United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Office of Research and
Development
Washington, DC 20460

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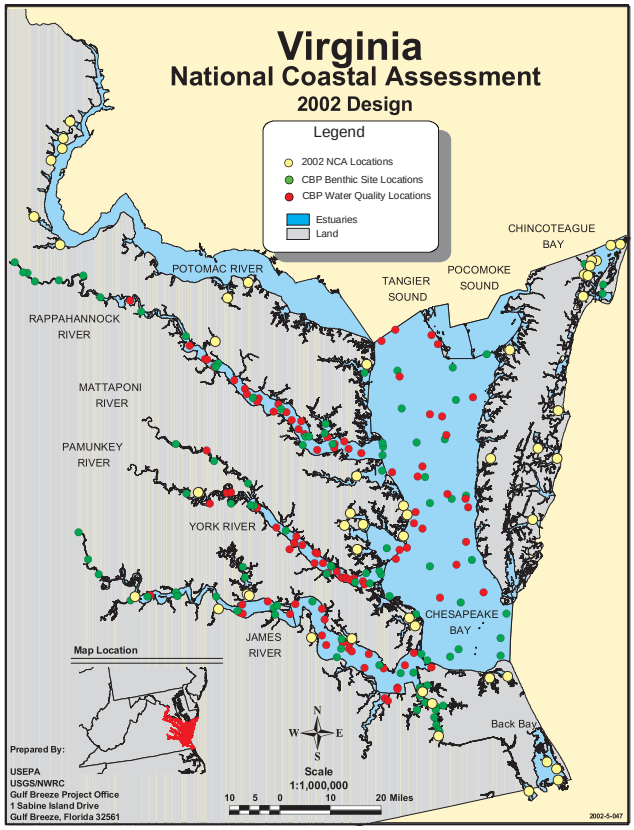
Coastal Communications

National Coastal Assessment: Virginia
ORD/VA-DEQ/CBP/Region 3/OW

Background

The U.S. EPA's National Coastal Assessment (NCA) Program, is a multi-year partnership among EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD), EPA's Office of Water (OW), EPA's Regional Offices, all coastal states, and selected territories. As part of this effort, ORD initiated a coastal monitoring program with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VA-DEQ) in 2000. Now in its third year, this program integrates elements of existing Virginia estuarine and coastal monitoring and assessment efforts, including data provided from the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP). The joint effort is determining the condition of estuarine waters in Virginia and allows comparison to other U.S. coastal areas. This collaborative effort is being coordinated by the ORD National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory's Gulf Ecology Division in Gulf Breeze, Florida.



National Coastal Assessment Strategy

The National Coastal Assessment is a strategic partnership among EPA, the coastal states, and other federal agencies. Each state uses a compatible probabilistic design and a common set of environmental indicators (see Table below) to survey its coastal resources and assess their condition. These estimates can then be aggregated to assess conditions at the EPA regional, biogeographical, and national levels. All data will be made available for public access on the Internet. The map above shows the estuarine waters of Virginia and the locations of sampling sites for the 2002 survey, including CBP sites.

Water Quality	Sediment Quality	Biota
Dissolved oxygen	Grain size	Benthic community structure
Salinity, temperature, depth, pH	Total organic carbon	Fish community structure
Suspended solids	Sediment chemistry	Fish external pathology
Nutrients	Benthic community structure	Fish tissue chemical analyses
Chlorophyll	Sediment toxicity	
Light transmittance/PAR		

Further Information

For further information, please contact Don Smith of the VA-DEQ at (804) 698-4429 or dhsmith@deq.state.va.us ; Richard Batiuk of the Chesapeake Bay Program at (410) 267-5731 or batiuk.richard@epa.gov ; or Jim Harvey of the EPA/ORD National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory's Gulf Ecology Division at (850) 934-9237 or harvey.jim@epa.gov. Visit the coastal communications web site at http://www.epa.gov/ged/crc.htm.