

NAPS News

Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship
"Northumberland is going to grow. Let's help it grow with order and beauty."

Summer 2012

Volume 21, Issue 2



Welcome to the summer issue of the NAPS Newsletter. Here's a brief look at what's inside:

NAPS Fall Social Set. Mark your social calendar. Saturday, October 13, at Bay Quarter Shores Clubhouse is the place to be.

Bluff Point PUD Update. Is Bluff Pt. Holdings, LLC playing permit games?

NAPS Scholarships. Learn who the six seniors at Northumberland High School got the nod. Each of them plan to attend Virginia colleges this Fall.

Nominate NAPS 2012 Distinguished Citizen. The Board is asking members to submit nominations for this signature program. Do you have a candidate?

Nutrient Pollution. One of the papers passed on to Del. Ransone was a powerful summary prepared by Dr. Lynton Land.

NAPS Financial Report. Find out where the money is.

NAPS Delegation Meets Delegate Ransone. It was a productive session with lots of sludge information passed on to our legislator.

Memo from Bill. President Bill Estell needs your help. If it was a poster, he would be pointing at the viewer.

Board Elects Officers and Charts Course. With the new officers in place, the Board set a brisk pace to tackle on-going projects and new ideas.

Check out the NAPS Exhibit at the Library. In August, people entering the Northumberland Library will get a sampling of what NAPS does and why.

NAPS Sets September 15 for Creek Clean-up. Calling all volunteers, especially small boat owners. Most especially boat-owners on the designated creeks. ➤

Look for NAPS at the Farmers Market. That's Saturday, July 21, and Saturday, August 18, at the Tavern center in Heathsville from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Coming in the Next Issue. Look for the new OP/ED page. One thing NAPS people have is strong opinions. Here's a chance to express them.

– Jay Walker, Editor

NAPS Calendar

NAPS Board Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, at 9 a.m. at the Union First Market Bank in Burgess, except as noted. All are welcome to attend.

July 21, Sat. Farmers Market, Heathsville
Aug. 8, Wed. NAPS Board Meeting & Omega Protein Tour, Reedville
Aug. 18, Sat. Farmers Market, Heathsville
Sept. 12, Wed. NAPS Board Meeting
Sept. 15, Sat. Creek Clean-up, Mila Landing
Oct. 10, Wed. NAPS Board Meeting
Oct. 13, Sat. NAPS Fall Social, Bay Quarter Shores Clubhouse
Nov. 14, Wed. NAPS Board Meeting

ENVIRONMENT



The 2012 NAPS Creek Clean-Up will take place on September 15. The waterways will include the Great Wicomico River from the mouth of Cockrells Creek west to the Glebe Point bridge (maybe including Balls Creek) and back east to Cranes Creek.

The event will be centered at the old Mila steamboat landing, on property owned by Pamela Russell. Omega Protein has graciously agreed to provide a dumpster, port-a-potties, hand-cleaning stations, and lunch. During lunch, Pamela will describe the history of the site.

"We would like to identify boaters willing to take responsibility for the following creeks: Reason, Whays, Warehouse, Horn Harbor, Coles, Cranes, Gougher, Barrett, Tipers, and Balls," Board Member Lynton Land says.

For people with boat trailers who live elsewhere, there are launch ramps at Shell Landing, Horn Harbor Marina, Samsons Wharf and Cranes Creek. You can locate these sites on the NAPS Paddlers Guide located on our web site at www.napsva.org or pick up a copy at the NAPS stand at the Tavern Farmers Market, July 21 and August 18.

"People could just pick up trash and bring it to Mila for sorting, beginning at about 8 a.m. or, preferably, they could come to Mila, pick up high school students to collect the trash, deliver it, and join us for lunch," Land adds.

If you want to participate in any way, but especially if you have a small boat, please contact NAPS President Bill Estell at 804-580-6609 or Clean-Up coordinator Lynton Land at 804-453-6605.

NEWS

NAPS Fall Social is Set

The 2012 NAPS Fall Social is set for Saturday, October 13, at the Bay Quarter Shores Clubhouse from 4 to 7 p.m. There will be food and beverages, plus a water front view.

The high light will be the presentation of the NAPS 2012 Distinguished Northumberland Citizen Award and the Ambassador Award for a non-County resident who has performed outstanding service in Northumberland County (see separate story).

The Board will send out invitations. Payment by check will represent a reservation and the return information will be the ticket. Admission is \$15 per person, plus the "Angels List," a separate donation amount on the return reservation.

ENVIRONMENT

Bluff Point PUD Update

By Ida Hall

Bluff Pt. Holdings, LLC has requested another extension on their year-old 250 acre oyster lease request in Barnes Creek. VMRC may hear the contested request on August 28. Most of the requested lease is located in the same area where the company plans to dredge a channel 1.3 miles long, 10 feet deep, and 100 feet wide to accommodate boats up to 80 ft. long using the proposed inland marina. What is the real intent of the requested oyster lease? "The Code of Virginia requires that leased areas 'be occupied for the sole purpose of propagating oysters' (Chapter 6, 28.2-603)."

NAPS Board member Monty Deihl has provided excellent aerial photos of Bluff Pt. that show the changing shoreline and any run-off from the property in its natural state. These photos, plus water quality tests that the Dividing Creek Assn. is providing from Barnes and Oyster Creeks, adjacent to the approved PUD, will help document any adverse affects the PUD may have on water quality.

On May 11, Bluff Pt. Holdings suspended its request to DEQ for a Virginia Water Protection (VWP1) General Permit Application for culvert maintenance and access road improvements "for the purpose of demolition and removal of an uninhabited and deteriorated house." Because the culverts would actually be replaced and nearly doubled in size, impacting wetlands, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and several citizens familiar with the property, have requested DEQ deny the application as preparatory work for the larger PUD project. The old house is located where homes, shops, and the inland marina are planned to be built.

Under the county conditions, the developer is required to obtain all regulatory permits for each phase before the county will issue any land-disturbing permits. Is getting permits approved piecemeal a way of circumventing this condition? The VWP1 general permit does not have a provision for a public hearing. Once the application is reactivated, DEQ has 15 days to make a decision.

More information about the oyster lease request and the VWP1 permit application request can be found at www.northernneck.com/bluffpoint.asp. Two other contacts: Ben Stagg, ben.stagg@mrc.virginia.gov and Tony Cario, Anthony.cario@deq.virginia.gov.

EDUCATION



NAPS Awards 6 Scholarships

By Myrtle Phillips

This year NAPS gave scholarships to six Northumberland High School seniors. Listed below are the names of six outstanding and deserving graduates. All demonstrated an interest in the projects NAPS presented during the school year. In addition, they all reported plans to attend colleges in Virginia this fall.

Photo (from left): NAPS President Mike Ahart, Brenda Sanchez, Karla Pinkard, Ryan Parker, Ryshan Conoway, Elizabeth Best, Khadijah Elmore, NAPS Education Chair Myrtle Phillips.

NEWS

Need Nominations for NAPS 2012 Distinguished Citizen

The Board is asking members to submit nominations for the NAPS 2012 Distinguished Northumberland Citizen(s) Award (DNCA). Presented at the annual Fall Social, the award honors an individual, team, organization, or business in Northumberland County that advances NAPS' goals.

These goals include: 1) improving the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; 2) fostering and preserving the County's rural atmosphere; 3) promoting and monitoring land use policies; 4) encouraging economic growth to promote jobs; and 5) cooperating with others through educational programs to target these goals.

Previous DNCA winners include Luther Welch (2003), Audrey Brainard (2004), Rev. Gale Fowler (2005), Lake Coward (2006), Clint Staples (2007), and Lynton Land (2008). Last year's winner was Myrtle Phillips. Groups honored were the firemen and the

EMTs.

NAPS also sponsors The Ambassador Award for a non-County resident who has contributed to the preservation of the County as outlined in the NAPS goals above. The first recipient of this award was Henry Bashore, a resident of Lancaster County, for his efforts in making Bush Mill Stream in Northumberland County a nature preserve in perpetuity with the Nature Conservancy.

If you know of someone, a group, organization, or business that you think merits either of these awards, mail the information to NAPS DNCA Nomination, PO Box 567, Heathsville, VA 22473. Or you can email your nomination to NAPS President Bill Estell at billestell62@gmail.com. In either case, please include your telephone number and email address. Important: Nominations must specifically address one or more of the criteria noted above. The deadline for the nominations is Friday, August 31.

TECHNOLOGY

Nutrient Pollution from the Application of Sewage Sludge

By Dr. Lynton S. Land

(Note: This material was presented to Del. Ransone – see related article below.)

- 1) "Nitrogen contributions to Chesapeake Bay from the watershed are attributable primarily to agriculture. The combination of manure and fertilizer applications and fixation by crops provides 54% of the estimated nitrogen contributions to the Bay." (p. 19) "early half (43%) of the phosphorus reaching the Bay is contributed from upstream agricultural fertilizer and manure applications..." (p 21)

Source: USGS Scientific Investigation Report 2011-5167. See also Virginia Tributary Strategies and TMDL documents.

- 2) Conventional chemical fertilization is only about 2/3 efficient for Nitrogen. If 150 pounds of Nitrogen is applied per acre, only about 100 pounds ends up in the harvested crop. Almost all of the remainder causes pollution.

Source: A.R. Townsend and R.W. Howarth, 2010. *Fixing the Global Nitrogen Problem*. *Scientific American* 302, 64-71

- 3) "We estimate that agricultural animal manure and poultry litter [municipal sewage sludge is omitted] contribute about half of the agricultural nutrient load to the Chesapeake Bay."

Source: Letter to me dated 03/25/09 from Mr. Jeffrey Lape, Director of the EPA Region III Chesapeake Bay Program Office.

- 4) No "fertilizer" causes more Nitrogen pollution than sewage sludge if application is "Nitrogen-based", according to Virginia law. Sludge and other forms of animal waste are extremely inefficient fertilizers because it takes time for microbes to decompose the organic material and release the nutrients for crop growth. Only 30% of the Nitrogen in the sludge is assumed to be "plant available" to the

succeeding crop. To supply 150 pounds of "plant available" Nitrogen, 500 pounds is actually applied. But the crop only sequesters 100 pounds of Nitrogen, so nearly 400 pounds of Nitrogen is released as pollution.

Source: Dept. Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria, Revised 2005

- 5) About seven times more Phosphorus is disposed than is needed for plant growth when the land application of sewage sludge is "Nitrogen-based."

Source: Dept. Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria, Revised 2005. Assuming application is "Nitrogen-based" and that about 40 wet tons are applied per acre, each ton contains about 4 pounds of Phosphorus. Crop requirements are about 40 pounds of Phosphorus per acre. Poultry litter causes much more Phosphorus pollution.

- 6) Sludge is used on only about 50,000 out of 3,500,000 acres tilled in Virginia. Less than 2% of farms use sludge, saving an average of only \$1,200 per farm.

Source: 2005 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee document #89

My Conclusion

Banning the land application of animal waste (sewage sludge, poultry litter and manure) is the cheapest way to reduce Chesapeake Bay nutrient pollution, affecting the smallest number of people. The waste could be used as biofuel and the Phosphorus recovered. No science supports disposal of animal waste at rates exceeding the Phosphorus needs of crops, based on soil analyses and therefore land application should be Phosphorus-based rather than Nitrogen-based.

NAPS Financial Report (6/22/12)

Starting Balance	\$7,202.53
REVENUES	
Dues	\$4,115.00
Donations	\$51.00
Total Revenues	\$4,166.00
EXPENSES	
Administration	\$466.00
Donations & Scholarships	\$3,260.00
Membership & Newsletter	\$514.76
Events	\$111.00
Projects	\$1,509.21
Other	\$250.00
Total Expenses	\$6,110.97
Current Year Net	-\$1,944.97
Current Cash Balance	\$5,257.56
OTHER ASSETS	
Certificates of Deposit	\$19,794.30

NEWS

NAPS Delegation Meets Ransone



Delegate
Margaret Ransone

On June 15, Mike Harwood, Lynton Land, Greg Haugan, and Lee Allain met with Del. Margaret Ransone at her office in Montross to discuss the sewage sludge land application issue and its importance to the quality of the Chesapeake Bay. The primary focus was on nutrient contamination of the Bay caused by sludge land application on farm lands.

According to Harwood, it was a very fruitful meeting. "Delegate Ransone was very receptive to our presentation, asked lots of questions, and took copious notes," he added.

She shared information about House Bill 186, which would delegate to Virginia localities authority to prohibit sewage sludge land application. It was introduced in an Agriculture Subcommittee meeting by Delegate Todd Gilbert, who is not a member of the Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Committee, but is concerned about the issue.

"We asked Delegate Ransone to send a copy of our talking papers to Delegate Gilbert and offered our assistance in preparation for continuing the bill in the 2013 General Assembly session," Harwood relates. "She agreed to do so, and said that she would study the materials we prepared for her, along with the references, and talk with some people about the sludge land application issue." (See separate article by Lynton Land.)

The NAPS delegation is hopeful that this meeting will kick off a movement to get HB 186 or a similar bill passed in the 2013 General Assembly.

The meeting was a direct result of Del. Ransone's participation in the NAPS Annual Meeting May 23. It provided Mike Harwood an opportunity to arrange the meeting.

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Memo from Bill

At the Annual Meeting on May 23, two new Board members were elected to fill the expiring terms of President Mike Ahart and Treasurer Susan Carter Hughes. Myrtle Phillips and Jay Walker were unanimously

selected to fill the vacancies. We bid Mike farewell as President, but we won't let him stray too far. Mike will serve as an "ex-officio" member and we hope he will continue to provide the guidance and insight he afforded NAPS during his tenure as President. Although Susan is passing on the Treasurer duties, which she dealt with so well during her Board service, she has kindly agreed to continue to handle the membership responsibilities.

NAPS is continuing to pursue its goals of conservation and stewardship in Northumberland County as is evident in this newsletter organized by the new editor Jay Walker. Our concentration is on education and the care of the Bay and our waterways, as well as the farmlands that dominate our county. We are dedicated to improving and conserving the health of the Bay so that oysters, crabs, and fish flourish for the benefit of all.

But we need your help in this effort. That's you – the person you see in the mirror every morning. While you're looking in the mirror, ask yourself: "Am I going to step up to the plate for NAPS and its goals?" The Board members represent you and work hard to ensure our goals are met, but they cannot do it alone.

Volunteers are needed for the annual Creek Clean-Up, September 15, the Fall road pick-up effort, the Annual Fall Social on October 13, and the NAPS booth at events like the Tavern Farmers Market in July and August.

When the call comes, please jump in to help. In the meantime, if you have questions or comments, you can reach me by phone or e-mail from the listing on the back page of this newsletter.

So when you look in the mirror tomorrow morning, I hope your answer is a firm YES.

Finally, please take note of the Newsletter item about nominations for the NAPS 2012 Distinguished Northumberland Citizen(s) Award (DNCA). This award is a very important program for NAPS. The lineup of previous winners is very impressive indeed. After reading the five goals, you may have a nominee in mind. We look forward to member responses.

Sincerely, –Bill Estell, President

NAPS Officers & Board Members

NAPS Officers

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NEWS

Board Elects Officers, Sets Course

At the June 13 Board meeting, members elected the following officers for the 2012-13 term: President, Bill Estell; Vice-President, Lee Allain, Secretary, Ida Hall; and Treasurer, Greg Haugan.

Having installed the officers, President Estell and the Board focused on carrying out the projects previously set for NAPS and exploring new courses. Essentially, the new leadership will act to increase membership and member participation to carry out NAPS educational and environmental programs at the school and community levels.

All agreed that communication internally and externally will be an important course to take, including participation at community events such as the Tavern Farmers Markets and the St. Stephens Harvest Festival in Heathsville. Innovative ideas and methods to encourage alternative energy projects and monitoring sound land use practices that protect the Bay's water quality and marine resources are two other avenues for NAPS. Finally, NAPS will strive to inform our local, state, and federal government representatives of the needs and concerns vital to our local area to fulfill the NAPS role of stewardship.

What is the future of our county and the Chesapeake Bay? As an active member of NAPS, you can determine that future and ensure that the way of life and beauty that has kept you here or attracted you here will continue..