

Smart Harbors

Winter 2026



Updates From Virginia Institute of Marine Science

CMP Best Management Practice of the Quarter - Low Impact Development

Using low impact development when expanding can help with runoff at your site. Some examples include green infrastructure (like rain gardens) and light imprint design (like adding a soccer field over a parking garage). [Click here for an EPA fact sheet.](#)

Why become a Virginia Clean Boater?

By adopting pollution prevention measures, Virginia Clean Boaters can take satisfaction in knowing they are doing their part to keep Virginia waterways clean, preserve our waterways for the future, and learn/teach clean boating habits. For more information, [click here for our Clean Boater webpage.](#)



Updated VA Clean Marina Recertification Checklists

The updated VA Clean Marina Program Recertification checklists have been posted to [our website](#). Next time you recertify, please use the updated version. If you'd like a copy emailed or mailed to you, please email acclark@vims.edu.

CMP Highlighted Marina – Lynnhaven Boat Ramp and Beach Facility

This quarter's highlighted marina is the newest Virginia Clean Marina, Lynnhaven Boat Ramp & Beach Facility.

Completed in December 2001, tucked in the Lynnhaven Inlet, Lynnhaven Boat Ramp & Beach Facility, stands as one of the premier public boating access facilities in the Tidewater region.

This facility features four concrete boat launch lanes with adjacent temporary mooring areas, 88 boat/trailer parking spaces, and 102 standard vehicle spaces. Amenities include restrooms with outdoor shower and foot rinse stations, changing areas, an informational kiosk, ample lighting and a security presence after hours. A pedestrian walkway beneath the Lesner Bridge provides convenient access to Ocean Park Beach on the Chesapeake Bay.

Launch fees are \$10 per use or \$150 for an annual pass. Additionally, 16-pound bags of ice are available for purchase onsite for \$5. The facility is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and welcomes both motorized and non-motorized watercraft.

Conveniently located near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, the Lynnhaven Boat Ramp offers direct access to both the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. It is a favorite among recreational boaters and anglers alike, providing excellent opportunities to catch a wide variety of saltwater species from both shore and boat.



Updates from External Partners

Upcoming Webinars / Training

Debris Containment and Disposal (Ohio Clean Marina Program) – [Debris containment video available here.](#)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Oyster Gardening

Interested in Oyster Gardening at your marina? Please contact acclark@vims.edu or Jlutzow@cbf.org for more information if you would like to partner with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.



Industry News

Supporting Fish Habitat Restoration at Smith Mountain Lake

From Smith Mountain Project, November 13, 2025

APCo employees recently assisted the [Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources \(DWR\)](#) with a habitat project designed to increase fish populations in Smith Mountain Lake.

The project involved constructing nursery structures that provide a safe haven for young fish. Each structure features eight posts with attached slats, allowing juvenile fish to escape predators, such as largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, striped bass and catfish — all of which are native to the lake.

In addition to allowing refuge, the structures promote the growth of algae, which serve as a vital food source for the young fish. Employees utilized the company's barge to expertly assemble the structures, which were then transported by the DWR to shallower waters, where they were strategically placed at an optimal depth of 12-15 feet.

Mark McGlothlin, maintenance supervisor at Smith Mountain and Leesville lakes, said the project has a positive impact on the lake's ecosystem.

"These structures will be in place just in time for the spawning season in early spring," he noted. "I'm confident we will see many juvenile fish congregating around them in March or April, using them as a safe refuge until they are mature enough to fend for themselves."

McGlothlin emphasized that this collaboration with DWR is a testament to the company's commitment to environmental stewardship. "This project represents just one of the many initiatives we undertake to preserve the natural beauty and ecosystem of the lake for future generations."

[Click here for a video from DWR.](#)

BoatUS Foundation Launches First National Database to Track Abandoned Boats and Derelict Vessels Across US

From BoatUS, November 5, 2025

The non-profit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water has developed [a database](#) that will identify the locations of abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV) across the U.S., freely associated states and U.S. territories and track their removal.

Created in partnership with the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Marine Debris Program](#), this national database will allow visitors to report abandoned and derelict vessels on their coastlines, allowing the issue to be better understood on a national scale with the support of the public. Eventually, this database will be able to track the impacts of removal and prevention efforts by showing how the number of ADVs across the country may one day decrease.

Abandoned and derelict vessels can crush or smother sensitive plants and corals, leach fuel and other pollutants into the water, threaten safe navigation, and contribute to economic losses. Removing ADVs is a costly effort, often averaging more than \$24,000 to remove a single boat.

"When we finally understand the scope of the problem, communities all over the country will be better able to remove abandoned and derelict vessels on their local coastlines," said BoatUS Foundation Director of Outreach Alanna Keating. "With the information the database provides, they will be able to know exactly where they need to dedicate resources, whether that be towards removing vessels or preventing them from becoming abandoned in the first place. This database is just one part of our critical work that could help make ADVs a thing of the past."

Along with the database, the BoatUS Foundation awarded grants this year to support ADV removal efforts across Alaska, Guam, Louisiana, Maine, North Carolina, Oregon, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Washington.

The database, regional removal grants, and efforts to raise awareness on boating-related debris disposal—including the Second annual "Turning the Tide" conference in New Orleans in December 2026—are supported by the NOAA Marine Debris Program.

Great egret caught in fishing line rescued at Stumpy Lake in Virginia Beach

From Ethan Krauss, Wavy News, December 5, 2025

A great egret caught in a fishing line in Stumpy Lake in Virginia Beach would have been left helpless if not for two good Samaritans.

It was another day of enjoying Stumpy Lake's natural scenery for Betty Sue Cohen, a bird photographer who visits the nature park several times per week.

During her usual stroll along the parks causeway, Cohen came across a saddening sight, an egret caught in a fishing line with no way out.

“I was on the causeway, the Stumpy causeway, walking when another photographer called and said there was an egret hanging by a wire,” Cohen said. “It was very sad. We love birds, so we were just trying to calm each other and calm the bird until a rescue person could get here.”

Cohen called Eastern Virginia Wildlife Rescue’s Robin Boehling, who without hesitation, jumped into the cold water to save the distressed bird.

“I just see the animal and I’m so focused on getting it,” Boehling said. “That’s just where my mind is. The first thing I wanted to do is just make sure I got the neck so that it wouldn’t bite me. He tried a few times, [but] he didn’t get me. There’s just a certain way you have to handle these birds and know what you’re doing so that you don’t get injured yourself.”

The egret was then taken to an animal rehabber to be checked out.

“She luckily got it into a vet right away, who did X-rays on it,” Boehling said. “There was no hook like we initially thought there might be, so we were able to release it later that afternoon. It was a beautiful release — it flew well over the lake. It was amazing.”

While the egret was left unharmed, Boehling and Cohen had a message to those responsible for the fishing line left in the tree.

“There are signs on the causeway that say, ‘Do not fish here,’ [and] ‘no fishing allowed,’” Cohen said. “We talk to the fishermen. They step over the wire that’s on the causeway and they say, we’re not on the causeway.”

“My team has responded to many, many birds at this location for that very thing, hanging by their wings, hanging by their feet,” Boehling said. “There’s so many things that could be prevented. If they see line hanging that’s accessible, they could easily just cut it down to prevent this sort of thing from happening in the future.”

Please Share Your News!

If you have any news that you would like included in the Clean Marina Newsletter, *Smart Harbors*, please let us know! This is a quarterly newsletter with the next issue scheduled for Spring 2026 and we would like to include information from the marina community. If you have comments or questions, please email the Virginia Clean Marina Program: askVCMP@vims.edu or acclark@vims.edu or call (804) 684-7768.

