WINTER 2015 NEWSLETTER

POLLUTION

BACTERIA
- GRADE: C+
- 42% of the river meets the shellfish harvest standard, 91% meets the swimable/fishable standard
- 100% of river meets the shellfish harvest standard and 100% swimable/fishable

NITROGEN & PHOSPHORUS
- GRADE: D
- Nitrogen & Phosphorus levels are too high for SAV to thrive.
- Nitrogen & Phosphorus levels that meet SAV habitat requirements

DISSOLVED OXYGEN
- GRADE: D
- 7.9 impaired sq miles (90% of the river)
- 4.26 acres of underwater grasses
- 0 impaired square miles

WATER CLARITY
- GRADE: F
- Although anecdotal evidence indicates that water clarity has improved, it still falls to meet the standard for SAV.
- Sediment & Algae levels that meet SAV habitat requirements

AWARENESS

NEW FUNDS FOR CLEAN BOATING
- GRADE: A
- $3,672,266 in water quality improvements in 2014
- $3 million per year

STORMWATER TREATMENT
- GRADE: C
- 23% of the watershed treated
- 100% of total watershed treated with stormwater management

SANITARY SEWERS
- GRADE: A
- 7 sanitary sewer overflows, 680 total gallons spilled, 211 remaining septic systems

OYSTERS
- GRADE: A
- 277,899 oysters transplanted, 83 acres of sanctuary reef, 261 linear feet of new oyster shoreline in 2014
- 250,000 oysters per year transplanted, 100 total acres of sanctuary reef, 300 linear feet of new oyster shoreline per year

OPEN SPACE & PUBLIC ACCESS
- GRADE: B
- 3,104 acres of open space, five public access sites
- Open Space: 4,000 acres, Public Access: 15 Public Access Sites

WETLANDS
- GRADE: A
- Net gain of 6,685 square feet of wetland, 8 living shoreline projects
- 0 permitted losses per year, increasing number of living shoreline projects each year

UNDERWATER GRASS BEDS
- GRADE: F
- 0 acres
- 175 total acres

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
- GRADE: A
- 135 Programs for new Pearl Faith Communities Annual Fall Festival, Watershed Forum and Candidates Forum
- 60 programs per year, 5 Pearl Faith Communities per year, Annual Fall Festival, Watershed Forum and Candidates Forum

MEDIA ATTENTION
- GRADE: A
- Coverage 12 times, 24 E-News pubs, 8 new print publications, 375 new Facebook followers, 2,000 blog views, 423 Instagram followers
- Coverage 18 times per year, 10 new publications per year, Facebook followers: 400 new per year

MEMBERSHIP & INVOLVEMENT
- GRADE: A
- Membership: 5,264, Involvement: 24,932, 2,877 volunteer hours, 767 new Pearl Homes
- Membership: 5,000, Involvement: 30,000, 3,000 volunteer hours, 500 new Pearl Homes

SCHOOL PARTICIPATION
- GRADE: A
- 58 Pearl Schools, 9 Teacher Trainings, Participation from all watershed schools.
- 50 Pearl Schools per year, 10 Teacher Trainings per year, Participation from all watershed schools

LYNNHAVEN RIVER NOW PRESENTS THE 2014 State of the River Report

We continue to make progress in reaching our goal of a cleaner, healthier Lynnhaven River. With the help of our partners and the commitment of many, we are restoring and protecting the Lynnhaven River.

With the gains and challenges of 2014, our overall water quality and outreach grade is a B.

The Lynnhaven River watershed is 64 square miles and is home to 250,000 Virginia Beach residents. Our watershed includes the most densely developed areas of our city: the Shore Drive area, much of the Resort area, Hilltop, Town Center, Lynnhaven Mall, Princess Anne Plaza, and Green Run. We have 38% impervious surface and 30% managed turf. In other words, every time it rains, only 68% of the rain water has optimal conditions for soaking into the ground, being filtered by the soil and taken up by plants. The remaining water is collected by the stormwater system and carried to the nearest surface water: creek, lake or directly into the river. Less than 25% of that stormwater goes into a stormwater pond or other system for pre-treatment.

Stormwater is the main way that pollutants enter the river. There are two ways to reduce pollutant loads. One is to reduce the stormwater flow and keep pollutants out of the water that runs off. That is the goal of many of our community programs that we hope are familiar to you. As you read this report, you will see What You Can Do at the end of each of the areas we track. This section shows you how you can help us to make gains in this area. We hope you will take special note of new practices that you can adopt. Whether it is "scoping the poop," planting a tree, installing pervious pavers or other practices, they are all contributing to reducing pollutants in our stormwater and a cleaner river.

The second way we can reduce pollutants in stormwater is to treat the stormwater before it enters the surface water. In a fully developed watershed like ours that is challenging and expensive. The City continues to use all available opportunities to retrofit and improve our stormwater system.

Three projects designed and built in 2014 are improving stormwater management:

- The Laskin Road improvements included stormwater retention both reducing the amount of stormwater going directly into Little Neck Creek and improving the quality of that runoff.

- Rebuilding of one section of Mill Dam Creek is increasing water flow capacity, adding wetlands and slowing the velocity of the water in the creek during rain events. Mill Dam Creek flows directly into Broad Bay.

- A parking lot retrofit at Princess Anne High School designed in 2014 and being built in 2015 will reduce stormwater runoff into Thalia Creek.

The other notable accomplishment of 2014 is the implementation by the City of the new stormwater regulations requiring increased on-site management of stormwater for all new development and redevelopment.

Another area of focus for Lynnhaven River NOW has been shoreline management. The choices we make in managing our shorelines have both immediate impacts on water quality and marine life, and also contribute to our readiness for sea level rise. In 2014, we again saw a net increase in wetlands and more oyster castle shoreline. Design and permitting work was also completed in 2014 for several important shoreline projects that will be constructed in 2015. We continue to work with homeowners who are interested in knowing more about how to use living shorelines and oyster castles to protect their properties from erosion at the same time they are adding wetland and oyster habitat to the river.

A fully developed and densely populated watershed continues to present challenges to restoring and maintaining a clean and healthy river. This is not easy. Any progress we are making is a result of the involvement and commitment of our community. Our Pearl Homes, Pearl Schools and Pearl Faith Communities programs continue to thrive. In 2014, we surpassed our goal of 2,014 Pearl Homes, had 58 Pearl Schools where amazing work is being done, and five active Pearl Faith Communities.

As we move into 2015, we know that many challenges lie ahead of us. But we also know that together we will continue to make progress and protect the river we love and is such an important part of our City.

lynnhavenrivernow.org
BACTERIA

NITROGEN & PHOSPHORUS

SANITARY SEWERS

WATER CLARITY

NEW FUNDS FOR WATER QUALITY A

CLEAN BOATING

In 2014, $3.7 million dollars was allocated for water quality improvements. Since 2013, the total is $18.7 million dollars. During this past year, funds were concentrated on development of the Barbour Total Maximum Daily Load program, Mill Dam Creek and Thalia Creek restoration, and management of the runoff including what runs off our own residents. The Lynnhaven NPS2 does not need to be our only No Discharge Zone in an area.

What you can do to help: Six pump-out facilities are available in the Lynnhaven including a self-service pump-out at the Chippenham Marina and 24 hours and 7 days per week. In addition, HRSD continues to offer a free pump-out service to each site. By using any of these pump-out facilities and reducing the number of gallons that are pumped out, we can help reduce the pollution to our waterways.

What you can do to help: reduce or eliminate your use of lawn fertilizers; handle sediments from any land disturbance properly; properly remove trash and debris from your yard; do not feed wildlife including ducks; keep pests in your yard.

What you can do to help: become informed about legislation affecting your local area; engage other state, county, and local elected officials; stand for what you believe in; express your opinions to your elected officials; talk to your city council representatives and legislators to tell them what you believe is important to you; and write to the newspapers about the issues that are important to you.

What you can do to help: A new year, a new opportunity to collect points for you and your community. Your points could be spent on a new tree for your yard or help fund a project near your home.

What you can do to help: If you’re not content with your local government, consider running for office yourself. Your voice matters.

What you can do to help: If you own a boat, please consider a cleaning station. This will be a place where boat owners can go to clean their boats before heading out on the water. We need your help to get these stations built in our community.

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What you can do to help: go to www.LRNowonline.org to get involved. LRNOW is a non-profit group whose mission is to promote environmental issues and awareness in the Lynnhaven watershed.

What you can do to help: support efforts to protect our waterways.

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