In partnership with the City of Virginia Beach, Lynnhaven River NOW constructed the first Oyster Castle reef in the Lynnhaven. On June 4th, we completed construction of 21 oyster castle structures on 244 feet of shoreline on Long Creek. We moved 6 tons of blocks by hand, thanks to some very strong volunteers, and by boat, thanks to a few generous oyster growers who helped with transportation. Another section will be constructed next year. As shown in the latest photos here, we have documented very good oyster settlement and growth after 4 months.
Many thanks to the partners, supporters and volunteers who helped make this project possible, including but not limited to:

- City of Virginia Beach Planning, Public Works
- LRNow Oyster Committee
- Allied Concrete, Gus Lorber
- Barry Truitt and Bo Lusk of The Nature Conservancy
- Cape Henry students Steve Sims, Allison Riccio and Nick Anderson
- Cameron Chalmers, Chris Pace, Dirk Sanford,
- Nelva Capps, Scott Hotchkiss
- Virtexco
Proposed oyster reef
Eastern endpoint 36 deg 54’ 13.04” N, 76 deg 4’ 9.60” W

Western endpoint 36 deg 54’ 13.32” N, 76 deg 4’ 16.47” W

Proposed reef location
An “Oyster Castle”

Designed and Produced by Allied Concrete
“Oyster Castles® are manufactured, using 100% renewable energy, from raw materials that are not problematic, as evaluated by MBDC’s stringent standards for Gold Level Certification. Oyster Castle® blocks are made of minerals from the earth's crust (including natural oyster shells) and designed to be returned to the earth as part of the natural habitat. They are intended to replace natural oyster reefs that have been previously depleted by human activities. They do not contain any problematic materials”. (Bonnie Eveleth, MBDC)
A Typical Castle Stacking Arrangement
A Castle arrangement covered with oysters (from S. Carolina)
LRNow Oyster Restoration Committee – using Legos to discover new ways to build with castle blocks
Davis Island Oyster Reef Restoration (Cross-section View, typical)
March 27, 2012

Max. horizontal distance from MLW = 5.5’
Max. height = MLW + 18”

MLW 0.00
MHW +2.00’

Existing grade (sand)

Proposed oyster castle

SCALE = 10 inches

SLOPE = 5.75 : 1
The “Argyle” Oyster Castle design in Legos
The “Argyle” Oyster Castle design
The “Argyle” Oyster Castle design
Davis Island oyster castle – 4 months after installation (Sept 27, 2012)
Davis Island oyster castle – 4 months after installation (Sept 27, 2012)
Davis Island oyster castle – 4 months after installation (Sept 27, 2012)
River Restoration Project

Helping clean the Lynnhaven River and provide healthy habitat.