

## **26<sup>th</sup> Annual International Submerged Lands Management Conference**

### **Coastal GEMS (Geospatial and Educational Mapping System)**

**Speaker:** Laura McKay

**Abstract:** The Virginia CZM Program has struggled for years (at least since 1988) to develop an easily accessible comprehensive mapped inventory of coastal resources. Recent advances in technology, generous support from NOAA, and years of CZM grants to partner agencies to develop data layers have finally made it possible to create an internet mapping system that allows anyone to see Virginia's best remaining coastal resources on the land and in the water. Coastal GEMS (Geographic and Educational Mapping System) allows you to create maps by combining data layers from various agencies, academic institutions and non-profits through one portal that also links you back to source agencies and provides information fact sheets for each data layer.

**Speaker Information:** Laura McKay has been with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program since 1988 and the Manager since 1994. The Program networks state and local agencies to implement laws and policies to protect and enhance coastal resources. She has a Bachelor's in Environmental Studies from Smith College and a Master's in Public Administration from the Rockefeller Institute of Public Affairs at SUNY/Albany.