

26th Annual International Submerged Lands Management Conference

Use conflict: An emergent conundrum for land-use and water-use management in Virginia

Presenter: Lewis (Lewie) L. Lawrence

Abstract: As the Middle Peninsula continues to transition from less rural to more suburban, public policies that once served as management tools for terrestrial lands, public water bodies, and water use rights and privileges seem to have become inadequate. Conflicts between waterfront property owners, watermen, boaters, recreational fishermen, sportsmen, the aquaculture industries, and others seeking use rights and use privileges to the Commonwealth's water resources have become increasingly common. The historical balance between working waterfronts and residential development is changing to predominantly residential waterfront. Balancing the rights and privileges of all Virginians to access common public trust areas with private property ownership rights and concerns creates a management conundrum for local and state governments. Within, but not limited to the Middle Peninsula coastal landscape, especially within the area commonly referred to as the riparian zone, multi jurisdictional regulatory overlap exists. Overlapping jurisdiction causes confusion with elected officials, government staff and the general public leading to confusing and sometime inconsistent public policy. This presentation will give an overview of the York River Use Conflict Policy Recommendation Committee process. The committee has been studying existing local and state public policies and statutes that serve to manage and allocate shoreline and near shore area use, additionally the committee is attempting to determine the fairness and appropriateness of the current system and to make recommendations (if any) to improve the current use conflict management system.

Speaker Information: Lewis (Lewie) L. Lawrence currently serve as the Director of Regional Planning for the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission. Lewie received a Master's degree in City and Regional Planning from University of Memphis in May, 1996. He received a Bachelors degree in Business Administration, Real Estate, from Christopher Newport College. Born and raised in Gloucester County, Virginia, Lewie spent seven years working for the Virginia Institute of Marine Science onboard the Research Vessel *Langley* and *Bay Eagle*.