

Virginia Wetlands Management Handbook

2nd Edition

Prepared by

Wetlands Program

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Editor

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been compiled and edited for the purpose of serving as a standardized, ready reference for Virginia wetlands board members and the staff persons who support the boards' volunteer efforts. The handbook contains up-to-date copies of laws, guidelines, policies, and informational statements such as Attorneys' General opinions pertinent to wetlands and dune management in Virginia. In addition, technical reports and advisories published and distributed by the Wetlands Program of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary are included. Beyond these staples of Virginia coastal management, discussions of the permit process and the respective roles of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science are illuminated. This latter information should be especially helpful to new appointees who wish to familiarize themselves with not only their specific roles as wetland and dune managers, but also with the overall shoreline management process within which the local wetlands boards play an integral role.

One of the primary motivations behind the production of this handbook is the need to institutionalize the experience and technical base accumulated during the near quarter century operation of the wetlands management program, given the necessary turnover involved with a decentralized volunteer management system. The handbook is also designed to be constantly updated and revised. **We urge each person who is issued one of these volumes to aid in keeping the handbook up-to-date by adding all new documents or reports to the appropriate notebook section as they are issued.**

These manuals are being provided to the localities and are intended to be assigned to each staff and board member position. The handbook is to be handed down to his or her successor as each board member or staff person leaves office. **Keeping the handbook updated is of great consequence given the importance of providing accurate and complete resource materials to new board appointees as soon as they assume their positions on the regulatory body.**

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Cover Photograph—The picture of the wetlands, dunes and old Coast Guard station on Cedar Island, Accomack County, was taken by Mr. Walter I. Priest, III, VIMS Wetlands Program. The photograph embodies coastal management by depicting the changing face of the shoreline, wetlands and dunes along with man's presence and his attempts to control the natural system.

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