

Annual Report 2025



Conserving land and water for life



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About Us

Our Mission

The purpose of Coastal Virginia Conservancy (CVC) is to restore, from legacy contamination, the environmental quality of the Elizabeth River watershed to the highest practicable level and conserve it for future beneficial use. Additionally, CVC's conservation mission is to preserve land in southeastern Virginia for recreation, parks, wildlife preservation, drainage, water and air quality, and the public's health and well-being. In this effort, CVC works with private property owners, Virginia localities, and community organizations to enhance the public's awareness of the benefits of land conservation.

Executive Summary

Coastal Virginia Conservancy has made great strides in restoration and conservation in 2025. CVC permitted and built its first in lieu fee oyster reef this year in conjunction with community partners' projects to restore and protect the shoreline of Lambert's Point along the Norfolk and Southern property. In addition, CVC continues to monitor several of its completed restoration projects including Paradise Creek and Money Point. These projects provide credits to offset future disruptions of subtidal river bottom and oyster reefs in our local waters. The conservation of 25-acres of an old family farm plot in Virginia Beach provided its surrounding neighbors with the gift of trails and wild spaces for their families in perpetuity. Lastly, staff and Board members expanded CVC's outreach this year by participating in partner workshops and local community festivals. CVC continues to grow and improve its operations, providing cleaner waters and healthful spaces. Thanks to your support CVC continues to conserve land and restore waterways in Hampton Roads!

Meet the Board

Officers

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*Retired Assistant to the City Manager
City of Chesapeake, Virginia*

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Wolcott Rivers Gates, Attorneys at Law

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*Executive Director
Wetlands Watch*

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*Retired Assistant Planning Director
City of Chesapeake*

Jody Wagner
*Founder and President
Jody's Inc.*

This Board list is from 09/30/2025. For a list of current Board members, please visit www.covaconserve.org.

Staff

Executive Director

Helen W. Kuhns

Restoration Manager

Dave Koubsky

Administrator

Shana Conley



Newton Neck in Chesapeake

Our Conservation Work

Coastal Virginia Conservancy is committed to saving the last remaining open spaces in Hampton Roads. With limited land in our region left undeveloped and ever-increasing development pressure, the time to act is now. CVC has preserved over 1,200 acres to date, but there is much more to do.

Current Projects

25-Acre Private Property, Virginia Beach

In July 2025, CVC conserved a 25-acre parcel nestled in the heart of Virginia Beach. This beautifully forested property hosts uninterrupted views of natural wilderness. Critical wetlands along West Neck Creek help to form this parcel's boundary, providing important habitat for birds and other species needing a quiet home away from the bustle of Virginia Beach.

Its owners protected it throughout their lifetime, a remaining piece of their family's farm. As they have grown older, they sought an innovative land management approach that would forever preserve this pristine property but also allow them to pass the land to new owners. A partnership formed between CVC, the landowners, and the adjacent neighborhood brought together all the pieces needed to keep this unique property in its natural state forever.

The new owners will continue the legacy of protection with the guidance of CVC. The former landowners can rest assured that this land, so important to their family, will continue to stay wild and be stewarded for future generations.



Private property in Virginia Beach, now conserved in perpetuity by CVC

Our Conserved Land:

Property	Acreage
ERP Ryan Resilience Lab (Norfolk)	0.8
Ferry Point Park (Virginia Beach)	9.1
Great Dismal Swamp (Chesapeake)	492
Libertyville Wetland Mitigation Bank (Chesapeake)	7.5
Mitigation Bank (Chesapeake)	544
New Mill Creek Mitigation Bank (Chesapeake)	28.7
Newton Neck (Chesapeake)	90.5
Paradise Creek (Portsmouth)	40
Peck-Portsmouth Recycling Company (Portsmouth)	6.2
Private Property (Norfolk)	0.2
Private Property (Norfolk)	1.5
Private Property (Portsmouth)	5.2
Private Property (Virginia Beach)	24.9
Southgate Plaza (Chesapeake)	2.3
Total	1253



Conservation Goals for the Coming Year

CVC will continue to support landowners who are committed to the conservation of their properties, as well as working with businesses who are interested in protecting parcels of land in perpetuity. CVC remains a resource and partner to localities in its service area, helping to guarantee open space. Continuing to expand services beyond the greater Hampton Roads area, CVC will help to identify and secure our region's scarcest resource – undeveloped, open parcels of land – through conservation easements and other conservation tools throughout Coastal Virginia.

Our Restoration Work

Coastal Virginia Conservancy is the first in-lieu fee (ILF) mitigation tool of its kind in the United States to be approved by the federal government for compensation of impacts to the bottom of a waterway. CVC meets development needs to mitigate environmental impacts to the Elizabeth River watershed — particularly impacts to life along the river bottom. Funds are used to offset unavoidable impacts when permittees conduct new dredging or filling projects for which government agencies require compensatory mitigation. Currently, funds are expended on projects to improve impaired river bottom in other areas of the river. Use of CVC for regulatory sanctioned “mitigation,” or offsetting of impacts, are considered only after every reasonable option has been pursued to avoid or reduce environmental harm.

Current Projects

Lambert's Point Oyster Reef, Norfolk

At low tide, the Elizabeth River laps quietly along the edge of the Norfolk & Southern (N & S) property at historic Lambert's Point in Norfolk. The gentle waves push through new piles of stone carefully placed in the intertidal zone to allow the maximum exposure to waters carrying oyster spat for settlement. Each stone has the potential of becoming the permanent home of *Crassostrea virginica*, the eastern oyster.

This area of Lambert's Point, named for Thomas Lambert who first received the 100-acre land grant in 1635, has been an industrial powerhouse along the Elizabeth River for

hundreds of years. Wind, river movement, heavy equipment and boat traffic have begun to erode the shoreline. N & S Railroad recently installed stone breakwaters and a living shoreline to protect and stabilize its coastal edge. To increase the project's efficacy, Virginia Marine Resource Commission (VMRC) placed an oyster reef along most of the face of the N & S shoreline.

CVC was able to close a gap on the previously constructed oyster reef and add that final area of protection at Lambert's Point. In May 2025, CVC worked with Seaward Marine to build its 2.1-acre oyster reef with over 2,400 tons of stone, completing the armament of N & S's shoreline from erosional forces. With the VMRC reef already showing significant natural oyster settlement, CVC looks forward to surveying their site next summer.

"These are the types of projects that really provide marked change along our most challenged shorelines. Three organizations worked to not only restore a fragile edge of the Elizabeth River but increased its habitat value exponentially."
- Helen Kuhns, Executive Director



Executive Director Helen Kuhns monitoring the Living Shoreline Project on the Elizabeth River

Long-Term Monitoring of Completed Projects

Long-term monitoring of Paradise Creek in Portsmouth is ongoing. Past monitoring has revealed a 60% reduction in contamination levels with 95% of samples meeting CVC's success criteria. Additionally, Money Point in Chesapeake undergoes long-term monitoring of sediment on the river bottom and continues to show a reduction in contaminants.

Restoration Goals for the Coming Year

CVC has In-Lieu Fee credits available to help fund future projects in the Elizabeth River. As these are purchased, CVC will move toward the next scheduled project, a second site along Paradise Creek (PC2). This year, CVC will continue to monitor its Paradise Creek 1 site and Money Point. In the spring, CVC will monitor the oyster reef for proof of settlement. If the reef has populated adequately, CVC will seek credit approval from the Interagency Restoration Team. CVC will continue to evaluate other sites for future work.



Celebrating Success

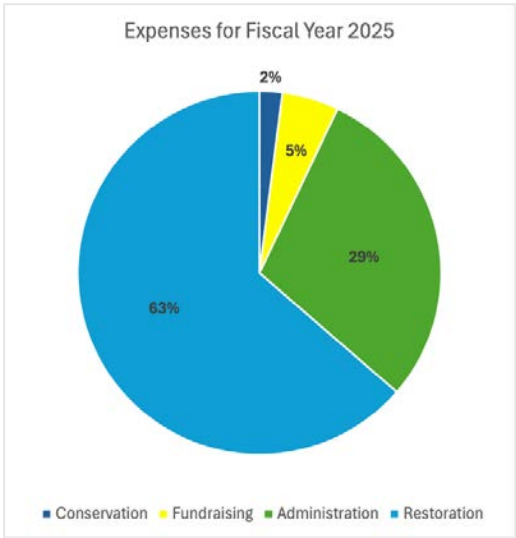
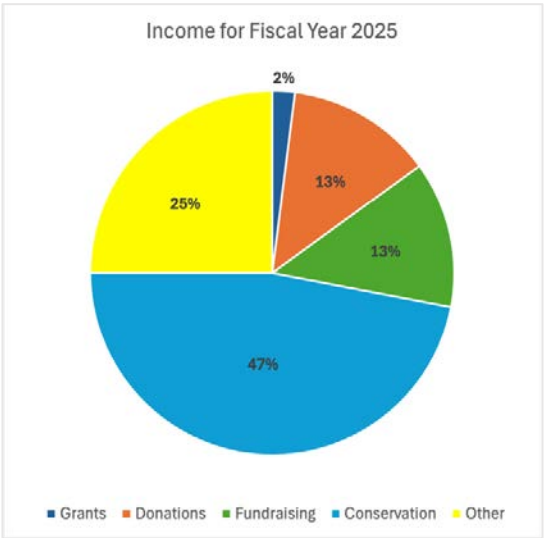
CVC Shines: Celebrating 20 Years in November 2024 was CVC's second annual fundraising event. This event was a celebration of all that CVC has accomplished over the last two decades. This opportunity not only raised funds, but also brought together staff, volunteers,

supporters and community members to celebrate the success of CVC’s conservation and restoration efforts. CVC looks forward to future celebrations to highlight CVC’s progress in Hampton Roads.



Financial Highlights

Financial highlights include the period covering October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025.



Thank You to our Donors

A big thank you to our grant sponsors and donors for this fiscal year:

◇ Ken & Diana Bailey	◇ Jeff Craig	◇ Luxgive	◇ Christopher Pocta	◇ TowneBank
◇ Bay Power Solutions	◇ Anna D'Antonio	◇ Mark Mansfield	◇ Myles Pocta	◇ Treasured Memories
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Reach Out

Email us at Info@CoVaConserve.org, or call (757) 500-4579.

