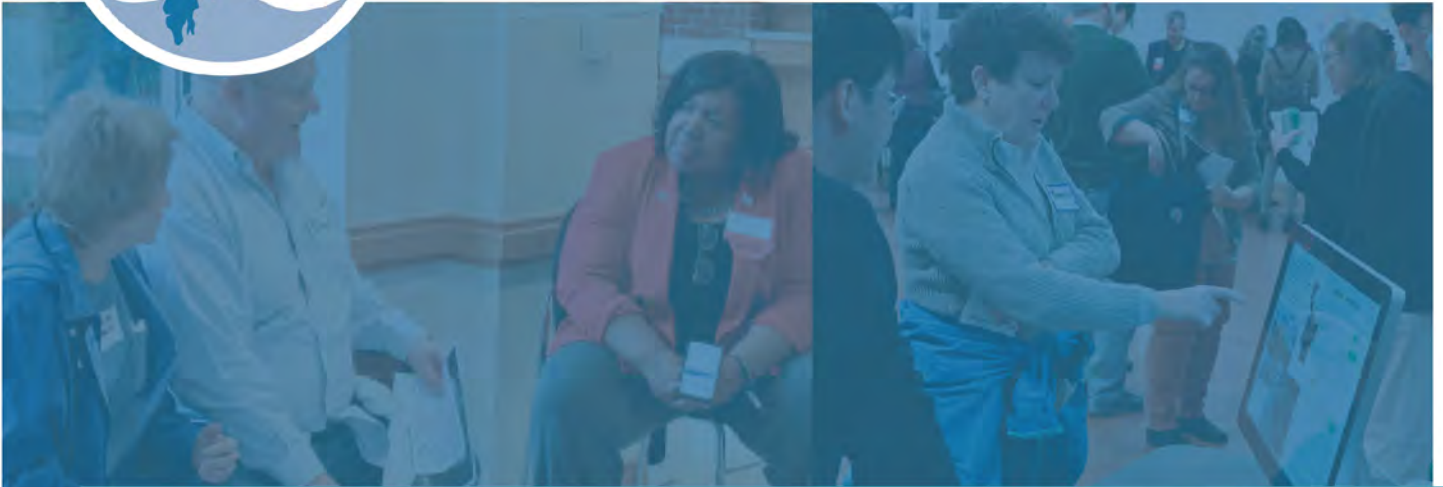




Eastern Shore of Virginia (ESVA)  
**CLIMATE EQUITY PROJECT**



# WORKSHOP ANALYSIS

JANUARY 2023



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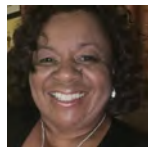


With thanks to the National Science Foundation (NSF) Coastlines and People (CoPe) initiative for awarding \$5 million of grant funding to this interdisciplinary team.

## Community Advisory Committee



**Karen Downing, Co-Chair**  
*Virginia Organizing; Baptist Church*



**Donna Smith**  
*Eastern Shore Agency on Aging /  
Community Action Agency*



**Andre Elliott, Co-Chair**  
*YMCA*



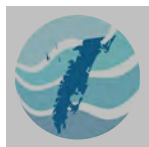
**Robert Sabbatini**  
*Eastern Shore of Virginia  
Chamber of Commerce*



**Alex Foxworthy**  
*Eastern Shore Community College  
Science Department*



**Allison Bradshaw**  
*Eastern Shore Health District,  
Virginia Department of Health;  
Eastern Shore Health Communities*



**Kathy Carmody**  
*Accomack County Administration*



**Dawn Byrd**  
*United Way of Virginia's Eastern Shore*



**Kelly Bulin**  
*Eastern Shore Community Services Board*



**Della Jordan**  
*Accomack County Public Schools*



**Jessica Steelman**  
*Accomack-Norhampton  
Planning District Commission*



**Marisa Sanchez**  
*Accomack County Public Schools;  
Bridge Network of Baptist Churches*

## Evaluator



**Maryfrances Porter**  
*Independent Evaluator*



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# Researchers



**Karen McGlathery**  
*Director of the Environmental Institute, AVP for Research, Sustainability & Environment and Professor, Department of Environmental Science, UVA*



**Barbara Brown Wilson**  
*Associate Professor, Urban and Environmental Planning, UVA*



**Michele Claibourn**  
*Assistant Professor, Political Science Department, and Director of Equitable Analysis for the Equity Center, UVA*



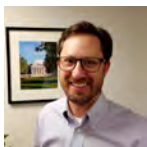
**Lawrence Band**  
*Ernest H. Ern Professor of Environmental Science Professor and Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering, UVA*



**Tanya Denckla Cobb**  
*Director of the Institute for Engagement and Negotiation, School of Architecture, UVA*



**Venkataraman Lakshmi**  
*John L Newcomb Professor, Department of Engineering Systems and the Environment, UVA*



**Jonah Fogel**  
*Program Manager, Environmental Institute, UVA*



**Wie Yusuf**  
*Professor, School of Public Service, Old Dominion University*



**Elizabeth Andrews**  
*Professor of the Practice of Law and Director of the Virginia Coastal Policy Center, William & Mary Law School*



**Majid Shafiee-Jood**  
*Research Assistant Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Systems and Information Engineering, UVA*



**Madhav Marathe**  
*Distinguished Professor in Biocomplexity, Division Director, Network Systems Science and Advanced Computing Division, Biocomplexity Institute*



**Cora Baird**  
*Site Director, Virginia Coastal Research Center, UVA*



**Teresa Culver**  
*Associate Professor Civil and Environmental Engineering, UVA*



**Joshua Goldstein**  
*Research Assistant Professor, Biocomplexity Institute, UVA*



**Ozlem Edizel-Tasci**  
*Senior Associate and Proposal Writer, Institute of Engagement & Negotiation, UVA*



**Patricia Wiberg**  
*Professor, Environmental Sciences, UVA*



**Stefan Hoops**  
*Research Associate Professor, Network Systems Science and Advanced Computing, Biocomplexity Institute, UVA*



**Henning Mortveit**  
*Associate Professor, Biocomplexity Institute, UVA*





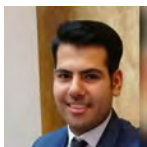
## Post-Docs & Students



**Hafsa Ambreen**  
*Graduate Research Assistant,  
The Equity Center, UVA*



**Lincoln Lewis**  
*Climate Equity Doctoral Fellow,  
The Equity Center, UVA*



**Saeed Ashrafi**  
*Graduate Research Assistant, Civil and  
Environmental Engineering, UVA*



**Mia Rodriguez**  
*Research Assistant, Institute for Engagement  
and Negotiation, UVA*



**Hanne Borstlap**  
*Graduate Research Assistant, Department of  
Environmental Sciences, UVA*



**Jenni Rogan**  
*Graduate Research Assistant,  
The Equity Center, UVA*



**Ashley Clubb**  
*Graduate Research Assistant,  
The Equity Center, UVA*



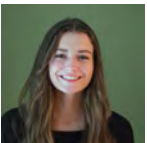
**Duc Tran**  
*Research Scholar, School of Engineering  
and Applied Science, UVA*



**Luke Hamel**  
*Graduate Research Assistant,  
The Equity Center, UVA*



**Qingguang (Bright) Zhu**  
*Research Associate, Department of  
Environmental Sciences, UVA*



**Erin Herock**  
*Graduate Research Assistant, Institute for  
Engagement and Negotiation, UVA*

## Invited Research Partners



**Katy Clune**  
*Director of Virginia Folklife Program*



**Willis Jenkins**  
*Professor of Ethics and Chair of the  
Department of Religious Studies, UVA*



**Lauren Francis**  
*Associate Producer at For Good Reason,  
Virginia Humanities*



**Jessica Taylor**  
*Assistant Professor of Oral and Public  
History, Virginia Tech*

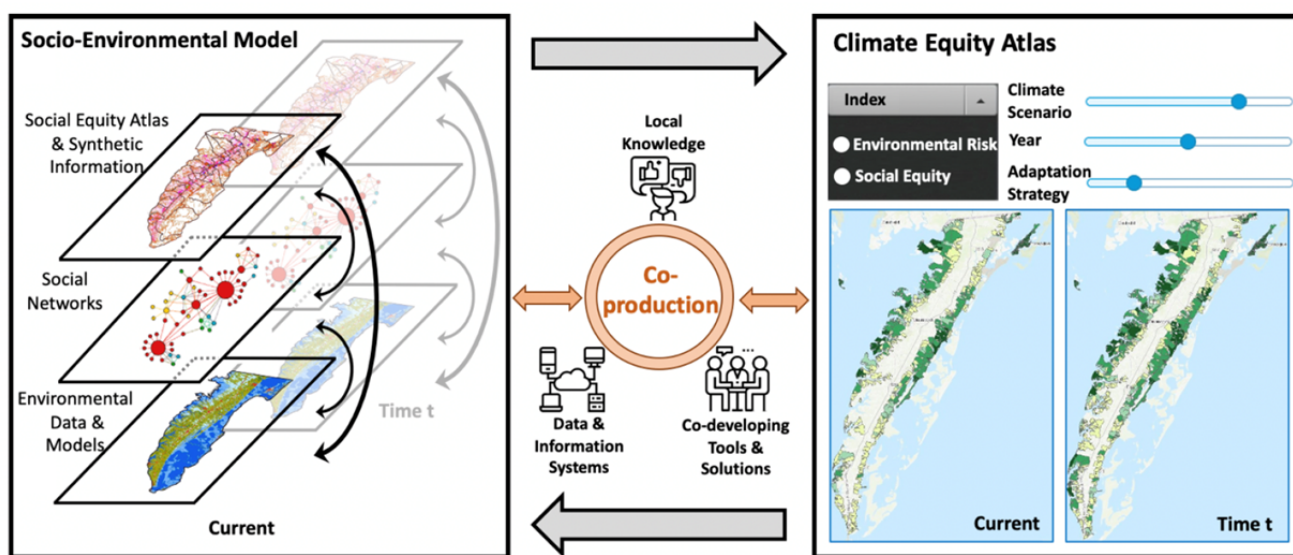


# PROJECT INTRODUCTION

## Eastern Shore of Virginia (ESVA) Climate Equity Project

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Climate Equity Project was awarded \$5 million by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and kicked off in August 2021. This project features an interdisciplinary team working on a five-year timeline to build community capacity in rural coastal Virginia for enhanced climate adaptation and resilience.

The project is co-produced, or jointly created, by a partnership between the University of Virginia scholars and the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), a team of Eastern Shore residents that will guide the community's co-production of participatory research. The goal is to co-produce an open-source data and visualization platform (the Climate Equity Atlas) to enable sustained collaboration and support equitable decision-making and solution adoption on risks of flooding and saltwater intrusion.



The ESVA Climate Equity Project co-production framework links environmental information and models, socio-economic information sources, models, and analytical tools, and integrated socio-environmental modeling with advanced visualization and data infrastructure, all co-produced with community stakeholders to identify priority problems and solutions. The open-source decision-support tool will assist diverse stakeholders in making equitable climate adaptation decisions.

For more information on this project:

- Visit our page on the UVA Environmental Institute's website  
<https://environment.virginia.edu/coastal-futures-hub>
- Check out our project Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/ESVAClimateEquity>



# ABOUT THE WINTER WORKSHOP

## Eastern Shore of Virginia (ESVA) Climate Equity Project

On Monday, January 30, 2023 the project team partnered with various organizations and community members to hold a climate equity workshop at the Great Hall of Eastern Shore Community College. The set-up of this event included interactive stations that encouraged collaborative discussion related to climate equity.



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### Workshop Goals:

1. Introduce the project goals, timeline, project team, and future workshops.
2. Identify and share a vision for the workshop participants' role.
3. Present information that the project team can produce for the community to support its decision-making and identify relevance of this information to the community.
4. Gain deeper understanding of the key issues of concern for Eastern Shore communities' long-term climate equity.
5. Identify the information needed that would be helpful or needed to support equitable decision-making.
6. Identify existing resources and information on Eastern Shore.

A broad range of residents and stakeholders representing different interests in climate equity were invited to attend. The workshop was advertised through emails, personal networks of CAC members, and social media, such as the project's Facebook page, and local newspapers. At the event, the Eastern Shore community had the opportunity to learn about the project and provide input throughout several interactive workshop stations. Overall, around 425 invitations were extended to residents, people representing local and state government, local and regional citizen boards, local tribes, emergency services, public health and medical services, educational services, non-profit/community organizations such as shelter and housing services and environmental services, faith-based organizations, private sector entities such as businesses and tourism services, and forestry, fisheries, and agriculture. The workshop attracted over 70 participants representing many of these interests. For the interests not well represented, such as the Black community, the Hispanic community, and watermen and farmers, the project team as it moves forward will be developing strategies to hear and include their voices, perspectives, and priorities for climate equity.



# PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Participant information was collected from online and in-person registration. The registration information provided below analyzed the number of pre-registered and walk-ins. The attendee information provided on the following pages of this section was broken down by professions and location of their home and/or work.

## REGISTRATION

80 people **PRE-REGISTERED**

56 people were **PRE-REGISTERED** and **ATTENDED**

11 people were **WALK INS**

67 **TOTAL ATTENDEES** plus CAC members



OF PEOPLE WHO  
PRE-REGISTERED  
ATTENDED

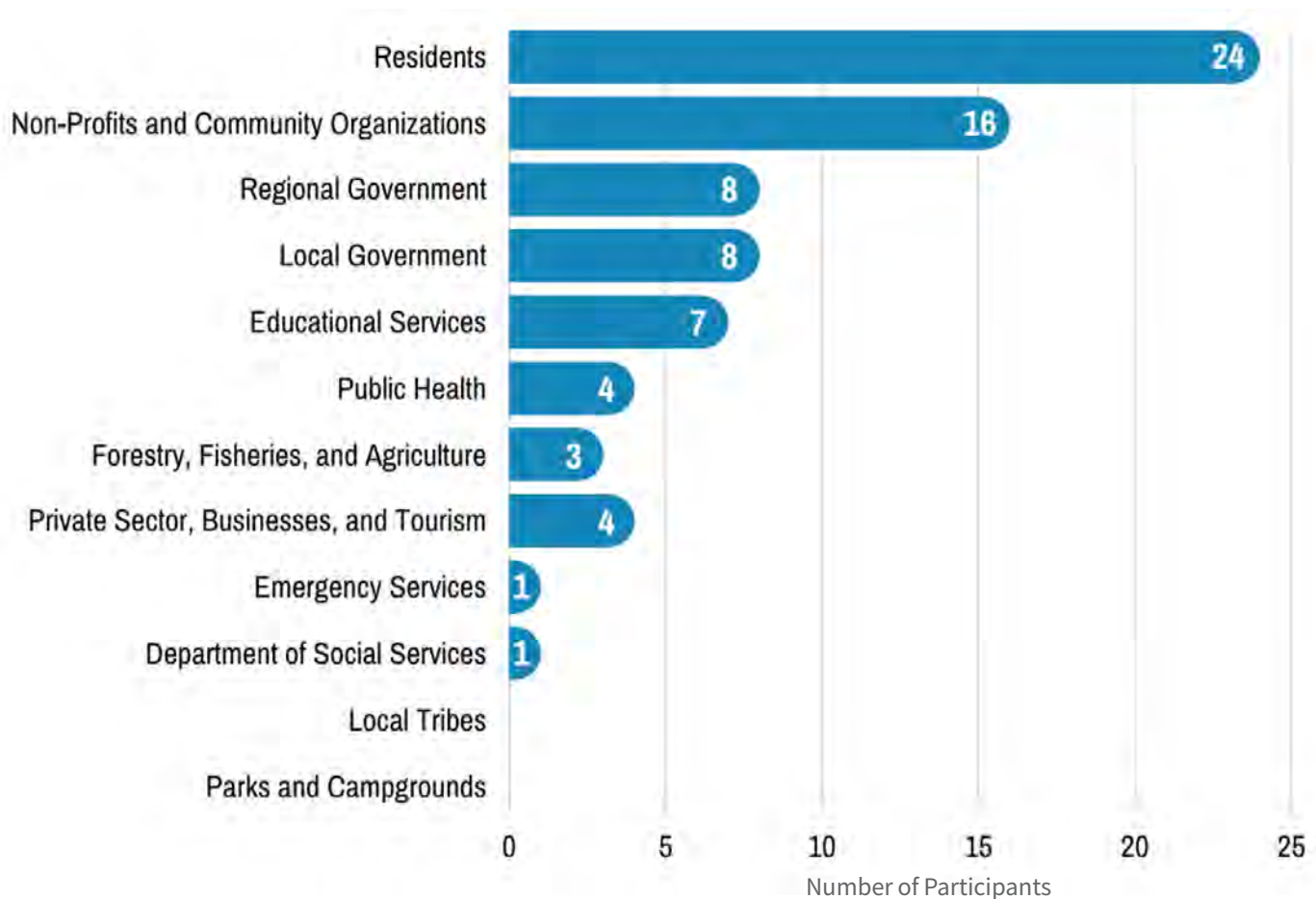


OF ATTENDEES WERE  
PRE-REGISTERED





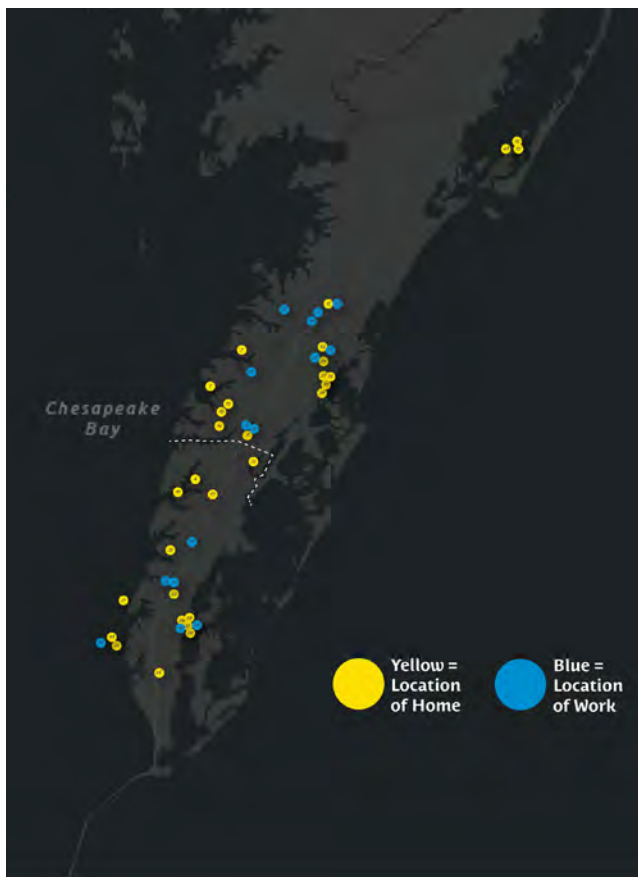
# PROFESSIONS / "YOUR PEOPLE"



Many attendees from different professions across the Eastern Shore participated in the workshop. One third of workshop attendees noted they were residents of the Eastern Shore and some of these residents indicated they were a part of another profession and/or community. **Non-profits and Regional and Local Government** were the most represented stakeholders. Going forward, a goal to engage with the **Black community, the Hispanic community, and watermen and farmers** will be imperative to understanding the full range of priorities and needs for advancing climate equity.



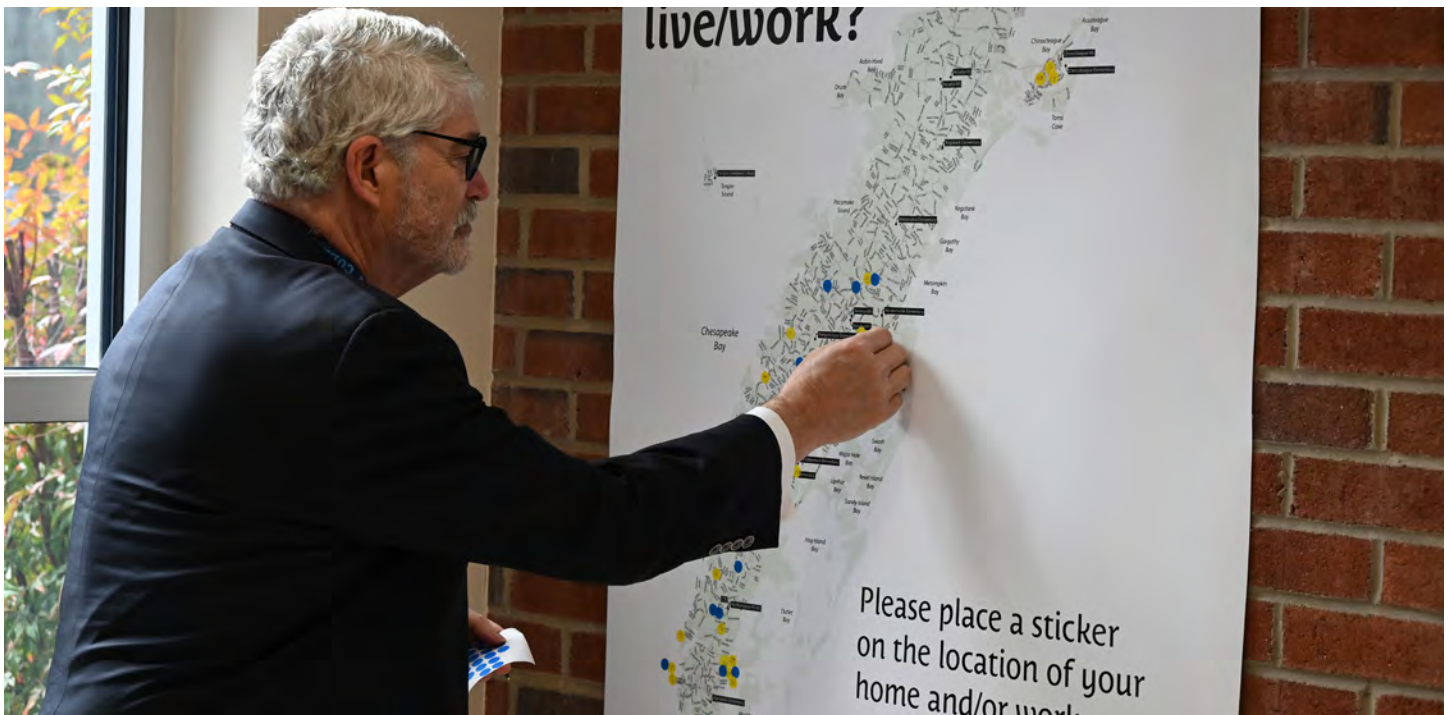
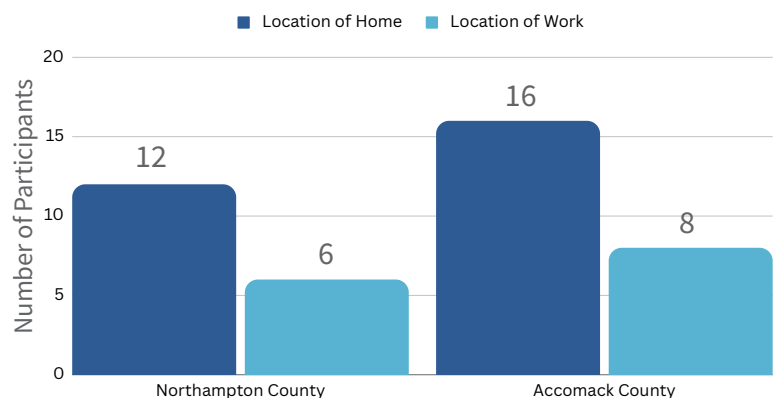
# LOCATION OF HOME AND/OR WORK



There were an equal number of participants from both **Accomack** and **Northampton** counties. Some of the most represented communities were **Oyster**, **Locustville**, **Belle Haven**, **Eastville**, **Cape Charles**, and **Chincoteague**.

Only half of participants that engaged with this mapping exercise marked their location of work alongside their location of home. In addition to the lack of participation with this exercise during the workshop, more effort should be made to engage with residents of the northern half of Accomack County.

Participant Location by County



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# STATION ANALYSES

The workshop included eight interactive stations which encouraged collaborative discussion between participants and the project team on current climate challenges. Participants were encouraged to follow a route that took them through each of these stations. The [Climate Equity Ticket](#), [participant agenda](#), and [summary highlight of each station](#) are found in *Appendix A* of this report.



**STATION 1**  
**WHAT IS YOUR  
HISTORY OF THE  
EASTERN SHORE?**



**STATION 5**  
**WHAT DO YOU  
WANT YOUR  
FUTURE TO SOUND  
LIKE?**



**STATION 2**  
**WATER CHALLENGES**  
Too Much? Too Little? Too  
Salty? How does water affect  
your community?



**STATION 6**  
**WHERE ARE YOUR  
COMMUNITIES?**



**STATION 3**  
**WHAT ARE YOUR  
CONCERNS?**



**STATION 7**  
**WHAT RESOURCES  
ARE ALREADY  
HERE?**



**STATION 4**  
**WHAT STORIES  
DO YOU WANT TO  
SHARE?**



**STATION 8**  
**WHAT ARE YOUR  
PRIORITIES?**







## STATION 1

# WHAT IS YOUR HISTORY OF THE EASTERN SHORE?



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The histories of marginalized communities tend to be passed down in family archives and shared through word of mouth, but are often absent from public records. Participants were prompted with an interactive timeline to add their own memories of the Eastern Shore of Virginia going back to the 1600's through the topical lenses of agriculture/food systems, economy/transportation, and climate events/flooding.

At this station many participants traced their family's history on the Eastern Shore back to the 1600s and enjoyed recounting the changing landscape, particularly during the 20th century with the rise and fall of the railroad and the building of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Participants had many **social and cultural memories**, particularly moments of **personal history**; as well as **economy and transportation** memories around projects such as the construction of **Route 13**, and **storm events and flooding** such as **hurricanes**. Participants added **48 entries of new information to the timeline** and **20 entries were commenting on a previously identified event**.

The memories added and questions posed by residents will become the catalyst for future research and engagement with the socio-environmental history of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. In future iterations of this exercise, we hope to transform the timeline into a mobile activity that residents can contribute toward at social gatherings.







## STATION 2

# WATER CHALLENGES

Too Much? Too Little? Too Salty?

How does water affect your community?



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The Eastern Shore is experiencing significant changes in its coastline and vulnerabilities to flooding, and numerous important communities are projected to be partially underwater and/or experiencing significant flooding impacting homes and businesses by 2040. The university team shared with residents a timeline of past major weather events as well as different water models that can be used to predict and project future impacts. Residents were engaged in mapping their personal experiences with water challenges and identifying their key priorities.

More specifically, they were asked:

- Do you know people with standing water in their yard?
- Do you know where septic systems are failing?
- Do you know if/ where there is contamination of wells?
- When and where has drought limited the availability of water for irrigation or household use?
- Where do you get your information when you have water challenges?

Residents raised numerous priorities, with “too much” and “too little” water being the most popular concerns of participants. The “too much” water concerns were centered on groundwater level interactions with septic system performance, in addition to stormwater flooding from developed areas, coastal surge inundation, the intrusion of saltwater and ghost forests. The “too little” water concerns often came up in the form of [withdrawing water from deeper aquifers](#) to ensure availability. A significant number of participants (25) provided feedback for 27 locations that are affected by storm surge. Another insight was that seaside areas are more affected by storm surge flooding than the bay side. Flooding in bay side areas is predominately caused by storm surge and heavy rains. Areas near Rt. 13 are vulnerable to localized flooding caused by heavy rains due to bad drainage. This information will frame focus group conversations that delve more specifically into topics of the lack, excess, and contamination of water systems.





## STATION 3

# WHAT ARE YOUR CONCERNS?

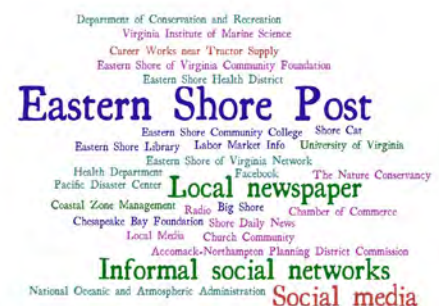
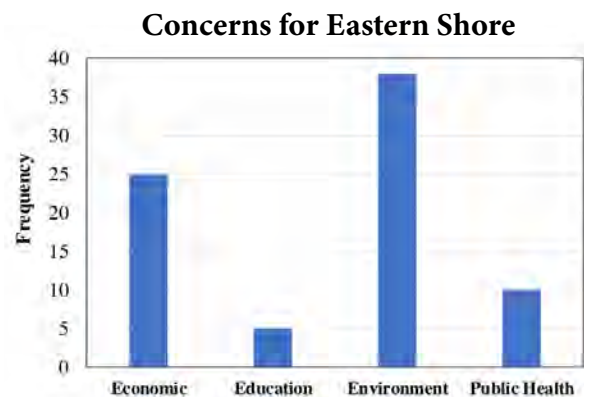


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The Eastern Shore has many opportunities for community-led growth and adaptation to challenges they face, but it is difficult to decide what topics should be of highest priority. At this station, participants were asked to map their most pressing concerns and challenges. Many concerns were shared, but the biggest concerns were related to **employment** and **economic development opportunities**, **housing availability** and **affordability**, and **limitations of current land use policies** and **zoning**.

Participants were also asked to map who they turn to and trust when faced with these obstacles as well as potential solutions to their concerns. Sources that participants got their information from were wide-reaching, but the most common were **social media** and the **Eastern Shore Post**. The solutions shared were plentiful, with the biggest proposed solution being more **climate and environment-relevant education** for **youth**.



Word cloud generated from where participants indicated they receive their information from.



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## STATION 4

# WHAT STORIES DO YOU WANT TO SHARE?



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Local knowledge and memories are highly valued on the Eastern Shore, but are not often captured in formats that can be shared for generations. **Virginia Humanities**, an invited research partner for this workshop, asked participants to write on postcards to define, using the five senses (taste, visit, hear, smell, and touch), what makes the Eastern Shore feel like home to them. There also was an opportunity for participants to sign up to record oral histories at a future date as identified local “knowledge keepers.”

Several individuals agreed to participate in a longer interview at a future date and expressed support for including cultural documentation in this process. At this station, participants wrote on postcards about five topics. For taste, **oysters and clams** were popular items on which to dine, alongside **local and fresh produce**. Unsurprisingly, participants love to visit the **beach**, particularly **Assateague**. The **marshes** were also popular, as well as sites along **Route 13**, and particularly events like the **Wachapreague Carnival** and **First Wednesdays at the Clam Shack**. **Bird sounds** were by far the most popular of the topics, with **geese, seagulls, Blue Herons, ospreys**, and others mentioned. The smells of the **marsh** and the **salt air** were also commonly mentioned. Finally, participants recalled so many feelings: from the **wind off the water to a cool breeze on the porch**, to more ephemeral feelings of being **calm and at peace**, surrounded by **hugs and laughter**.





## STATION 5

# WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR FUTURE TO SOUND LIKE?



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Eastern Shore communities have been formed around environmental abundance – oysters, clams, and fish from productive waters, birds and beauty in open skies, fresh produce of fertile fields. Coastal Futures Conservatory, an invited research partner for this workshop, offered short pieces of sound art made from Eastern Shore places with prompts that invited participants to give expression to values, feelings, or thoughts that shape their imagination of possible futures.

If you were to make a recording to represent the Eastern Shore, what would it be? Many participants focused on the sounds of birds or waves, some noted boat motors or the buzz of conversation at community gathering places, and a few commented on the lack of sound – the quiet.

In your experience, how has the sound of the landscape changed? Participants noted that **bird sound has decreased with increased traffic sounds**. This created a louder and more urgent sound overall, but one can **still hear empty buildings** despite people needing housing and jobs.

After listening to sounds representing tide gauge data over many years, what feeling, thought, or image came to mind? People identified how the **reassuring tide** becomes fearful or ominous when a storm comes, and several mentioned the **loss of generational land**, including farmland.

What do you hope the next generations will hear? As with the questions above, **ecological sounds** like birds and **benthic creatures** like crabs were common answers, along with – as one respondent put it “the sounds of nature and people sharing life.” Some participants also marked that they simply **hope future generations will be able to hear all that we hear now**.

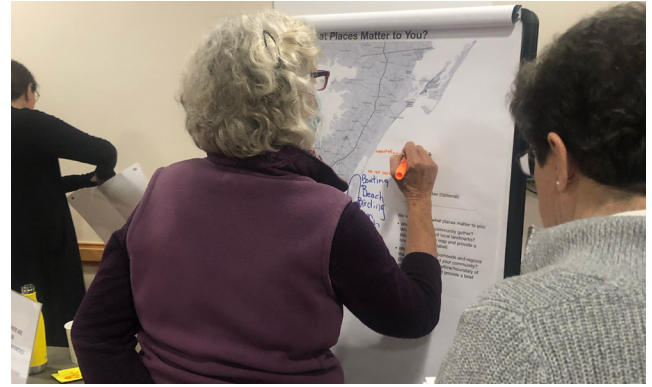






## STATION 6

# WHERE ARE YOUR COMMUNITIES?



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Conventional maps, government-drawn boundaries, and the names attributed to spaces often do not reflect the extent of our communities because the places we live, work, and play crossover jurisdictional lines or are known by names given by residents. Participants were given a map of the Eastern Shore of Virginia to mark the areas of their most commonly visited places, draw the boundaries of their community, and name places most meaningful to them. On a flip chart with removable paper maps, residents' understanding of relevant community boundaries, names, and markers were elicited to:

- Improve understanding of local perceptions of key spatial contexts;
- Help socialize possible future spatial units for data aggregation; and
- Support ongoing work describing spatial areas in meaningful ways.

Participants identified their communities across the Eastern Shore on a map, with the most common communities of interest being [Cape Charles](#), [Oyster](#), [Chincoteague](#), and [Wachapreague](#). These places were often identified as the locations of homes, jobs, key roadways, beloved natural areas, and locations of recurrent flooding. Several [Hispanic churches](#) were also identified across the Eastern Shore, as well as major agricultural employers like Perdue. Residents cited warnings about loss of farmland and issues with septic tanks.

The Climate Equity project has the goal to create a Climate Equity Atlas which will be a digital tool that visualizes socio-environmental data and disproportionate impacts on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. This tool hopes to group data in ways that best describe the spatial areas through the boundaries and names residents use.



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## STATION 7

# WHAT RESOURCES ARE ALREADY HERE?



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Climate action has been occurring on the Eastern Shore for a while, so this station shared relevant master plans and resiliency work with participants and asked for resources to be provided by residents. Participants interacted with poster content about:

- Climate equity resources that already exist;
- Equity partnerships that exist; and
- Climate initiatives already underway on the Eastern Shore.

A [comprehensive list of the current and additional resources](#) can be found in *Appendix B* of this report. The additional resources provided by participants included the [DCR Community Outreach & Engagement Plan](#) and [Community of Oyster Coastal Adaptation + Resilience Plan](#). The [Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool \(RAFT\)](#) findings were presented, and some existing resiliency tools shared were the Coastal Resilience Web Explorer by DCR and RAFT Scorecard for Northampton. Additional tools mentioned by the workshop attendees were the [Social Vulnerability Index \(SVI\)](#) and [NOAA Digital Coast](#). Existing working groups such as CAWG and small municipal committees were shared. Additions to this section were the [CBES](#), [The Tree Advisory Committee \(Cape Charles\)](#), [The Regional Navigable Waterways Committee](#), and [Eastern Shore Chapter VA Master Naturalists](#).







## STATION 8

# WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?



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Every resident of the Eastern Shore of Virginia has a role to fulfill in achieving climate equity, but priorities need to be strategically worked towards as a collective Eastern Shore. In December 2022, the project's Community Advisory Committee identified 15 priorities that they would like the project to consider. This [comprehensive list of questions and the voting results](#) can be found in *Appendix B* of the report. At this station, participants designated their priorities via: completing a voting card sharing their top five priorities; filling out a survey or putting sticky dots with their number on the poster to indicate all the ways they would be able/ interested in participating going forward; and completing a feedback card regarding the workshop and to also make suggestions or ask questions they would like to have answered at future workshops.

During the workshop, the participants voted for the following top 5 priorities.

- How will [sea level rise affect ESVA communities and populations differently](#), including Tangier Island?
- How will [septic systems, salinization of soils and groundwater](#) be affected by climate change?
- What can our community do to [mitigate and adapt](#) to the effects of climate change?
- How can we create [affordable retrofitting](#) for homes and structures to withstand the increase of powerful storms and hurricanes?
- Can we identify a practice that [encourages and ensures input and collaboration from residents of underserved communities crucial to the planning process](#), and from local government officials vital to the implementation process?

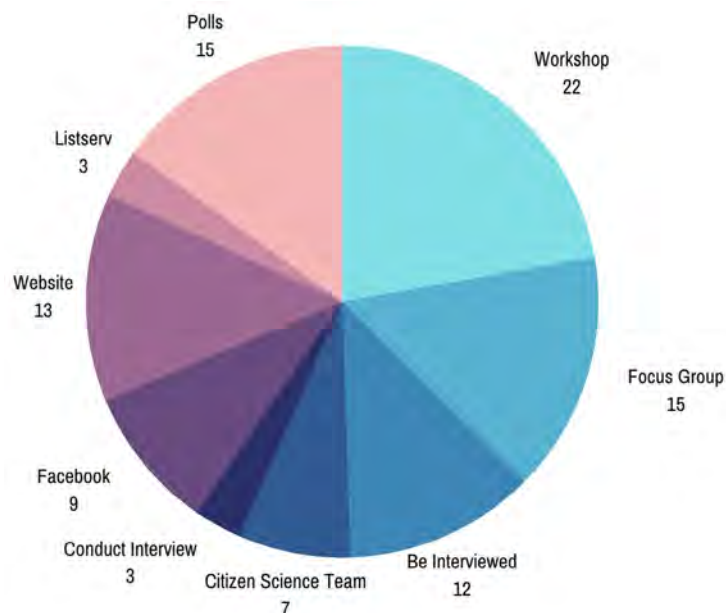
Based on the responses of attendees, they are [interested in actionable solutions to climate change that can benefit the community](#). More specifically, it is crucial for people to learn about location-specific actions and to draw insights from communities that have traditionally been excluded from climate change discussions. Moving forward, it is important to clarify how past data analysis tools can be used to develop effective solutions.



# WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

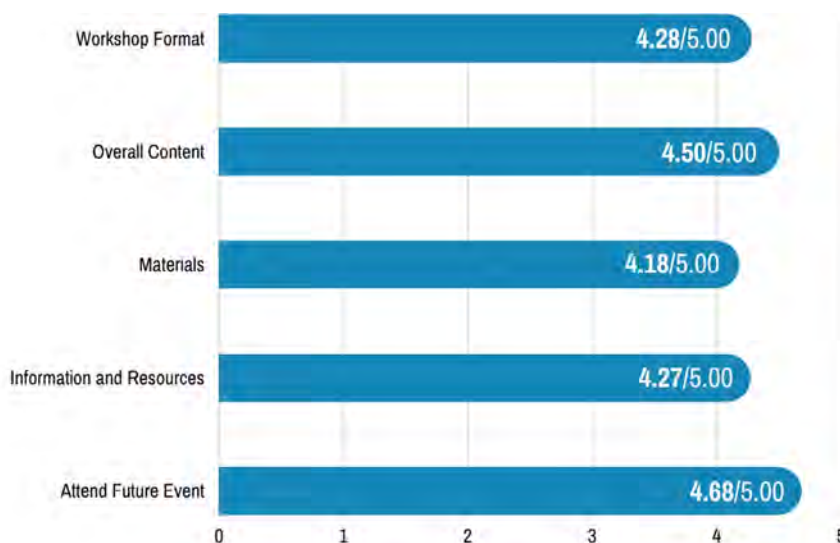
## FUTURE PARTICIPATION

Only 41 percent of participants responded to the feedback survey, indicating that a different method of gathering feedback will need to be found for future workshops. Of the 28 attendees that responded, most are interested in participating in future workshops, focus groups, and surveys and polls. Also notable is the interest of having a project website, being interviewed, and the project Facebook page. As we seek community involvement, in-person events and conversations are preferred over electronic but developing an online presence for updates about the process is also desired.



## WORKSHOP RATINGS

Overall, the mean scores for each category were above average. However, the materials and resources scored the lowest, and the likelihood that attendees will attend a future event is the highest score. Based on the long-form feedback, participants enjoyed the format overall: they liked the opportunity to talk, discuss, and move around although there were some that would need better accommodation like seating in the future. Regarding future workshops, having a clear and easy to understand statement on the project's mission, the form of the workshop, and their involvement would help participants understand their role better.





# PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Many participant responses collected at the workshop feedback station emphasized an appreciation for hosting and providing lunch at the workshop. What participants enjoyed the most was the opportunity to interact with community members, the station format, the type of information presented, and the ability to share their feelings and concerns about the Eastern Shore. Some participants criticized the poor acoustics and awkward setup of the space the workshop was held in. A different time was suggested for workers who could not attend. For future workshops, participants suggested the inclusion of more presentations and discussions, clarifying the event's purpose, providing actionable items for participants, a briefing on the current status, more inclusion of groups not represented, and insight from coastal communities that have mobilized on similar efforts.

## WHAT DID YOU LIKE/ENJOY ABOUT THE WORKSHOP?



### Interaction and Talking

***"[I enjoyed] catching up with many people for the first time in person in years."***

Thirteen participants noted their favorite aspect of the workshop was interacting and networking with the moderators, their neighbors and friends, and other workshop participants.



### Station Format

***"[I liked that] you could follow your own pathway through the exhibits, taking your time without hurry."***

Five participants noted the station format being their favorite, especially the interactive focus of the set up.



### Information Presented

***"[I enjoyed] the sheer variety of areas that were covered."***

Four participants noted they enjoyed the staff explanations and variety of information provided.



### Sharing Feelings and Ideas

***"[I liked] that you are getting input on concerns from Shore residents"***

Four participants noted they enjoyed sharing feelings and telling stories about the Eastern Shore.



## WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ADDED TO FUTURE WORKSHOPS?



### More Presentations / Discussions

***"[I would like to see] less asking, more telling."***

Seven participants wanted the format of the event to be changed. Many suggested having less interaction and more presentations through having a keynote speaker, presentations by groups, roundtable discussion, or a larger room for stations.



### Clarification of the Event

***"I went in to this workshop thinking it was going to be more like a seminar with speakers explaining what is happening in our area and it was not that at all."***

Three participants emphasized a desire to clarify the event's purpose through a formal introduction and a summary/maps ahead of time.



### Actionable Items

***"I would like to see actionable items regarding climate change and ways to participate myself or share info with the populations that might take action."***

Two participants indicated a desire to include more content on how individuals can take action.



### Briefing on Current Status

***"I think there's needs to be a few minutes that explains how climate change is affecting our community and also ways to mitigate."***

Two participants stressed a need to brief on the state of the Eastern Shore through a presentation or detailed explanation.



### Improved Outreach

***"[I would like to see] more outreach to groups not represented."***

Two participants would like more outreach to groups not represented, specifically the Black community and Hispanic community.



### Insight from Other Communities

***"[I would like to see] discussions from localities that actually mobilized and do something to address potential impacts."***

Two participants requested insight from coastal communities that have implemented solutions and projects that could also be used for the Eastern Shore.




# NEXT STEPS

Insights collected from the community will inform the ESVA Climate Equity Project over the next three years. To continue engaging with this project:

- Learn more about the project at info booths during upcoming community events.
- Participate in focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews regarding topics important to you.
- Contribute your experiences at thematic sessions and crowdsourcing displays.
- Record your oral history about how climate change has impacted you and your community.

✉ If you would like to participate, please reach out to: [ESVAClimateEquity@virginia.edu](mailto:ESVAClimateEquity@virginia.edu)

 or follow the project's next steps on our [Facebook page](#)



# CLIMATE EQUITY TICKET

## 1 WHAT IS YOUR HISTORY OF THE EASTERN SHORE?

Interactive timeline and mapping of:

- Extreme weather events
- Agriculture & food
- Economy & transportation



## 2 WATER CHALLENGES: Too much? Too little? Too salty? How does water affect your community?

- Display of major water and weather events
- Display of water models and future impacts
- Interactive mapping of past water challenges in ESVA



## 3 WHAT ARE YOUR CONCERNS?

- Identify the biggest challenges/concerns
- Identify sources of information and resources
- Identify possible options for the path forward



## 4 WHAT STORIES DO YOU WANT TO SHARE?

(led by Virginia Folklife Program)

- Sign up to share your story
- Community-driven oral histories of ESVA



## 5 WHAT CAN YOU HEAR FROM THE COAST?

Four listening stations, each playing a different short piece:

- Oyster Reef Hydrophone & Sonification
- Soundscapes: Ghost Forest & Road
- Changing Tides: Field Recording & Tide Gauge Sonification
- Wildlife: Bird Sound & Sonification



## 6 WHAT/WHERE IS YOUR COMMUNITY?

- Display of ESVA "census tracts" or federally defined geographic boundaries of neighborhoods
- Mapping of geographic community boundaries and spatial places meaningful to you
- Example of integrating existing social and demographic data (by ESVA census tracts)



## 7 WHAT RESOURCES ARE ALREADY HERE?

Interactive display of:

- Climate equity resources/reports
  - Resilience Plans/Tools/Partnerships
- Eastern Shore public library book display



## 8 WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

- Identify the priorities to be addressed/solved in the ESVA
- Identify ways of participation



**YOUR NUMBER:**

1



Eastern Shore Virginia (ESVA)  
CLIMATE EQUITY PROJECT





## Kick-off Community Workshop

Monday, January 30, 2023 | 11:30am-3:30pm  
Eastern Shore Community College  
29300 Lankford Hwy, Melfa, VA 23410

### Agenda

#### 11:30-12:30 Meet and Eat and Roam

- Registration/ Welcome Table at the Atrium
  - Sign-in
  - Get a name tag
  - Receive a “Climate Equity Ticket”: Roadmap to visit different stations in a suggested order with an individual number for each participant
  - Get information about the project
- Food & Refreshments: Lunch (11:30-12:30) & Snacks (12:30-3:30)

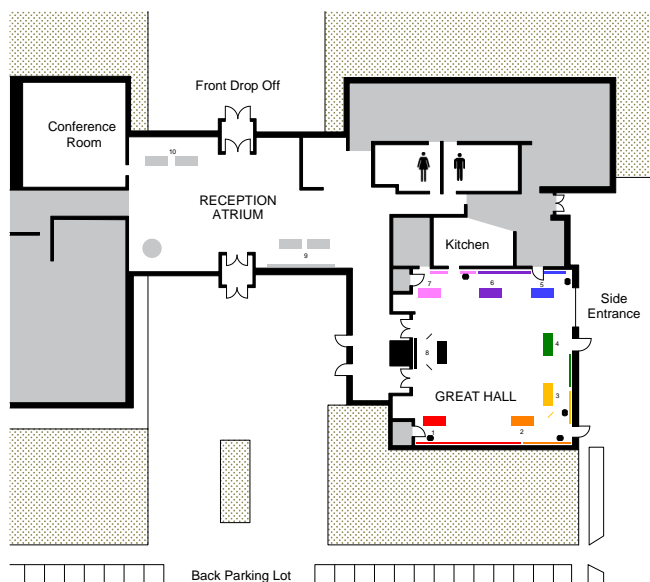
#### 12:30 Welcome by Andre Elliott and Karen Downing

#### 12:40 Visit Stations at the Great Hall (20 minutes per station)

Please follow the order of your “Climate Equity Ticket”

- Station 1:** What Is Your History of The Eastern Shore?  
**Station 2:** Water Challenges: Too Much, Too Little, Too Salty? How Does Water Affect Your Community?  
**Station 3:** What Are Your Concerns?  
**Station 4:** What Stories Do You Want to Share?  
**Station 5:** What Do You Want the Future To Sound Like?  
**Station 6:** Where Are Your Communities?  
**Station 7:** What Resources Are Already Here?  
**Station 8:** What Are Your Priorities?

#### 3:30 Adjourn



#### STATIONS

- 1 What is your history of the Eastern Shore?
- 2 Water Challenges: Too Much? Too Little? Too Salty?
- 3 What are your concerns?
- 4 What stories do you want to share?
- 5 What do you want the future sound like?
- 6 Where are your communities?
- 7 What resources are already here?

- 8 What are your priorities?
- OTHER
- 9 Welcome Desk
  - 10 Food

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA CLIMATE EQUITY WORKSHOP



Eastern Shore of Virginia (ESVA) Climate Equity Project, a five year partnership between University of Virginia and ESVA community, aims to better understand how a changing climate affects the lives of ESVA residents and develop tools and build capacity to improve climate equity in the Eastern Shore. In its first outreach to the broader community, the project invited over 300 residents representing a broad range of interests to attend the first community workshop on January 30, 2023. A summary of community participation, key findings, and the project's next steps are listed as follows:



### PARTICIPANTS

Over 70 participants joined the workshop! The workshop was a great success as participants enjoyed different interactive stations where they learned more about current and future climate challenges on the Shore and shared their ideas of what would be helpful to support the Shore through these changes. **Non-profits and Regional and Local Government** were the most represented stakeholders. Going forward, a goal is to engage with the **Black community, the Hispanic community, and watermen and farmers**. There were equal number of participants from both **Accomack and Northampton** counties. Some of the most represented communities were **Oyster, Locustville, Belle Haven, Eastville, Cape Charles, and Chincoteague**.



### WHAT IS YOUR HISTORY OF THE EASTERN SHORE?

At this station many participants traced their family's history on the Shore back to the 1600s and enjoyed recounting the changing landscape of the Shore, particularly during the 20th century with the rise and fall of the railroad and the building of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Participants had many **social and cultural memories**, particularly moments of **personal** history; as well as **economy and transportation** memories around projects such as the construction of **Route 13**; and **storm events and flooding** such as past **hurricanes**.



### WATER CHALLENGES

#### Too much? Too Little? Too Salty? How does water affect your community?

Participants raised concerns of both "too much" and "too little" water. Examples of "too much" water concerns were centered on groundwater level interactions with **septic system performance**, in addition to stormwater flooding from developed areas, coastal surge inundation, salt water intrusions and ghost forests. Participants also mentioned "too little" water concerns around lack of high quality drinking water in the upper aquifers, meaning **deeper wells** would need to be drilled in the future.



### WHAT ARE YOUR CONCERNS?

At this station, participants provided not only their concerns, but also their trusted sources of information and solutions they would like to see in their community. Many concerns were shared, but the biggest concerns were related to **employment and economic development opportunities, housing availability and affordability, and limitations of current land use policies and zoning**. Sources that participants got their information from were wide-reaching, but the most common were **social media** and the **Eastern Shore Post**. The solutions shared were plentiful, with the biggest proposed solution being more climate and environment-relevant education for youth.



### WHAT STORIES DO YOU WANT TO SHARE?

At this station, participants wrote on postcards about five topics: taste, visit, hear, smell, and feel. For taste, **oysters and clams** were popular items on which to dine, alongside **local and fresh produce**. Unsurprisingly, participants love to visit the **beach**, particularly **Assateague**. The **marshes** were also popular, as well as sites along **Route 13**, and particularly events like the **Wachapreague Carnival** and **First Wednesdays at the Clam Shack**. **Bird sounds** were by far the most popular of the topics, with **geese, seagulls, Blue Herons, ospreys**, and others mentioned. The smells of the **marsh** and the **salt air** were also commonly mentioned. Finally, participants recalled so many feelings: from the **wind off the water to a cool breeze on the porch**, to more ephemeral feelings of being **calm and at peace**, surrounded by **hugs and laughter**.



## WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR FUTURE TO SOUND LIKE?

This station offered short pieces of sound art with accompanying prompts that invited participants to give expression to the values, feelings, and thoughts that shape their imagination of possible futures. Some key patterns of response:

- Invited to name representative sounds of the ES, many mentioned birds, waves, boat motors, and **community conversations at gathering places**.
- Prompted to reflect on how the ES soundscape has changed, many mentioned increased traffic sounds and decreased bird song, and some noted that noise increased yet many buildings remain empty even while people need housing and jobs.
- In reflection on sonification of tidal data, many noted feelings of fear of foreboding, including of the **loss of generational land, including farm land**.
- Asked to name what they hope future generations will hear, many named birdsong, some named benthic creatures like salt clams and fiddler crabs at low tide, a few named the sounds of sharing life, and several that they simply hope future generations will be able to hear **all that we hear now**.



## WHERE ARE YOUR COMMUNITIES?

Participants identified their communities across the Eastern Shore on a map, with the most common communities of interest being **Cape Charles, Oyster, Chincoteague, and Wachapreague**. These places were often identified as the locations of homes, jobs, key roadways, beloved natural areas, and locations of recurrent flooding. Several **Hispanic churches** were also identified across the Eastern Shore, as well as major agricultural employers like Perdue. Residents cited warnings about loss of farmland and issues with septic tanks.



## WHAT RESOURCES ARE ALREADY HERE?

Resources shared at this station were relevant master plans and resiliency work. Additional resources provided included the **DCR Community Outreach & Engagement Plan** and **Community of Oyster Coastal Adaptation + Resilience Plan**. The **Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT)** findings were presented, and some existing resiliency tools shared were the Coastal Resilience Web Explorer by DCR and RAFT Scorecard for Northampton. Additional tools mentioned by the workshop attendees were the **Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)** and **NOAA Digital Coast**. Existing working groups such as CAWG and small municipal committees were shared. Additions to this section were the **CBES, The Tree Advisory Committee (Cape Charles), The Regional Navigable Waterways Committee, and Eastern Shore Chapter VA Master Naturalists**.



## WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

*In December 2022, the project's Community Advisory Committee identified 15 priorities that they would like the project to consider. During the workshop, the participants voted for the following top 5 priorities.*

- How will **sea level rise affect ESVA communities and populations differently**, including Tangier Island?
- How will **septic systems, salinization of soils and groundwater** be affected by climate change?
- What can our community do to **mitigate and adapt** to the effects of climate change?
- How can we create **affordable retrofitting** for homes and structures to withstand the increase of powerful storms and hurricanes?
- Can we identify a practice that **encourages and ensures input and collaboration from residents of underserved communities crucial to the planning process**, and from local government officials vital to the implementation process?



## NEXT STEPS

Insights collected from the community will inform the Eastern Shore Climate Equity Project over the next three years. Here are ways you can reach out and engage:

- Learn more about the project at info booths during upcoming community events
- Participate in focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews regarding topics important to you
- Contribute your experiences at thematic sessions and crowdsourcing displays
- Record your oral history about how climate change has impacted you and your community

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Funded by The National Science Foundation (NSF) Coastlines and People (CoPe)



# Comprehensive List of Resiliency Resources

## STATION 7: WHAT RESOURCES ARE ALREADY HERE?

Resources shared at this station were relevant master plans and resiliency work. This list includes the additions to this list of relevant research, master plans, reports, resiliency tools, and working groups/committees in the Eastern Shore.

### E.S. Research, Plans, Reports

- **Chesapeake Bay Program** - [Climate Resiliency Outcomes: Management Strategy 2021-2025 – June 2021](#)
- **Commonwealth of Virginia & Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)** - [Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan – Phase 1 December 2021](#)
- **Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine** - [The Impact of Climate Change on Virginia's Coastal Areas – June 2021](#)
- **Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at Department of Environmental Quality** - [Virginia Working Waterfront Master Plan – July 2016](#)
- **The Nature Conservancy** - [The Eastern Shore of Virginia: Strategies for Adapting to Climate Change – May 2011](#)
- **Northampton County** - [Your Northampton County 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)
- **Eastern Shore Community College** - [ESCC Strategic Plan](#)
- **Community of Oyster Coastal Adaptation + Resilience Plan (Release Date TBD)**
- **DCR's Community Outreach & Engagement Plan (Release Date TBD)**

### Resiliency Tools

- **Coastal Resilience** - [Virginia Eastern Shore](#)
- **Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)** - [Virginia Coastal Resilience Web Explorer](#)
- **Old Dominion University and the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency** - [Coastal Virginia Sea Level Rise](#)
- **Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN)** - [The RAFT Scorecard - Northampton County](#)
- **EPA** - [Social Vulnerability Index](#)
- **NOAA** - [Digital Coast](#)

### E.S. Working Groups/Committees

- [Climate Adaptation Working Group \(CAWG\)](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Program - Climate Resiliency Workgroup](#)
- [Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore \(CBES\)](#)
- [Town of Onancock Citizen Committees - Waterfront Committee & Tree Committee](#)
- [Community partners of Eastern Shore](#)
- [Eastern Shore Chapter VA Master Naturalists](#)
- [Tree Advisory Committee, Cape Charles](#)
- [Northampton Democratic Committee](#)
- [ES Regional Navigable Waterways Committee](#)

# Comprehensive List of CAC Identified Priority Questions

## STATION 8: WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

In December 2022, CAC members identified 15 priorities/questions that they would like the project to address/solve. During the workshops, the participants voted on their top 5 priorities from this list.

### Priorities Identified by the Community Advisory Committee

1. How will **sea level rise** affect **ESVA communities and populations differently**, including Tangier Island?
2. How will climate change and sea level rise **affect our Eastern Shore way of life** and mobility across the Shore?
3. How will **septic systems, salinization of soils and groundwater** be affected by climate change?
4. What can our community do to **mitigate and adapt** to the effects of climate change?
5. What **resources** are needed to address climate change?
6. What kind of **economic impacts** (farming, aquaculture, etc.) will climate change have on the Eastern Shore?
7. What can we do to advocate for and **protect our productive farmlands** (a major current and historic economic driver for ESVA)? How do we build a list of stakeholders from the agriculture sector?
8. Does the Eastern Shore have the governmental or non-profit **structure to coordinate responses to climate change**? Who should be in charge of/lead climate change responses in our community?
9. What **models** can we replicate or adapt for our region to ensure sustainability of our natural resources on the Shore?
10. How can we address the lack of **reliable broadband fiber optic internet and cell service** across the Shore?
11. How can we address the **lack of transportation for evacuation** (especially for those in manufactured homes, elderly, access and functional needs populations, low lying areas, and private roads that are not maintained)?
12. How can we create **affordable retrofitting** for homes and structures to withstand the increase of powerful storms and hurricanes?
13. How is the CoPe ES Climate Equity Project going to **tangibly benefit the Eastern Shore** and all its residents? How is it different from other tools and projects?
14. What is the **history of climate events** (storms, flooding) on the Eastern Shore?
15. Can we identify a practice that encourages and ensures **input and collaboration from residents of underserved communities** crucial to the planning process, and **from local government officials** vital to the implementation process?

