

**April 28, 2017**

**Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program  
Semiannual Section B.1 Report on Section 312 Evaluation and Metrics  
For the Period from October 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017**

|  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| SECTION B.1.A: Section 312 Evaluation Progress | 2           |
| SECTION B.1.B: Section 312 Metrics             | 3           |

## B.1.A. SECTION 312 EVALUATION PROGRESS

Virginia's most recent evaluation began in the fall of 2014 with the Virginia CZM Program responding to 36 evaluation questions regarding administration of the program, protection of coastal habitat, coastal hazards and sea level rise, coastal water quality, coastal-dependent uses, public access, governmental coordination, and descriptions of major achievements and challenges. NOAA then conducted an online survey of Virginia CZM stakeholders and partners, and in May 2015 conducted interviews of key partners on identified target areas. A public meeting was held on May 12, 2015.

Stakeholders interviewed by the NOAA team described the program as *partner-oriented* and *having effective partnerships with local communities and regional and non-profit groups*. "Flexible to meet the needs of locals" and "inclusionary" were some of the ways stakeholders expressed partnership demonstrated by Virginia CZM.

The three target areas identified by the NOAA team to evaluate the Virginia CZM Program were: 1) Restoring and Protecting Coastal Habitats and increasing Public Access, 2) Ocean Planning, and 3) Coastal Resilience. Preliminary accomplishments and recommendations identified by NOAA in each target area are as follows:

### Restoring and Protecting Coastal Habitats and Increasing Public Access

Accomplishment: The Public Access Authorities are providing a new tool for public access acquisition and management through a local policy framework enabled by state legislation.

Accomplishment: The VCZMP's place-based restoration efforts have been highly successful, leveraging significant funding from partners and resulting in "on the ground" coastal habitat improvements.

### Ocean Planning

Accomplishment: The VA CZMP's leadership in regional ocean planning has brought together diverse stakeholders to plan for the location of future offshore facilities while minimizing user conflicts and impacts to coastal resources.

Recommendation: The NOAA Office for Coastal Management encourages the VA CZMP to continue its leadership role in regional ocean planning and to plan for how the work will move forward over the next five years, including continued emphasis on ways to diversify and leverage funding.

Progress This Period (October 2016 - March 2017): The CZM Program Manager has continued her leadership role and increased it by becoming the State Co-lead for the Mid-Atlantic RPB as of Jan 1 2017 along with a quarterly rotating federal lead and a Tribal lead. These duties involve steering the direction of the RPB, planning and conducting monthly co-leads' calls as well as monthly calls with the full RPB and in-person full RPB and public meetings such as the upcoming June 19-20 meeting in Silver Spring. In addition, she continued her two-year term as Chairman of MARCO. That term ends June 30, 2017. She also serves as the sole lead for the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Plan's (certified by the National Ocean Council in December 2016) Healthy

Ocean Ecosystem (HOE) Work Group to identify and increase understanding of Ecologically Rich Areas. She serves as the state co-lead on the HOE Marine Debris Work Group (EPA serves as federal co-lead however that person has been out on extended sick leave). She also co-leads HOE action Work Group on mapping species shifts and the Work Group on ocean acidification. She also participates in the HOE Work Group on healthy ocean indicators and the Sustainable Ocean Use Work Group on non-consumptive recreation. Multiple workshops were planned for these actions including: one on mapping species shifts for April 4-5; one on ocean acidification for May 9; one on ERAs for May 19; one on marine debris for June 7; one on indicators for July 19-20. Securing additional funding remains difficult as private foundations tend to believe that government should fund these activities. Various federal grant funding opportunities are being sought including inclusion of ERA work in the FY17 Virginia CZM grant application.

### Coastal Resilience

**Accomplishment:** The VA CZMP's leadership in coastal resilience has enhanced the capacity of local partners for adaptation planning and promoted the use of living shoreline approaches to enhance community and ecological resilience.

**Recommendation:** The NOAA Office for Coastal Management recommends that the VA CZMP further define the program's "niche" as it relates to coastal resilience.

**Progress This Period (October 2016 – March 2017):** The Virginia CZM Program addressed this recommendation by focusing its efforts to build coastal resilience into two key areas identified in the Section 309 Coastal Hazards Strategy. The Strategy, which was developed with significant stakeholder input, targets community resiliency (the built environment) and shoreline resiliency (natural and nature-based features). Projects funded through the Strategy should ultimately lead to new enforceable policies that advance coastal resiliency in these two areas. The first year of the Strategy focused on acquiring the data necessary to develop local shoreline management plans, and on providing training for shoreline contractors and local government officials responsible for shoreline management decisions. Projects proposed for funding in the second year include more work to promote better shoreline management and the use of living shorelines, but also two community resilience projects. The first is designed to promote local adoption or expansion of the community rating system under the national flood insurance program, while the second will provide coastal communities with a tool to comprehensively evaluate their current resiliency efforts.

## **B.1.B. SECTION 312 METRICS**

**The Five-Year Reporting Period for these Metrics is October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2017.**

**Progress for the period October 2016 – September 2017 will be reported in October, 2017.**