



NEW EASTERN SHORE KIOSKS: Atlantic Coast & Bayside Interpretive Signage



Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission

NOAA Grant: NA17NOS190152

Grant Year 2017 Task 73.02

On the cover – Photograph supplied by the Town of Saxis, as presented on the August 2 Facebook Page post. The Town marina and boat ramp is an active working waterfront area, public water access facility, and the location for a native garden demonstration site and the new interpretive panels.



Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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About the Accomack-Northampton PDC

The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) was formed in 1970 to provide planning and housing services on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. A-NPDC is a regional commission consisting of Accomack and Northampton Counties and the Town of Chincoteague. In addition to Chincoteague, the A-NPDC assists 18 incorporated towns on the Eastern Shore.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is an approximately 70-mile long peninsula between the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay that has remained as one of the few remaining rural regions on the Atlantic seaboard. The region is unique for its vast wealth of coastal resources. The threats of development and constant changes to the region's dynamic coastal environment put the socio-economic, natural, and built environments on the Eastern Shore at risk. As result, A-NPDC has championed several efforts focusing on ensuring a sustainable future for local economies and the environment.

Executive Summary

Under this 2017 Fiscal Year (FY2017) project, the A-NPDC worked with an array of partners to ensure the proper content, locations, and installation for signage on both the Seaside and the Bayside of the Eastern Shore.

The new kiosks and replacement panels will undoubtedly increase the public's understanding not only of the ecological importance of the area but also the recreational opportunities that exist and associated visitor and access policies in place to preserve the natural integrity of the system. The Atlantic signage was developed in conjunction with Task 73.01 and points out the ecological value, management scenarios and ecotourism opportunities of the near shore environment as well as other ecological and/or recreational points of interest including ocean-based economic activities and offshore geographical features. Bayside signage was modeled after the Town of Cape Charles beach kiosk (Grant #NA126NOS4190168 completed in fall 2015) with the purpose of improving understanding of the resources and sensitivity of the habitats in the region and developing a respect for the historic significance of the reliance on the resources therein.

As part of the overall mission, the A-NPDC maintains a coastal program with the assistance and support of the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The A-NPDC will incorporate these new assets into its outreach and education events, as made possible by the VCZMP Technical Assistance grant and other specific project grants and continue to reach hundreds of residents annually with events covering groundwater, coastal hazards and resiliency, floodplain management, and more.

Products and Outcomes

Section 306A documentation for the three new kiosks on the Atlantic Coast and the two new kiosks in the coastal Chesapeake Bay Towns on Virginia's Eastern Shore was completed prior to full execution of the contract to which this report applies. A-NPDC staff worked with County, Town, and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) partners as well as using the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) V-CRIS/ePIX to complete the required processes and acquire the necessary signed forms.

Bayside Signs

Using the design from the interpretive kiosk designed and installed in Cape Charles through VCZMP Grant #NA126NOS4190168 completed in fall 2015, A-NPDC staff developed draft panel designs to share with stakeholders from each of the Bayside Towns.

Although stakeholders only met once in-person to review the draft panel designs, thorough communication by phone and primarily by email were continued to perfect the content, design, and to seek final approval before requesting fabrication from the vendor, Pannier Graphics. Design included logos and programs supported and developed by other VCZMP initiatives, including the FY2017-FY2019 Virginia Oyster & Water Trail Eco-Tourism Collaboration (Task#72, Grant#NA17NOS4190152), featuring the Virginia Water Trails logo and website URL and information about the Virginia Certified Ecotour Guide Program.

October 5, 2018 stakeholders met at Onancock Town Hall at 15 North St from 10am-noon to discuss the Onancock Wharf Interpretive Signage. October 24, 2018 stakeholders met at the Saxis Island Museum & Old Crockett Store from 10am-noon to discuss the Saxis Pavilion Interpretive Signage. Staff returned to Saxis to meet with the Mayor and Town Council Member Donna Croushore again on April 5, 2019 to see progress on the new restroom and shower facilities and Town Clerk office, as that was to be the location for the kiosk. The delivery from Pannier Graphics arrived in Onancock Wharf on July 18th, where Saxis volunteers picked up their portion of the delivery. Both kiosks were fully installed by Town staff by August 2nd.

Seaside Signs

The metal frames for the three new seaside kiosk locations, Queen Sound Landing, Gargatha Landing, and Folly Creek Landing, were delivered to Accomack County Department of Public Works in Accomack on September 10th and installed by September 20th. The labor and travel associated with the installation serves as match. The design and the installation of the interpretive panels into the installed frames will be completed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) staff as part their Section 306 grant under FY17 Task 73.01. Note that the images presented in Figures 4, 5, and 6 are of the frame installations, and the report VCZMP will receive from TNC will include photographs of the kiosks with the panels installed.

Volunteer efforts of residents and staff in the region included those listed in Table 1 below. Additional review was requested within each locality and time dedicated to installation. VCZMP staff provided technical assistance with design software compatible with Pannier Graphics and in improving the overall layout and content of the panels. All panels' mockups had several iterations of review and support from the localities and VCZMP staff.

Table 1: Locality Participation

<u>Town of Saxis</u>	<u>Town of Onancock</u>	<u>County of Accomack</u>
Mayor Denise Drewer	Mayor Fletcher Fosque	Dept. of Public Works Stewart Hall
Council Member Donna Croushore	Town Manager William Kerbin	Dept. of Public Works Andy Nunnally
Moody M. K. Miles, Saxis Island Museum	Public Works Bryon Horton and his colleagues	
Jim Lewis, Saxis Island Museum	Hilary Hartnett-Wilson, The Historical Society of the Eastern Shore	<i>All partners listed by TNC for their 306 grant under Task 73.01</i>
Dorothy Field, VDCR	Ruth Boettcher, VDGIF	
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Summary

Interpretive signage is important in trying to create a memorable experience for users – one that generates a long-term and positive impression. ANPDC and CZM staff made a genuine effort to limit the text to what is necessary and supplement the content with many visually appealing graphics. Additionally, content was included that would appeal to a variety of interests, nature-lovers, outdoor enthusiasts, history buffs, those looking for cultural experiences, and those who will be out in the Eastern Shore's sensitive natural areas and need to know the rules and nuances of entering these areas.

These kiosks demonstrate community pride in local heritage and inspire a feeling of stewardship in site visitors, thus strengthening awareness of cultural and natural resources.

Figure 1: Kiosk Locations Map**ESVA Interpretive Signage**

Bayside Kiosks

Figure 2: Town of Onancock Interpretive Signage



Figure 3: Saxis Island Interpretive Signage



Seaside Kiosks

Figure 4: Gargatha Landing



Figure 5: Queen Sound Landing



Figure 6: Folly Creek Landing

