



## The RAFT

### Northern Neck One-Year Progress Workshop

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

#### Executive Summary

The Northern Neck RAFT workshop was held virtually on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and a full recording will be available shortly on [The RAFT website](#) and [YouTube channel here](#). The workshop was an opportunity for the RAFT core team to share tools that were developed over the course of the past year of implementation and to share information about upcoming funding opportunities and other resources available to localities. Presentations from Sara Carroll of the Warsaw- Richmond Co. Chamber of Commerce, Hope Mothershead of Richmond County, and Robin Schick of Colonial Beach, and a panel featuring Pat Frere of White Stone, Susan Cockrell of Kilmarnock, Mason Brent, community member and board member with the River Counties Community Foundation, Anne Self of Friends of the Rappahannock, and Darrin Lee of Westmoreland County shared lessons learned and achievements amongst localities. Each locality has plans to continue resilience work, and many of them are forming resilience committees. A full participant list is also included at the end of the meeting summary.

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#### **Welcome & RAFT Overview** – *John Bateman, NNPDC and Wie Yusuf, ODU*

John Bateman of the Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC) welcomed participants to the workshop and gave background information on The RAFT in the region. Next, Wie Yusuf of Old Dominion University provided a brief overview of The RAFT process.

- The goal of The RAFT is to help Virginia’s coastal localities improve resilience to flooding and other coastal storm hazards while remaining economically and socially viable. The RAFT consists of an assessment of localities’ resilience, community workshops to develop resilience action checklists, and twelve months of support in implementing those checklists.
- The RAFT’s work in the Northern Neck started in 2018 when Governor Northam signed the executive order establishing a Chief Resilience Officer and funding for the creation of a Coastal Resilience Master Plan. Reacting to those opportunities, the PDCs came together to put in an application for funding to build capacity for resilience in the coastal region. Around that time, the RAFT team sent an invitation to the Northern Neck to help its localities build community resilience. The localities here today have been a



part of that process for the last 12 months, and have done some great work. There is increasing recognition that we need to be proactive in planning approaches. This workshop offers the opportunity to share progress and kick off the next phase of resilience work.

**Tools and Resources from The RAFT – Elizabeth Andrews, VCPC; Wie Yusuf ODU; Sierra Gladfelter, IEN; Tanya Denckla Cobb, IEN; and Anne Nelson Stoner, IEN**

- **[Incorporating Resilience into Comprehensive Plans](#)** – Resilience in comprehensive planning was a high priority for a number of Northern Neck localities, so The RAFT team hosted a webinar in April 2021 to share examples and best practices for incorporating resilience into comprehensive planning. The [videos](#) and [slide decks](#) from this webinar are posted on the RAFT website. A [document](#) of best practices for integrating resilience into comprehensive planning is also available.
- **[Emergency Risk Communication Tool for Counties and Towns](#)**– The purpose of this tool is to help localities develop emergency risk communication plans. These plans are designed to support preparedness, response, and recovery from an emergency event. Emergency risk communication helps to maintain trust and improve outcomes through informed decision-making and behavioral change by residents. This tool outlines a seven-step process and includes forms and templates which localities can use to do an inventory of communication assets, a gap analysis, and emergency scenario planning.
- **[Small Business Resilience Guide](#)**– This guide is a resource to ensure that the economic base is supported throughout efforts to build resilience. It is a tool for localities, businesses, and organizations supporting businesses, and includes a self-assessment and recommended actions to improve resilience. The guide was created with help from businesses in Warsaw, and currently takes the form of a workbook containing the self-assessment with additional resources for exit planning, succession planning, and online business. A web-based tool is currently being developed.
- **[Community Worksheet on Vulnerability](#) and [Data List for Planning](#)** – These tools were developed iteratively with Westmoreland County and Richmond County, after both localities identified early on that they needed identify impacts on vulnerable populations. The Vulnerability Assessment Worksheet is designed to assess hazards and their impacts on vulnerable populations. The worksheet currently focuses on flooding, but could be adapted to any hazard, and works through flood risk assessment, vulnerable population identification, identification of data gaps, and development of a strategy. A data list of resources that could help to fill data gaps during vulnerability assessment is also available. This list will continue to be updated by the NNPDC.

- **[Resilience Committee Formation Worksheet](#)** – Forming an ongoing resilience committee was a high priority for many localities, and the RAFT team put together a worksheet that helps localities find the right parameters for their community. Resilience committees can help serve as a liaison with different community members and organizations, and keep resilience at the top of mind in the operations of a locality.
- **[COVID Rapid Response Final Report and Asset Map](#)** – The RAFT team recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic was a stress test for many critical services in the Northern Neck region. Sierra and Anne Nelson launched a project to understand how the delivery of critical services, including libraries, schools, and mental health resources, were impacted and where gaps exist. They interviewed critical service providers last fall and winter, and developed an asset map and report to document findings. The report offers insights into gaps, vulnerable populations, and adaptations due to COVID that could have a lasting positive impact. The asset map shows critical service provider locations, service areas, hours of operation, and contact information, and will be maintained going forward by the Northern Neck Resource Council.
- **[Questions and Discussion](#)** – Tanya invited any questions or comments about the tools. Victoria Luna of Colonial Beach shared that her town is getting ready to roll out a new comprehensive plan that incorporates resilience, and thanked the RAFT team for helping to build it. John Bateman expressed that he is really happy to have these tools and that they will help continue the momentum from the RAFT.
  - **Note:** Links to the tools shared above and additional resilience resources are available in this [Resilience Resources Document](#).

**Locality Presentations: Community Achievements & Application of RAFT Tools– Moderator, Wie Yusuf, ODU**

- ***Town of Warsaw: Sara Carroll, President, Warsaw-Richmond Co. Chamber of Commerce-*** In Warsaw, Sarah shared that resilience was a critical issue for retaining small businesses. About five businesses gave insight into the Small Business Resilience Guide, giving input on exit strategies, succession planning, continuity of operations planning, hiring/retention/benefits, and online sales. The Chamber of Commerce wanted to make sure that they had a collection of resources to help businesses be successful long-term, retain existing businesses, and draw in new businesses. Warsaw's other priorities during the RAFT included working with Richmond on an Emergency Management Communication Strategy, reviewing town ordinances to find opportunities to increase resilience in planning and stormwater management, working on the Bounds project, and improving water infrastructure. Our next steps include completing the Bounds Project and distributing the SBRG to small businesses.

- **Richmond County: Hope Mothershead, Director of Planning & Zoning**- Hope Mothershead shared that Richmond County developed a resilience communication strategy, established a coordination committee to carry out the strategy, created a county green infrastructure plan, assessed risk levels for vulnerable communities, and integrated resilience into all plans. They established the Richmond Resilience Network, which will help Richmond County to share perspectives across siloes and provide mutual support across departments. The Network will meet once every other month, with nonprofits and representatives from various county departments, a representative from Warsaw, and Mitch Paulette and Hope Mothershead as co-directors. The County also explored green infrastructure projects and grants, assessed vulnerable communities, and benefited from the comprehensive planning workshop during the year of implementation. The Board has approved the Richmond Resilience Network, and Mitch and Hope look forward to using the network to share ideas, thoughts, and concerns.
  
- **Town of Colonial Beach: Robin Schick, Mayor**- Mayor Robin Schick shared that the Town of Colonial Beach had a prolific implementation year, and was able to get a tree canopy survey, improve GIS support, evaluate the zoning code to support green infrastructure, draft site plans for three green spaces, secure a tree planting grant for main street, begin a living shoreline project, apply for several grants, relocate the volunteer rescue squad from the floodplain, create a resilience subcommittee in the planning commission, establish communication with the County Emergency Response Coordinator, evaluate erosion on a critical shoreline, and receive historic commercial designation from the state. The biggest area for action moving forward is the development of a resilience communication strategy.
  
- **Questions and Discussion** – Following the locality presentations, meeting participants were invited to ask questions or share comments. Participants asked the following questions:
  - How do you plan to actively use the small business guide with small businesses? I assume some of the report activities and recommendations would have a cost for small businesses and/or require resources. How will the town/county help with that?
    - Warsaw hasn't quite gotten to that point with the Chamber of Commerce, but will be thinking through it and available to support going forward. Wie and John offered support as well, and Wie mentioned a tourism business resilience assessment report that her team created (available in the [resources document](#)).
  - How do your county leaders, especially elected officials, engage in the comprehensive plan for Richmond and use it as a key part of their decision-making?

- Richmond had done a review of their comprehensive plan, and decided to do a rewrite with new mapping. All of the commissions and board look to the comp plan as a guide and as intentions, so having it updated with the outlook of the citizens is very useful.
- The PDC has received a Small Watershed Grant from NFWF to continue supporting green infrastructure work in the region.

**Locality Panel Discussion: Levers and Lessons in Advancing Community Resilience—**  
*Moderator, Elizabeth Andrews, VCPC*

- **Town of White Stone: Pat Frere, Town Manager**
  - Pat Frere shared that White Stone is a small town of 350 people, 60-70 businesses, and a small, part-time town staff. Before White Stone started the RAFT, town staff were working on a housing project, a public sewage system, some town-wide stormwater issues, and a business district revitalization project. When the RAFT began, 4-5 needs were apparent. The first was the lack of communication tools, lack of a website, and gaps in emergency services. The RAFT was able to narrow down key action items. White Stone made good progress on three items, some progress on one, and little on another. Drafting a town zoning ordinance will be the biggest priority moving forward. The biggest success story was the town-wide emergency communication strategy. A tornado struck near the town almost a year ago, and town staff realized that they have a significant elderly population that still relies mostly on landlines for communication. There will be a town-wide event at which free NOAA weather radios are distributed (funded by the River Counties Community Foundation) and residents are signed up for the code red community alert system this fall.
    - *Elizabeth:* How did White Stone go about prioritizing with such a small staff?
      - *Pat:* We tried to meld the RAFT action items with our long-term projects that were already underway. That helped prioritize and provide direction to us. The student teams were also incredibly helpful, and their work was very high quality.
    - *Elizabeth:* How are you thinking about resilience as you approach all your long-term projects?
      - *Pat:* We have realized that there is a need for a long-term town-wide stormwater improvement plan. Being able to prioritize better is helpful for knocking out our list. Once all of these projects are finished, we will update and integrate resilience into our Comprehensive Plan.
- **Town of Kilmarnock: Susan Cockrell, Town Manager**

- Susan Cockrell shared that looking beyond hazard mitigation is imperative for hazard mitigation in the Town of Kilmarnock. A holistic view is important, as is planning for both mitigation and prevention. Kilmarnock needed to connect with other localities for issues that were outside of the Town's normal scope. Kilmarnock is not in a low-lying area, but it has a hospital and a rescue squad, which are key infrastructure in crisis response for the region. Education efforts are also key to resilience in Kilmarnock. Resilience is not in everyone's lexicon, so there is a need to educate and discuss what resilience can mean from a policy perspective. Kilmarnock has engaged the PDC and is working to make sure that all long-term plans incorporate resilience. There are stormwater issues in the downtown, which need to be fixed urgently as rain events become more common. John Bateman has offered his assistance to coordinate with business owners, property owners, and VDOT to come to a solution, and keeping people out of their siloes is an essential part of that. The main issue going forward is the downtown area's drainage and how Kilmarnock can solve these complex problems with the new tools at our disposal.
  - *Elizabeth:* You made such an important point that making sure Kilmarnock functions well is important for the whole region. John pointed out in the chat that this really requires a whole government and whole of community approach, which is so true. How will you achieve this going forward?
    - *Susan:* I think every project or issue has to have a champion, and I think we need to work with Lancaster County government to set up a champion for each issue. The community always comes together in a crisis, so let's come together proactively as well and make everything bite-sized and tactical.
- **Northumberland County: Mason Brent, Community Leader**
  - Mason Brent, a Northumberland County resident and business owner who is also on the board of the River Counties Community Foundation, shared his perspective on the RAFT and resilience. He noted that all of the initiatives highlighted in the workshop require funding and expressed interest in developing a formalized and integrated funding strategy for resilience projects using both public and private sources. He also spoke from his perspective as a farmer and noted with concern that in the last 2-3 years the severity of rain events has increased, resulting in inland erosion on agricultural fields. Northumberland is predominantly an agricultural county, and with increasing demand for food the country cannot afford to lose farmland. Several farmers in the area have observed similar inland erosion, and experimented with solutions, none of which have been successful yet. The RAFT needs to include mitigation protocols for inland erosion and other agricultural concerns.



- *Elizabeth*: From your perspective as a resident, what do you think resilience looks like for the community?
  - *Mason*: Having been in business for most of my life, in the business world resilience and adaptation are part of the everyday job. Businesses always have to adapt to survive, so resilience is not a new concept there, but it is a new concept for me in the world of local government and in protecting our environment. I think it's a great process, and to me it's an ongoing everyday process.
- **Lancaster County: Anne Self, Friends of the Rappahannock**
  - Anne Self, the Lower Rappahannock River Steward with the environmental nonprofit Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR), agreed with previous speakers that resilience is an extremely complex issue. FOR focuses its efforts on the environmental part of resilience. Anne spoke to represent Lancaster County, but works throughout the Northern Neck. Funding is a huge hurdle for environmental resilience, and FOR has tried to take on some of the responsibility for that. One strategy FOR has used is holding tree giveaways to engage residents and give them ownership. Hearing from many different perspectives as part of the RAFT process has benefited the nonprofit. They are currently working with John Bateman to help all counties in the Northern Neck to come up with green infrastructure priorities. FOR gives away trees, does community tree planting days, and connects with the communities to keep projects moving.
    - *Elizabeth*: I think a lot of folks think of nonprofits as educators, but can you also play a role in collecting citizen input?
      - *Anne*: Our goal is to be ingrained in the community and be a voice for the river but also to recognize the balance between human and environmental needs. Working with localities is a great way to connect the environmental needs with human benefits.
    - *Elizabeth*: What do you think are some of the challenges for the region?
      - *Anne*: Every time you plant a tree or throw some oyster shells in the water, you're improving water quality. Right now, we're focusing on increasing the oyster population, and we also do a lot of shoreline work and tree planting. Watershed management is inherently holistic, and everything is connected.
- **Westmoreland County: Darrin Lee, Planner**
  - Darrin Lee, a Planner with Westmoreland County, spoke about the county's GIS toolbox, which is used for planning and permitting. From a land use perspective, planners look at what long term things can be done to address resilience issues. There is immediate response to natural events, but planners also look at what

can be done at the planning and permitting stage. Tracking wetlands cases and permits over the long term also allows planners to understand how wetlands are responding to storms and changes over time. Developing story maps that highlight the benefits of living shorelines to property owners is one future action item. Westmoreland County also tracks where people have dead or dying trees, as well as tree removal and replacement within the riparian buffer, and that data can also give insight into flood risk. Darrin has also seen patterns in road closures located near certain streams, which helps the county understand where interventions may be needed. Westmoreland also keeps track of building footprints for new construction and is hoping to add attributes to that layer for building code standards. Every locality should have a specific GIS manager to handle data, and important information such as road closures should be shared across the region.

- *Elizabeth*: Did you have any other thoughts on platforms for data sharing or crowd sourcing data that could be helpful?
  - *Darrin*: I think it's just a matter of getting everyone on the same page and consistently sharing information amongst each other. Great GIS platforms already exist.
- **Questions and Discussion** – Elizabeth thanked the panelists and invited general comments and questions from the participants.
  - John agreed that GIS staff and data are essential for local governments, and crowdsourcing has potential to capture more data. Support from the state and input from citizenry are essential to increasing resilience.

## Resilience Planning Going Forward: Role of Localities, PDC, and Ongoing Collaboration

### Funding Opportunities to Support Continued Resilience— *John Bateman, NNPDC and Elizabeth Andrews, VCPC*

John and Elizabeth shared an overview of future support the PDC can offer to assist with resilience efforts, as well as an overview of key upcoming funding opportunities for resilience projects. These are listed with hyperlinks in the [Resilience Resources doc](#) available [at this link](#) and in Appendix A of this summary.

- John shared that collaboration between local governments and nonprofits is very strong on the Northern Neck. The PDC provides technical assistance through the Coastal Zone Management program, assistance with Hazard Mitigation Plans, Comprehensive Planning, grant writing, and project identification. The upcoming Hazard Mitigation Planning process will incorporate results from the RAFT and input from residents in a



proactive way. John noted that the region wants to incorporate the Coastal Resilience Master Plan and a whole of community approach into all of our planning processes.

- A selection of the most useful funding opportunities is referenced on the [Resilience Resources doc](#) and in Appendix A of this summary. There has been a notable increase in state and federal funding for resilience projects and capacity building in the past two years, with more funding coming. It is worth prioritizing these issues as much as possible in the near term to take advantage of this funding. Thinking carefully about how to use these opportunities is a good investment of time. For FEMA grants, note that VDEM has an earlier deadline for localities that want their assistance in applying.
- NFWF has a National Coastal Resilience Fund and supports many projects that have dual resilience and water quality or habitat benefits.
- John is poised and ready to help localities take advantage of Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF). Under CFPF, there are projects, studies, and capacity building grants. No less than 25% should be used in low-income geographic areas, and localities need a resilience plan in order to apply for some grants.

**Continued Support from The RAFT Team with Thanks to the Jessie Ball duPont Fund–** *Tanya Denckla Cobb, IEN and Elizabeth Andrews, VCPC*

- Generous funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund will allow The RAFT team to continue to work in the Northern Neck as well as the Middle Peninsula. The RAFT core team will be able to support resilience committees with resources and provide support for the design and development of an engagement process for the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The funding also includes mini grants for boots on the ground, and forming a regional Social Equity Workgroup that will span the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. The group will provide guidance for the distribution of grants. With funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, The RAFT will be able to compensate qualifying community experts for their time and energy through honoraria to make this process as inclusive as possible.

**Moving Forward Together–***Tanya Denckla Cobb, IEN*

Tanya led a facilitated discussion around progress made during RAFT implementation. She invited participants to respond to three questions about the RAFT process in a collaborative [google doc](#), shared here in Appendix B. She also reminded participants that feedback could be shared with RAFT core team members over email (Please contact RAFT Project Manager Sierra Gladfelter at [sg6us@virginia.edu](mailto:sg6us@virginia.edu)), or in the anonymous [evaluation form](#).



## Meeting Attendees

1. **India Adams-Jacobs**, Town Manager, Town of Colonial Beach
2. **Kenneth Allison**, Town Council Member, Town of Colonial Beach
3. **Michael Barber**, Floodplain Manager, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
4. **John Bateman**, Regional Planner, Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC)
5. **Bryant Bays**, Regional Forester, VA Department of Forestry (VDOF)
6. **Lowery Becker**, Community Conservation Specialist, Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District
7. **Jim Blue**, Northumberland County, Executive Director Economic Development
8. **Lincoln Boykin**, Grants Officer, River Counties Community Foundation (RCCF)
9. **Mason Brent**, Community leader, Farmer, and RCCF Board Member
10. **Harrison Bresee**, All Hazards Planner, Region 5, VA Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
11. **Taryn Brice-Rowland**, Lancaster County Economic Development Authority and Co-owner, Rogue Oysters
12. **Brandy Buford**, Floodplain Manager, DCR
13. **Bobbie Burton**, Director, Northern Neck Master Naturalists
14. **Lance Carrington**, Director, Guadalupe Free Clinic of Colonial Beach
15. **Sara Carroll**, Warsaw- Richmond County Chamber of Commerce
16. **Warren Coburn**, Forester, Essex/Westmoreland, VDOF
17. **Susan Cockrell**, Town Manager, Town of Kilmarnock
18. **Darren Coffrey**, Berkeley Group
19. **Joseph Coleman**, Student Support Services, Rappahannock Community College
20. **Jackie Davis**, Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board
21. **Aimee Dillon**, Branch Services Manager, Central Rappahannock Regional Library, Westmoreland Co.
22. **Kathleen Easley**, Planner, Town of Colonial Beach
23. **Pat Frere**, Town Manager, Town of White Stone
24. **David Fridley**, Environmental Health Manager, Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
25. **Josh Gemerek**, Senior Vice President of Housing, Bay Aging
26. **Karen Grabowski**, In-home Coordinator, Middle Peninsula-Northern Neck Community Services Board
27. **Thomas Hastings**, Community Planning and Liaison Officer, Naval Support Facility Dahlgren
28. **Lisa Hull**, Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator, NNPDC
29. **Darrin Lee**, Planner, Westmoreland County
30. **Chad Lewis**, Community Resilience Coordinator, The Haven Shelter & Services



- 31. **Vanesa Livingstone**, Richmond County Department of Social Services (DSS)
- 32. **Victoria Luna**, Chair of Planning Commission, Town of Colonial Beach
- 33. **Susan Mack**, Organizer, Alliance of Colonial Beach Community Organizations, Northern Neck Tourism Commission
- 34. **David Milby**, Forester, VDOF
- 35. **Stephen Moore**, Disaster Program Manager for the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula, American Red Cross
- 36. **Hope Mothershead**, Director of Planning & Zoning, Richmond County
- 37. **Ken Pollock**, Transit Director, Bay Transit
- 38. **Jonathan Putt**, Operations Director, Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck
- 39. **Amanda Roach**, Senior Marine Scientist, VDH
- 40. **Jacqueline Samuel**, Vocational Rehab Counselor, VA Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (VDARS)
- 41. **Robin Schick**, Mayor, Town of Colonial Beach
- 42. **Marshall Sebra**, Director of Planning & Zoning, Town of Kilmarnock
- 43. **Anne Self**, Lower Rappahannock River Steward, Friends of the Rappahannock
- 44. **Caryn Self Sullivan**, Town Council Member, Town of Colonial Beach
- 45. **Katie Shepard**, Belle Isle State Park Manager, DCR
- 46. **Matt Smith**, GIS/Asset Manager, Town of Colonial Beach
- 47. **Karen Turner**, Rappahannock Community College
- 48. **Mark Walker**, Jessie Ball duPont Fund
- 49. **Aaron Wendt**, Shoreline Engineer, DCR-Shoreline Erosion Advisory Service (SEAS)

**RAFT Facilitation Team:**

- 1. **Elizabeth Andrews**, Director, Virginia Coastal Policy Center (VCPC), William & Mary Law School
- 2. **Tanya Denckla Cobb**, Director, Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN), University of Virginia (UVA)
- 3. **Sierra Gladfelter**, RAFT Project Manager, IEN, UVA
- 4. **Jane Ann Langford**, Graduate Research Assistant, IEN, UVA
- 5. **Linnea Laux**, Graduate Research Assistant, IEN, UVA
- 6. **Gray Montrose**, Assistant Director, VCPC, William & Mary Law School
- 7. **Anne Nelson Stoner**, Graduate Research Assistant, IEN, UVA
- 8. **Wie Yusuf**, Program Director, Old Dominion Institute for Coastal Adaptation & Resilience

## Appendix A.

### THE RAFT RESOURCES FOR RESILIENCE PLANNING

#### **Incorporating Resiliency in Comprehensive Planning**

The RAFT hosted a webinar in April 2021 to share how localities can and have built resilience into comprehensive planning, and (2) tie comprehensive planning and the NFIP's CRS Program.

- Resiliency in Comprehensive Plans - [video](#) and [slide deck](#) - Brian Swets, *City of Portsmouth*
- Resilience and Mitigation Planning on the Eastern Shore of Virginia - [video](#) and [slide deck](#) - Shannon Alexander, *A-NPDC*
- Resilience Planning Highlights - [video](#) and [slide deck](#) - Gray Montrose, *VCPC*
- The NFIP's Community Rating System: Comprehensive Planning - [video](#) and [slide deck](#) - Mary-Carson Stiff, *Wetlands Watch*
- Incorporating Resilience into Planning - [video](#) - John Bateman, *NNPDC*
- *Resilience and Planning* - [video](#) - Curt Smith, *MPPDC*

Sample comprehensive plans that incorporate resilience:

- [Accomack County Comprehensive Plan](#)
- [Town of Chincoteague Draft Comprehensive Plan](#)
- [Northampton County Draft Comprehensive Plan](#)

#### **Emergency Risk Communication Plan Tool**

This tool offers a 7-step process for counties and towns to develop Emergency Risk Communication Plans. Download the tool and fillable templates for [towns](#) and [counties](#).

#### **Coastal Virginia Small Business Resilience Self-Assessment and Guide**

This resilience self-assessment and guide is a resource for small businesses and organizations supporting businesses. Download the [Self-Assessment and Guide and other resources](#).

#### **Coastal Virginia Tourism Business Resilience Assessment Report**

This report assesses the resilience of the tourism industry in Virginia, and offers recommendations for improvement. Download the [Report](#).

#### **Assessing Community Vulnerability, Mapping, and Data Needs: Planning Worksheet**

This exercise seeks to understand the specific impacts of hazards on a locality and identify populations vulnerable to those impacts. Download the [Planning Worksheet](#) and [data list](#). For localities in the Northern Neck, you can also view an [online map](#) with various data layers.

#### **COVID Rapid Response Study and Asset Map**

This project analyzed COVID-19 impacts on delivery of critical services to vulnerable populations and identified gaps and opportunities for increased resilience (download the [report](#)). The

[Northern Neck Community Asset Map](#) identifies critical service provider locations, service areas, hours of operation, and contact information.

### **Local Resilience Committees: Formation Worksheet**

This worksheet is designed to assist localities to establish a formal resilience committee structure by leading locality representatives through a brainstorming process to consider key questions and identify an appropriate committee framework. Download the [Worksheet](#).

More resilience planning resources are available on [The RAFT website](#).

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT FUTURE RESILIENCE** (August 2021)

### **FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Programs**

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)
- **BRIC** will support states, local communities, tribes and territories undertaking hazard mitigation projects. Guiding principles are: supporting communities through capability- and capacity-building; encouraging and enabling innovation; promoting partnerships; enabling large projects; maintaining flexibility; and providing consistency.
- **FMA** provides funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes and territories to fund projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the NFIP.

VDEM is currently accepting pre-applications/applications, due November 10, 2021

### **Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund (VA CFPF)**

- [Call for proposals](#)
- [2021 Grant Manual](#)

The VA CFPF uses funding from RGGI auction proceeds to provide support for regions and localities across Virginia to reduce the impacts of flooding through resilience projects, studies, and capacity building and planning activities.

Round 1 applications due September 3, 2021

Round 2 applications due November 5, 2021

### **National Fish & Wildlife Foundation**

- [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund](#) provides targeted investments that support networking and information-sharing among restoration partners on emerging technologies, successful restoration approaches, and new partnership opportunities.
- [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) supports conservation projects that restore or expand natural features such as coastal marshes and wetlands, dune and beach systems, oyster and



coral reefs, forests, coastal rivers and floodplains, and barrier islands that minimize the impacts of storms and other naturally occurring events on nearby communities.

### **Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)**

[VCAP](#) funds are available for stormwater mitigation practices and living shorelines. An asset for home owners and business owners and for localities to get buy-in for helping address resilience issues.

### **Virginia Department of Forestry**

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants to encourage projects that promote the protection and enhancement of urban and community forest ecosystems, tree planting, and the care of trees and education on tree issues.



## Appendix B: Google Doc for RAFT Participant Feedback

### 3 Questions for You!

#### PLEASE TYPE IN YOUR IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS BELOW!

**These will be anonymous, so please don't be shy!**

1. What needs, priorities, or opportunities do you see in your town or county, or the Northern Neck region as a whole, for increasing your resilience? For example:
  - a. Workshops? Training? Opportunities for gathering/ sharing/ collaboration?
  - b. Research?
  - c. Data needs?
  - d. Grant writing?
  - e. Needs for historically excluded or underrepresented populations?
  - f. Other?

#### Type Your Ideas/ Suggestions here:

- Encouraging training for certified floodplain managers as the certification is necessary for some funding.
  - Greater opportunities for collaboration within, between local governments and inclusive of residents and community organizations
  - Classes/workshops/discussion with collaboration at public meeting places (churches, libraries, or virtually)
  - As our communities continue to “revitalize,” planning for how to protect populations in our communities who are already marginalized from being further marginalized by gentrification.
  - Regular forum to involve voices from underrepresented populations - a way for people to engage without committing to regular committee meetings
  - Breaking down silos and increasing cross-organizational communication
  - Utilize the Potomac Watershed Roundtable and Rappahannock River Roundtable as forums for continuing resilience discussions, particularly natural and nature-based infrastructure (blue-green)
  - Integrating input from community organizations and local government in an independent and apolitical space (as the RAFT is already doing) is what an effective process looks like
  - How to get VIMS septic systems analysis (new 2-year project) into the PDC's 2022 hazard mitigation plan update?
2. What do you see as the biggest challenges for advancing resilience that need attention? For example:
    - a. Infrastructure

- b. Environmental protections**
- c. Health and Well-being**
- d. Social Equity**
- e. Transportation**
- f. Communication/networking**
- g. Funding**

**Type Your Ideas/ Suggestions here:**

- Infrastructure, infrastructure, and more infrastructure
  - Lack of affordable childcare, lack of affordable healthcare, lack of affordable home ownership for residents who have low incomes, lack of transportation, lack of sufficient funding for mental health services, lack of living wages (seconded) - This lack creates a higher level baseline community stress level that becomes exacerbated by poor infrastructure, disasters, etc.
  - Our infrastructure (roads, water/sewer lines, power lines, etc.) is ancient and is deteriorating and the cost to repair and replace is exorbitant. (Colonial Beach)
  - Aged infrastructure- public sewage
  - Emergency communications -- need access to broadband infrastructure
  - Stormwater infrastructure needs
  - Failed/failing septic systems - impacts every aspect of community resilience (business, environmental/habitat protection, tourism, etc.)
  - Natural habitat protection
- 3. Help us learn from the past year! Please share any suggestions for how we could improve The RAFT process to make it more effective to support localities' needs. We welcome any and all suggestions! For example, how might we improve:**
- a. The RAFT Scoring process?**
  - b. The workshops to develop local Resilience Action Checklists?**
  - c. The involvement of community people?**
  - d. Getting the word out about The RAFT's work?**
  - e. Implementation team work?**
  - f. Support for locality's work on resilience?**

**Type Your Ideas/ Suggestions here:**

- A 1 year implementation effort seemed very quick and pushed hard on rural locality resources. Having the new additional funding (duPont) to continue providing RAFT support is critical.
- (Agreed. Continuing the momentum is critical).

- The RAFT engaged Northern Neck localities in resilience planning starting in May 2020.
- A workshop was held in August 2021 to highlight successes, lessons learned, and tools for continued resilience efforts.
- Evaluations of The RAFT process were completed by 10 participants following the workshop.
- Overwhelming agreement that The RAFT process supports resilience efforts and contribute to resilient community outcome

The RAFT process...	Agree
Helped build interest in the community for increasing resilience	80%
Improved understanding about resilience	90%
Improved ability to work with others in my community to build resilience	90%
Efficient and participation was time well spent	90%

### Resilient community outcomes:

- RAFT's yearlong implementation built momentum for continued efforts to build resilience (100% agree)
- Overall, the community is more resilient than before (70% agree)
- Outcome is likely better than what communities could get in the same amount of time from another process (100% agree)

## RESILIENT COASTAL COMMUNITIES

### How The RAFT process helped resilience planning:

*"Gathering the information and working with so many people and organizations to bring us together has helped"*

*"There is a great amount of information and a great group of people who want to help. I think as a team we are able to build each other up."*

*"Hearing what other localities had done and how they had approached it."*

*"Communication, communication, communication"*

*"Documenting the at risk locations and developing avenues for action plans"*

*"Support [for projects] from college professors and their classes"*