

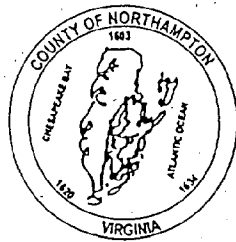
The
**Sustainable Development
Action Strategy**
for
**Northampton County,
Virginia**

Northampton County Board of Supervisors
Sustainable Development Task Force

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Action Strategy**
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Adopted by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994
Approved by the Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

JUNE 28, 1994



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sustain

1. to maintain; keep in existence; keep going.
2. to keep supplied with necessities; to provide for.

develop

1. to bring to full potential.
2. to build; cause to grow gradually.
3. to become larger, fuller, better.

*Capitalizing on and protecting
Northampton's world-class natural,
cultural, historic and human assets for
the ongoing benefit of all citizens.*

Resolution of Adoption

2

Summary

3

Introduction

4

Agriculture Industry

5

**Seafood/Aquaculture
Industry**

6

**Heritage Tourism
Industry**

7

**Arts/Crafts/Local
Products Industry**

8

**Research/Education
Industry**

9

New Industry

10

Foundation Documents

Resolution of Adoption

Northampton County Sustainable Development Action Strategy

WHEREAS, Northampton County suffers from serious poverty conditions which cause severe human suffering, which the community cannot in good conscience ignore, and which create the urgent need for development with immediate and lasting benefit for all of its people; and

WHEREAS, Northampton possesses valuable natural, cultural, historic and human assets supporting development, as well as difficult challenges and threats which must be overcome to successfully facilitate and sustain development; and

WHEREAS, valuable opportunities exist to build on the County's assets, overcome its challenges and protect against threats in order to develop industry that will provide good jobs and income for the County's people and create a healthy economy now and for the future; and

WHEREAS, on September 13, 1993 the Board of Supervisors appointed the Sustainable Development Task Force and charged it with the mission of "providing leadership for concerted action to capitalize on and protect Northampton's world-class natural, cultural, historic and human assets for the ongoing benefit of all citizens"; and

WHEREAS, in commencement of its mission, the Task Force has involved a broad cross section of Northampton County's diverse citizenry in creating a *Sustainable Development Action Strategy*, including a Community Development Workshop at Kiptopeke Elementary School on November 30, 1993; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has identified industries with realistic, significant, immediate and ongoing potential for development, including agriculture, seafood/aquaculture, heritage tourism, research/education arts/crafts/ local products, and is prepared to pursue these and additional new industries which complement these; and

WHEREAS, the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* conforms to the policies, goals, and objectives of the *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan* and implements all or part of the *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands plan, Blueprint for Economic Growth, and Special Area Management Plan*; and

WHEREAS, the County has been awarded a substantial grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program to implement a *Special Area Management Plan* with the interdependent goals of protecting the County's coastal resources and facilitating sustainable economic development based on these resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Northampton hereby adopts the Northampton County *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* as a coordinated County strategy to develop industry and to protect the assets on which industry depends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* shall serve as an implementation mechanism for the County's *Special Area Management Plan*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board charges the Sustainable Development Task Force to continue its mission by facilitating the actions called for by the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy*, bringing recommendations regarding specific actions to the Board as appropriate, and continuing to involve a complete cross section of Northampton County's diverse citizenry as this work goes forward. Any specific action by way of ordinance, funding, or enforceable policies shall require further action by the Board and nothing in this resolution shall be deemed to commit the Board to any future action.

Adopted this 28th day of June, 1994.

Eastville, Virginia

BY _____

Thomas H. Dixon, III,
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

Introduction

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Mission

On September 13, 1993, Northampton County embarked upon the *Sustainable Development Initiative*. On this date, the Northampton County Board of Supervisors appointed a Sustainable Development Task Force representing the diverse citizenry of the County and charged it with the mission of providing leadership for:

"concerted action to capitalize on and protect Northampton's world-class natural and cultural assets for the ongoing benefit of all citizens".

This mission is concise, but holds a depth of meaning to the local community:

Concerted action means coordinated, measurable tasks formulated, agreed to and carried out by the community and directed toward a common vision for the County's future.

Capitalize means to facilitate private investment which leads to good jobs and income, and which supports quality education, recreation, churches, medical facilities, government services, and all of the wide range of factors vital for thriving individuals, families and communities.

Protect means effective, enforceable policies and action to maintain the viability and health of the resources essential to Northampton's economy and quality of life.

World-class means those things unique to Northampton County and which set this place and people apart.

Natural assets means the things of Creation; those things made directly by the hand of God; the land, the water, and the plants and animals which inhabit them.

Cultural assets means the things of people - past and present - history, community, ethnic diversity.

Ongoing benefit means for immediate, continuing, and lasting improvement of peoples lives and living conditions; to provide economic, educational, social, and spiritual value for current and future generations.

Benefit all citizens means to improve the lives of everyone in the County, with a special emphasis on providing the means to make a living for those who are currently least in a position to help themselves.

The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* was developed by the Task Force as the first step in accomplishing this mission. The *Strategy*:

- o provides an organized framework for concerted action;
- o targets industries with immediate and ongoing job and income potential for the County;
- o identifies the natural and cultural assets which are vital to the start-up and ongoing profitability of these industries;
- o identifies specific actions to build these industries and protect these assets; and
- o provides for intensive involvement of the entire community throughout the development process.

Immediate Objectives

To accomplish its mission, Northampton County must achieve three interdependent objectives:

- 1. Sustainable Industries.** Develop industries which capitalize on Northampton's assets while supporting their protection and enhancement.
- 2. Asset Protection.** Protect and enhance the assets on which Northampton's sustainable industries depend for their full development and ongoing success.
- 3. Community Ownership.** Actively involve the entire Northampton community throughout the sustainable development effort.

Strategy Scope

The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* is a short range plan focusing on immediate action for the development of promising local industries and the protection of community assets vital to the success of these industries. As such, the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* is *short term* and *focused* in its scope. It deals with the development of basic industries (industries which bring new dollars into the community) and has a two and one-half year duration in which to complete its mission (the duration of current grant which funds it). The *Action Strategy* is coordinated with the other County planning and development documents being implemented or developed at this time which are *long range* and *comprehensive* in scope. These include the *Comprehensive Plan*, the *Blueprint for Economic Growth*, and the bi-county strategic plan being formulated as part of the *Enterprise Community* process. These plans are implemented over a period of five to ten years or more and involve all areas of community life.

This strategy involves public actions to facilitate private investment that simultaneously furthers the community's immediate development goals and the goals of private business while maintaining opportunities for the next generation to successfully pursue its goals - individually and collectively. Sustainable development happens through partnership. The community is supported by community groups, churches, academic institutions, business and

government. The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* provides the framework for coordinated development decisions by government, business, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions and community groups which have a vested interest in Northampton County and are committed to its success. It is up to the local community to set the climate for private development. For development to truly be sustainable, the local community collectively must set the parameters for development activities. The local community must take responsibility for its future and control its destiny. Major private efforts involving sustainable development are currently underway in Northampton County. The public actions of this Strategy will be critical to the success of these private efforts. Likewise, the successful and immediate demonstration of the potential of sustainable development to provide profitable return on private investment will be critical to the successful achievement of the mission and objectives of this strategy and will spur additional private investment in sustainable industrial activities.

Foundation Documents

The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* is based on four foundation documents created by the Northampton community in recent years: *Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands*, *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan*, *Blueprint for Economic Growth*, and *Special Area Management Plan*. The *Action Strategy* is in conformance with the spirit, letter and intent of each of these documents and specifically implements all or part of each of them. The Strategy does not replace or duplicate these documents. Rather, it provides a time table and citizen work force to accomplish specific objectives called for by these documents. The *Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands*, *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan*, *Blueprint for Economic Growth*, and *Special Area Management Plan* are appended to the *Action Strategy*.

Development Policy

The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* serves as the complete economic development policy for the County. The County contemplates no industrial development activity which is outside the scope of sustainable development as constituted in this Strategy. To be successful, the community must be concerted in its efforts. Valuable development activities urgently needed by the community must not be threatened by any short-term exploitive activities which by nature or design cannot be sustained. The type, quantity/intensity, timing/duration, location, design/management, local responsibility/authority, ownership/beneficiaries of development activities to be pursued shall be carefully considered to ensure attainment of full development potential and ongoing sustainability.

Community Profile

Northampton County is located at the southern tip of the Delmarva peninsula and occupies the southern half of Virginia's Eastern Shore. A slender landmass suspended between the Atlantic and the Chesapeake, the County is bounded by 225 miles of shoreline enclosing some 134,000 acres of prime cropland, saltmarsh and forest. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, its sole physical connection with the Virginia mainland, is a dramatic seventeen-mile span. Open landscapes and a pastoral atmosphere persist even in 1994 -- a small but distinct

interruption in the East Coast's solid line of seashore development. Founded in 1620, the County was one of the eight original shires of colonial Virginia. Today it is home to the oldest continuous court records in the United States, as well as a wealth of history, historic and archaeological sites, early buildings and artifacts.

But despite its gifts, Northampton has severe problems. It is the poorest county in the Commonwealth of Virginia, with a declining population and steep job losses resulting from reversals in its dominant seafood and agricultural industries. The Sustainable Development Initiative is a direct expression of the community's collective determination to insure a more prosperous and hopeful future for all its citizens.

Development Urgency

Northampton County is the most impoverished of the 136 counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia. According to the 1990 census, twenty-seven percent of the County's 13,000 inhabitants live in poverty compared with 10.2 percent statewide. Much of the poverty is concentrated in the African American population, which is forty-seven percent of the total population. Sixty-four percent of families with female heads of households and children under age 18 live below the poverty level. This number increases to seventy percent in households with children under five.

Large numbers of the population are either unemployed, underemployed, or working for minimum wage in part time jobs. According to the census, 30% of the residents earn less than \$10,000 and half of those residents have annual incomes of less than \$5,000. Unemployment in 1991 measured 9.4% compared to 5.8% statewide. Many of Northampton's residents have only seasonal employment. More than 1500 jobs have been lost during the past five years due to seafood and vegetable processing plants closing, manual farm labor disappearing, and seafood not replenishing to the degree that is necessary for substantial harvesting. In fact, total employment dropped six percent from the third quarter of 1988 to the third quarter of 1992. Total wages (in 1992 dollars) dropped eleven percent during the same 1988 to 1992 period.

Twelve percent of housing units lack indoor plumbing and eight percent lack complete kitchen facilities. At least nine percent of homes do not have a central heating system and ten percent do not have indoor toilet facilities. Over thirty percent of the County's housing stock was built prior to 1940. As there are almost no affordable rental units that meet minimal standards of safety, families are forced to rent from slum landlords whose units are substandard and lack indoor plumbing. Many houses have started to collapse due to age and neglect, so that an already insufficient housing stock is continually shrinking. Many former dwellings stand empty and quickly deteriorate because absentee heirs cannot reach agreement as to the disposition of the property. Forty-two percent of the renter population pays thirty-five percent or more of its income for housing. Due to the lack of housing, every available dwelling is full or overcrowded. It is not unusual to find two or three families sharing a three- or four-room house.

Perhaps the most revealing economic composite of Northampton County is the 20.5% of Northampton County residents over 25 who have less than a ninth-grade education compared to 11.2% in the State. Further, only 10.1% of Eastern Shore residents have obtained bachelor degrees or higher compared with 24.5% for the State. The low educational attainment of the County's work force further limits industrial development. Northampton County continues to see out migration (decreased population for the past three census) and a rising level of unemployment.

Compounding these obvious housing, employment, educational, and income problems are the dire straits Northampton County faces as a municipal government where it has been ranked as the second most fiscally stressed locality out of 136 in the Commonwealth.

Community Ownership

The people of Northampton County have collectively created the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy*. The County's people are responsible for carrying out its objectives. The community - through its elected Board of Supervisors - has entrusted the Sustainable Development Task Force with providing the leadership for both the formulation and the implementation of the *Strategy*.

Task Force

The mission of the Task Force is to provide leadership to achieve the County's goal of building a strong economy which capitalizes on and protects its world-class natural and cultural assets for the benefit of *all* citizens. The focus of the Task Force is on building consensus for specific actions to achieve this goal. It is working in partnership with groups from throughout the County and is working to actively involve the entire Northampton community in this effort.

The Task Force involves the complete range of interests of Northampton's people, including economic interests, human interests, environmental interests, agriculture, seafood, tourism, business, finance, government, natural and cultural resources, housing, neighborhoods, communities, churches, education, arts, youth, towns and villages. The Task Force reflects the multi-cultural makeup of the County with members of Native-American, African-American and European-American heritage. The Task Force has made a special effort to include low income and less advantaged groups of the County's population. More than sixty community groups active in Northampton and more than sixty churches have been involved and will continue to be included as the work goes forward. Northampton's people are involved through representation on the Task Force, community workshops, field trips, presentations and discussions at meetings of specific community organizations, and special events. Through this extensive involvement, the Task Force has created a plan of action which is owned by *the people* of Northampton County. It is committed to ensuring that the results of this plan are also owned by *the people* of Northampton County.

Community Workshop

Creation of the *Action Strategy* began with the *Sustainable Development Workshop* held on November 30, 1993 at Kiptopeke Elementary School. The workshop was attended by more than 200 participants from throughout the County and representing a cross section of the County's population. The workshop was a community-wide event. All County residents were actively encouraged to attend and participate.

The workshop involved participants in determining strategies that the community wishes to pursue to achieve and sustain a healthy economy and quality of life. The main goal of the event was to begin to build consensus among the many diverse interests within Northampton County for a program of action that will achieve a sustainable economic future. The workshop focused on: 1) development of industries with immediate and ongoing potential to provide good jobs and revenue to benefit *all* of Northampton's people, and 2) protection of the community assets on which these industries rely.

At the Workshop, participants shared their visions for the ideal future of the County and actions to achieve that vision. They then worked in small groups to articulate specific assets, liabilities, opportunities and threats that must be considered in achieving that vision. The groups completed their work by outlining actions aimed at developing a specific industry and protecting the assets on which that industry relies. These visions, assets, liabilities, opportunities, threats, and action ideas generated at the workshop are the basis for the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy*. The Strategy will serve as the work program for the Task Force over the next two years as it continues to carry out the community's development mission.

Development Conditions

To fully develop and sustain industry and an overall healthy economy, Northampton must consider current development conditions both internal and external to the County. These conditions include assets, challenges, opportunities and threats. Northampton's development conditions were evaluated by the County's citizens at the Sustainable Development Workshop on November 30, 1993 and were further analyzed by the six target industry task forces. A comprehensive array of the County's development assets, challenges, opportunities and threats is included in the strategy sections for each of the County's targeted industries.

Assets

Assets are community strengths which contribute to the development and ongoing success of the local economy and the specific industries on which it is based. If an industry is to be sustained, the viability of the assets upon which it relies must be sustained. Assets serve as the community's competitive advantages that set it apart from other localities. These are the qualities the community must capitalize on and take care of. The County's assets include its young people, its skilled artisans and experienced retirees, its vast coastal wilderness, barrier islands, wildlife refuges, productive farmland, marshes, and globally-important concentration point for migratory birds. The County's cultural assets include its history, historic towns, rural

landscape of farms and villages.

Challenges

Along with its strengths, the community must consider its weaknesses or liabilities. These are *challenges* which must be overcome to successfully build and sustain industry, both new and existing, and a healthy economy. Liabilities will inhibit or erode development if not dealt with directly by the community. Northampton's liability challenges include substandard housing, low literacy rate, limited fresh water, low educational attainment rate, and very few permanent and long term employment opportunities.

Opportunities

Opportunities are potential activities and other factors that could be taken advantage of by the community to develop industry and build a healthy economy. Opportunities can be used to build on assets and overcome liabilities. Valuable development opportunities are available to Northampton County.

Threats

Threats are potential activities that could destroy the community's assets, increase its liabilities and prevent it from achieving a healthy economy now or in the future. Threats must be carefully identified and diligently guarded against if a community is to be successful in developing and sustaining its economy. Threats currently facing Northampton County include suburban sprawl/strip residential and commercial building, loss of unique identity, heavy shoreline residential development, fragmented community, and mismanagement of our resources.

Development Potential

The community has targeted five existing industries with immediate and ongoing potential to provide good jobs, income and revenue. These industries can be sustained indefinitely if developed and managed wisely. In addition, the community is actively seeking other promising sustainable industries. These target industries include agriculture, seafood/aquaculture, heritage tourism, arts/crafts/local products, research/education, value-added produce/seafood, and new industry. These industries have significant development potential.

Agriculture

Throughout the county's long history, agriculture - along with seafood - has been the mainstay of the local economy. Today, agriculture continues as the largest component of Northampton County's economy by a large margin. With total industrial output exceeding \$68 million annually, this sector drives the rest of the local economy. According to a 1993 analysis by the Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, agriculture supports more than 450 full time jobs in Northampton County and provides a net fiscal benefit (taxes minus cost of services) exceeding \$400,000 annually.

A recent analysis by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University of the economic potential of agriculture in Northampton County indicated that the level of industrial output can be maintained and that the number of agriculture jobs can be doubled while producing the current mix of crops and using alternative, low-input agricultural practices.

The growing number of health-conscious American consumers and the growing demand for fresh produce, specialty produce and chemical-free "organic" produce present significant market opportunities for Northampton County. The County's proximity to Southeast Virginia's 1.1 million people and to major East Coast cities offers a large and continuous potential market for its agricultural products. The bottom line is that agriculture is big industry in Northampton County, can stay big and grow. Agriculture can be carried on with little negative environmental impact while maintaining profitability and doubling the number of local jobs which it supports.

Seafood and Aquaculture

Throughout the County's history, watermen have harvested vast quantities of fin and shellfish from Northampton's bayside and seaside waters. For nearly 400 years, seafood, along with agriculture, has supported the local economy. In recent years, the Northampton County seafood industry (excluding aquaculture) has generated approximately \$6.8 million in income annually and supported 478 jobs.

Since the late 1980's, aquaculture has come to play a very significant role in Northampton's economy. Northampton County's Cherrystone Aquafarms is one of the largest clam producers in North America with an annual harvest approaching 50 million clams and valued at over \$7 million. There are other growing clam hatcheries in the County as well as some soft shell crabbing operations. Aquaculture currently supports approximately 95 full- and part-time jobs in Northampton County and its economic impact is estimated at \$10.5 million. Currently, Northampton's aquaculture industry is built on a thriving hard clam market, but local producers in conjunction with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science are developing the culture of scallops, oysters, soft clams and ribbed mussels, as well as finfish products. This will vastly expand and diversify Northampton County's seafood and aquaculture industry to meet world-wide demand.

Demand for Northampton County's seafood products is increasing. Diminishing areas of clean, disease-free water and seafood world-wide coupled with Northampton County's and Virginia's reputation for consistently clean, high quality seafood has resulted in a high level of market acceptance for Northampton County seafood.

Heritage Tourism

Heritage Tourism is defined as recreational travel activities which depend on the appreciation, interpretation and protection of the community's authentic natural, scenic, recreational, historical and cultural assets. The heritage tourism industry in Northampton County is a significant component of Northampton's economy. People engaged in recreation, travel, and

tourism in the county spent a total of \$9.9 million on lodging, restaurants, retail groceries, fuel and oil, and other goods and services in 1992. This initial spending generated \$14,297,200 in direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts and supported 454 jobs.

There were an estimated 70,300 recreation party-trips in Northampton County in 1992 for fishing, boating, sightseeing, observing wildlife, visiting historic sites and other travel activities. These parties spent an average of \$203 in Northampton County.

Fishing and boating on the Bay are the primary attractions for tourists and recreationists visiting the county. The First Annual *Eastern Shore Birding Festival*, held in October 1993 during the peak of fall migration, demonstrated the potential of birding to the County. Bird-watching tourists brought \$52,000 into the County during the two-day event, the equivalent of nearly two full-time, permanent jobs. Northampton County is known for its place in the annual *Historic Garden Tour* held each April.

Given the outstanding cultural and natural resources found in Northampton County, it is likely that the county can attract a much larger share of the east coast tourism market. Demand for nature-based and heritage-based tourism outlets is great. According to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service study, over 3 million people in Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania reported traveling for the purpose of observing, feeding, or photographing fish and wildlife in 1991. In pursuit of these activities, residents of these three states spent over \$819 million on food, lodging, transportation and other trip-related expenses, and \$952 million on equipment.

According to the United States Congress Office of Technology Assessment, tourism has recently emerged as the world's largest industry. Its data for recent years show that travelers and tourists in the U.S. spent \$350 billion, generated 5.8 million jobs and produced \$4.8 billion in local tax revenues annually. Moreover, tourism is a growing industry worldwide. One study projects 8% growth in world tourism overall, with 10% to 15% growth expected in adventure/cultural tourism, and 25% to 30% growth in nature-based tourism. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that 7 out of every 10 jobs generated in the 1990's will be in tourism.

Arts/Crafts/Local Products

Production and sales of indigenous arts, crafts and other local products have proven to add significantly to rural economies with similarities to Northampton. Successful arts/crafts guilds and cooperatives in other communities suggest how a strong and thriving arts/crafts/and local products industry could improve the County's economy.

One such cooperative is the Watermark Association of Artisans based in coastal North Carolina. The Watermark cooperative is a large association of 750 member-artisans that produces, markets, and distributes large volumes of hand-made baskets, quilts, decorative wooden items, dolls, wreaths, and other items. In 1992, its 15th year in production, Watermark sales totaled \$664,000, nearly 90% through their wholesale catalog outlet. The total impact of Watermark on the rural Camden County, North Carolina economy is more

than \$1 million annually.

Research and Education

Research and education activities currently bring significant new dollars into Northampton County. Total known research expenditures in the county in 1992 amounted to about \$377,500 and supported 25 local jobs. These expenditures generated \$691,200 in direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts. In 1992, there were seven reported research groups active in the county spending over 5,900 research days. However, research and education activities in Northampton County have the potential to be significantly expanded beyond current levels. Old Dominion University, in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy, announced in 1993 its intentions to establish the *Virginia Coast Institute*, a research facility dedicated to the applied study of sustainable development. As this research facility evolves into a large center sponsored by a consortium of universities and other research concerns, its impact on the community should be substantial.

Northampton County is an ideal location for specialized research requiring the presence of relatively unspoiled coastal natural and cultural systems which are becoming increasingly rare throughout the world. For example, the importance of Northampton County for resident and migrating birds has generated much interest among researchers at nearby universities and research institutions. The unique hydrogeology of the Eastern Shore has also generated research activity in the County. Efforts of the Long Term Ecological Research Center headquartered in Oyster and the research activities of numerous institutions and agencies within the County demonstrate the significant potential for research and education in Northampton.

In addition to pure research activities, adult/youth education programs hold significant potential to bring income to the County in the support of jobs, revenue and improved quality of life. Organizations which could potentially include Northampton County in their existing national/international education programs include Elder Hostel, Marine Science Consortium, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, Outward Bound, World Watch, and others.

Value-Added Produce/Seafood

A recent analysis by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University of the economic potential of targeted industries in Northampton County indicated that the local agriculture and seafood/aquaculture industries could support development of a value-added produce/seafood industry with an estimated potential of more than \$20 million in gross regional product and more than 500 jobs. The growing number of health-conscious American consumers and the growing demand for fresh produce and seafood, specialty products and chemical-free products grown in clean waters and "organic" soils present significant market opportunities for Northampton County.

New Industry

Promising opportunities exist for Northampton County to develop new industries which provide well-paying jobs with benefits, provide a diversified tax base, improve the quality of life of the County's people and retain its young people as they enter the work force. Efforts must include development of new local industry and retainment of existing industry as well as recruiting relocation and expansion of appropriate industries to the County.

If the community is to be successful in developing, recruiting and sustaining new industry, it must preserve and enhance its valuable competitive advantages including its unique character and sense of place, its quality of life, its natural environment, as well as many other assets. Schools must be kept at high levels. Limited-but-adequate groundwater must be protected and managed wisely. Infrastructure, such as water and sewer, as well as new retail, service and cultural facilities, must be developed to serve development focused in our identified village/town growth areas to assist in developing/recruiting/retaining new, as well as existing industry.

Target Industries/Vital Assets

Each of these target industries depends on many factors for its development and ongoing success, but each is based upon one or more fundamental "vital assets". These are "make or break" assets, without which the industry cannot remain viable. Ultimately these industries, the assets they are built upon, and the people of the local community who are responsible for development of these industries and stewardship of these assets are each dependant one upon the other. Northampton County's targeted industries and corresponding vital assets are:

- o Agriculture/Productive Land
- o Seafood and Aquaculture/Clean Water
- o Heritage Tourism/Preserved Natural and Cultural Resources
- o Arts, Crafts and Local Products/Culturally-Diverse and Authentic Community
- o Research and Education/Intact Natural and Cultural Systems
- o New Industry/Sense of Place, Quality of Life, Adequate Fresh Water

Development Implementation

Target Industry Task Forces

To effectively manage the creation and implementation of the *Action Strategy*, the Sustainable Development Task Force formed itself into the following target-industry task forces. Working as subcommittees of the overall Task Force, these six groups are focused on development of specific industries and protection of the key assets on which each industry relies:

1. **Agriculture Task Force** - focus on development of the agriculture industry and protection of productive land;
2. **Seafood/Aquaculture Task Force** - focus on development of the seafood/aquaculture industry and protection of water quality;

3. Heritage Tourism Task Force - focus on development of the heritage tourism industry and protection of preserved natural and cultural assets;

4. Arts/Crafts/Local Products Task Force - focus on development of the arts/crafts/local products industry and protection of a culturally-diverse and authentic community;

5. Research/Education Task Force - focus on development of the research and education industry and protection of intact natural and cultural systems

6. New Industry Task Force - focus on development of new sustainable industry and protection of sense of place, quality of life and groundwater.

Budget and Funding

Development of the Sustainable Development Action Strategy was funded by the County's *Special Area Management Plan* grant. Its implementation will be primarily funded by the SAMP grant as well. The *Action Strategy* is the implementation mechanism for SAMP. The allocation of Fiscal Year 1993 funds has already been applied for and approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the funding agency. The budget for Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 will be formulated by the target industry task forces subject to approval by the Sustainable Development Task Force, County Board of Supervisors and NOAA.

Measures of Success

The focus of this strategy is a program of achievable, measurable actions. Accomplishment of these actions will provide immediate tangible successes. However, these immediate objectives are only a means to an end. They are not an end in themselves. The true measures of success must come in the enhancement of the community's economic, social and environmental health. Specific indicators to be tracked in each of these areas include:

Economic Indicators

Social Indicators

Environmental Indicators

Sustainable Development Concept

Sustainable Development, according to the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, is "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." At the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, representatives from 180 nations gathered "to promote sustainable and environmentally sound development." Sustainable development has three defining principles. It is development which is *economically viable*,

environmentally responsible, and *socially equitable*. Sustainable development requires a long term planning and policy perspective. It must build upon and reinforce the interdependence of people, the economy, and the environment.

Early in this century Theodore Roosevelt wrote, "the nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation, increased and not impaired in value". Perhaps the earliest reference to the concept is in the Book of Genesis, where in the story of creation Moses wrote, "The Lord God [put humankind in Creation] to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15). Here are simply stated the interdependent responsibilities of humankind to derive a living from Creation - "to work it" - and to be its continuing stewards - "to take care of it".

Factors which determine Sustainability

No industry or development activity can be considered "sustainable" in and of itself. Sustainability depends not only on *what* is done, but also on *how* it is done, *how much* is done, *when* and *where* it is done, *who* does it and *who benefits* from it. The factors which determine sustainability include:

1. Type of Development Activity
2. Quantity and Intensity
3. Timing and Duration
4. Location
5. Design and Management
6. Responsibility/Authority
7. Owners/Beneficiaries

Northampton's Sustainable Development Legacy

Sustainable development is not a new concept to Northampton County and Virginia's Eastern Shore. For centuries the native peoples were sustained by the great abundance of fish, shellfish, deer and fowl of the waters, land and forests of this narrow strip of land between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The Native Americans understood their interdependence with Creation. They knew that with proper stewardship, they could count on a continuing harvest. Upon their arrival nearly 400 years ago, African and European settlers soon learned that if worked and cared for properly, Northampton County's soils, the shellfish beds of its shallow waters, and the fisheries of its creeks and bays would yield an abundant crop year after year, season after season.

Although there has been much discussion, nationally and internationally, in recent years about the definition and philosophy of the term "*sustainable development*", the Northampton community has made it clear that it is not concerned with merely defining or talking about the concept. Rather, the County is working to put the principles of sustainable development into action. The 1990 *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan* states: "it shall be the development policy of Northampton County to promote agriculture, seafood, tourism, and compatible industries; to protect and enhance its fragile environment, natural resources and

rural character while permitting environmentally compatible economic growth and improvement to the cultural and socio-economic well being of its citizens both present and future."

The local community has engaged in efforts to derive jobs and income from its resources in ways that protect and enhance these resources and that benefit all of its people equitably. The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* is the direct result of these efforts, as are its foundation documents, the *Special Area Management Plan*, *A Blueprint For Economic Growth*, the *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan* and *Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands*.

Agriculture Industry

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Adopted by Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994

Approved by Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

Approved by Agriculture Task Force - May 17, 1994

DEVELOP AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY/ PROTECT PRODUCTIVE LAND

Mission & Goals

Return local agriculture to its historic economic level in a manner which sustains the industry at its full economic potential and maintains productive locally-owned farm land and farms for the ongoing benefit of all citizens and future generations. To accomplish this mission, Northampton County must:

1. Keep Northampton's adequate-but-limited supply of agricultural land in production by maintaining the County's pattern of compact villages and towns.
2. Rationally and fairly reform the means of financing local government services to a system which would encourage business investment, rather than relying on the speculative residential and/or commercial potential of land.
3. Maximize the market for Northampton County agricultural products and pursue local industry which adds value to products to maximize local agricultural jobs, tax revenue, markets for local producers, and benefits to the local economy/community.
4. Educate the community on current efforts of agricultural producers to protect water and environmental resources and continue to explore and introduce sensible, voluntary practices to minimize chemical inputs and to ensure ongoing viability of the County's valuable ecosystems and the continuing health and productivity of its land and water.
5. Involve all agricultural producers and the entire Northampton community in efforts to develop the agriculture industry and protect the resources on which it relies.

Industry Potential

Throughout the county's long history, agriculture - along with seafood - has been the mainstay of the local economy. Today, agriculture continues as the largest component of Northampton County's economy by a large margin. With total industrial output exceeding \$68 million annually, this sector drives the rest of the local economy. According to a 1993 analysis by the Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, agriculture supports more than 450 full time jobs in Northampton County and provides a net fiscal benefit (taxes minus cost of services) exceeding \$400,000 annually.

Agriculture has continued as the mainstay of the local economy even as the importance of this industry has declined throughout Virginia overall. The amount of cropland harvested in Northampton County has remained between about 36,000 acres and 50,000 acres throughout most of this century. Northampton is one of Virginia's largest producers of commercial

vegetables, even though the trend has been to diversify into small grains, soybeans, and nursery production.

A recent analysis by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University of the economic potential of agriculture in Northampton County indicated that the level of industrial output can be maintained and that the number of agriculture jobs can be doubled while producing the current mix of crops and using alternative, low-input agricultural practices. This analysis also indicated that the local agriculture industry could support development of a Northampton County value-added produce industry with an estimated potential of more than \$20 million in gross regional product and more than 500 jobs. The growing number of health-conscious American consumers and the growing demand for fresh produce, specialty produce and chemical-free "organic" produce present significant market opportunities for Northampton County. The County's proximity to Southeast Virginia's 1.1 million people and to major East Coast cities offers a large and continuous potential market for its agricultural products.

The bottom line is that agriculture is big industry in Northampton County, can stay big and grow. Agriculture and the rural community which it makes possible, is vital to the development and sustainability of other important local industry, including heritage tourism, arts/crafts/local products and value-added produce/seafood. Agriculture can be carried on with little negative environmental impact while maintaining profitability and doubling the number of local jobs which it supports.

To fully develop and sustain the agriculture industry, Northampton County must consider the following assets, challenges, opportunities and threats.

Assets

Community strengths which support full development of the agriculture industry in Northampton County include:

- o fertile agricultural land;
- o agricultural services and support infrastructure;
- o available experienced labor;
- o farming tradition;
- o excellent reputation and market acceptance of Northampton produce;
- o rural villages and communities;
- o productive farms, nurseries and forests.

Challenges

Major hurdles that must be overcome to fully develop and sustain agriculture in Northampton County include:

- o local tax structure based on farmland's speculative residential/commercial development potential;

- o diminishing markets;
- o increasing reliance on and costs of fertilizer, pesticides, other chemicals and irrigation;
- o increasing development pressure on farm land;

Opportunities

Activities/factors with promise to support the development and ongoing viability of the agriculture industry in Northampton County:

- o large and growing new markets for fresh vegetable products, organically-grown produce and specialty farm products;
- o proximity to large metropolitan areas;

Threats

Current/potential activities that could prevent or destroy our ability to develop and sustain the agriculture industry in Northampton County:

- o loss and fragmentation of productive land to suburban sprawl development;
- o loss of local supply/service businesses and other infrastructure needed to support agricultural operations;
- o loss of farm communities, small towns and villages;
- o conversion of quality agriculture, nursery and forest land to residential and other uses;
- o loss of market share to other agricultural-producing areas;
- o taxing of farmland based on the value of its suburban and waterfront residential/commercial development potential rather than its crop-producing potential.
- o attitude that farming is a dead/dying industry locally and throughout America;

Actions

Actions to develop and sustain the agriculture industry in Northampton by building on the County's assets, overcoming its liabilities, taking advantage of opportunities and protecting against threats:

Priority Actions

1. Value of Local Agriculture Industry. Perform a detailed analysis of the costs and benefits of the agriculture industry in Northampton County. Include an analysis of the land acreage and location required to sustain a viable agriculture industry in the County. Also include analysis of the economic, fiscal, environmental and social benefits of preserving agricultural land and steering development toward compact rural towns and villages in the County's historic settlement pattern versus sprawling suburban patterns and strip commercial development along U. S. 13.

2. *New Agricultural Markets/Products.* Identify and develop new agricultural markets for products that can be produced profitably by Northampton County farmers. Support and take maximum advantage of the Eastern Shore Farmers Market and identify and pursue opportunities for direct marketing of the County's produce to retail outlets and consumers in nearby urban centers.

3. *Value-Added Products.* Identify and explore development of marketable value-added products and means for profitably producing such products. Coordinate with seafood and Aquaculture Task Force to include value-added seafood and combination products.

4. *Agriculture Field Trips.* Facilitate field trips to educate community leaders and the citizenry regarding agriculture and the assets, opportunities, threats and action needed to develop and sustain it as a viable local industry.

5. *Agriculture Community Workshop.* Sponsor a community workshop which involves agricultural producers and the Northampton community in actions to fully develop and sustain the local agriculture industry. This will be held in January 1995 in conjunction with the annual agricultural conference.

6. *Low-input/Organic Farming.* Explore product markets for and feasibility of low-input and organic produce and implement demonstration projects for promising new products.

Actions to Support Work by Others

1. *Village Zoning Ordinance.* Review the Zoning Ordinance currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure inclusion of effective provisions and incentives for clustering development to preserve productive agricultural and forest land.

2. *Village Zoning Map.* Review the Zoning Map currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure designation of towns and villages as the focal points of residential, commercial and industrial development to preserve productive agriculture, nursery and forest land.

3. *Village Revitalization Strategy.* Work with the other industry task forces in the development of a county-wide town and village revitalization strategy to ensure coordination of village revitalization with protection of the most productive agricultural lands.

4. *Diversified Tax Base.* Work with and support groups engaged in development of a diversified business/industrial tax base compatible with the continued viability of the agriculture industry in Northampton County.

5. *Use Value Taxation.* Work with and support efforts to rationally and fairly reform the means of financing local government services to a system which is supported by exported industrial products/services and visiting tourists, rather than the speculative residential and/or commercial potential of land.

6. Conservation Easements. Work with interested community groups to formulate and implement a local strategy to facilitate voluntary placement of conservation easements on agricultural, nursery and forest land to remove all or a portion of the development potential and corresponding tax burden from land designated by its owner to be permanently maintained in agricultural use. Granting of such easements would be at the discretion of the property owner and could be held by a qualified regional "land trust" organization operating in Northampton County (Chesapeake Bay Foundation or The Nature Conservancy) or state agency (Virginia Outdoors Foundation).

7. Village/Town Infrastructure. Support efforts to provide water, sewer, and other infrastructure which facilitates a settlement pattern of small, compact villages and towns based on the County's historic settlement sites, each surrounded by productive farmland and/or forest.

Potential Future Actions

1. Transfer of Development Rights. As permitted by state enabling legislation, explore development of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program or similar program which most equitably steers residential/commercial development to compact town/village growth areas and away from productive agriculture, forest, and nursery land.

Agriculture Task Force

focus on development of the agriculture industry and protection of productive land

Task Force

Ms. Christine Tankard, *Chairman*
26109 Lankford Highway
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-3965 (h)

Mr. Roger Buyrn
P. O. Box 2080
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
678-7232 (h)

Mr. J.W. Nottingham, III
P.O. Box 383
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-7666 (h) 442-9237 (o)

Mr. Steve Parker
P.O. Box 158
Nassawadox, Virginia 23347
442-5418 (h) 442-3049 (o)

Ms. Mary Peacock
P.O. Box 1047
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
678-5207 (h)

Mr. Bruce Richardson
P.O. Box 22
Capeville, Virginia 23313
331-1997 (h)

Mr. Phillip B. Tankard
RFD Box 425
Machipongo, Virginia 23405
678-5297 (h) 442-6112 (o)

Resource Persons

Ms. Caroline Butler
City of Hampton
22 Lincoln Street
Hampton, Virginia 23669
727-6140 (o)

Mr. Fred Diem
Northampton County Extension Agent
P.O. Box 457
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-7709 (h) 678-0453 (o)

Mr. John Humphrey
Northampton County Department of
Planning & Zoning
P.O. Box 538
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-0443 (o)

Mr. Thomas G. Johnson
Dept. of Agricultural Economics
Virginia Tech.
Blackburg, Virginia 24061
(703) 382-5327 (h) (703) 231-6461 (o)

Mr. Rodney Lewis
Eastern Shore Soil &
Water Conservation District
P.O. Box 127
Accomac, Virginia 23301
787-1251 (o)

Mr. Denard Spady
Northampton Joint Local
Planning Commission
Townsend, Virginia 23443
331-1211 (h)

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTION	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS *			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			COMPLETION	
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Value of Local Agriculture Industry		1,000							
2. New Agricultural Markets/Products									
3. Value-Added Products									
4. Agriculture Field Trips									
5. Agriculture Community Workshop									
6. Low-input/Organic Farming									
* Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT WORK BY OTHERS

ACTIONS BY OTHERS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Village Zoning Ordinance									
2. Village Zoning Map									
3. Village Revitalization Strategy									
4. Diversified Tax Base									
5. Use Value Taxation									
6. Conservation Easements									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.		Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force							

Seafood & Aquaculture Industry

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Adopted by Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994

Approved by Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

Approved by Seafood & Aquaculture Task Force - May 17, 1994

DEVELOP SEAFOOD & AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY/ PROTECT WATER QUALITY

Mission & Goals

Develop a strong Seafood & Aquaculture Industry in Northampton County and protect the high water quality of the County's Seaside and Bayside waters.

1. Restore and maintain a sustainable local seafood industry based on the harvesting of wild stocks of local shellfish and finfish.
2. Develop to full potential a sustainable local seafood industry based on the culturing of shellfish and finfish.
3. Protect water quality from both point-source and nonpoint-source contamination;
4. Maximize the local seafood & aquaculture industry's potential to create jobs, career advancement and entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Involve the entire community in the development of the seafood & aquaculture industry and protection of water quality.
6. Educate the community on the close connection between clean water and a healthy economy and between clean water and local land use decisions.

Industry Potential

Throughout the County's history, watermen have harvested vast quantities of fin and shellfish from Northampton's bayside and seaside waters. For nearly 400 years, seafood, along with agriculture, has supported the local economy. In recent years, the Northampton County seafood industry (excluding aquaculture) has generated approximately \$6.8 million in income annually and supported 478 jobs.

Since the late 1980's, aquaculture has come to play a very significant role in Northampton's economy. Northampton County's Cherrystone Aquafarms is one of the largest clam producers in North America with an annual harvest approaching 50 million clams and valued at over \$7 million. There are other growing clam hatcheries in the County as well as some soft shell crabbing operations. Aquaculture currently supports approximately 95 full- and part-time jobs in Northampton County and its economic impact is estimated at \$10.5 million. Currently, Northampton's aquaculture industry is built on a thriving hard clam market, but local producers in conjunction with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science are developing

the culture of scallops, oysters, soft clams and ribbed mussels, as well as finfish products. This will vastly expand and diversify Northampton County's seafood and aquaculture industry to meet world-wide demand.

Demand for Northampton County's seafood products is increasing. Diminishing areas of clean, disease-free water and seafood world-wide coupled with Northampton County's and Virginia's reputation for consistently clean, high quality seafood has resulted in a high level of market acceptance for Northampton County seafood.

To fully develop and sustain the seafood and aquaculture industry, Northampton County must consider the following assets, challenges, opportunities and threats.

Assets

Strengths supporting the successful development and sustainability of the seafood and aquaculture industry in Northampton include:

- o abundant clean waters and shellfish growing areas of its numerous tidal creeks and bays;
- o its experienced seafood harvesting and aquaculture labor force;
- o high market acceptance of Eastern Shore seafood products;
- o unmet and growing demand for Northampton's seafood products;
- o civic-minded residents willing to monitor water quality;
- o job potential of aquaculture, seafood and value-added seafood;
- o high level of buyer confidence due to effective efforts of Virginia's Division of Shellfish Sanitation to guarantee clean waters/shellfish and protect public health.

Challenges

Weaknesses that must be overcome in the development of the aquaculture and seafood harvesting industry include:

- o areas of condemned shellfish grounds in virtually every bayside creek due to fecal coliform bacteria contamination;
- o failed septic systems, nitrate and other contamination of bayside and seaside waters;
- o lack of adequate wastewater treatment facilities and corresponding reliance on individual septic systems;
- o inadequate supply of most county seafood products to meet steady demand for product.

Opportunities

Activities/situations with potential to build on our assets and overcome our liabilities to develop and sustain the industry:

- o large and growing national and global demand for seafood;
- o large and growing number of health-conscious American consumers;
- o contamination of water and loss of seafood-producing ability in other historic seafood-

producing areas world-wide;

- o Citizens For a Better Eastern Shore water monitoring/stewardship program;
- o Local water research efforts of University scientists/students;
- o local seafood and aquaculture research and development efforts of Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

Threats

Actions/Factors that could prevent or destroy our ability to develop and sustain the seafood & aquaculture industry:

- o possible additional shellfish ground closures and loss of productivity of County waters due to contamination from large numbers of septic systems, sediment, and nutrient pollution from suburban residential development throughout the County;
- o Improperly-located/designed resort/marina development;
- o Continued over-harvesting and mismanagement of fisheries resources.

Actions

Actions to develop and sustain the seafood and aquaculture industry in Northampton by building on the County's assets, overcoming its liabilities, taking advantage of opportunities and protecting against threats:

Priority Actions

1. **Exceptional Waters.** Nominate some appropriate bayside and seaside creeks and bays for designation as Exceptional Waters by the Virginia Water Division to protect shellfish growing areas from new and expanded point source discharges and to gain a competitive marketing advantage for Northampton-grown seafood.
2. **Stormwater Management.** Formulate a County-wide stormwater management plan and ordinance and review the County's erosion & sediment control ordinance to minimize nonpoint-source contamination from surface runoff.
3. **Marina Siting.** Adopt marina siting standards and subaqueous permit guidelines to ensure appropriate siting of marinas and dredge material disposal.
4. **Subdivision Ordinance.** Modify the County subdivision ordinance to maintain maximum vegetative cover, reduce impervious surface and minimize runoff.
5. **Rural Road Standards.** Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to develop and adopt alternative rural road standards which provide for safe travel while minimizing impervious surface in order to minimize runoff and retain maximum vegetation in road rights-of-way. This will protect water quality as well as preserve habitat and historic rural character. Establish the standards in a memorandum of understanding between Northampton County, the Virginia Department of Transportation and Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department.

6. *Vegetation in Power Line Rights-of-Way.* Draft and execute a memorandum of understanding between Northampton County, A & N Electric Cooperative, Delmarva Power Company, and the Virginia Departments of Conservation & Recreation and Game and Inland Fisheries to pursue appropriate management of vegetation in power line rights-of-way for water quality and wildlife habitat protection.

7. *Community Workshops and Field Trips.* Facilitate community workshops and field trips to involve the community in specific actions to develop the seafood & aquaculture industry and protect water quality.

Actions to Support Work by Others

1. *Citizen Water Quality Monitoring/Stewardship.* Support Citizen's for A Better Eastern Shore in organizing and maintaining a citizen water quality monitoring/stewardship program to locate, analyze and eliminate specific sources of contamination.

2. *Zoning Ordinance.* Review the Zoning Ordinance currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure inclusion of effective performance zoning provisions, incentives and criteria to foster the re-establishment of towns and villages as the focal points of community life and the location of new residential, commercial, and industrial development. Amend the *Comprehensive Plan* map and text if necessary to facilitate such zoning. The ordinance must also contain provisions for protection and installation of vegetation in order to protect water quality.

3. *Zoning Map.* Review the Zoning Map currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure designation of towns and villages as the focal points of residential, commercial and industrial development to protect water quality by maintaining maximum vegetative cover and minimizing impervious surface and runoff.

4. *Vegetated Waterfront.* Support County and Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department efforts to maintain a vegetated waterfront through the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and County Zoning Ordinance.

5. *Oyster Replenishment.* Support Virginia Marine Resources Commission and Virginia Institute of Marine Science efforts to restore oyster populations and productivity in Seaside and Bayside waters.

6. *Water Research.* Support continued research to support sound protection and management of ground and surface water quality and quantity.

7. *Marine Resource Management.* Draft new legislation and assist the Virginia Marine Resources Commission in developing policies to promote proper management and harvesting of marine resources.

Potential Future Actions

1. Wastewater Treatment. Explore development of cost-effective, environmentally-sound wastewater treatment facilities to serve compact development areas of individual, historic towns and villages designated to be the focus of planned residential, commercial and industrial development throughout the County. Explore operation of these separate facilities by a County-wide utility/service authority to provide coordinated management, quality control and economy of scale.

2. Septic System Limits. Explore means to limit installation of new individual septic systems and phase out existing systems, where practical, as town/village systems are phased in.

Seafood & Aquaculture Task Force

focus on development of the seafood & aquaculture industry and protection of water quality

Task Force

Mr. Seth Rux, *Chairman*
P. O. Box 37
Marionville, Virginia 23408
442-3297 (h)

Mr. Roger Buym
P. O. Box 2080
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
678-7232 (h)

Mr. Sidney Camden
P.O. Box 1227
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-7370 (h) 678-7655 (o)

Dr. Michael Peirson
P.O. Box 222
Eastville, Virginia 23347
331-2622 (o) Fax: 331-1208 (o)
678-7896 (h)

Mr. Gordon Putman*
6166 Rose Court
Exmore, Virginia 23350
442-4032 (h)

Mr. Victor Schmidt
P.O. Box 613
2227 Cherrystone Road
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
331-1450 (h)

Resource Persons

Mr. Paul Berge
Accomack-Northampton
Planning District Commission
31144 Bunting Point Road
Melfa, Virginia 23410
787-3844 (h)

Professor William Dunston
Business Department
Old Dominion University
5420 Hibiscus Court
Chincoteague, Virginia 23336
336-5819 (h)

Dr. William DuPaul
School of Marine Science
P.O. Box 1346
Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062
642-7163 (h) 642-7097 (o)
Fax: 642-7097

Mr. Chris Frye
Virginia Marine Resources Commission
P.O. Box 756
Newport News, Virginia 23607
247-8028 (o)

Ms. Jean Gregory
Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality
Water Division
P.O. Box 10009
Richmond, Virginia 23240-0009
527-5093 (o)

Mr. John Humphrey
Northampton County Department of
Planning & Zoning
P.O. Box 538
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-0443 (o)

*pending appointment by Board of Supervisors

Task Force (continued)

Resource Persons (continued)

Mr. Mark Leukenbach
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
P.O. Box 1346
Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062
642-7097 (o)

Ms. Sayra Grace Thacker
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
College of William and Mary
Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062
642-7175 (o) Fax: 642-7097

Mr. James Wesson
Virginia Marine Resource Commission
P.O. Box 756
Newport News, Virginia 23607-0756
247-2121 (o)

SEAFOOD & AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTION	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS *			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Exceptional Waters		500							
2. Stormwater Management		500							
3. Marina Siting									
4. Subdivision Ordinance									
5. Rural Road Standards									
6. Vegetation in Power Lines Rights-of-Way									
7. Community Workshops and Field Trips									

*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.

SEAFOOD & AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT WORK BY OTHERS

ACTIONS BY OTHERS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Citizen Water Quality Monitoring/Stewardship		200							
2. Zoning Ordinance									
3. Zoning Map									
4. Vegetated Waterfront									
5. Oyster Replenishment									
6. Water Research									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

Heritage Tourism Industry

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Adopted by Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994

Approved by Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

Approved by Heritage Tourism Task Force - May 17, 1994

DEVELOP HERITAGE TOURISM INDUSTRY/ PROTECT NATURAL & CULTURAL ASSETS

Mission & Goals

Build a diversified, locally-owned, authentic and high quality heritage tourism industry for Northampton County, Virginia.

1. Create well-paying jobs, career advancement and educational opportunities for the benefit of all Northampton County citizens.
2. Promote growth of existing businesses and provide new entrepreneurial opportunities.
3. Ensure the protection and sustainable use of the natural, cultural and historic assets upon which the industry is based.
4. Involve the entire Northampton County community and all appropriate organizations and agencies throughout development and ongoing management of the heritage tourism industry.
5. Develop markets and a coordinated marketing program for nature tourists, cultural tourists, outdoor recreational tourists in general and target groups such as birders, fishermen, photographers, in specific.
6. Preserve and enhance the historic rural character and image of Northampton County by revitalizing and beautifying its many historic villages, towns, buildings and byways.

Industry Potential

Heritage Tourism is defined as recreational travel activities which depend on the appreciation, interpretation and protection of the community's authentic natural, scenic, recreational, historical and cultural assets. The heritage tourism industry in Northampton County is already a significant component of Northampton's economy. People engaged in recreation, travel, and tourism in the county spent a total of \$9.9 million on lodging, restaurants, retail groceries, fuel and oil, and other goods and services in 1992. This initial spending generated \$14,297,200 in direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts and supported 454 jobs.

There were an estimated 70,300 recreation party-trips in Northampton County in 1992 for fishing, boating, sightseeing, observing wildlife, visiting historic sites and other travel activities. These parties spent an average of \$203 in Northampton County. However, this

level of tourism activity was well below lodging capacity. Lodging unit occupancy averaged less than 25% in 1992, with a maximum monthly occupancy rate of 67% in July.

Fishing and boating on the Bay are the primary attractions for tourists and recreationists visiting the county. However, because of declines in sportfish populations in the area, the number of anglers visiting the county has dropped off in recent years. The First Annual *Eastern Shore Birding Festival*, held in October 1993 during the peak of fall migration, demonstrated the potential of birding to the County. Bird-watching tourists brought \$52,000 into the County during the two-day event, the equivalent of nearly two full-time, permanent jobs. Northampton County is known for its place in the annual *Historic Garden Tour* held each April, but the economic impact of this event has not been measured.

Given the outstanding cultural and natural resources found in Northampton County, it is likely that the county can attract a much larger share of the east coast tourism market. The number and variety of migrating birds, the pristine coastal marshland habitat, and the many historical structures and sites are a few examples of what the county can offer its visitors.

Demand for nature-based and heritage-based tourism outlets is great. According to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service study, over 3 million people in Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania reported traveling for the purpose of observing, feeding, or photographing fish and wildlife in 1991. In pursuit of these activities, residents of these three states spent over \$819 million on food, lodging, transportation and other trip-related expenses, and \$952 million on equipment.

Moreover, tourism is a growing industry worldwide. One study projects 8% growth in world tourism overall, with 10% to 15% growth expected in adventure/cultural tourism, and 25% to 30% growth in nature-based tourism. Through careful planning and judicious development, Northampton can capitalize on its unique wildlife and historic resources and capture a large share of this market.

To fully develop and sustain the heritage tourism industry, Northampton County must consider the following assets, challenges, opportunities and threats.

Assets

Strengths supporting development of Northampton's heritage tourism industry include:

o Natural Resources

- Chain of nine natural Barrier Islands
- 38,000-acre coastal wilderness
- More than 250 species of birds
- Migratory Bird concentration area, corridor, habitat
- Rare plants, animals & natural communities
- Kiptopeke Bird Banding Station
- Kiptopeke Raptor Observatory

Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge
Mockhorn Wildlife Management Area
Wreck & Bone Island Natural areas
Virginia Coast World Biosphere Reserve

o Cultural Resources

Native-American Heritage
African-American Heritage
European-American Heritage
Traditional Seafood Harvesting
Productive Farms, forests, nurseries
Working Watermen & Farmers
Architecturally- and archaeologically-significant sites

o Historic Resources

Northampton County Courthouse National Historic District
Town of Cape Charles National Historic District
16 National Register Historic Sites
Oldest continuous court records
Wealth of Artifacts

o Archeological Resources

Arlington
Indiantown Park/Gingaskin
Pear Valley
many others

o Recreational Resources

Indiantown Park
Kiptopeke State Park
Kiptopeke Beach, fishing pier and boat ramp
Cape Charles beach
Cape Charles boat ramp
Willis Wharf boat ramp & dock
Oyster public harbor
Red Bank boat ramp
Morley's Wharf boat ramp
Cape Charles deep water harbor
Cape Charles rail-ferry

o Scenic Resources

11 Bayside Creeks
194 miles of Chesapeake Bay shoreline
55 historic villages & towns

40 miles of seaside shoreline
Rural countryside
Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel
Seaside coastal wilderness
261 miles of Barrier Island shoreline
Virginia Byways - Seaside Road (SR 600) and Willis Wharf Road (SR 603)

Challenges

Weaknesses that must be overcome in the development of the heritage tourism industry:

- o lack of local knowledge and appreciation of assets;
- o lack of visitor opportunities for authentic Eastern Shore experiences, food, and products;
- o lack of public access to the County's islands, marshes, waterways and other natural and historic assets;
- o limited interpretation of these assets;
- o lack of visitor rest rooms and other facilities;
- o lack of visitor centers and gateways;
- o lack of central information/reservations;

Opportunities

Activities/situations with potential to build on our assets and overcome our challenges to develop and sustain the industry:

- o Large and growing regional, national and international market for heritage tourism;
- o Development of Ocean Heritage Highway;
- o Large and growing market for authentic travel experiences, food, and products;
- o proximity to major population areas;
- o isolation by Bay and bridge-tunnel toll;
- o within a day's drive of 60 million people;

Threats

Activities/factors that could prevent or destroy our ability to develop and sustain the heritage tourism industry:

- o sprawl and strip development;
- o loss of wildlife and bird habitat - field, forest/scrub, marsh - due to forest fragmentation, clearing of scrub/brush understory, conversion of farmland and forest to residences;
- o potential water contamination;
- o loss of historic buildings, farms, villages, and overall unique heritage, character, identity;
- o loss of traditional economic activities - watermen, family farms - and rural way of life as in most of coastal America;
- o potential loss of unique sense of place;
- o complete lack of County's unique character in recent residential, commercial developments;

Actions

Actions to develop and sustain the heritage tourism industry in Northampton by building on the County's assets, overcoming its liabilities, taking advantage of opportunities and protecting against threats:

Priority Actions

1. Market Development. Identify and evaluate existing and potential markets for Northampton County heritage tourism in terms of points of origin; demographic and economic profiles; recreational travel demand, activities and expenditures; alternative heritage tourism programs that could be viewed as competition. Evaluate Northampton County's existing tourism infrastructure, facilities, amenities and services, and delineate their strengths, weaknesses and appropriateness for the heritage tourism markets identified.

2. Interpretive Guidebook. Develop a guidebook based on a coordinated heritage interpretation (history, wildlife, recreation) and access program as the initial product of an overall marketing and interpretation strategy for Northampton County heritage tourism.

3. Heritage Trail. Facilitate development of the *Northampton County Heritage Trail* linking all historic sites, villages and natural areas of the County as part of a *Virginia Coast Heritage Trail* and the interstate *Ocean Heritage Highway* being developed between New Jersey and Florida. Work with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society to restore and reopen the Eastville Inn as the visitor center for the Heritage Trail. Design and construct county gateways as part of the Trail development. Formulate a Corridor Management Plan to protect the long term integrity of the Trail and the County's designated Virginia Scenic Byways.

4. African-American Heritage Trail. Facilitate development of the *Northampton County African-American Heritage Trail* linking sites, structures and artifacts associated with persons, places, traditions, businesses, schools, churches and other institutions of African-American heritage significant in the life and development of Northampton County. The *African-American Heritage Trail* must be designed to: 1) celebrate and accurately portray the County's vital African-American heritage; 2) support sustainable economic development based on and supportive of this heritage; 3) provide educational and recreational opportunities based on and supportive of this heritage; 4) promote the appreciation and understanding of the County's African-American culture and the individual and collective contributions, sacrifices, vitality and dreams of Northampton's people of African-American descent - past and present; and 5) must foster wise stewardship of the County's African-American heritage as a living legacy for the ongoing benefit of future generations of all Northampton County people. Coordinate development and operation of the *African-American Heritage Trail* with the overall *Northampton County Heritage Trail*, with other sites of African-American heritage throughout Virginia, and with America's *Ocean Heritage Highway*.

5. Historic Settlements, Villages, and Towns. Conduct an historic survey and formulate a revitalization plan for the County's historic settlements, villages and towns as the focal points

for heritage tourism activities and related businesses and as the centers for community life. Utilize available funding opportunities and expertise, including those of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, to augment local expertise.

6. *Community Festivals/Events.* Work with the chambers of commerce, town governments, community groups to designate a County-wide festival coordinator and festival coordinating committee to organize and facilitate a continuous schedule of festivals and special events based on Northampton's heritage, and to promote these to markets off the Shore.

7. *Certified Local Government.* Formulate a local Landmarks Commission, historic preservation plan and other requirements to obtain *Certified Local Government* status from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and *Accredited Tourism Community* status from the Virginia Division of Tourism to make funding available for preservation and heritage tourism development.

8. *Appropriate Nature Tourism Access.* Facilitate a memorandum of understanding between the County, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and The Nature Conservancy for a nature tourism plan that commits the signatories to public access guidelines for recreational activities. The objective is to enhance tourism while protecting fragile ecosystems.

9. *Comprehensive Plan Review.* Review the goals, objectives and policies of the *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan* with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to facilitate compliance with its spirit and intent in all County decisions.

10. *Community Workshops and Field Trips.* Facilitate community workshops and field trips to involve the entire Northampton County community in specific actions to develop the heritage tourism industry and protect natural and cultural assets.

Actions to Support Work by Others

1. *Zoning Ordinance.* Review the Zoning Ordinance currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure inclusion of effective performance zoning provisions, incentives and criteria to foster the re-establishment of towns and villages as the focal points of community life and the location of new residential, commercial, and industrial development. Amend the *Comprehensive Plan* map and text if necessary to facilitate such zoning. The ordinance must facilitate mixed-use village centers with restaurants, general stores, public meeting places, small parks/squares, small businesses, and residences. The ordinance must also contain provisions for protection and installation of vegetation in conjunction with development in order to maximize bird/wildlife habitat and the quality of the County's waters which are essential to the heritage tourism industry. Foster increasingly cooperative relationships between the County and its incorporated towns and support zoning and other development tools which achieve town revitalization, development, and protection aspirations.

2. Zoning Map. Review the Zoning Map currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure designation of towns and villages as the focal points of residential, commercial and industrial development to preserve and enhance the County's unique historic character and sense of place, wildlife habitat, and recreational water quality which are essential to developing and sustaining the heritage tourism industry.

3. Year-Round Birding. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and the Birding Festival Planning Committee to develop the County's bird-watching potential by supporting production of a guide to birding on the Eastern Shore, continuing the annual Eastern Shore Birding Festival centered at Kiptopeke, and providing birding opportunities and events to attract birders throughout the year.

4. Northampton County/Eastern Shore Experiences. Work with private businesses to develop opportunities for visitors to experience the authentic, preserved nature, culture and history of Northampton County through participation in activities such as seafood harvesting, farming, birding, arts, crafts, archaeology, research and exploration of the beaches, islands, creeks, bays, marshes, villages and towns of the County.

5. Tourism Infrastructure. Work with the Bed & Breakfast Association, Hotel & Restaurant Association, chambers of commerce and individual developers/operators to foster development of quality authentic accommodations, food service, shopping, amenities, and other heritage tourism infrastructure.

6. Community Hospitality Training. Work with chambers of commerce to cultivate a hospitality training program for businesses, high schools and continuing-education programs.

Potential Future Actions

1. Cape Charles Excursions. Explore development of boat excursions to and from Cape Charles harbor to Norfolk, Portsmouth, Newport News, Crisfield, and other destinations. Work with the Town of Cape Charles to develop the lodging, dining, shopping, entertainment and Town amenities necessary to support such excursions.

2. Cape Charles Waterfront Revitalization. Explore development of the vacant Cape Charles Harbor land tract for historic waterfront development/ferry terminal and market place as the focus of a comprehensive Cape Charles revitalization program.

3. Railroad Excursions. Explore development of historically-authentic excursion rail between Cape Charles and Parksley, visiting Eastville, Nassawadox and other stations in conjunction with other heritage tourism activities and experiences.

4. Lower Seaside Boat Ramp. Explore development of a boat ramp on the seaside at the lower end of the County.

5. Oyster, Willis Wharf Revitalization. Facilitate cooperative local, state, federal, public, private, non-profit, and business action to update and initiate revitalization plans which have been prepared for the villages of Oyster and Willis Wharf.

Heritage Tourism Task Force

focus on development of the heritage tourism industry and protection of natural & cultural assets

Task Force

Mr. Grayson Rogers, *Chairman*
P. O. Box 217
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-6518 (h)

Ms. Ginger Hale
11502 Swan Drive
Machipongo, Virginia 23405
678-5604 (h) 442-6018 (o)

Ms. Joyce Holland
P.O. Box 15
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-5262 (h) 442-6100 (o)

Ms. Elizabeth Humphrey*
P.O. Box 2045
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
331-3604 (h) 331-2622 (o)

Mr. Marvin Lee
4405 Townsend Drive
P.O. Box 89
Townsend, Virginia 23443
331-2713 (h)

Ms. Jean Mihalyka
Cherry Core
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
331-1627 (h)

Ms. Virginia Savage
301 Mason Avenue
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-1079 (h)

Mr. Kevin Townsend*
3156 Sand Hills Drive
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-4697 (h)

Resource Persons

Mr. Scott Flickinger
Kiptopeke State Park
3540 Kiptopeke Drive
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-3259 (o)

Ms. Cathleen Ann Haines
217 Jefferson Avenue
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-2226

Ms. Francis B. Latimer
P.O. Box 746
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-7283 (h)

Ms. Sarah Mabey
Virginia Division of Natural Heritage
Main Street Station
1500 East Main Street, Suite 312
Richmond, Virginia 23219
442-4762 (h) 331-4760 (o)

Mr. David Parker
Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Drawer R
Melfa, Virginia 23410
787-2460 (o)

Mr. Steve Parker
The Nature Conservancy
P.O. Box 158
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-3049 (o)

Mr. Kenneth Redizer
643 Ocean Highway
Pocomoke City, Maryland 21851

Mr. Sherman Stairs
Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuge
5003 Hallett Circle
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-2760 (o)

Task Force (continued)

Mr. Giles C. Upshur, Jr.
4178 Wilsonia Neck Drive
Machipongo, Virginia 23405
678-5297 (h)

Mr. Monty Webb
P.O. Box 104
Jamesville, Virginia 23398
442-7915 (o)

Mr. Frank Wendell
515 Monroe Avenue
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-3264 (h) 331-2472 (o)

Mr. George Young
P.O. Box 966
Exmore, Virginia 23350
442-9035 (h)

Resource Persons (continued)

Ms. Karen Terwilliger
Virginia Department of Game
and Inland Fisheries
P.O. Box 11104
Richmond, Virginia 23230-11104
787-8378 (h) 367-6913/2211 (o)

Mr. John Verrill
Eastern Shore of Virginia
Historical Society
P.O. Box 193
69 Market Street
Onancock, Virginia 23417
787-8012 (o)

*pending appointment by Board of Supervisors

HERITAGE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTION	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Market Development									
2. Interpretive Guidebook		15,000							
3. Heritage Trail									
4. Historic Settlements, Villages and Towns		20,000							
5. Community Festivals/ Events									
6. Certified Local Government									
7. Appropriate Nature Tourism Access									
8. Comprehensive Plan Review									
9. Community Workshops and Field Trips									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA, and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.		Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force							

HERITAGE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT WORK BY OTHERS

ACTIONS BY OTHERS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Zoning Ordinance									
2. Zoning Map									
3. Year-Round Birding									
4. Northampton County/ Eastern Shore Experiences									
5. Tourism Infrastructure									
6. Community Hospitality Training									

*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.

Arts/Crafts/Local Products Industry

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Adopted by Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994

Approved by Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

Approved by Arts/Crafts/Local Products Task Force - May 17, 1994

DEVELOP ARTS, CRAFTS AND LOCAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY/ PROTECT CULTURALLY-DIVERSE AND AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

Mission & Goals

Develop an authentic arts and crafts industry which preserves, enhances and capitalizes on the artistic skills, talents and craftsmanship of the people of Northampton County and passes them on to the next generation. This industry must be true to the people and place of Northampton County, its natural and cultural heritage, and its culturally-diverse Native American, African American and European American community. The industry must be encouraged to grow from the solid base of the County's natural and cultural heritage and must support and complement existing and new local businesses.

1. Identify and develop marketable products involving fine art, folk art, carving, traditional and contemporary crafts, furniture, ceramics, textiles, quilts, needlepoint, clothing, plants/flowers, photography/film, specialty foods, and other locally-authentic products reflective of the people and place of Northampton County and Virginia's Eastern Shore;
2. Identify and develop marketable performing arts products including music, story telling, theater, dance reflective of the people and place of Northampton County and Virginia's Eastern Shore.
3. Identify and develop promising markets for Northampton County arts/crafts/local products and facilitate development of a wholesale/retail marketing and distribution organization and facilities.
4. Locate current and potential artisans and craftspersons and organize them into an association capable of consistently producing product to meet market demand.
5. Take advantage of local and visiting talent to develop classes, apprenticeships and other means to develop, multiply and pass on the artistic skills of proven and promising artisans, educate them in necessary businesses practices, and instill a continuing work ethic.
6. Facilitate revitalization of the County's historic villages and towns as traditional mixed-use centers for in-home businesses, including studios and galleries, and to preserve the county's unique rural character and sense of place.
7. Establish Northampton County as a location for the production and marketing of high quality arts/crafts/local products and as an attractive place for artists to live and work.

8. Involve all of Northampton County's people in the development of the arts/crafts/local products industry and in protecting the cultural diversity and community authenticity on which it depends.

Industry Potential

Nationwide, tourists generate \$327 billion annually in sales revenues and support 5.85 million jobs, making travel and tourism the third largest retail sales industry in the U.S., according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Center for Rural Revitalization and Community Development. The percent of the total tourist dollar spent on shopping is increasing. Marketing the arts/crafts/local products of the County can be one way to take advantage of this trend and help diversify Northampton's economic base.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Center for Rural Revitalization and Community Development reports that the majority of tourists visiting areas for their cultural and natural attractions buy local crafts and food products (in addition to meals). Nature and cultural tourists actively search out local crafts as they travel. They prefer to visit the artist's/craftsman's studio to purchase work, but they also make purchases at fairs, festivals, and historic sites. In addition to retail sales associated with tourism, wholesale distribution of arts/crafts is a large segment of the industry.

Production and sales of indigenous arts and crafts have proven to add significantly to rural economies with similarities to Northampton. Although several craftspeople live and ply their trade in Northampton County, there is currently little in the way of an organized system for production and distribution of arts and crafts that would facilitate measuring current economic impact. However, successful arts and crafts guilds and cooperatives in other communities suggest how a strong and thriving arts/crafts/and local products industry could improve the County's economy.

One such cooperative is the Watermark Association of Artisans based in coastal North Carolina. The Watermark cooperative is a large association of 750 member-artisans that produces, markets, and distributes large volumes of hand-made baskets, quilts, decorative wooden items, dolls, wreaths, and other items. In 1992, its 15th year in production, Watermark sales totaled \$664,000, nearly 90% through their wholesale catalog outlet. The total impact of Watermark on the rural Camden County, North Carolina economy is more than \$1 million annually.

To fully develop and sustain the arts/crafts/local products industry, Northampton County must consider the following assets, challenges, opportunities and threats.

Assets

Key strengths supporting the successful development of the arts/crafts/local products industry in Northampton:

- o culturally-diverse and authentic coastal community;
- o proud rural coastal heritage evident in the county's character;
- o strong sense of place and historic identity;
- o skilled local artisans and craftspersons;
- o excellent ambient light quality and overall environment for artists;
- o abundance of natural raw materials for artists;
- o interstate traffic through the County;
- o unlimited opportunities for entrepreneurial endeavors.

Challenges

The major roadblocks that must be overcome in the development of the arts/crafts/local products industry include:

- o lack of an outlet organization and accompanying facilities;
- o zoning which prohibits mixed-use, residential/studio/gallery space within residence or requires special permission for "home occupations";
- o few art/craft traditions other than furniture, carving;
- o lack of entrepreneurial tradition.

Opportunities

Activities/factors supporting development and sustainability of the arts/crafts/local products industry:

- o large and growing national demand for regionally-authentic, handmade art and craft products;
- o demonstrated success of rural community-based wholesale/retail art/craft businesses;
- o potential demand created by development of the heritage tourism industry in the county;
- o development of the *Northampton County Heritage Trail*;
- o national demand for products can be met by mail-order/catalog sales.

Threats

Current/potential activities/factors that could prevent or destroy our ability to develop and sustain the arts/crafts/local products industry:

- o potential loss of the county's unique identity as a place of preserved coastal heritage;
- o loss of knowledge and skill to produce traditional artifacts unique to the county and region;
- o disappearance of historic towns and villages and historic retail buildings;
- o increasing strip commercial and suburban sprawl;
- o continued lack of zoning consistent with art/craft studio at artists home place;

o total economic development focus on recruiting from outside and corresponding lack of commitment to develop local resources/industry from within.

Actions

Actions to develop and sustain the arts/crafts/local products industry in Northampton by building on the County's assets, overcoming its challenges, taking advantage of opportunities and protecting against threats:

Priority Actions

1. Community Workshops and Field Trips. Facilitate community workshops and field trips to involve the community in specific actions to develop the arts/crafts/local products industry and to establish connections between schools, churches, service agencies, and arts organizations to put those who need jobs in touch with artisans/businesses who need workers.

2. Products/Artisans/Facilities/Markets. Identify, inventory, and develop potential products, artisans, sources of workers/artisans, existing facilities and potential markets for the industry.

3. Organization/Production/Promotion. Compile and evaluate business organization, process for production, catalogues/promotional materials of successful arts/crafts/local products businesses.

4. Eastville Revitalization. Work with town leaders and citizens to create and implement an historically-authentic revitalization plan for the town of Eastville which focuses on the core of Eastville as a center for arts/crafts/local products industry and related high quality heritage tourism in its historic small-town scale. Following initiation of revitalization action for Eastville, pursue arts/crafts/local products opportunities through revitalization of other towns and villages throughout Northampton County.

Actions to Support Work by Others

1. Zoning Ordinance. Review the Zoning Ordinance currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure inclusion of effective performance zoning provisions, incentives and criteria to foster the re-establishment of towns and villages as the focal points of community life and the location of new residential, commercial, and industrial development. Amend the *Comprehensive Plan* map and text if necessary to facilitate such zoning. The ordinance must facilitate mixed uses and allow arts/crafts/local products production, sales and marketing in association with residences without requiring special-use permits.

2. Zoning Map. Review the Zoning Map currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure designation of towns and villages as the focal points of residential, commercial and industrial development to preserve and enhance the County's unique historic character and sense of place which are essential to developing and sustaining the arts/crafts/local products industry.

- 3. Wholesale/Retail Association/Facilities.** Support efforts by the Working Alliance of Virginia's Eastern Shore to develop a wholesale/retail association and facilities to cooperatively produce and market arts/crafts/local products.
- 4. Educational Programs/Facilities.** Support efforts by the Working Alliance of Virginia's Eastern Shore to provide educational facilities and programs to train county residents in skills necessary to profitably produce arts/crafts/other local heritage products for marketing and distribution by the association.
- 5. Heritage Festival.** Support the organization and facilitation of an annual *Northampton County Heritage Festival*. Coordinate the Festival with other arts/crafts/local products and heritage tourism industry development actions and coordinate with promotional efforts of *Virginia Heritage Tourism Weeks*.
- 6. Heritage Trail.** Work with the Heritage Tourism Task Force to develop the *Northampton County Heritage Trail* and ensure its coordination with arts/crafts/local products industry development efforts.
- 7. Economic Development Promotion.** Work with the Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Commission to include and/or feature the arts/crafts/local products industry in local festivals, logos, County profiles/videos, and other County and Eastern Shore promotional materials/activities.
- 8. Arts Organizations.** Support/coordinate efforts with the Eastern Shore Arts League and Spinners and Weavers Guild.
- 9. Art/Craft Tourism Award.** Work with local arts organizations to organize an annual "Art/Craft Tourism Award" dinner and award presentations for persons/businesses with the greatest contributions to the arts/crafts/local products industry in Northampton County.
- 10. Annual Art/Craft Day.** Work with local arts organizations to organize and facilitate a tour of the County's art/craft/local products studios.

Art/Crafts/Local Products Task Force

focus on development of the art/crafts/local products industry and protection of a culturally-diverse and authentic community

Task Force

Ms. Irene Walker, *Chairman**
P.O. Box 144
Franktown, Virginia 23354
442-2431 (h/o)

Ms. Jane Cabarrus
P.O. Box 511
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-4023 (h) 442-8000 (o)

Ms. Barbara Brown*
515 Jefferson Avenue
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-2951 (h) 787-3532 (o)

Ms. Mary Miller*
The Old Rectory
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-7532 (o/h)

Ms. Thelma Jarvis Peterson*
5180 Thistlebriar Lane
Machipongo, Virginia 23405
678-5037 (h/o)

Ms. Ionthe Rhodes*
P.O. Box 846
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-5760 (h)

Mr. Danhof F. Vandyke*
P.O. Box 737
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-7127 (h)

Ms. Ida Williams*
P.O. Box 236
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-5452 (h)

Resource Persons

Ms. Julie Parker
14070 Still Pond Lane
Belle Haven, Virginia 23306
442-5501(h/o)

Ms. Ava McMillan
Northampton Economic
Empowerment Corporation
P.O. Box 814
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-4509 (o)

Ms. Janet C. Whitehead
Dexma Services
Box 872
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-5017 (h)

Ms. Francis B. Latimer
P.O. Box 746
Eastville, Virginia 23447
678-7283 (h)

*pending appointment by Board of Supervisors

ARTS/CRAFTS/LOCAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTION	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Community Workshops and Field Trips									
2. Products/Artisans/ Facilities/Markets									
3. Organization/Production/ Promotion									
4. Eastville Revitalization									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

ARTS/CRAFTS/LOCAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT WORK BY OTHERS

ACTIONS BY OTHERS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Zoning Ordinance									
2. Zoning Map									
3. Wholesale/Retail Association Facilities									
4. Educations Programs/ Facilities									
5. Heritage Festival		3,000							
6. Heritage Trail									
7. Economic Development Promotion									
8. Art Organizations									
9. Art/Craft Tourism Award									
10. Annual Art/Craft Day									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA.		Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force							
and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

Research & Education Industry

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Adopted by Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994

Approved by Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

Approved by Research & Education Task Force - May 17, 1994

DEVELOP RESEARCH AND EDUCATION INDUSTRY/ PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL SYSTEMS

Mission & Goals

Promote and integrate Northampton County's research & education industry and protect and enhance the human, cultural and natural resources on which it relies.

1. Take full advantage of research activities occurring in Northampton to improve the County's economy and the quality of life of all of its people.
2. Ensure provision of necessary services and support to researchers and research institutions to facilitate the full development and ongoing sustainability of research and education in the County.
3. Provide educational experiences involving research activities occurring in the County and utilizing Northampton's cultural and natural resources to enrich the lives of local residents and visitors.
4. Provide opportunities for local students to be exposed to and participate with scientists and institutions from around the world engaged in research activities in Northampton County.
5. Take full advantage of research activities occurring in Northampton to support sustainable development of new and existing County industries, including agriculture, seafood/aquaculture, heritage tourism, arts/crafts/local products, research & education, and value-added produce and seafood.
6. Maintain and promote Northampton County as a rare community of intact coastal natural/cultural systems in which to engage in pure and applied scientific research.
7. Involve the entire local community in the development and ongoing management of the research and education industry in Northampton County.

Industry Potential

Research and education activities currently bring significant new dollars into Northampton County. Total known research expenditures in the county in 1992 amounted to about \$377,500 and supported 25 local jobs. These expenditures generated \$691,200 in direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts. Much of the impact now felt from research activities

in the county is from associated spending by researchers during their stay in the county. In 1992, there were seven reported research groups active in the county spending over 5,900 research days.

Northampton County is an ideal location for specialized research requiring the presence of relatively unspoiled coastal natural and cultural systems which are becoming increasingly rare throughout the world. For example, the importance of Northampton County for resident and migrating birds has generated much interest among researchers at nearby universities and research institutions. The unique hydrogeology of the Eastern Shore has also generated research activity in the County. Efforts of the Long Term Ecological Research Center headquartered in Oyster and the research activities of numerous institutions and agencies within the County demonstrate the significant potential for research and education in Northampton.

Research and education activities in Northampton County have the potential to be significantly expanded beyond current levels. Old Dominion University, in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy, announced in 1993 its intentions to establish the Virginia Coast Institute, a research facility dedicated to the applied study of sustainable development. If this research facility evolves into a large center sponsored by a consortium of universities and other research concerns, its impact on the community could be substantial.

In addition to pure research activities, adult education programs hold significant potential to bring income to the County in the support of jobs, revenue and improved quality of life.

To fully develop and sustain the research and education industry, Northampton County must consider the following assets, challenges, opportunities and threats.

Assets

Community strengths supporting development and ongoing sustainability of the research and education industry:

- o the County's intact natural and cultural systems which permit individual research efforts to be understood and applied within their larger natural and cultural context;
- o Virginia Coast World Biosphere Reserve;
- o migratory bird concentration area;
- o historic settlement pattern;
- o Long Term Ecological Research Station;
- o Kiptopeke Bird Banding Station and Raptor Observatory;
- o research activities of numerous institutions and agencies;
- o local experts on the waterways and resources of the County;
- o community's stated commitment to becoming a world model for sustainable development.

Challenges

Constraints that must be overcome to fully develop and sustain the research and education industry in Northampton County include:

- o lack of an umbrella institution physically located within the County to coordinate the breadth of potential research and education activities;
- o lack of existing labs, classrooms, offices, and housing facilities to support increased activities;

Opportunities

Activities/situations with potential to build on our assets and overcome our liabilities to develop and sustain the industry:

- o efforts of The Nature Conservancy and Old Dominion University to establish the *Virginia Coast Institute for Sustainable Development*;
- o available vacant school and commercial buildings within the County's towns and villages which could possibly house labs, offices, classrooms, and other necessary facilities;
- o Local *Legacy* program and *Broadwater Institute for Natural Science*;
- o local watermen and other experts on local resources who could serve as guides and interpreters.

Threats

Factors that could prevent or destroy our ability to develop and sustain the research and education industry:

- o the County's current vulnerability to suburban sprawl, strip commercial and unplanned waterfront development common throughout the U.S. and in virtually all coastal areas. Such common, "anywhere USA" development would irreparably degrade the County's natural and cultural systems and thus their usefulness as a research and education model.

Actions

Actions to develop and sustain the research and education industry in Northampton by building on the County's assets, overcoming its liabilities, taking advantage of opportunities and protecting against threats:

Priority Actions

1. **Research/Education Information Center.** Establish an ongoing, County-wide center to collect and maintain information on research activities currently underway in the County and the results of research which has previously occurred. Maintain results in a library/data base available for use by local residents, students and businesses, and by current and potential researchers. Structure this information center to:
 - o facilitate the involvement of researchers in local school and adult education programs;

- o involve local school students and visiting adult education students in research activities as appropriate;
- o provide local residents with job and business opportunities to provide research support services and supplies;
- o coordinate available local guides, outfitters, interpreters, educators, other resource persons with educational program needs/opportunities.

2. National Adult Education Programs. Establish Northampton County as a prime location for short-term field studies, camps, workshops, hostels for adult and youth education programs involving a comprehensive array of studies based on the County's natural and cultural resources. An unlimited offering of studies is possible, including archaeology, history, ecology, marine biology, migratory birds, photography involving organizations currently engaged in such programs, including The National Audubon Society, World Watch, the National Wildlife Federation, Elder Hostel, The Nature Conservancy and others. These programs will actively involve local residents as well as visitors and will focus on active exploration of the natural and cultural resources of Northampton County. They will be designed to provide business opportunities for private local outfitters and entrepreneurs.

3. Research/Education Facilities. Facilitate development of meeting, classroom, laboratory, office, lodging, retreat and other facilities to support existing and new research and education activities in Northampton County. Locate these primarily in the County's historic settlements, villages and towns, and utilize existing vacant structures to the maximum extent possible.

4. Promotional Materials. Develop a promotional program and materials to attract researchers to Northampton County. Coordinate promotional materials with efforts to promote heritage tourism, arts/crafts/local products and other County industry.

5. Geographic Information System. Work with the Long Term Ecological Research Center (LTER) headquartered in Oyster to establish, maintain and access a comprehensive geographically-oriented data base (GIS) for Northampton County. Utilize the County's GIS system set up by the Virginia EcoMAPS program as the initial base for the system.

Actions to Support Work by Others

1. Sustainable Development Institute. Support development of the Virginia Coast Institute as a partnership of Old Dominion University, the Nature Conservancy and the County. Explore opportunities to involve the local community and local schools, businesses and citizens in the work of the Institute.

2. Legacy Program/Broadwater Institute. Support and work with the Northampton County Schools *Legacy* program, and Broadwater Academy's *Broadwater Institute of Natural Science*, and other opportunities to integrate research and education activities with the local schools.

Research & Education Task Force

focus on development of the research & education industry and protection of natural & cultural systems

Task Force

Ms. Lenora Mitchell, *Chairman*
309 Tazewell Avenue
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-4061 (h)

Mr. B. R. "Dusty" Rhodes, *Vice Chairman**
P. O. Box 846
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-5760 (h)

Ms. Beth Humphrey, *Secretary**
P.O. Box 2045
Cheriton, Virginia 23316
331-3640 (h) 331-2622 (o)

Rev. Harry Crandall*
P.O. Box 1010
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-5642 (h) 678-7837 (o)

Resource Persons

Dr. Fiege
Eastern Shore Community College
29300 Lankford Highway
Melfa, Virginia 23410
787-5900 (o)

Dr. Dawn Goldstein
Northampton County Schools
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-5151 (o)

Ms. Sarah Mabey
Virginia Division of Natural Heritage
Main Street Station
1500 East Main Street, Suite 312
Richmond, Virginia 23219
442-4761 (h) 331-4760 (o)

Mr. John Ordeman
29404 Beacon Road
Melfa, Virginia 23410
787-8078 (h)

Ms. Terry Thompson
The Nature Conservancy
P.O. Box 158
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-3049 (o)

*pending appointment by Board of Supervisors

RESEARCH & EDUCATION INDUSTRY

Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTIONS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Research/Education Information Center									
2. National Adult Education Programs									
3. Research/Education Facilities									
4. Promotional Materials									
5. Geographic Information System		20,000							
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

RESEARCH & EDUCATION INDUSTRY

Northampton County

Sustainable Development Action Strategy

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT WORK BY OTHERS

ACTIONS BY OTHERS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Sustainable Development Institute									
2. Legacy Program/ Broadwater Institute									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

New Industry

Northampton County Sustainable Development Action Strategy

Adopted by Northampton County Board of Supervisors - June 28, 1994

Approved by Sustainable Development Task Force - May 17, 1994

Approved by New Industry Task Force - May 17, 1994

DEVELOP NEW INDUSTRY/ PROTECT SENSE OF PLACE, QUALITY OF LIFE AND GROUNDWATER

Mission & Goals

Foster development of new sustainable industry in Northampton County and protect the sense of place, quality of life, groundwater, and other assets vital to new industry creation and ongoing success. These industries must:

1. Create new well-paying jobs with benefits and career advancement opportunities; jobs which provide a decent standard of living for all Northampton County citizens and which challenge and retain the youth of the community.
2. Provide new locally-owned business and entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote growth of existing businesses.
3. Create a local industrial tax base to provide public revenue to support adequate government services.
4. Diversify the County's economic base and be compatible with the County's developing sustainable industries of agriculture, seafood/aquaculture, heritage tourism, value-added produce/seafood, research/education, and arts/crafts/local products.
5. Ensure the protection and sustainable use of the natural and cultural assets upon which the County's ongoing economy and continued quality of life depend.

Industry Potential

Promising opportunities exist for Northampton County to develop new industries which provide well-paying jobs with benefits, provide a diversified tax base, improve the quality of life of the County's people and retain its young people as they enter the work force. Efforts must include development of new local industry and retention of existing industry as well as recruiting relocation and expansion of appropriate industries to the County.

If the community is to be successful in developing, recruiting and sustaining new industry, it must preserve and enhance its valuable competitive advantages including its unique character and sense of place, its quality of life, its natural environment, as well as many other assets. Schools must be kept at high levels. Limited-but-adequate groundwater must be protected and managed wisely. Infrastructure must be improved and developed to enhance our advantages for attracting and developing new business and industry.

To fully develop and sustain new industry, Northampton County must consider the following assets, challenges, opportunities and threats.

Assets

Community strengths supporting the successful development and sustainability of new industry in Northampton County include:

- o the young people of our community;
- o the experienced, skilled retirees of our community;
- o unique sense of place and preserved rural, coastal America image;
- o proximity to large urban markets of Tidewater Virginia and East Coast cities;
- o good intermodal transportation access via the Eastern Shore Railroad, Cape Charles Port, U.S. Highway 13 and the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel;
- o available work force;
- o excellent community college for education and training, but located in Accomack County;
- o new state-of-the-art county school facilities;
- o research facilities of National Science Foundation, University of Virginia;
- o Cape Charles water and wastewater treatment facilities;
- o sound, vacant buildings in Cape Charles, Exmore and throughout the County;
- o high quality of life, including scenic beauty, preserved coastal location, clean environment;
- o small-town rural living, quiet, slower pace of life;
- o farming, fishing;
- o historic villages and towns, no suburbs;
- o low crime rate;
- o violent crime almost non-existent;
- o cultural/racial diversity;
- o outdoor recreation opportunities, including parks, wildlife, beaches, boating, fishing;
- o community recreation programs, youth sports programs;
- o community theater productions;
- o large number and diversity of churches;
- o sense of community
- o Northampton-Accomack Memorial Hospital;
- o Emergency Medical Service;
- o commitment of community to maintain and improve its unique character and quality of life.

Challenges

Community weaknesses that must be overcome to develop and sustain new industry:

- o limited professionally-skilled labor due to lack of opportunities;
- o low educational attainment rate of population;
- o out-migration of young people and accompanying loss of skill, energy and talent;
- o adequate-but-limited supply of fresh water (groundwater);
- o limited wastewater treatment facilities;
- o substandard housing stock and lack of adequate housing due to limited income;

- o limited amenities;
- o limited cultural activities; limited local library facilities;
- o lack of first-class restaurant and lodging;
- o lack of adequate meeting/conference facilities;
- o limited shopping facilities.

Opportunities

Current/potential activities that could begin or enhance the development and sustainability of new industry:

- o sound, vacant buildings in Cape Charles, Cheriton Exmore, Eastville, Nassawadox and other locations throughout the County available to house business and industrial operations;
- o current efforts to begin development of Cape Charles marine terminal/industrial park;
- o draft groundwater protection ordinance ready for finalization and adoption;
- o vacant, developable land adjacent to Cape Charles Harbor and within each town;
- o rail transportation to both north and south terminals;
- o fully-planned industrial park waiting on implementation;
- o available local, state and federal industrial development incentives;
- o local coordinator for industrial development available to County staff;
- o experienced, skilled retirees willing to provide volunteer services to the community;

Threats

Current/potential activities that could prevent or destroy our ability to develop and sustain new industry:

- o creation of a large and growing segment of the County population which is dependent on services but is not contributing to a productive community;
- o non-descript "anywhere U.S.A." suburban sprawl subdivisions and resultant loss of unique product/corporate image, increase in taxes, cost of services and overall cost of living, reduction in quality of life, and undue competition and cost for limited fresh water supply;
- o strip commercial development of Route 13 and resultant compromise of interstate transportation capacity/desirability and compromise of unique community character;
- o improper wastewater treatment and resultant contamination of water and loss of pristine image to market products;
- o continued erosion of tax base leading to an ever increasing tax burden on local residents and businesses;
- o continued exodus of young people to other communities due to lack of good jobs;
- o loss of talent, intellect, energy and leadership of our most valuable natural resource - our young people.

Actions

Actions to develop and sustain new industry in Northampton by building on the County's assets, overcoming its liabilities, taking advantage of opportunities and protecting against threats:

Priority Actions

1. Potential Industry. Formulate criteria for new sustainable industries/products in Northampton County and identify and evaluate specific opportunities and constraints for development of such industries. Evaluate examples of potential industries as case studies.

2. Existing Industrial Infrastructure. Inventory and evaluate Northampton County's existing infrastructure, facilities, buildings, sites, amenities and services, and delineate their strengths, weaknesses and appropriateness for development and support of the industries demonstrated in Action 1 above.

3. Sustainable Industry Development. Facilitate development of industries/products and required services, facilities and infrastructure. Develop asset-protection measures to ensure sustainability. Develop a budget for implementation and identify potential funding sources.

4. Development/Protection Coordination. Coordinate development of new sustainable industries with development and protection strategies being formulated/implemented for the County's existing/developing sustainable industries and their vital resources:

- o agriculture industry/productive land;
- o seafood, aquaculture industry/water quality;
- o heritage tourism industry/natural and cultural resources;
- o arts, crafts, local products industry/culturally-diverse and authentic community;
- o research & education industry/natural and cultural systems;
- o value-added produce, seafood/groundwater

5. Community Involvement. Involve the Northampton County Community, its incorporated towns, and appropriate groups, organizations and agencies throughout the process of new industry development.

o *Community Workshop One.* Immediately cosponsor, with the Board of Supervisors, a community workshop to involve national industry development leaders and the community at the outset of the effort to create and develop new sustainable industry. (Workshop to be held on June 14, 1994)

o *Community Workshop Two.* Facilitate a second community workshop upon completion of Actions 1 and 2 to present results to the community and involve citizens in implementation of action three.

o *New Industry Field Trips*. Facilitate field trips to evaluate promising industry proposals and potential industrial sites/facilities.

6. *Publications/Promotional/Educational Materials*.

Publish the new industry development strategy and its results in a format for effective dissemination to the public. Produce a poster with maps, photos, drawings, sustainable development actions. This poster will be designed to be distributed as an insert in the *Eastern Shore News*.

Actions to Support Work by Others

1. *Zoning Ordinance*. Review the Zoning Ordinance currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure inclusion of effective performance zoning provisions, incentives and criteria to foster the re-establishment of towns and villages as the focal points of community life and the location of new sustainable industry, as well as residential and commercial development. Amend the *Comprehensive Plan* map and text if necessary to facilitate such zoning. The ordinance must facilitate mixed uses and allow/encourage industry designed, situated and at a scale appropriate to the village or town in which it is to be located.

2. *Zoning Map*. Review the Zoning Map currently being drafted and work with the Planning Commission to ensure designation of towns and villages as the focal points of industrial, commercial and residential development to preserve and enhance the County's unique historic character and sense of place which are essential to developing and sustaining new County industry.

3. *Cape Charles Marine Terminal/Industrial Park*. Work with the Town of Cape Charles, the Eastern Shore Railroad, the Economic Development Commission, the Cape Charles and County industrial development authorities, and others to develop the Cape Charles Marine Terminal and related industrial facilities and infrastructure to serve sustainable industry.

- o pursue designation by the Town of Cape Charles and Northampton County as a *Community Investment Area* with meaningful local tax and other incentives for private development;
- o pursue designation by the Commonwealth of Virginia as an *Enterprise Zone* with corresponding state incentives for private development;
- o pursue designation by the U.S. Department of Commerce as a *Duty Free Port* with corresponding federal incentives for private development.
- o pursue private investment in development of the facility.

4. *Enterprise Community*. Support community efforts to designate portions of Northampton and Accomack Counties as an *Enterprise Community* by the President's Community Enterprise Board facilitated by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Housing & Urban Development. As part of the Enterprise Community process, participate in development and implementation of a long range, comprehensive strategic plan for the attainment of a sustainable community.

5. *Revolving Loan Fund.* Support the Northampton Economic Empowerment Corporation in obtaining available grants to develop a revolving loan fund for start up of business enterprises.

6. *Groundwater Protection Ordinance.* Work with the Planning Commission in review and adoption of a county *Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone* as part of the County Zoning Ordinance in order to protect the quality of our limited supply of fresh water.

7. *Route 13 Corridor Protection.* Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Planning Commission to preserve the US Highway 13 corridor for limited access transportation. Avoid strip development.

8. *Education/Vocational/Professional Training.* Support the work of Northampton County Schools and Eastern Shore Community College to provide quality vocational/professional training to provide a labor force with the skills to meet the needs of Northampton business and industry. Support the work of these schools to provide a high quality education program to develop students to be contributing members of the local community.

9. *Adequate Housing, Services, Amenities.* Support work of Northampton Housing Trust, Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission, Habitat for Humanity, World Changers and other groups and private developers to ensure adequate affordable housing, services and amenities for all County residents and to meet the needs of prospective businesses and their families.

10. *Water Research.* Support continued research to support sound protection and management of ground and surface water quality and quantity.

New Industry Task Force

focus on development of new industry and protection of sense of place, quality of life and groundwater

Task Force

Ms. Beth Williams, *Chairman*
P.O. Box 814
Nassawadox, Virginia 23413
442-4509 (o)

Mr. John W. Nottingham, Jr., *Vice Chariman**
27355 Arlington Road
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-3602 (h)

Mr. Charles Bell
P.O. Box 554
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-7586 (h) 331-4897 (o)

Mr. Arthur Pawling*
Shepherd's Choice
Exmore, Virginia 23350
442-4060 (h)

Mr. Gordon Putman*
6166 Winter Rose Court
Exmore, Virginia 23350
442-4032 (h/o)

Ms. Margaret Vass
6552 Saltworks Road
Exmore, Virginia 23350
442-2797 (h)

Mr. Frank Wendell
515 Monroe Avenue
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-3264 (h) 331-2472 (o)

Mr. John W. White, Sr.
1 Randolph Avenue
P.O. Box 202
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
331-3122 (h) 678-0440 (o)

Resource Persons

Mr. Dennis Ackerman
Business Department
Old Dominion University
5105 Holy Road
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451
683-3000 (o)

Mr. Jack Bonniwell
Virginia Employment Commission
P.O. Box 545
Exmore, Virginia 23350
442-6176 (o)

Ms. Darlene Burton
Accomack-Northampton
Planning District
P.O. Box 417
Accomac, Virginia 23301
678-7755 (o)

Mr. Daniel de Lima
BioProteus, Inc.
P.O. Box 73
Hacks Neck, Virginia 23358
442-9543 (o)

Mr. Paul G. Hawken
20 South 40 Pier
Sausalito, California 94965
(415) 332-5124 (o) Fax: (415) 332-7933

Mr. James McGowan
Accomack-Northampton
Planning District
P.O. Box 417
Accomac, Virginia 23301
678-7755 (o)

Mr. Vanlue Morgan
County of Northampton
P.O. Box 66
Eastville, Virginia 23347
678-0444 (o)

*pending appointment by Board of Supervisors

NEW INDUSTRY
Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy
PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTION	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Potential Industry		5,000							
2. Existing Industrial Infrastructure									
3. Sustainable Industry Development									
4. Development/Protection Coordination									
5. Community Involvement									
6. Publications/Promotional/Educational Materials									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

NEW INDUSTRY

Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT WORK BY OTHERS

ACTIONS BY OTHERS	ASSIGNED TASK FORCE MEMBER	ESTIMATED SAMP FUNDS*			ESTIMATED OTHER FUNDS			START DATE	COMPLETION DATE
		FY'93	FY'94	FY'95	FY'93	FY'94	FY'95		
1. Zoning Ordinance									
2. Zoning Map									
3. Cape Charles Marine Terminal/									
4. Enterprise Community									
5. Revolving Loan Fund									
6. Groundwater Protection Ordinance									
7. Route 13 Corridor Protection									
8. Education/Vocational/Professional Training									
9. Adequate Housing, Services, Amenities									
10. Water Research									
*Fiscal Year 1993 Funds have been approved by NOAA. Fiscal Year 1994 and 1995 Funds are to be recommended by the Sustainable Development Task Force and approved by Board of Supervisors and NOAA.									

Foundation Documents

*Northampton County
Sustainable Development Action Strategy*

Foundation Documents

The *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* is based on the foundation of four key documents created by the Northampton community in recent years: *Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands*, *Northampton County Comprehensive Plan*, *Blueprint for Economic Growth*, and *Special Area Management Plan*. The *Action Strategy* is in conformance with the spirit, letter and intent of each of these documents and specifically implements all or part of each of them. These documents are appended to the *Action Strategy*.

Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands

Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands: the Outdoor Recreation Plan on Virginia's Eastern Shore was developed cooperatively in 1987 by Northampton County, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Nature Conservancy. The plan includes objectives for recreational development and resource conservation in the County. Several of the specific actions of the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy*, such as birding festivals and a heritage trail were initially conceptualized in *Beaches, Islands, Marshes and Woodlands*.

Northampton County Comprehensive Plan

Although it does not use the term, the *County Comprehensive Plan* is a declaration of sustainability. The Plan states:

Therefore, it shall be the development policy of Northampton County to promote agriculture, seafood, tourism, and compatible industries; to protect and enhance its fragile environment, natural resources and rural character while permitting environmentally compatible economic growth and improvement to the cultural and socio-economic well being of its citizens both present and future.

The *Comprehensive Plan's* five goals are to:

1. Conserve the County's natural resources.
2. Preserve the County's rural character.
3. Pursue economic self-sufficiency for all Northampton County citizens.
4. Provide an adequate level of public services for all Northampton citizens.
5. Pursue and establish a diversified economic base by supporting agriculture, seafood production, tourism and industry compatible with the goals and objectives of Northampton County's *Comprehensive Plan*.

It can be clearly seen that the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy* mission and initial target industries came directly from the *Comprehensive Plan*. Further, the *Strategy* programs specific actions aimed at achievement of the *Comprehensive Plan* goals.

develop specific "enforceable policies" for protection and management of its coastal resources. All of the required enforceable policies are called for in the *Action Strategy*. The *Strategy* puts these policies into the context of the sustainable development of existing and new industry, in specific, and the entire local economy, in general.

The SAMP was developed by representatives of the County staff and Planning Commission, and several state and federal agencies and nonprofit organizations in cooperation with the Virginia Council on the Environment's Coastal Resources Management Program. To carry out its objectives, the SAMP called for a partnership involving all levels of government, community groups, nonprofit organizations, and all local citizens.

NOAA committed \$700,000 over four years to implement the Northampton County SAMP under a section of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act requiring no state or local matching funds. The Virginia Coastal Program competed for these funds nationally and while many coastal states proposed SAMPs, only three were funded and Northampton County's received the largest award. NOAA was impressed with the County's economic component and its commitment to protect and capitalize on its coastal resources to overcome its severe poverty. The agency is investing in Northampton in the hope that it will model for the nation a community which is creating a sustainable, environmentally compatible local economy which protects and capitalizes on its resources for the ongoing benefit of all of its people. As the implementation mechanism for SAMP, the SAMP funds will be allocated through the *Sustainable Development Action Strategy*. The complete text of the *Special Area Management Plan* is appended to the *Action Strategy*.

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