

Agenda

Coast Smart Council Quarter 4 Meeting

Dec 3, 2025 | 12:30pm - 1 :30pm

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401

Room C-1

OR

Meeting link: <https://meet.google.com/ctu-emeb-bic>

Or dial: (US) +1 315-646-8269 PIN: 189 849 946#

I. Welcome, Introductions & Review of Agenda

12:30 - 12:35

Secretary Kurtz (DNR), will open the meeting, call roll, and review the agenda.

- a. Action: Member approval of Aug 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes via vote
- b. Materials: [DRAFT Aug 27 CSC Meeting Notes](#)

House of Representatives	Delegate Stein ✗
DBM	Jason Wardrup ✓
MDE	Matt Rowe ✓
DGS	Spyros Papadimas ✓
MDP	Chuck Boyd ✓
MDOT	Allison Gost ✓
Commerce	John Papavasiliou ✗
CAC	Erik Fisher ✓
MDEM	Jesse Delph ✗
University System of Maryland	Dr. Fernando Miralles Wilhelm ✓
Comptroller's Office	Brooke E. Lierman; Kim Pezza for Comptroller ✓
Charles County Government	Beth Groth ✓
Blackbeard Biologic	Andrew Thaler ✓
Stantec Inc.	Rebecca Aiken ✗
UMD Civil and Environmental Engineering	Greg Baecher ✓
Crisfield Government	Mayor Darlene Taylor ✗

Secretary Kurtz provided an update that the first round of Coast Smart Regulations have been passed and will be effective December 11.

Secretary Kurtz asked for comments or discussion on the August meeting notes. Asked for a motion for approval. Chuck Boyd (MDP) motion to approve. Dr. Mirales-Wilhelm seconded. No abstentions and no opposition.

II. No Adverse Impacts – Riverine Flooding and Act 121 in Vermont 12:40 - 1:10

After major damage in July 2023, Vermont adopted Act 121 to comprehensively manage development in River Corridors and Flood Hazard Areas for flood resilience. Outreach and Education work is now underway before rulemaking. The Act will set stronger minimum no adverse impact standards for floodplain management by municipalities and protect mapped River Corridors by state permit. The Act also strengthens wetlands protections and dam safety. Ned Swanberg is the Vermont Flood Hazard Mapping Coordinator for the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Action: Informative talk

Materials: Slides to be presented

Flood Safety Act of 2024 - Reducing Flood Damage to Vermont Communities.

- Establishes statewide regulations of development in Mapped river corridors
- Establishes minimum no adverse impact standards
- #3 & 4 from the slides

Seeing increasing amounts of public assistance from FEMA following disasters.

Flooding damages happening to individuals (measured through NFIP), but also in infrastructure, loss of connectivity to schools, hospitals, etc. (Graph in slides). Shows that flood impacts are not just to those who live in the floodplain. Most people are not carrying adequate coverage so the NFIP values underestimate the impact to private dwellings. (90% without flood insurance).

NFIP - setting standards in the special flood hazard area. Some states (MD included) have stricter regulations beyond the requirements.

Vermont – damage is less from the wetness and more from the power of the water. Looking at both inundation in the special flood hazard area and the flood corridor – area around the streams that we expect to change over time. Alm is to have no negative impact and that includes the floodzone.

How do we build our houses, structures and functions that allows them to live along the Lewis Creek (see map in slides for variable alignment of the Creek).

Floodplains are an asset and work for VT. Storing floodwaters, reducing flood depths and erosive powers. Associated with aquifers and groundwater. Provide key habitats and important to people who live in VT.

LCBP 2011 slide is following Tropical Storm Irene. Working with EPA on their TMDL's. Flood events and instability of systems drive the major depositions of sediments (phosphorus, nitrogen, etc.) into the system.

A restricted or straightened river becomes deeper, more powerful and more destructive. "Protected River Corridor" allows the river to move over time, maintaining the slowest, least erosive path.

VT 75% streams and rivers in VT are in the adjustment phases (2-3) of the models – contributes to the instability.

Resource: [The Active River Area: A Conservation Framework](#). Also includes Implementation (?) Guides. [Living in Harmony with Streams: A Citizen's Handbook to How Streams Work](#) – includes encouragement to plan more densely to reduce encroachment into the areas adjacent to the rivers / river corridors.

River Corridor is defined by the State legislature (ANR River Corridor Protection Procedures 10 VSA symbol 1422(12))

- Efforts to map include dynamic buffers to identify areas where it could meander (Meander Belts). Led to the identification of the River Corridor with the meander center line. While it's not 100% effective (rivers will occasionally move beyond it), it does provide a good understanding of where the river will go.
- Some areas within the River Corridor are not wet.
- Overlay with the special flood hazard area – some alignment, other areas of non-alignment.
- Identified a stream restoration buffer.

Aim to allow the rivers to reestablish their least erosive path.

Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) Rates - a lot of rural communities can't afford the impacts. Community / state pickup of the gap in need/federal contribution is incentivized with reduced cost expectations on the communities. (see visual pie charts in slides).

Find it's been harder to move communities off start / through the regulation and flood preparedness planning in the absence of strict FEMA deadlines. Some are adopting River Corridor protections.

FARC rule – do the regulatory process as there was misalignment with local / state regulatory authority over various infrastructure and development. Current ask for FARC rule to be expanded to regulate development in the River Corridor area.

Regulations: they provide proposed flood hazard bylaws. Required minimum standards will be more strict than the current proposed.

Slides have visual examples of what development adjacent to the River Channel buffer could look like.

- Shadow Area
- Infill Area

[Flood Safety Act of 2024](#)

- Education and outreach – focused on flood impacted communities
- Infill Mapping – pilot study
- Rulemaking – in the rulemaking process right now. Statutory target 01/01/2028
 - Open question of how to get this done with variable zoning and capacity constraints across different municipalities

Slides include a snapshot from the infill mapping - includes homes adjacent to the river corridor.

- When is it allowable and appropriate to allow development in the infill area.

[Flood Ready Vermont](#)
[Flood Training Vermont](#)
[Vermont Flood Atlas](#)

River corridor protects us by allowing the river to move over time, maintaining the slowest possible path and reducing the erosive power (*I missed the end of this and it's not correct but it's in the slides*)

Question (Kate C.): In the first order mountain streams – are you facing challenges applying this in these areas? Maps you’ve provided show it more in the valley

- (A) Online maps have two versions. Mapped flood areas (jurisdiction of flood safety act), are only ones *with 2 mile (?) somethings*. Smaller first order streams coming down the mountain are often poorly placed. Harder group to categorize accurately. Not all the extent of all first order streams - but those with at least 0.25 / 0.5 mile of watershed are included in the maps and the towns are encouraged to take responsibility for them. They are considered protected with a 50ft. setback.

Question (William Den...): with MS report card, found people are moving into the floodplain for the MS river. (National trend but also seeing in MS). Are you seeing this in VT? Road to the River Program (Netherlands) – include “removal of obstacles” as an element, is that present in your program?

- (A) Always encouragement to build in unbuilt and undeveloped flat areas. Finding people want to build in the flood plain less frequently. And some communities are not allowing any development at all, they don’t have the interest or capacity to put people in harms way.
- Inspired by this work - and some of the work in VT has included buyouts of substantial damaged structures and for those who want to move. Flood Resilient Communities as match of FEMA money for high-and-dry communities that are dealing with erosion. Creating incentives to try and support this in a timely way, and move structures and people out of the meander zone.

Have tried to create areas for the river to move into, directing it. But it hasn’t been successful. We’re trying to just let the river move to where they want to go. Machines also compact the soil and change the microflora - having larger impacts to the areas.

Question (Natalie Snider): how are you managing state investments in these areas (in addition to the local focus)

- (A) First step in the process when the legislature realized the counties had no authority in the state. Moving to stop development in that corridor. Already in place for the state development. Was originally tightly linked. Significant and successful multi-agency partnership.
- Discussion to align incentives so that funding of one program isn’t discouraging progress on another program.
- In MD like VT, there are a lot of agricultural areas. In VT - AG is considered developed property and they’re allowed to armor those lands – which can have an impact on the capacity for implementing and managing the River Corridor.
 - Program to develop River Corridor easements to help the AG lands convert the land within the corridor and compensate the AG land owners.

III. Local Government Integration Discussion

1:10 - 1:25

Ryland Taylor (DNR) will lead a discussion to generate ideas on how we can better integrate the Coast Smart criteria into local government planning.

Action: Members come prepared to discuss current opportunities with local governments

Materials: [Prompting Questions](#)

Sec. Kurtz - State Agencies and the Council have been doing increased outreach to the locals to help them better understand the program and its requirements.

Ryland facilitating at

- How to better integrate knowledge of Coast Smart into processes that are already occurring at our agencies.

- Chuck Boyd (MDP) – providing technical assistance to local governments through their comprehensive planning processes. So they are aware of the processes for Coast Smart, inform them of the state roles and they can take it and apply it at the local level.
- Erik Fisher (CAC) - Critical Area, obvious opportunity as they interact often with local governments and are open to more engagement and connection. Find that the departments building things are not those that are planning things. Local jurisdictions floodplain ordinances vary significantly. Suggestion to look at the different ordinances and see who is doing innovative efforts.
- Kate Vogel (USWFS) - chat.
- What are the areas we're regularly interacting with local governments? Others on the call that work closely with the local governments?
 - Bridget Cantwell (MDEM) - Hazard Mitigation Plans
 - Dave Nemazie (UMCES) - Resilience Authorities – potential avenue for engagement. There are many research projects related to resilience – UMCES working with Cambridge with FEMA support.
 - Jason Wardrup (DBM) - intergovernmental monitor – state clearinghouse process. Opportunity for county comments on projects.

Request for participants to send additional thoughts and comments to Ryland ahead of the next meeting.

IV. Public Comment, Updates, & Next Steps

1:25 - 1:30

Soliciting for public comment from anyone on the call. No public comment.

Next Meeting: Feb 25, 2026 12:30-1:30

2026 meetings – final wednesday of the month → May 27, August 26, November 18 – meeting invitations will be forthcoming.

- Considering extending the August meeting to extend the Construction Program. Will finalize this decision at the February meeting.