Higher Estimates of Flood Risk

A new study of flood risk by First Street Foundation, taking into account sea-level rise, rainfall, and flooding of smaller creeks, found a 40% increase, compared with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps, in properties at risk from a 100-year flood. The First Street estimate found 14.6 million properties at risk across the country, while FEMA maps identify 8.7 million properties. The group also estimated that, with climate change, an additional 1.6 million properties will be at risk by 2050.

“Millions of home and property owners have had no way of knowing the significant risk they face,” said Matthew Eby, Founder and Executive Director of First Street Foundation, a group of academics and experts who compiled the data.

There have been long-standing concerns that FEMA’s flood maps underestimate flood risk. It is difficult to keep the maps up to date, and climate change has not been factored in until recently. In addition, the maps don’t account for flooding from intense rainfall, don’t accurately predict the way winds drive waves inland during massive storms, and are using a 50-year-old model to predict storm surge, according to Grover Fugate, former Executive Director of Rhode Island’s Coastal Resources Management Council. In addition, many inland areas have not been mapped.

New Data Show Increased Risk of Coastal Flooding

By Sue Mastyl

The estimate for Accomack County is actually close to FEMA’s (29% vs. 32%). In Northampton County, 9% of properties are at risk, compared with FEMA’s estimate of 5%. That means an additional 726 properties in Northampton County are at risk of flooding.

First Street Foundation has developed their Flood Factor™ tool (https://firststreet.org/flood-factor/), which shows the risk by address or zip code for individual properties, color-coded from minor to extreme risk.

New FEMA Numbers Will Mean Increased Premiums

As noted above, FEMA’s flood risk assessments are outdated, and the agency is currently reworking its numbers to include climate change. That will increase premiums for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for waterfront homeowners in the flood plain. FEMA is projecting an average premium increase of 9.9% for 2020, with larger increases for businesses, non-primary residences, and properties with repetitive losses.

However, when new FEMA maps are developed, homeowners often object, in order to avoid higher NFIP premiums. “You can’t appeal your rate. You can only fight your map,” noted Roy Wright, former head of the NFIP. “It turns into house-by-house combat.”

As one of FEMA’s fact sheets notes, “FEMA is not empowered to make you whole.” The maximum NFIP payout is $250,000 for a house and $100,000 for the contents. To reduce the number of claims, the Flood Mitigation Program provides assistance to homeowners to help pay for elevating a home or buying out a home that’s flooded repeatedly. FEMA also recently announced an overhaul of their program to fund community resilience projects, including stormwater updates and living shorelines.

More “Sunny Day” Flooding Predicted

In addition to the flooding risk from storms, we’re also at risk of high tide flooding (1.75 to 2 feet above mean high tide), also known as “sunny day” or “nuisance” flooding, driven by sea-level rise, as well as lunar cycles.

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Blood Drives & Bragging Rights
By Donna Bozza

I’ve had a lifelong aversion to needles. Though I’m sure no one welcomes them, most probably pay more attention to what information their blood test will provide or how a flu shot will help them avoid weeks of misery.

For seemingly forever, my two older sisters loved to laugh as they shared the story about the time when we were kids and had to line up at the Army Hospital to get penicillin shots. They were unfazed, or so they said, while I – at age 7 – was absolutely terrified. But I got my shot. Stood up. Then quickly kissed the tile floor.

“Donna fainted!” and the humiliating giggles followed me around for weeks and weeks. Oh, sisterly love.

Fast forward to age 61, and I am happy to report I have received many an inoculation while remaining vertical. So, one would think giving blood would not be a big deal. Yet, for years, I had a million reasons I couldn’t take the time to participate in a Blood Drive and drive up the road or across the Bay.

That is, until this summer. The American Red Cross was having such a drive near me, at the American Legion Post in Cheriton.

Blood Drives & Bragging Rights

As I am no spring chicken, COVID-19 would have been quite an acceptable excuse to skip donating blood yet again. But surprisingly, it prompted me to go. Like many of us, I had been searching for ways to have a positive impact on my community during these unsettling times.

As the American Red Cross points out, it is essential to keep the nation’s blood supply steady, especially during a pandemic – when donations can drop off, but the need does not.

The clincher for me? My daughter. I remember back when she was only 16 and asked that I sign a consent form so she could donate blood. She has done it many times since. Surely, at some decades older, I could ditch my silly fears – I could woman up and roll up my sleeve – and I did. It’s safe, it takes maybe an hour tops, and to my fellow weenies, it doesn’t hurt any more than a quick pinch, really. And not least of all, you have bragging rights.

Who’s laughing now, dear sisters?

Find out if you are eligible to donate life-giving blood, how to register, and more details on page 6.

Blood, cont’d from p. 1

and winds. A new report from NOAA indicates that the frequency of these events will increase with climate change and sea-level rise. Nineteen locations along the Gulf and East coasts broke or tied records in 2019, including 6 in the Chesapeake Bay area. The NOAA predictions for the 2 tide gauges on the Eastern Shore are provided in the table below.

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Source: NOAA Tides & Currents. The state of high tide flooding and annual outlook. https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/HighTideFlooding_AnnualOutlook.html


After every decennial census, new congressional and state legislative districts are drawn to ensure that citizens are represented equally in government. Years of legislative and judicial actions have dogged Virginia’s redistricting. The General Assembly (GA) currently controls redistricting – gerrymandering by both political parties was rampant, challenges to district maps often led to dissent and discord between the Governor and the GA, and court intervention became inevitable. The 2020 ballot referendum on redistricting proposes that a Redistricting Commission, to include citizens as well as elected officials, be established to replace the current system. It passed the GA for 2 consecutive years, as required for a constitutional amendment – with much debate, but enough bipartisan support.

The constitutional amendment would establish 2 criteria that the commission would use to draw districts: (1) districts would need to be drawn in accordance with “the requirements of federal and state laws that address racial and ethnic fairness, including the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and provisions of the Voting Rights Act,” and (2) districts would need to “provide, where practicable, opportunities for racial and ethnic communities to elect candidates of their choice.” Also, the 2020 GA established 9 additional criteria and standards based on those Federal statutes for redrawing districts, including: proportional population; preserving communities of interest; equal opportunity for participation by minorities; neutrality on political party affiliation; compact territory; and the provision that incarcerated persons be counted at their address at the time of incarceration. Proposed Redistricting Procedure

(For reader clarification: Committee refers to the 5-judge selection group; Commission refers to the actual citizen/legislator redistricting body)

The following is proposed for the establishment and conduct of a 16-member Redistricting Commission, composed of 8 legislators and 8 citizens:

• There shall be a Redistricting Commission Selection Committee consisting of 5 retired judges of the circuit courts of Virginia.

• The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia will provide a list of retired judges of the circuit courts of Virginia who are willing to serve on the Selection Committee. The 4 top-ranking officials from each political party in the Senate and House of Delegates shall each select a judge from the list – a total of 4 retired judges. The 4 will select a 5th judge to serve, who will also be Chair of the Selection Committee.

• Leaders of the legislature’s 2 largest political parties would select members to serve on the Redistricting Commission. Therefore, based on the current GA membership, the Commission’s legislative members would include 2 Senate Democrats, 2 Senate Republicans, 2 House Democrats, and 2 House Republicans.

• Each of those legislative leaders would then submit a list of at least 16 citizen candidates for service on the Redistricting Commission. The 5-judge Committee would then select, by majority vote, 2 citizens from each legislator’s list to serve, along with the 8 legislators, on the Redistricting Commission.

• The Redistricting Commission would create district maps adhering to the adopted criteria. Agreement to present both the state GA and the federal House of Representatives District maps would require approval by 12 commissioners – including 6 of 8 legislators and 6 of 8 citizens. State Senate districts would require approval by 3 of the 4 Senators, and State House districts by 3 of the 4 Delegates.

• The Redistricting Commission’s maps would be filed with the GA, which would vote to pass the maps into law or reject them. The GA would be prohibited from amending the maps. If the GA rejected a map, the Redistricting Commission would design a new map. If the map was rejected again, the Virginia Supreme Court would establish the districts.

The Entire Text of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment:

Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended to establish a redistricting commission, consisting of eight members of the General Assembly and eight citizens of the Commonwealth, that is responsible for drawing the congressional and state legislative districts that will be subsequently voted on, but not changed by, the General Assembly and enacted without the Governor’s involvement and to give the responsibility of drawing districts to the Supreme Court of Virginia if the redistricting commission fails to draw districts or the General Assembly fails to enact districts by certain deadlines?

• A “yes” vote supports transferring the power to draw the state’s congressional and legislative districts from the
to generate $1.4 million annually, the county real estate tax would need to increase by $0.74/$100 annually.

Renovation and construction of the High School/Middle School complex will be underway soon. Parts of the current high school, built in 1954, are in such bad shape that the Board of Supervisors (the Board) decided to renovate what could be saved, construct new replacement sections, and build a new middle school. Bonds have been secured at the current low interest rate, and plans to generate revenue to pay down the 20-year debt are being considered.

State Makes the Rules on Local Tax Options

Virginia’s Dillon Rule greatly restricts a locality’s ability to raise revenue by any tax mechanism that is not approved by the General Assembly (GA). Without other options, school bonds are generally paid out of local tax revenue – real estate, personal property, etc. During a meeting last year with county officials about school construction funding, Delegate Rob Bloxom mentioned that, under certain conditions and with certain restrictions, the state could allow counties and cities to hold a referendum to gauge local approval for a 20-year, 1-cent increase in the local sales tax.

The Board passed the appropriate Resolution in March – a request to consider a 1-cent sales tax to be dedicated only to “design, renovation, equipping, modernizing, replacement, construction and expansion” of schools. Shortly after that, Senator Lynwood Lewis of Accomack and Delegate Danny Lewis of Danville (city) carried the Bill to their respective chambers of the GA to be debated – and to decide if the county could go forward with a sales tax initiative. With bipartisan support for approval, SB1028 was passed in the Senate, 32-8, and in the House of Delegates, 70-26. The 1-cent sales tax referendum will appear on the November ballot in Northampton County.

Will a Sales Tax Generate Enough Revenue?

The current Northampton County sales tax is 1 cent on the dollar – state sales tax is currently 4.3 cents on the dollar. Approval of the referendum would make the county sales tax rate 2%, for a total state/local sales tax of 6.3%. County officials have projected that the additional 1% sales tax over the next 20 years would generate about $1.4 million/year – and that 45% of that new revenue would be collected from visitors to the county. Calculations were based on the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s information on visitors’ spending patterns, which were then compared with county monthly sales tax collections. Analysis showed that during busy tourism/travel months, sales tax revenue on visitors’ identified spending patterns increased significantly.

Of the $35 million school project, $28 million could be paid for by the projected 1-cent sales tax revenue over 20 years. The balance would be made up by the county’s general fund – which has increased annually over the past 3 years by $250,000 to $300,000 in additional real estate tax revenue on new construction.

Other School Bond Debt Repayment Options

Without the projected $1.4 million in additional sales tax revenue, the county would need to depend on increased real estate and/or other tax rates to fund the school bond debt. To generate $1.4 million annually, the county real estate tax would need to increase by $0.74/$100 annually. Northampton taxpayers do have a choice in how they pay for school construction because of the sizeable tourism industry sector. Without a healthy tourism economy, an additional 1% sales tax revenue would fall short of needed revenue.

Voters Have a Choice

The Sales Tax Referendum as it appears on the ballot:

Should the Board of Supervisors be authorized to impose an additional general sales tax in an amount not to exceed one percent (1%) in order to provide revenue solely for purpose of financing capital projects for public school purposes, including, without limitation, the design, renovation, equipping, modernizing, replacement, construction and expansion of the Northampton Middle/High School Complex, said tax to expire on January 15, 2040, the date upon which the repayment of that certain general obligation school bond dated October 26, 2019 is due?

The 1-cent sales tax would let county residents share the cost with visitors for needed school infrastructure. Items exempt from the sales tax include groceries, medications, automobiles, and farm equipment. A $10 lunch bill would be $0.10 more with the new tax; a $29 gallon of paint would cost about $0.30 more; and a $2.79 gallon of milk would still cost $2.79.
What’s on the Ballot?

Tuesday, November 3, is Election Day. Polls will be open 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Candidates on the ballot are:

President and Vice-President:
• Joseph R. Biden and Kamala D. Harris (D)
• Donald J. Trump and Michael R. Pence (R)
• Jo Jorgensen and Jeremy F. “Spike” Cohen (L)

Member, U.S. Senate:
• Mark R. Warner (D)
• Daniel M. Gade (R)

Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Congressional District 2:
• Elaine G. Luria (D)
• Scott W. Taylor (R)
• David Bruce Foster (I)

There will also be elections for Mayor and Town Council for Accomac, Cheriton, Eastville, Melfa, Nassawadox, Onley, and Painter; and for Town Council for Bloxom and Parksley.

There will be 2 statewide ballot questions on proposed Constitutional Amendments, as well as a referendum for Northampton voters. See articles on pages 3 and 4 as well as the Keeping Track column in this issue for details.

How Do I Vote?

With the ongoing pandemic, voters are encouraged to vote by mail or vote early in person (no excuse is required). Key dates to remember:

• September 18 to October 31 – Registrars’ offices open for in-person voting, including 2 Saturdays (October 24 and October 31).
• October 13 – last day to register to vote or update your address.
• October 23 – last day to request that an absentee ballot be mailed to you. If you mail your absentee ballot, it must be postmarked by Election Day, November 3, and received by noon on November 6.

Voting Law Changes

In 2020, there are several changes to the voting laws, including:

• No requirement for a witness signature on absentee ballots.
• Election Day is now a state holiday in Virginia.
• Absentee ballots will include a postage-paid envelope to return the ballot.
• A ballot drop box will be available after September 18 at each Registrar’s office, and at each polling location on Election Day.

Additional Information

For more information, and details on polling locations, visit the Registrars’ websites:

Accomack County

Northampton County

Democracy requires participation at every level; every vote counts and every election matters.

2020 CBES Candidate Forum Canceled

ShoreLine Staff

For over two decades, CBES has conducted Candidate Forums for all local (federal, state, and county) elections, to afford citizens on the Shore the opportunity to hear from all candidates on key issues, in order to make well-informed decisions when they vote. CBES, which is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, does not support or oppose any candidate for office.

We have worked diligently for the past few months to bring a (virtual) Candidate Forum to the Shore prior to Election Day, for the Senate and Congressional candidates. Unfortunately, we weren’t able to organize this. Scott Taylor declined to participate, and the Warner campaign was unable to make a commitment.

CBES encourages everyone to do their due diligence in researching those running, and to exercise their voting muscles!
**Tips for a Greener Home**

**Reduce Energy Usage**
- Don’t heat (or air-condition) an empty house. In winter, set the thermostat to 68°F when home and 55°F at night or when away. In summer, set it to 78°F when home and 82°F (or higher) when away. Use floor or ceiling fans to keep comfortable, but only run them if you’re in the room (they don’t actually cool, but move air to make you feel cool; the motor can actually increase heat in the room). If you can’t remember to change the settings, get a programmable thermostat.
- Your computer and other electronics are using energy even in sleep mode. Turn off the computer and monitor at the end of the day. Don’t leave your cell phone or other electronics on the charger overnight; charge during the day, and unplug as soon as they’re fully charged.
- Change incandescent bulbs to LEDs, which last much longer and use less energy.
- Switch to Energy Star-certified appliances when upgrading. Ask your dealer how to dispose of old appliances responsibly.
- Keep your freezer full – it will run more efficiently.
- Clean your refrigerator coils – it will release heat more efficiently.

**Reduce Materials**
- Reduce your paper usage – read the news online, e-file your taxes, and get statements and pay your bills online.
- If you do read paper magazines and newspapers, pass them along. Magazines can be donated to doctors’ offices (after the pandemic), local shelters, and libraries. Old newspapers can be donated to animal shelters.
- Buy in bigger quantities. For milk, buy a full gallon, pour half into a carafe, and freeze the rest. Anything that might spoil (cheese, lunch meats, salsa) can be cut into smaller portions and frozen.

**Other Tips**
- Buy a new houseplant (or several) – they’re great natural air purifiers and mood lifters.
- Switch from toxin-loaded dryer sheets to safer alternatives, such as wool dryer balls. Or switch to line-drying your wash.
- Switch to chemical-free cleaning products.
- Look for eco-friendly beauty products, fashion lines, and home décor.

Adapted from Sierra Club. Easy Tips for a Greener Home. 2020.

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**One More Ballot Referendum**

**Constitutional Amendment – Question #2**

Should an automobile or pickup truck that is owned and used primarily by or for a veteran of the United States armed forces or the Virginia National Guard who has a one hundred percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability be free from state and local taxation?

**Blood Drive Information**

**American Red Cross Blood Drives on the Eastern Shore**

**OCTOBER**
- Friday, October 9, 2020, 12 PM - 5 PM
  St. Charles Catholic Church, Social Hall
  550 Tazewell Avenue
  Cape Charles, VA 23310
- Wednesday, October 14, 2020, 11 AM - 3 PM
  Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital
  20480 Market Street
  Onancock, VA 23417
- Tuesday, October 20, 2020, 2 PM - 6 PM
  American Legion Northampton Post 56
  21210 S. Bayside Road
  Cheriton, VA 23316

**NOVEMBER**
- Wednesday, November 11, 2020, 12 PM - 5 PM
  Eastern Shore Community College
  29300 Lankford Highway
  Melfa, VA 23410

**DECEMBER**
- December 17, 2020, 2:30 PM - 6 PM
  American Legion Northampton Post 56
  21210 S. Bayside Road
  Cheriton, VA 23316
- Wednesday, December 23, 2020, 11 AM - 3 PM
  Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital
  20480 Market Street
  Onancock, VA 23417

This may not be an exhaustive list of local Blood Drives, and dates can change. Check the American Red Cross website to confirm and register.

https://www.redcrossblood.org
Redistricting Referendum, cont’d from p. 3

state legislature to a redistricting commission composed of state legislators and citizens.
• A “no” vote opposes transferring the power to draw the state’s congressional and legislative districts to a redistricting commission, thus keeping the state legislature responsible for redistricting.

Ed. note: For further history and analysis of Virginia redistricting, see
https://ballotpedia.org/Virginia_Redistricting_Commission_Amendment_(2020)

Correction

The September article on Social Equity contained an error: it incorrectly stated, “why did the community have to find out from a Washington newspaper that a huge state prison was coming to a tiny African-American neighborhood?” In fact, reporter Karen Jolly Davis, of The Virginian-Pilot, initiated coverage of the issue. ShoreLine regrets the misstatement.

PUMPKIN SOUP

Piles of pumpkins everywhere – it must be fall in the country. Pumpkin patch picking, corn mazes, jack-o-lanterns, and pumpkin pie. And soup. Even though those beautiful pumpkins are indeed, a fruit, many pumpkin soups are savory, flavored with garlic, onions, vegetables, and spicy condiments. Here’s a thick, lovely fall soup that falls somewhere between spicy-savory and pumpkin pie – a lot of fall flavor and a little bit of heat. You can roast a pumpkin yourself, or use canned pumpkin puree. Make it vegan by using vegetable broth and coconut milk. Add or delete spices and amounts to your taste. Here you go!

To roast pumpkin: cut in half, remove seeds and fibers, cut in smaller chunks, rub with olive oil, then roast in 425° oven for 35 minutes or until fork tender. Peel and mash.

• 2 cups pumpkin puree (fresh or 15 oz. canned)
• 1 carrot, grated
• Salt and pepper
• Warm spices to taste – cinnamon, allspice, cloves, nutmeg, ginger
• A bit of dried orange peel
• 1-2 tsp. chili powder
• 1-2 tbsp. maple syrup or honey, to taste
• 3-4 cups well-flavored broth
• 2-3 tbsp. lime juice
• Fresh thyme sprigs (or add ¼ tsp. dried thyme to warm spices)
• 1/2 cup heavy cream

Sauté grated carrot in a bit of olive oil until very soft, remove pan from heat, and add ALL the dry spices and orange peel. Stir to moisten and let spices bloom in the warmth, scrape spices and carrot into pot with pumpkin, and add broth to desired thickness. Add syrup/honey, lime juice, and thyme sprigs tied with string (if using) – simmer and stir very gently for 30 to 40 minutes, then taste for adjusted seasonings. Finish with cream, stir well, and garnish with thyme sprigs and a bit of yogurt or coconut cream. Serve warm, chilled, or at room temperature.

Community Calendar*

*NOTE: For current status of public meetings, go to the appropriate website or contact by email or phone.

CBES and Other Activities

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<td>3rd Tues</td>
<td>ES Ground Water Committee</td>
<td>10 AM, Accomac</td>
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<td>3rd Tues</td>
<td>CBES Board Meeting</td>
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Accomack County
757-787-5700
www.co.accomack.va.us

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<td>Board of Zoning Appeals</td>
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<td>3rd Tues</td>
<td>School Board</td>
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Northampton County
757-678-0440
www.co.northampton.va.us

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<td>School Board</td>
<td>6 PM, Machipongo</td>
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CBES HAS LOST ITS MAJOR FUNDRAISER CAN YOU HELP?

1. Consider a Larger Donation: Make in Memory or Honor of a Loved One
2. Membership: Join/ Renew/ Lifetime/ Give as Gift

CBES, P.O. Box 882, Eastville VA 23347 or online at www.cbess.org

THANK YOU