



***Facilitation of and Reports on Ocean Planning Committee Meetings*** (IEN will assist the CZM Program through its active involvement in the preparation, facilitation, and documentation of at least two Ocean Planning Committee meetings. IEN helped reconvene and facilitate two OPC meetings (one a hybrid in-person/remote on Oct. 18, 2023, and the other remote only on March 14, 2024) during the previous period. IEN and CZM began planning for a February 18, 2025 meeting during this grant period as well. During the grant period, IEN and CZM met monthly, biweekly, or weekly, depending on project need, to coordinate progress.

***Facilitation of and Report on Public Workshop*** (IEN, in collaboration with CZM, will hold an in-person public workshop to solicit valuable feedback on the initial outline of the Virginia Ocean plan.) CZM and IEN spent a substantial portion of their time designing and preparing for this workshop, which was held on August 15, 2024. The forum brought together a variety of Ocean stakeholders that are engaged in the Plan development via workgroups as well as members of the public, with a total of approximately 60 participants. The purpose of the event layout was to stimulate learning and conversation through a series of stations where members of the public could learn more about various aspects of the Ocean Plan, ask questions and provide feedback immediately, either to various staff members or experts or via handwritten notes on stickies. An additional virtual workshop was held on Oct. 23, as a follow-up to the August in-person workshop.

### ***Draft of Virginia Ocean Plan***

CZM and IEN reviewed the structure of the report in preparation for writing the initial draft. In addition, IEN developed a draft section of the report focused on addressing user conflicts and the best means to resolve and transform them. IEN developed material to present to the ocean planning committee as well as in preparation for the final report.

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*The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA, or any of its subagencies.*

***Please find attached examples of project materials created by IEN.***



## **Virginia Ocean Plan**

**August 15 and October 23, 2024 Community Forums**

### **Meeting Summaries**

#### **August 15, 2024 Community Forum**

Meeting Location: Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center,  
Virginia Beach

#### **Executive Summary**

Virginia's ocean and coastal communities serve a variety of human and ecological uses, including but not limited to national security, commerce, energy, and recreation. Various state and federal bodies share

responsibility for managing Virginia's ocean waters, leading to a need for a comprehensive plan that will ensure appropriate protection and management. The development of the Virginia Ocean Plan (Plan) began in 2020 but was slowed considerably by COVID-19. After a recess, during which a Plan framework was created and a report on existing ocean plans in other states was compiled. The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program is a network of state agencies and coastal localities, led by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, where the program's coordinative office is located. CZM has entered a new stage of Plan development. Facilitating the discussions with stakeholders is the University of Virginia's Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN), a public service organization dedicated to fostering effective and equitable collaboration.

On August 15, 2024, Virginia CZM, following an extensive outreach campaign, hosted members of the public at a community forum to learn more about the Plan and share their perspectives, concerns and hopes. The forum was one of a series of methods for public engagement, including a survey, the Oct. 23 virtual forum, a dedicated email and voicemail box for input, and participation in one of six working groups. This forum brought together CZM staff as well as a variety of Ocean stakeholders that are engaged in the Plan development via the workgroups. More information can currently be found on the [Virginia CZM's Virginia Ocean Planning page](#).

This summary provides an overview of the input collected and the conversations that took place.

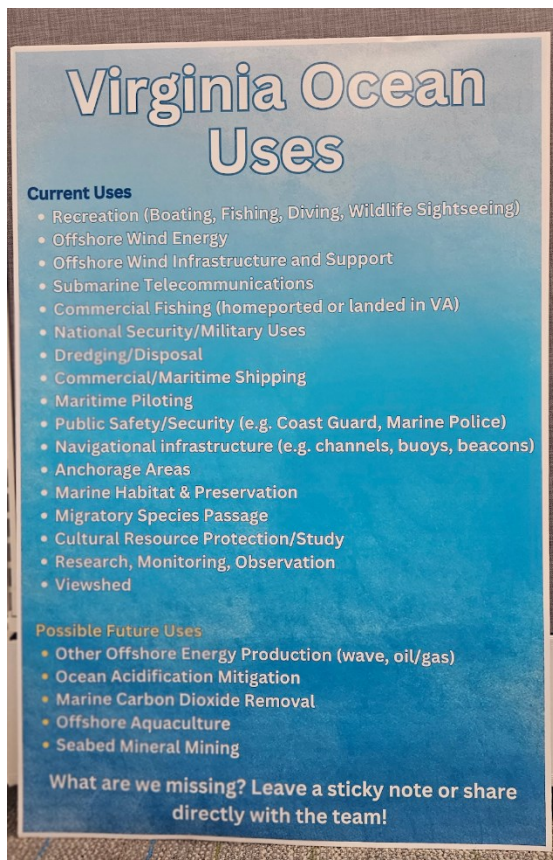
## Event Design and Stations

The layout of the event was designed to stimulate learning and conversation through a series of stations where members of the public could learn more about various aspects of the Ocean Plan, ask questions, and provide immediate feedback, either to various staff members, experts, or via post it notes applied to ocean resource/issue posters.

The following stations were available:

1. Virginia Ocean Planning Process generally:
  - a. Ocean Uses
  - b. Process Partners and Stakeholders consulted
2. Working Groups:
  - a. Transportation, Navigation, and Security
  - b. Sustainability and Conservation
  - c. Seafloor Resources
  - d. Fishing and Aquaculture
  - e. Energy and Infrastructure
  - f. Cultural & Historic Resources and Non-Consumptive Recreation
3. Interactive Mapping/Data Portal information
4. Partner Tables:

- a. Regional Ocean Planning - MARCO/MACAN
- b. Aquaculture
- c. Wildlife Tours and Recreational Fishing - Rudee Tours
- d. Recreational Boating - BoatUS
- e. Commercial Fishing
- f. Marine Minerals - BOEM Marine Minerals
- g. Shipping - Port of Virginia
- h. Marine Debris - Clean Virginia Waterways
- i. Marine Debris - Elizabeth River Project
- j. Offshore Wind - Dominion Energy



## Feedback from members of the Public

Planning process station:

**Ocean Uses: Participants** were invited to share reactions to a list of ocean uses: What is missing? What would you prioritize?

Responses included:

Missing aspects:

- Growing Coral Reefs
- Marine Traffic Routing
- Outreach field trips for public schools
- Human Habitation (Houseboats)
- Underwater Human Habitation (submarines)

To be prioritized:

- Marine Biodiversity
- Ecotourism
  - Visitor product for tourists (i.e. charters, tours, etc.)
- Emerging Contaminants PFAS (per + poly Fluoroalkyl)

**Partners & Stakeholders engaged:**



# VOP Partners and Participants

- Battle of the Atlantic Research & Expedition Group
- BoatUS Foundation
- Chickahominy Indian Tribe
- City of Virginia Beach
- College of William & Mary
- Delaware Geological Survey
- Dominion Energy
- Elizabeth River Project
- Hampton Roads Military & Federal Facilities Alliance
- Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
- Mid-Atlantic Coastal Acidification Network
- Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean
- Nansemond Indian Nation
- Old Dominion University
- Pamunkey Indian Tribe
- Patawomeck Indian Tribe
- Rudee Tours
- RVA757Connects
- Southeastern Wind Coalition
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Water Institute
- University of Virginia
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Bureau of Energy & Ocean Management
- U.S. Coast Guard - Sector Virginia
- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. National Aeronautics & Space Administration - Wallops Flight Facility
- U.S. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Navy
- Virginia Aquarium Foundation
- Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission
- Virginia Maritime Association
- Virginia Pilot Association
- Virginia Port Authority
- Virginia Spaceport Authority
- Virginia Tech

Who are we missing?  
Leave a sticky note or share directly with the team!

Attendants were asked to identify stakeholders who are missing from the list of partners and stakeholders engaged. Responses included:

- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- DuPont
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Lynnhaven River Now
  - Karen Forget + Vince Bowhens
- Virginia Ship Repair Association
- Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Environmental Studies Program
- Vessel Disposition and Reuse Foundation (VDRF)

## Workgroup Stations:



Attendees were invited to provide feedback via post-its on each workgroup station's poster. Most of the feedback provided was centered around concerns for the Energy and Infrastructure group, specifically around Offshore Wind (OSW). For a high-resolution photo of the post-its, please see this [link](#).

- Seafloor Resources
  - Use dredge materials for wetlands restoration
  - Emerging contaminants (PFAS) coming up while dredging
- Fishing & Aquaculture
  - Reduce Menhaden take
- Energy and Infrastructure
  - Increased opportunities for citizen education in Infrastructure/Energy to better understand new developments
  - Advantage/Effect Of OSW as nursery/aggregation points for fish
  - Oil lubricant in OSW turbines- released when damaged
  - [Washington Post 8/14](#) Turbine falling into ocean
    - Impacts to tourism and wildlife - example Nantucket blade caused fiberglass debris - Shut down beaches - cost of power is astronomical.
  - Impacts from turbines background transmitted noise & vibrations to both wildlife and sonar detection of foreign power submarines for first strike potential
  - Monitoring who gets near OSW farm
  - OSW turbine blinking lights
  - Cybersecurity concerns for offshore infrastructure
  - Impact of OSW on benthic habitat vs recreational fishing
  - Pilot turbine was deceptive, fooled people about height - 200 ft, but the full CVOW project is using 400 ft tall turbines
- Cultural/Historic Resources & Non-consumptive Recreation
  - VTC: Tourism visitors ≠ recreation residents
    - Different audiences
    - entrepreneurial aspect
    - Recreational data
  - Species migration - impacts recreational fishing more than migrational patterns



## Other observations and feedback:

- One attendee shared their concerns for offshore wind development and its potential impacts to wildlife and property (once it makes it on land). They were also concerned that Dominion was able to "buy" the Ocean, which they thought no one owned. Staff explained that the leasing process only allows them to start the planning process and that only the Federal Government "owns" the land in the public trust east of Virginia's waters. Staff further explained that even when turbines are put out there, they are leasing the space, which will be decommissioned someday. This gave some relief but was followed by other concerns with offshore wind.
- One attendee works for the Virginia Ship Repair Association and shared about the concerns they are dealing with. PFAS in ship repair is an area of strong focus.
- One member of the public identified as a surfer who came to the event to learn more about "the ocean that I spend so much time in." Staff shared some general facts including one of the maps for the Seafloor Resources workgroup. Staff also discussed beach renourishment projects, and the ideas on the table around offsetting costs with heavy mineral sand co-extraction.
- A member of the commercial fishing community expressed the sense that the ocean plan was more or less an offshore wind plan, and that offshore wind was a foregone conclusion. CZM discussed some of the potential recommendations related to making the fishing industry more resilient. The individual reiterated distrust for government agencies' involvement.
- A member of the public expressed concern about offshore wind and environmental impacts, including the blade failure observed in the northeast.
- Stakeholders expressed appreciation for the opportunity for networking/talking with other stakeholders.
- One member from the pilot's association was very supportive of the event, particularly given CZM had invited stakeholders to table. He recommended that having all stakeholders present as often as possible in these kinds of engagements was important going forward in other conversations.

### Other feedback:

Many participants in the forum chose to provide feedback via a survey. The [survey is still accepting submissions](#) during the VOP development as another way for Virginians to share their perspective on the Ocean Plan. Results will be summarized in the Plan.

## Workgroup members in attendance:

- Kerby Dobbs - Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) - Marine Minerals
- Skip Feller - Rudee Tours - Wildlife Watching Tours & Recreational Fishing
- Jeff Deem - Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council - Recreational Fishing

- Scott Lawton - Dominion - Offshore Wind
- Christina Tripani (& Zach Huntington virtually) - Clean Virginia Waterways - Marine Debris
- Todd Janeski - Virginia Commonwealth University - VA Ocean Commercial Fisheries Coordinator
- Mike Moore - BoatUS Foundation - Recreational Boating & Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADVs)
- Julia Raimondi - Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Communications - State Air, Water, and Land Quality Management
- Danielle Simms - Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Environmental Justice – State Air, Water, and Land Quality Management
- Jes Watts - Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) & Mid-Atlantic Coastal Acidification Network (MACAN) - Regional Ocean Planning & Coastal and Ocean Acidification
- Scott Whitehurst - Port of Virginia - Port Planning and Operations
- Robin Dunbar - Elizabeth River Project - Marine Debris

**What does the ocean mean to you?**



**Virginia Ocean Plan**  
**COMMUNITY**  
*Open Forum*

**August 15, 2024** | **6:30 - 9:30 pm**  
 Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center  
 Virginia Beach

We want to hear from YOU.  
 Join us to help shape Virginia's vision for our ocean waters.



Free parking and access to select Aquarium exhibits. Kids activities. Giveaways.

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Virginia Coastal Zone MANAGEMENT PROGRAM | DEQ  
[virginiaoceanplan@gmail.com](mailto:virginiaoceanplan@gmail.com)  
[deq.virginia.gov/VAOceanPlan/](http://deq.virginia.gov/VAOceanPlan/)



# Virginia Ocean Plan

## Virtual Forum, October 23 2024

### Meeting Summary

On October 23, 2024, following extensive outreach, CZM convened a virtual meeting as companion to the August 15 in-person Community Forum. The goal was to provide stakeholders and the public with an additional opportunity to learn about the development of the Plan and to engage in conversation with Virginia CZM staff. This on-line format had the added advantage of enhancing the accessibility of input to the Plan by those unable to attend the in-person forum. Below, find a summary of conversations, questions, responses, and concerns voiced by participants on October 23.

CZM Program Manager, Ryan Green, introduced the Virginia Ocean Plan. Slides to this presentation may be found here: [CZM Virginia Ocean Plan Virtual Ocean Forum October 2024.pdf](#)

Participants were encouraged to share ideas, questions, and concerns through a variety of means:

- Using an online [Concept Board](#).
- Typing directly in the chat.
- Raising hands and unmuting to talk.

In response to the question of whether there were other groups who may not yet have been engaged in development of the Plan, participants responded with the following:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Virginia Saltwater Fishing Association
- Telecom Cable Owners
- Nansemond River Preservation Alliance
- VA Tourism Bodies
- Virginia Department of Education
- Minerals Industry of Virginia

CZM staff then gave brief summaries of the activities of each of the six Work Groups, which prompted the following questions and answers:

- **Seafloor resources**
  - Question: How much of the sea floor is mapped?
    - Answer: Most mapping is done closer to the coast, so much of the seafloor is not mapped in detail.

- Have you thought about incorporation of living shorelines, maybe in collaboration with VIMS?
  - Answer: It's been a conversation for beneficial reuse from dredging, but sourcing it can be an issue. There are efforts to try and leverage those opportunities as much as you can reuse material from dredging since it is so valuable.
    - Related to parallel CZM funded project to develop a process aid for beneficial reuse of dredged material.
- **Sustainability & Conservation**
  - Question: Would pollution/debris be included in this working group?
    - Answer: One of the big pollution topics that we deal with a lot in the Coastal Zone Management Program is marine debris.
      - Marine Debris is an umbrella topic for everything from consumer trash: single use plastic; fishing gear that's been lost, abandoned, derelict; microscopic particles of plastic, microplastics and microfibers; and then abandoned and derelict vessels.
        - While this topic will be discussed in the Ocean Plan, it's more extensively covered via the Virginia Marine Debris Reduction Plan. More info on that via [this link](#)
        - CZM encouraged folks who are interested in Marine Debris Reduction to get engaged with it, especially as that plan is due for an update next year
  - Question: The public seems especially interested in topics related to dumping, debris, etc. and would want to easily access this information. Where would someone looking at the plan find information on pollution?
    - Answer: Each work group will have multiple chapters, some will discuss subtopics such as dumping/debris
      - Part of this work will include summarizing existing efforts, such as Marine Debris Reduction Plan
  - Question: Why is sustainability & conservation separated from other working groups? Is it not a part of every working group/are those stakeholders not also interested in sustainability?
    - Answer: See answer above, but work groups interact, and questions that arise in one are discussed in others.
    - We also wanted to deeply focus on the topic of each work group
  - Question: There is also such an inextricable link with land use and health of coastal and ocean resources. It seems like there should be a section of the report dedicated to this.

- Answer: This is something that the workgroup discussed and plan to characterize narratively. However, there are already many existing efforts to regulate coastal land use especially in Chesapeake Bay planning
  - Spending money in watershed monitoring hasn't been as effective, chance to rethink current protocol
  - A productive tension for the VOP will be the challenge between navigating between other agencies who already dealing with this question while not avoiding any issues
- **Fishing & Aquaculture**
  - Question: If there are issues with the wind farm after it has been established (such as overfishing of species that reside close to the turbines), who will be responsible for potentially altering access?
    - Answer: This answer will depend on the realm of the specific issue. For example, issues with navigation will be dealt with by the Coast Guard and Dominion developed a construction operation plan with the Coast Guard that outlines how navigation will be allowed within the turbines.
- **Infrastructure & Energy**
  - Question: Some of these topics are highly regulatory as opposed to non-regulatory or voluntary areas of these work groups. What will be the goal of the ocean plan on some of these highly regulated topics?
    - Answer: We cannot mandate that the federal government make a regulatory change or mandate that local governments make ordinance changes.
      - At maximum, the plan could lay out a case for a change that needs to be made, by identifying a policy issue.
      - A focus will be looking at impacting the spaces where the plan and this group can impact. Some examples:
        - Federal consistency, enforceable policies, and processes like the subsea cable laying process, seeing if we can identify where some additional coordination could be done voluntarily
  - **Transportation, Navigation, & Security**
    - Question: Will jobs in "Blue Green" careers be included?... "The universities are developing programs now for maritime industries, young people are moving from hampton roads, education for younger levels to increase interest, but we need older age education "
      - Answer: Don't have a specific number but bringing/constructing offshore wind industry in hampton roads would provide a significant number of jobs



- Question: Are Emergency Logistics under maritime operations? Example: the Port of Virginia was key in helping with the Francis Key Scott Bridge incident.
  - Answer: Port of VA is in the workgroup, they have emergency protocol and collaboration between other stakeholders

**Other remarks/general feedback:**

- There are stakeholders who already collaborate and should be a key part of the Virginia plan, especially with research equipment, research training. We need a mindset change of collaboration.
- This is such a complex process. Oceans-uses already benefit from cross communications.
- Question: What is the mechanism to balance the interest areas in recommendations in the final plan. How do you make compromises?
  - Answer: Long period of input, wide variety of stakeholders, a steering committee will ultimately deliberate on the final recommendations, IEN will help facilitate contentious discussions to reach compromise