

MPRA NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024



Mark your calendar

Jan. 22—Public hearing on Caroline County Water Withdrawal Plan, 6-8 pm, Caroline County Community Services Center, Milford, VA

Jan. 30—General Assembly Lobby Day

Feb. 6—Fight the Flood workshop—5:30-8 pm, Colosse Baptist Church, King William

Feb. 28—Water Monitoring Workshop, 1-4 pm, Upper King William Library

April TBA—MPRA Annual Meeting and Picnic



Your Dues are Due . .

\$15 year/family

Send a check to MPRA, P.O. Box 115, Walkerton, VA 23177 or pay online through our PayPal account, which can be accessed through www.mpra.org.

It's time to speak for the rivers again



statements were done, 20 years of meetings and studies, bouncing the permit from agency to agency, it was finally defeated.

Since that time, MPRA has focused on making citizens aware of the value of these rivers, connecting people to them through leading kayak trips, river clean ups, environmental education and stewardship projects. But, it's time for us to speak for the rivers again.

Our organization has become aware that there is a plan for Caroline County to pump water from the Rappahannock River in a 45-mile pipeline to Carmel Church and Ladysmith off of I-95, where residential housing and businesses are growing, and three large industrial projects have been proposed. The wastewater from the project will empty into Pole Cat Creek, a small tributary of the Mattaponi. The outflow could go from 7.9 million gallons/day to 13.9 million gallons per a day, a 22 percent increase. This could greatly affect the physical dynamics of the river in the headwaters, and result in erosion and pollution upstream from the river we have known as one of the more pristine rivers in the Bay Watershed. At the past few board meetings and the All Hands Forum of the York Small Coastal Basin Roundtable there has been discussion and concerns about these projects. There will be a public hearing/information meeting about the Caroline County wastewater treatment plan on Monday, January 22. Members are encouraged to attend this meeting and also to make your concerns known to your local Board of Supervisor and legislative representatives.

Some people think that it is better to use surface water rather than groundwater for uses other than drinking water, but the farmers who are riparian landowners on the Rappahannock are concerned that they may not have enough water for their farms. Carefully planned development and careful consideration of its affects is important. It's a complicated subject. We all need water, but it's becoming more and more important for us to plan for future clean water and protect our rivers from ourselves.

(Continued on p. 4)

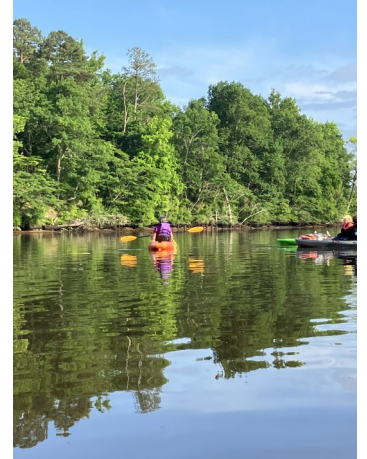




2023 Paddles

We had great turn out and good weather for our 2023 paddles. In May, about two dozen people of all ages put in at the Pamunkey Indian Reservation and paddled “the Pocket” to Powhatan’s grave. Thanks to board member April Deacy for arranging permission for our group to paddle on the Pamunkey Indian Reservation.

Our traditional River Month Walkerton paddle in June was another beautiful afternoon. In August, a group paddled from Zoar State Forest to Aylett and the first Monday in September, we had a relaxing float on Garnett’s Creek, which has become another MPRA tradition.



King & Queen County River Day

As a cooperative project with the RAFT program, MPRA coordinated a River Day for all the 6th graders in King & Queen County in March. Students rotated through stations on forestry, wildlife, water monitoring and wetlands. Students enjoyed exploring the shoreline and learning about the York River watershed. Thanks to station leaders & volunteers: Three Rivers SWCD, Dave Slack, VA Dept. of Forestry, Christina Ruszczyk-Murray & Tyler Minks, VA Cooperative Extension, Heather Strother, Dawn Shank, Clyde Chrisman, Audrey Mitchell, & Mary Shipman.





Fight the Flood Workshop

MPRA, in conjunction with the RAFT program and the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Virginia is hosting a workshop for property owners. The free workshop will be held Feb. 6 from 5:30 to 8:00 P.M. at Colosse Baptist Church, 23945 King William Rd., West Point, VA 23181.

The program's goal is to help people in local communities address solutions to flooding problems as sea level rises. Information about resources, funding opportunities, natural and nature-based shoreline management tools, green infrastructure and professional assistance will be addressed. Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Participating residents from King & Queen, King William and West Point are eligible to receive \$100 in compensation, provided they are in attendance for the duration of the workshop and submit a W9 form. Practitioners, including local government officials/staff, are unable to receive this compensation but are eligible for workshop certifications upon completion.

To view what your property might be like in the future due to sea level rise, check out VIMS' AdaptVA's Viewer maps at <https://cmap22vims.edu>.

Join us for a workshop
on flooding in your
community and how to
handle it.

Tuesday, February 6
5:30-8:00 PM

Colosse Baptist Church
23945 King William Rd.
West Point, VA 23181



We've got mail

We sometimes get messages from folks who see something going on or have questions about river issues. We recently got this one. We encourage people to contact us and also their local board of supervisor representative or government officials to let them know your concerns. It's a good way to speak for our rivers.

Dear MPRA,

I found out today that the bridge at Rt. 628, Dorrell/Spring Cottage Roads bridge is being replaced. I usually use that put in at least a half a dozen times a summer but didn't this year at all, but went down there today to do some trash cleanup and found it shut down.

I contacted folks at VDOT and found the bridge is being replaced in 2025. There's so little access to this section of the Mattaponi. This spot is critical to have a good put in and take out (much better than what was there). The folks I spoke with could not tell whether VDOT design would be helpful or not.

I think this is something MPRA should be concerned about. Is there a way to get the word out?

Follow up from same person:

I'm trying to get some more information on what the plans are. Right now I guess you can put in (it's winter) but once they start work I'm sure VDOT/contractors will not allow put in. This leaves about 34 miles of river almost inaccessible. As you know, VDOT has a long history and bad habit of impeding access to rivers with designs that are unfriendly to boaters and miles of guard rails which prevent any parking basically eliminating access. Its 22 miles up stream to the next bridge and 12 miles downstream to Zoar. Without an access point here, float trips on the upper Mattaponi will be difficult at best. I'm going to try to get some additional information on what their bridge design plans are.



(It's Time to Speak for the Rivers Again, cont. from p. 1)

To find out more, a group from MPRA plans to attend a Town Hall meeting concerning the Rappahannock River Draft Intake Permit Application Project on Jan. 22 from 6 until 8 pm at the Caroline County Community Services Center, 17202 Richmond Turnpike, Milford, VA 22514. The meeting will include an overview of the proposed project, its history permitting, design considerations and studies that have been performed to date.



Boy Scouts often help us with projects. Thanks to King William Troop 303 for installing information signs in our river kiosks at the boat landings at Walkerton and Aylett. MPRA has informational kiosks at several public and private boat landings on the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers as part of the Algonquin Trace Water Trail that include maps, environmental stewardship tips and historical information about the rivers.



President's Corner

Happy New Year! 2024 promises to be another busy year for MPRA.

Did you realize that MPRA is the only established river association in the entire York River watershed? Participating in the York River & Small Coastal Basin Roundtable (YRSCB) and the York River Steward Advisory Committee, we have been working to address threats along the watershed. The York River, unlike the James and Rappahannock Rivers, does not have a River Basin Commission. These commissions are created by the General Assembly with elected representative and state senators, as well as membership from each county along the river basin "to provide guidance for the stewardship and enhancement of the water quality and natural resources" of that river basin as stated by the General Assembly.

We are working with members of the YRSCB RoundTable and other groups to gather support from elected officials for the creation of a York River Basin Commission. It is greatly needed to preserve these beautiful and vital rivers.

We're also hosting a **water monitoring workshop on Feb. 28 from 1-4 pm at the Upper King William Library**. If you'd like to become a volunteer monitor or have river access where we can test, join us or let us know.

If you'd like to get more involved in any way, email me at matpamrivers@gmail.com.

Audrey Mitchell, president

MPRA Board 2023-24

President—Audrey Mitchell

V. Pres.—Dave Slack

Sec.—Mary Shipman

Treas.—Steve Mitchell

Elizabeth Christeller

Kitty Cox

April Deacy, Pamunkey Tribal rep.

Mike Greenwood

Josh Rellick

Dawn Shank

Bob & Adele Smith

Tommy Tupponce, Upper Mattaponi Tribal rep.

Amanda Walker

Armistead Saffer, webmaster

Christina Ruzszyk-Murray, VA Coop. Extension 4-H

Kayla Huffman, King William Parks & Recreation

Nate Davis, student rep

Heather Strother—Mattaponi River Steward

I care about our rivers.
I care about our environment.
Reduce single-use plastic. Reuse. Recycle.

