



*Welcome to the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program **E-Update** – a monthly summary of selected activities of the APNEP staff, committees and our partners...*

**The APNEP Website** has been updated! While the address remains the same [www.apnep.org](http://www.apnep.org), content and manipulation of information has been improved. Our appreciation and very best THANK-YOU go to Susan Roemer and Denise Smith of NC DENR's Division of Public Affairs.

**Furry-Clawed Crab Could Spell Trouble** - An alien crab with furry claws could be invading the Atlantic seaboard. Scientists at the Marine Invasions Research Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Maryland have confirmed that two mature female Chinese mitten crabs were pulled from commercial crab pots in the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays in the past month. Both female crabs had mated, and one carried eggs.

Until June, researchers at the laboratory had found only male crabs off the East Coast. The discovery of the two females raises the odds that mitten crabs could be establishing breeding populations in the Mid-Atlantic.

Unless larvae or juvenile mittens are found however, scientists cannot rule out the possibility that the hairy-clawed crabs were dumped from ballast tanks of ships from Asia or Europe.

Researchers have confirmed eight mitten crabs in crab pots from the Chesapeake Bay to the Hudson River since May. In 2005 and 2006, just two mittens were found, both in the Chesapeake.

The 2005 confirmation was the first time the crab had been identified in waters off the East Coast, although unconfirmed sightings dating back to 2001 have been reported.

The Chinese mitten is considered "injurious wildlife" due to its aggressive invasion of non-native habitats. The species has spread from Asia to Europe and to the US Pacific Coast, where they have burrowed into shorelines and riverbanks, speeding erosion.

The potential threat posed to the native blue crab population is unknown, but scientists caution that the introduction of an invasive species always raises concern.

Sean McKenna, marine biologist with the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, said no mitten crabs have been reported in the state. Carin Ferrante, Marine Invasions Research Laboratory manager, said North Carolina has just been lucky so far. "North Carolina definitely would be good mitten crab habitat," Ferrante said,

The laboratory is asking fishermen and others on the water to report sightings of mittens. Fishermen should freeze or keep the crab on ice, note the location and date of the capture, and email a close-up photo for preliminary identification to SERCMittenCrab@si.edu, or call the Mitten Crab Hotline at 443-482-2222.

Mitten crabs are light brown to olive green in color, with dark hair on white-tipped claws. The crabs have eight sharp-tipped walking legs, no swimming legs, and a carapace up to four inches wide. The crabs spend much of their life in freshwater but migrate to saltwater to spawn.

*BY SUSAN WEST / SENTINEL STAFF (Reprinted with permission)*

**New Water Quality Trading Guide Available** - A new EPA publication will help the regulated community design and implement voluntary water quality trading programs consistent with EPA's 2003 National Water Quality Trading Policy. This new guide will provide stakeholders with detailed guidance on the fundamental concepts of trading which can accelerate water quality improvement and reduce compliance costs.

"EPA's Trading Toolkit is the first-ever 'how-to' manual on water quality trading," says Assistant Administrator for Water Benjamin H. Grumbles. "This Toolkit will be useful not only for permit writers but for anyone interested in designing a trading program to improve water quality. It is part of EPA's efforts to support and encourage innovation for water quality progress."

Water quality trading is a voluntary option that regulated point sources can use to meet requirements under the Clean Water Act. The Water Quality Trading Toolkit for Permit Writers provides permitting authorities with the tools they need to incorporate trading provisions into required permits. The guide is focused on

trading nitrogen and phosphorus, but other pollutants may be considered for trading on a case-by-case basis. The Toolkit discusses the fundamental concepts of designing and implementing trading programs including the relevant geographic scope, effluent limitations and other factors involved in defining a credit. The document also includes a set of appendices which feature detailed case studies based on actual trading programs.

EPA is interested in public comment on the Toolkit. Comments received through the document's Web site will be considered for future updates.

The Toolkit is available on the EPA's Water Quality Trading Web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/waterqualitytrading/WQTToolkit.html> . A limited number of hard copies are also available through the National Service Center for Environmental Publications: <http://www.epa.gov/nscep/> EPA is interested in public comment on the Toolkit. Comments received through the document's Web site will be considered for future updates.

**The Roanoke-Chowan Wildlife Club's** annual observance of National Hunting and Fishing Day is Saturday, September 22, 2007. The club facility is in Hertford Co., bordering Chowan River and Hares Mill Pond, off River Road (SR 1400) between Winton and Tunis. Scheduled activities include skeet shooting, rifle, archery, and bait casting ranges. Crafts, taxidermy, natural heritage, resource and educational exhibits will also be on display. Millpond boat tours and nature walks will be conducted. The event is open to the general public and all activities are free of charge. Usually, there is something to interest kids of all ages. For more information, contact Lyn Henry at [lynnhenry@wildblue.net](mailto:lynnhenry@wildblue.net)

### **EPA Administrator Tours Sustainable Water Systems**

**Across the Nation** - The challenge of our nation's water and wastewater infrastructure is not just an EPA challenge, or a local challenge it's everyone's challenge. Recognizing that, over the last two weeks EPA Administrator Johnson and local officials celebrated achievements in sustainable practices for water infrastructure across the nation, all as part of the Agency's efforts to help change the way America views, values, and manages water and its support system. Events occurred at drinking water and wastewater plants, a desalination plant, a recycled water facility, a tribal green housing complex, and a green infrastructure site. They also welcomed new WaterSense promotional partners. For more information on sustainable infrastructure practices, visit one of the following:  
Sustainable Infrastructure site: <http://www.epa.gov/waterinfrastructure/>  
Green Infrastructure site: [http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program\\_id=298](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=298)  
WaterSense site: <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/>

EPA's Sustainable Watershed Finance Team Announces new Plan2Fund Objective Prioritization Tool (OPT) and Free Training Seminar - Does your watershed group need assistance deciding between competing objectives and priorities?

Plan2Fund Objective Prioritization Tool (OPT), a free web-based Watershed Planning Tool, can help. Funded by EPA's Sustainable Watershed Finance Team and developed by the Environmental Finance Center (EFC) at Boise State University, OPT provides an easy way for watershed groups to build consensus as they evaluate competing goals and objectives. OPT allows users to rank competing priorities by providing a user-friendly spreadsheet that makes setting, weighting, and applying criteria simple. Your group can set its priorities with confidence and share this information with decision makers, funders, and constituents. Download Plan2Fund OPT at <http://efc.boisestate.edu/efc/Login/tabid/91/Default.aspx?returnurl=%2fefc%2ftools%2fOPT%2ftabid%2f109%2fDefault.aspx>

**Richard Rogers**, assistant secretary for Natural Resources, has accepted the position of executive director with the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Richard's transition to this important new role leaves us with a mixture of feelings. We're happy for Richard, his family, the Clean Water trustees and Richard's new colleagues at the CWMTF. Richard's passion for our state's conservation mission, his integrity and his effectiveness will be great assets to Clean Water's work.

We're sad that we'll lose Richard as a colleague and driving force in the department's work to conserve and protect our natural resources. Richard has been a great asset to the department for the past 13 years -- as legislative liaison, director of the Office of Conservation and Community Affairs and as assistant secretary. We will miss him and his contributions to our department's mission, vision and values. We're glad that we will have the opportunity to continue to work with Richard in his new job.

Richard began his new position on Aug. 1, and Linda Pearsall, program director for the Natural Heritage Program has graciously accepted to assume Richard's duties as the search for a new assistant secretary for Natural Resources begins.

**Land Conversion: Confusion to Clarification** -This informational meeting is offered collaboratively by the Virginia Department of Forestry; Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation – Division of Soil and Water; and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

The agenda for the meetings will consist of 30-minute presentations by each sponsoring agency describing the role of that agency in land-disturbing activities. These presentations will be followed by a panel Question and Answer session.

The meeting will be held on September 18, 2007, from 1-4pm at the Smithfield Center, 220 North Church Street, Smithfield, Virginia 23430. The purpose of the meeting is to clarify the role of state government and outline the responsibilities of local government in managing land-disturbing activities associated with land-use conversion. Please RSVP to Dearvon Bowens, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, at: 757-935-2468 or email at: [dearvon.bowens@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:dearvon.bowens@dcr.virginia.gov)

Until next time...

Joan Giordano  
APNEP Outreach Coordinator

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