



PO Box 6090
Suffolk, VA 23433
757.745.7447

River Chat

NansemondRiverPreservationAlliance.org
Special Edition Serving the Suffolk Community Since 2010



Grassroots Movement *Determined Citizens*

In 2009, fourteen Suffolk citizens concerned with the continued degradation of the Nansemond River and its tributaries met to establish an environmental organization whose mission was to help reverse the trend by educating and encouraging all community residents to be environmental stewards. As a result of the efforts of this small group, the Nansemond River Preservation Alliance (NRPA) was founded, received its official nonprofit status in August 2010

and enacted a fast-paced plan to address the mission. The NRPA organizational structure is minimal, yet very effective - led by a 22-member board, 4 committees, 2/3 time President/ CEO and 1/4 time K-12 Education Manager. Program funding comes from the generous support of individuals, foundations and businesses. Through our outreach efforts NRPA, over the past seven years, has educated 7,500 K-12 students and 3,500 adults.

A Window into NRPA's Accomplishments

See more details on Page 2



Volunteers are the lifeblood of NRPA

People of all ages willingly donate their time, expertise and energy, to ensure that marine and wildlife will continue to flourish and future generations will have the opportunity to

swim, fish, kayak and canoe along Suffolk's River and creeks. Annually, 350 citizen's support NRPA's programs and activities. Several members of local organizations also offer their help.

Interested in Volunteering?

Contact us at 757-745-7447 or taraski.nrpa@gmail.com



A Window into NRPA's Accomplishments

Restore and Protect our River/Creeks

The NRPA....

- Conducts monthly monitoring and sampling of the Nansemond River and Bennetts Creek.
- Reports “hot spots of high bacteria sites” to the city Public Works and VA Department of Environmental Quality.
- Biannually develops and publishes the comprehensive *State of the Nansemond River and its Tributaries Report and Report Card*. Published reports: 2013, 2015, 2017, next report 2019.
- Establishes oyster reef sanctuaries and oyster aquaculture sites off residential and business properties.

Citizens' Voice for the Environment

- Advises local community groups such as the Eclipse Village Organization, citizens concerned with potential environmental violations occurring during development activities.
- Investigates issues and contacts the City Manager, councilmen, Suffolk Planning and Public Works Departments, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Marine Resource Commission to address and/or remediate the incident.
- Attends Wetlands Board and Planning Commission meetings and provides facts about potential problem areas.
- Consults with experts to ensure that the information NRPA shares is consistent with best practices.

Educating the Next Generation

- Developed and launched its signature Nansemond Watershed Initiative: (NWI) *Connecting the Classroom With Our Environment Program* for middle school students. The hands-on multi-session, semester program includes an outdoor Salt Marshfield Study and Boating Experience.
- Over the last six years, the NWI program has educated over 7,500 students about local watersheds in the classroom. The program also includes outdoor classroom experiences: hands-on Salt Marsh Study and on-board educational boat excursion along the Nansemond River.
- Provides shorter hands-on environmental educational sessions for kindergarten and fourth grade students.
- Supports an outdoor environmental mentoring and training program and research projects for High School Ecology Club members.

Creating Waterway Access

- Worked with Suffolk River Heritage and the National Park Service to form the Suffolk Water Trail which was a critical step for Suffolk's waterways to be part of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Water Trail. Being listed as part of the national trail allows the city to apply for federal grants to fund projects along the waterways.
- A Suffolk Water Trails Map was published and three interpretive kiosks were installed at Bennetts Creek, Sleepy Hole and Constant's Wharf Parks.
- Helped the city obtain Federal grant funding for two canoe/kayak launches and piers at Sleepy Hole and Constant's Wharf public parks.
- Currently exploring potential city-owned sites for more collaborative planning to increase public access to Suffolk's waterways.

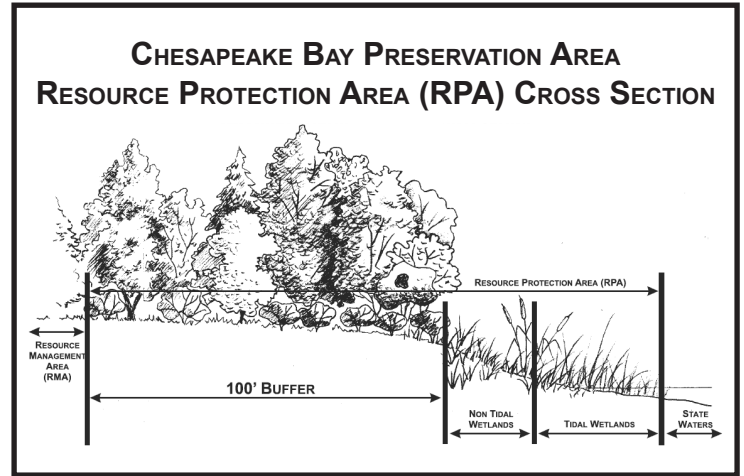
Collaborations with Organizations on River Restoration Projects *Expanding the Mission of NRPA*

- First in the state! Collaborative River Bacterial Tracking Program - Nonprofit organization (NRPA), Suffolk Watermen, Virginia Department of Health, Division of Shellfish Sanitation, Suffolk Public Works and Hampton Roads Sanitation District. Through the efforts of these organizations significantly expanded the number of sites that were sampled which resulted in the identification of aging infrastructure sanitary sewer pipes and faulty septic systems. Remediation activities were implemented to help reduce bacteria flow into the Nansemond.
- Launched the city-wide Water Wise Home Program with the Nansemond River Garden Club.
- River Clean Up Activities with Izaak Walton League and Suffolk Litter Control
- Planting and maintenance of the NRPA-Parks & Recreation Riparian Buffer and Native Plant Arboretum with Suffolk Master Gardeners, Historic Southside Master Naturalists, Tidewater Master Naturalists, and Navy volunteers
- Sustainable Water Initiative for Tomorrow – GFWC Junto Women's Club

State Government Actions to Restore the Waterways

Environmental Regulations and Laws

The Chesapeake Bay Program was adopted in 1981 as required by the Virginia General Assembly to create and preserve buffer areas around local streams, creeks and rivers to help improve water quality compromised by concentrated and polluted runoff from impervious areas from new and existing developments. New and redevelopment construction projects within the designated Chesapeake Bay Protection Areas (CBPAs) **require** a 100 foot buffer measuring to mean high water or jurisdictional limit of tidal marshes.



NRPA Demonstration Site Projects

Throughout the Community

- Educate citizens of the Resource Protection Area (RPA), Chesapeake Bay Restoration Act and ways to reduce stormwater runoff.
- Educate and advises citizens in the planning and establishment of Living Shorelines and eradication of invasive plants such as phragmites.
- Created and maintains a 300 foot Outdoor Classroom – Riparian Buffer and Native Plant Arboretum Demonstration Site at Sleepy Hole Park and Rain Gardens Demonstration Sites at Bennetts Creek Park to educate citizens about best practices they can do on their own property.
- Created and maintains three oyster reefs.



Workshops, Forums, Exhibits

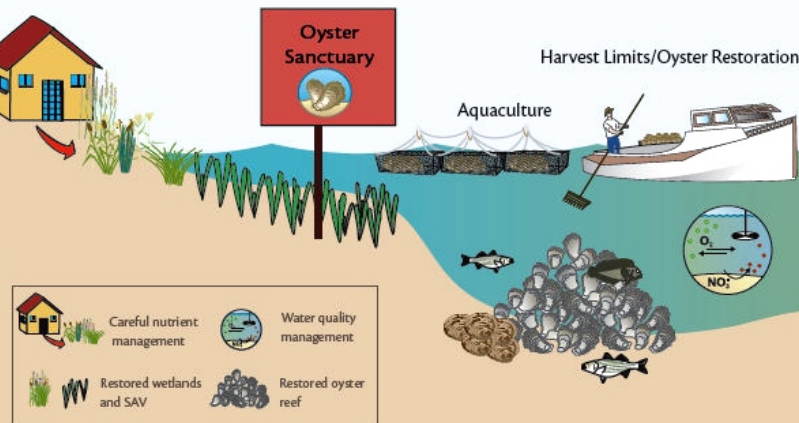
Community-wide Environmental Seminars, Workshops and Exhibits.... Educating thousands of citizens

- NRPA River Talk – Environmental presentations provide the opportunity for all citizens to attend a one-hour session where they learn from experts about the waterways and best practices to protect the River and creeks.
- NRPA exhibits at community-wide and school events such as Taste of Suffolk, Earth & Arts Festival, Library and School Science Fair Events.

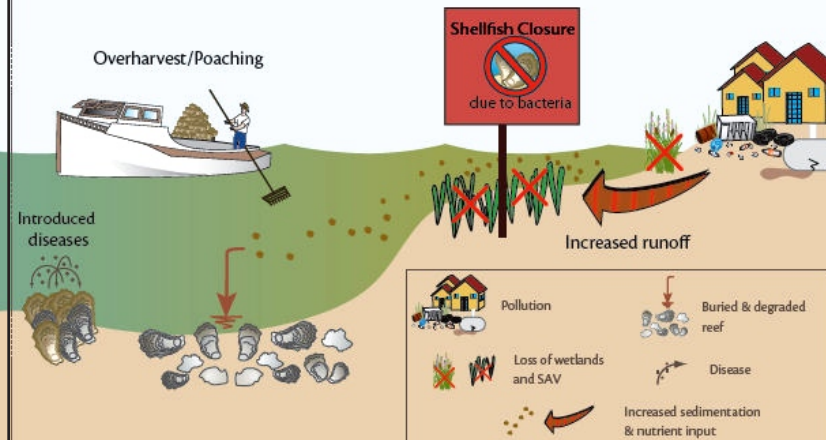


Direct Human Impact on Oysters

Positive



Negative





757.745.7447

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 Volvo Penta

COMMUNITY, REGIONAL ALLIANCES

Bethlehem Ruritans
 Suffolk Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
 CE&H Ruritans
 Chesapeake Bay Foundation
 Chuckatuck Historical Society
 Elizabeth River Project
 GFWC Junto Women's Club
 Healthy Suffolk
 Historic Southside Master Naturalists
 Izaak Walton League
 James River Association
 Lynnhaven River Now
 Nansemond River Garden Club
 Nansemond River Power Squadron
 North Suffolk Rotary CLub
 Oyster Reefer Keepers
 Possum Hollow Ruritan Club
 Suffolk Art League
 Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts
 Suffolk Master Gardeners
 Suffolk River Heritage
 Suffolk Rotary Club
 Suffolk Women's Magazine Club
 Wetlands Watch
 Westover Garden Club

CITY, REGIONAL, STATE & FEDERAL ALLIANCES

Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund
 City of Suffolk, Dept of Litter Control
 City of Suffolk, Parks & Recreation
 City of Suffolk, Public Works
 Great Dismal Swamp and National Wildlife Refuge
 Hampton Roads Sanitation District
 National Park Service
 VA Dept of Environmental Quality
 VA Dept of Health, Div of Shellfish Sanitation

EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCES

Suffolk Public Schools
 Nansemond Suffolk Academy
 Old Dominion University
 VA Institute for Marine Science
 W&M Law School/VA Coastal Policy Center



Join your Neighbors and Sign Up for the WaterWise Home Program.

Go to NansemondRiverPreservationAlliance.org

to learn about the steps that you and your family can do everyday to protect the waterways!

You are invited to become a member of NRPA

and join the over 300 citizens, businesses, foundations and government agencies that are *Making A Difference* in Suffolk.

DONOR LEVELS

SUSTAINING \$ 15,000	CREW \$ 250
BLUE RIVER \$ 5,000	PATRON \$ 100
ADMIRAL \$ 3,000	FAMILY \$ 40
CAPTAIN \$ 1,000	INDIVIDUAL \$ 25
COMMANDER \$ 500	STUDENT \$ 10

Make your donation online at
NansemondRiverPreservationAlliance.org
 or make your check payable to NRPA and mail to NRPA,
 P.O.Box 6090, Suffolk, Virginia 23433

Your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Your email address allows us to send you important updates and information about activities and events. NRPA will not share your information.