drive, Chesapeake
Help CBF staff a table at this fishing festival. To volunteer, contact Tanner Council at tcouncil@cbf.org.

Legends of the Fly

Saturday, March 9, 3:30–6:15 p.m.
Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art
2200 Parks Avenue, Virginia Beach
This annual event raises awareness about fly fishing in Hampton Roads. We are looking for volunteers to help coordinate the CBF booth. Please contact Tanner Council at tcouncil@cbf.org to volunteer.

Chesapeake Bay Education Day

Saturday, March 30, 11:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
CBF's Brock Environmental Center
3663 Marlin Bay Drive, Virginia Beach
Hosted by the Waterman's Museum, join CBF and others for a fun-filled exploration of life on the Bay. Come out to the event and/or help CBF staff a table. To volunteer, contact Tanner Council at tcouncil@cbf.org.

CBF Office Assistance

CBF's Brock Environmental Center
3663 Marlin Bay Drive, Virginia Beach
CBF is looking for volunteers to help with administrative duties. Times are flexible, during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. Perks include a beautiful work space, fun work environment, free coffee, and helping to save the Bay. Please email Tanner Council at tcouncil@cbf.org to indicate your availability.



**CHESAPEAKE BAY
FOUNDATION**

Saving a National Treasure

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