Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Coastal Policy Team
Agenda
September 21, 2023

10:00am – 4:00pm

DEQ 14th Floor Training Room, 1111 East Main Street, Richmond, VA

10:00 Welcome & Introductions (Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)

10:10 Brief Review of Virginia CZM/Networked Program/CPT Background (Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)

10:30 Briefly Review NOAA Sect. 312 Evaluation Recommendations (Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)

10:40 Brief Review of current Focal Area (Will Isenberg, Virginia CZM)

10:45 Brief Review of FY2021-2025 Strategies (Jeff Flood, Virginia CZM)

10:50 Discuss Project of Special Merit (PSM) (Jeff Flood, Virginia CZM)

Notes

- Deadline: Proposals due November 20th to CZM (this was revised after the meeting once NOAA officially announced the process)

11:00 Discuss IRA non-competitive funding proposals

Notes

- Proposals due to NOAA November 1, so quick turnaround time
    - CZM will need to provide a proposal to DEQ Office of Financial Management (OFM) by Oct 16, but preferably earlier
- Each proposal was summarized and then feedback from CPT was provided.
- CZM Staff capacity – Full Time Equivalent (FTE) position
    - Feedback from CPT
        - May be best to focus the work on the Federal funding we're getting (BIL and IRA).
        - The Septic project may be able to intersect with this one in that it needs coordination from CZM.
        - The DCR coordination element's goal is to improve efficiency between programs. For example, better communication between Planning District Commissions (PDCs) and both DCR and CZM.
        - Rachel (VMRC) offers support for CZM being more present at Resilience TACs and subcommittees given CZM's overarching view of Virginia's coastal resources.
        - With respect to a CZM office FTE supporting CZM network agencies (VMRC, DCR, etc), there is concern that coordinating more groups means more meetings for people already saturated in workload.
        - To what extent is CZM office support for CPT and CZM partners related to IRA and BIL competitive funding opportunities helpful?

        - It's going to vary by PDC, but for Middle Peninsula PDC, it's not that important. Does not need an email to let them know about funding opportunities without meaning to them.
            - Value could be added in sharing high level "sorting" of details for recipients of emails, info like, Is there match required, funding for public/private, etc.
            - CZM staff notes that it's challenging to sort these funding opportunities because you'd have to sort for every PDC.
        - Ryan – With respect to this proposed position, this would be more of an effort to help work on proposals/project ideas. CZM Office will continue to work on improving messaging related to competitive funding opportunities, but will continue to send out info to those on the conservation coordination mailing list. Overtime we intend for this effort to evolve into more targeted assistance in matching funding with correct partners, and assistance in developing funding.
- Living Shorelines CBSM Campaign (Presentation by Will Isenberg, Virginia CZM)
    - Feedback from CPT
        - It is important to consider the new technologies and their costs when working with landowners. In particular, what options exist under the Living Shoreline definition that fit both the site needs and the landowners budget.
        - If we're trying to make behavior change when it comes to shorelines, the installation funding availability is critical, as is the availability of technical expertise.
        - Important to have a roadmap to the contractors and funding opportunities.
- Living Shoreline Collaborative (Presentation by Jamie Brunkow, James River Association & Shereen Hughes, Wetlands Watch)
    - Funding would allow the LSC to continue to develop a strategy to secure long-term funding and expand their geographic area of influence to one or more watersheds or rivers beyond the James. While some of the funding will allow the LSC to continue their current operations after their NFWF grant ends on 6/30/23, the use of CZM funds will primarily be used for the long-term planning efforts.
    - Also submitted a Letter of Intent (LOI) for NOAA's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge
    - Primary goal with this request is to make sure Dialogue and Design (the facilitator) and the James River Association (JRA) are funded for the planning that they do.
    - If receiving $300k, then 2/3 would go to JRA and Dialogue and Design, and the other 1/3 would go to supporting participation on the Steering Committee, including VMRC.
    - LSC will be flexible and are prepared to make do with less funding.
- GWRC Septic Collaborative (Overview given by Meredith Keppel, GWRC)
    - It may be best to have the FTE at CZM coordinate this, but the role can be situated in other places.
    - Does not need to be an ongoing initiative.
    - The effort proposed is more about how we funnel the funding sources, and then the FTE could sit in on relevant work groups.
- Sea Grant Fellow (Overview given by Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)
    - This would fund a full 40 hour a week position.

    - The Sea Grant fellows can work on some of these other capacity tasks, but they would be a 1-year position making ongoing coordination not possible. Fellows would focus on producing a deliverable on a specific project e.g. investigation of a policy question, but would not serve a coordinator role like CZM office staff do.
    - These would be post-graduate level fellows.
    - CPT Feedback
        - What would be the opportunities to have the funded fellow work on the coordination roles in the CZM FTE staff proposal?
            - Since these are one-year positions, not ideal for use in ongoing coordination roles.
        - This one has the challenges that you're still competing for the students.
        - You could have a dedicated CPT track in this fellowship, being a liaison between agencies work and the CPT.
- CZM asked if there were other ideas not captured it the proposals we should consider:
    - Regulatory Think Tank - There are new technologies and solutions coming into the resilience/shoreline restoration space that is causing slowdowns as they intersect with regulations/permitting. The problem will get worse as more money is poured into coastal resilience. Need more focused attention to understand how the regulatory and permitting space intersects with these projects. Staff time dedicated to this for a year can help identify areas for improvement, or any level of dedicated attention.
        - Suggestion that the permitting agencies look into experimental permits to address these issues.
    - Wetlands Work – A way to coordinate funding opportunities to work on wetlands projects. This can include Living Shorelines, but emphasis on the larger scale. This would be part of an FTE. This could also support coordination could work on state wetlands plan, but Virginia does not have a team that provides input to this. Could be covered at VMRC.
    - Is there interest in the CPT to build capacity at VMRC as well?
        - There is but it would need to be at VMRC with VMRC's authorities to be impactful. Another person to coordinate with won't help address the workload issues.
- General Considerations and Questions from the CPT/NOAA:
    - Important to think about how to get the most out of this level of funding. We can certainly use the priorities we've identified today to plan what the CZM staff position would work on.
    - Comment from NOAA - NOAA prefers IRA capacity funds be used to fund whole FTEs not parts of FTEs, so we need to be aware of that.
    - There's a lot of options for capacity building and planning, but we need to ask ourselves, what will get the most projects constructed in the end?
        - This can be a good metric
        - Also worth noting that the role of this position is also to help coordinate existing initiative.
    - Can this money be used to infill existing salaries for staff who have the capacity?
        - Not sure, but NOAA can look into this.
    - NOAA notes that as it relates to scoping an FTE or other personnel, you can generally keep the scope of work more high level to allow shifting around on different tasks.
- General funding question

    - What's the total award?
        - $875 total for 5 years, which can be flexible in amount each year.
- Mentimeter Voting – only CPT members voted (either Appointee or Alternate, but not both) select top 3 items (with no rank)
    - Top 2 will be a part of proposal
    - Next 2-3 will be considered
    - Results:
        - Broad support for CZM Office FTE
            - Will need to figure out how to fill this with task priorities. Can include the "Permit/Regulatory Think Tank for Resilience Projects"
        - Sea Grant Fellows in 2nd place
            - There is interest in a fellow at HRPDC,
            - There is a lot to sort out in terms of what this idea means.
                - Is there a way to get a Sea Grant Fellow for VMRC to get them capacity (5th place ranking in Mentimeter).
                - VMRC interested in this and can come up with the $20k
                - The fellows have a choice, so we need to figure out how that should work.
                - Does the money have to be sent to William and Mary, or can the organization assign the funding directly to the fellow.
                    - It has to go to William and Mary
        - Living Shoreline Collaborative in 3rd place
            - Funding and deliverables can be trimmed down
            - Half ($150k) the ask could work to bridge this period.
            - It would be hard to not work with Dialogue and Design since partners are all at capacity.
            - Question is asked whether CZM can or should provide this funding directly to an NGO?
                - If that becomes a problem, VMRC is happy to be the pass through for that.
                - NOAA will look into this but suggests pass through VMRC is a smart way to handle.
            - LSC will need to think about this in terms of bridge funding to see what's the lowest amount they can work with can do with.
                - Thinking a floor of $100k and high intensity 1 year of work
            - It's important to think about this as whether or not it's setting a precedent to subsidize an NGO since historically, we've had NGOs contracted to provide a task.
                - What would be the deliverable here?
                    - Deliverables would be for LSC to continue evaluation of how to set up a sustainable collaborative model, and how that work can be replicated throughout the region. Even at reduced funding.
                - This could be cleared up by having VMRC as the sponsoring agency

        - Could put some guardrails on this to get some outputs to show the work that's been done.
        - The concern remains on setting a precedent regardless of the outputs.
    - CPT generally agrees that LSC, as in NGO, needs a CPT member sponsor that will act as passthrough. VMRC will do so for this funding.
  - Permit/Regulatory Think Tank for Resilience Projects
    - This doesn't currently fit into the DCR initiatives
    - This is also far down the line for the Resilience Coordination Working Group.
    - We can probably fit this into some of the other proposals
    - Nests more naturally under 309
  - VMRC Capacity may be able to fit into the Sea Grant fellow project
  - CBSM Living shorelines, septic collaborative and wetland capacity can be further investigated and did not rise to the top priorities on the poll (See results below).

Action Items

- Share what the CZM FTE will look like and share that with the CPT
- Need to develop the idea of what the Sea Grant fellow will look like and the options we have at hand.
- Work with Living Shorelines Collaborative to get a sense for what they can scale back.

12:00 LUNCH (on your own)

Continue IRA non-competitive discussion if needed

1:00 FY23 CZM Funding (Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)

- FY23 – Updated funding based on State Budget Update
- Discuss contractual funding under Task 1 (~91K)

Notes

- $91k 306 funds for FY23 that needs to be reprogrammed – this funding was for a database transition which we are not currently able to do given capacity, new manager, changes in NOAA database. Do need to do this in a couple years but we have for the moment 91k to reprogram.
  - One proposal is to add funds to level funded annual tasks (Task 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 49) to make up for increases in the costs of doing business.
    - Being just a year of this funding makes this less attractive.
    - NOAA notes we would have to note at least "more of original outcomes" if not new outcomes in scopes of work, so the additional funds would also come with more work.
    - CPT generally agrees this option should not be pursued.
  - This could also be used to fund one of the IRA proposals that did not get funded.
  - Or this could be used to provide funding for an agency that needs a lot of capacity
  - One idea not covered yet is the challenge with accessing federal funding, and with being a low water state. It requires legal research to investigate this issue and explore options to address.
    - This issue is particularly problematic when applying for funds for projects in areas that have both public and private property.
    - UVA's Institute for Engagement and Negotiation and Sea Grant may be able to do this work.

Action Items

- CZM will investigate the low water state question, as well as other possible uses for this funding, and get back to the group with the path forward for CPT consideration.

1:15 Review FY23 BIL Competitive CZM Process (Lucan Manweiler, Virginia CZM)

- Brief overview of selected projects and expected timeline, CZM and NERRS
- Debrief State Level Process & plan for next year- CZM and NERRS
- Some questions to consider:
  1. How to assess conflict of interest for scoring of projects
  2. Would members prefer VA CZM to simplify criteria explanations for scoresheet?
  3. Planning projects seem to be at a disadvantage. Modify criteria? Slot reserved?
  4. Is a meeting necessary? After LOI's are received? After scoring?

Notes

- CZM process will be similar next year
- NERRS process (Erin Reilly, CBNERR-VA)
  - Now includes projects on NERRS property and habitat focus area (York River watershed, Mobjack Bay, and Piankatank)
  - This year the process piggy backed on the CZM process proposing one project from the Middle Peninsula Public Access Authority that was not put forward in the CZM process.
  - Start talking with CBNERRS about projects in the habitat area early on.
  - Hoping to have CPT members review projects in the next round.
- Questions
  - #1 Do we want dedicated time to discuss the proposals after they are received?
    - Yes, it makes the projects stronger benefiting from the perspectives of the CPT
    - It may be better to talk about the projects before scoring and allow folks to ask questions that might reveal pros/cons to projects.

- Relevant to conflicts of interest, do folks support not voting on a project where your organization may benefit?
  - If you are trying to make projects big and collaborative it makes it difficult.
  - Could establish a review panel
  - How were the votes counted – we did an average considering the number of votes in the denominator.
    - This was challenging when scores were outliers, skewing the average.
  - Does a scoring by a project owner really cause a problem more so than the optics of it?
  - Olympics Gymnastics Scoring – get rid of the top 2 and the bottom 2 – could be a good approach
- #2 The rubric was made from the NOFO, but can we simplify the language to better communicate the ask? Or should we add what we think is important to the CPT?
  - The more direction we are given the less we can make decisions by feelings
  - HRPDC likes to look at the immediate funding inquiry, but also the long-term priorities to help identify projects over the long-term.
    - Propose we consider this long vision/bigger picture
    - Caution to not change it too much so that projects remain competitive at the national level.
  - From Sea Grant's position, they administer competitive funding with policies on conflict of interest. This process may be something worth looking into.
    - External Reviewers help get past conflict of interest.
    - This could lead to less CPT input, but also highlights the value of CPT input early in the process.
- #3 Restoration Planning proposals are disadvantaged by this process, should we reserve a slot for this?
  - Planning is important, NFWF learned this after receiving Superstorm Sandy funds. This is why they have specific pots of funding beyond shovel ready projects.
  - Environmental Justice considerations here since the bigger entities tend to have the shovel ready projects.

Action Items

- Lucas would like to set up a more focused meeting/work group to try to pare down some of these points/questions to prepare for the coming years' competitions.
  - The results of these meetings will be presented at the winter CPT meeting.

1:45 Update on Ocean Planning (Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)

Notes

- We will cover this at the next CPT meeting.

1:50 Update on Virginia Coastal & Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) Plan and Outreach Efforts (FY23 BIL Task) (Lucas Manweiler & Ryan Green, Virginia CZM)

- CELCP Plan Update Goals and Next Steps
  - Update and display underlying data (VEVA and other)
  - Build on the plan – what additional elements or data would be useful in a conservation plan?
  - Workgroup
- Outreach Efforts

- Expand awareness and access to BIL funding through existing relationships
- Gain further input on CELCP Plan

Notes

- Brief overview of CELCP plan updates goals given by CZM staff. CZM will invite interested parties to participate in developing new iteration of this plan.

2:00 Update on Coastal Partners Workshop (Jeff Flood, Virginia CZM)

Notes

- Theme will be to discuss how to expand the program successes throughout the coastal zone. Building a tool kit of best practices.
- More information is coming.
- Thursday November 16 in the afternoon and then the morning of November 17 with a social in the evening of November 16.

2:45 Grant Management and other Reminders (April Bahen, Virginia CZM)

- FY23 Contract Reminders
- Indirect Cost Agreements
- Accessibility of Final Products
- Including Trainings on the Progress Report Form
- Build America, Buy America – CZM's Lucas Manweiler is available to answer questions about NOAA requirements for grants featuring construction materials

Notes

- October 1st start date for FY23 contracts, which are coming in soon.
- Please start working on Indirect Cost Agreements for FY24. Need the time frame, the approved current rate, and the base. You can use a future rate if it is approved, and the timeframe aligns with your FY24 proposals.
- Final products need to be Section 508 accessible. Big things are alternate text for images. You can mark images as decorative when it asks for images to be in line.
- We do have to report on trainings to NOAA, and all grantees must do this where applicable. Please do not include educational events. Include the title of the training and what the outcomes were. PDCs can consult the PDC minimum standards document. All need the exact number of participants and for grantees to keep a back up document of registrants.
  - Cirse Gonzalez noted that CBNERRS is here to help partner on trainings!

3:00 CPT Member/Partner Updates (All)

Notes

- DCR-NH: Have 4 new staff on Eastern Shore staffing coastal region natural area preserves.
  - Thanks to CZM and ARPA funding, starting process to open North Landing River Natural Area Preserve, which has been closed for ~15 years.
- ANPDC: Have over $35M in funding for infrastructure projects, with stormwater mitigation being a big one.
- DCR: Talking to USGS to expand the Chesapeake Conservancy land use land cover data to be statewide. If your agency is interested in this, please contact Matt Dalon (DCR).

- Rappahannock River Basin Commission is having a symposium on October 25 all day. Great networking opportunity and presentations on best practices. NFWF will be there to do "speed dating" for proposals to get a sense for where your proposals apply
- VMRC just finished up coastal zone management review of offshore wind. VMRC received $11M from Dominion to fund post-turbine construction monitoring of fisheries as well as funding for fishermen who experience economic losses due to OSW construction. Got post construction monitoring of up to $11M for commercial fisherman that experience financial losses. This was all because of CZM and enforceable policies.
    - Also working with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on time of year restrictions for in water construction in the James River that will go in tandem with the beneficial use project.
    - Working on a habitat restoration project in Guinea Marsh
- Wetlands Watch will be hosting a Lunch and Learn for CFPF and Resilient Revolving Loan Fund on September 29th 12-1pm.
- Living Shoreline Collaborative virtual summit on October 31st to learn about accomplishments and a field visit to Paradise Creek Nature Park (Portsmouth) on November 9
- NOAA – lots of grant systems transitioning so no actions happening until November.

4:00 Adjourn

Attendees (40)

Lewie Lawrence, Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission

Troy Hartley, Virginia Sea Grant

Jamie Brunkow, James River Association

Shereen Hughes, Wetlands Watch

Meredith Keppel, George Washington Regional Commission

Rebecca Murphy, Northern Virginia Regional Commission

Taylor Parker, Virginia Department of Transportation

Ken Jurman, Virginia Energy

Chip Boyles, George Washington Regional Commission

Matt Dalon, Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation – Resilience Planning Office

Aaron Wendt, Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation – Shoreline Erosion Advisory Service

Sharon Baxter, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Division of Environmental Enhancement

Steve Begg, Virginia Department of Transportation

Andrew Button, Virginia Marine Resources Commission

Pam Mason, Virginia Institute of Marine Science – Center for Coastal Resources Management

Anne Doyle, Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission

Andrew Franzyshen, Crater Planning District Commission

Lewis Gillingham, Virginia Marine Resources Commission – Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Andrew Larkin, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration – Chesapeake Bay Office

Breanna Heath, Northern Neck Planning District Commission

Mark Luckenbach, Virginia Institute of Marine Science – Marine Advisory Program

Jason Bulluck, Department of Conservation & Recreation – Natural Heritage Program

Lucy Deignan, James River Association

Erin Reilly, Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve – Virginia

Megan Black, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality Office of Environmental Impact Review

Whitney Katchmark, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

Ben McFarlane, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

John Bateman, Wetlands Watch

Cirse Gonzalez, Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve – Virginia

Julia Wellman, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Office of Environmental Impact Review

Joe Weber, Department of Conservation & Recreation – Natural Heritage Program

Meghann Quinn, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Pollution Prevention Program

Dave Davis, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Office of Wetlands & Stream Protection

Michelle Henicheck, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Office of Wetlands & Stream Protection

David Hawkins, Virginia Energy

Elizabeth Moore, Virginia Department of Historic Resources (joined via phone)

John Kuriawa, National Ocean & Atmospheric Administration – Office for Coastal Management (joined via phone)

Scott Sandridge, Virginia Sea Grant (joined via phone)

Rachael Peabody, Virginia Marine Resources Commission (joined via phone)

Curt Smith, Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (joined via phone)