

The Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Gloucester County Hazard Mitigation Open Space Management Plan (The Plan) is to protect and conserve county land, wetlands, and water for current residents and future generations. Open space is defined as *protected* lands and waters that are owned and managed by the County, its public sector partners, the Commonwealth, the United States government, and/or the County's private sector partners, including non-profit land trusts. Open Space consists of any parcel or area of land and water that is devoted to:

- The preservation of natural resources;
- The managed production of resources (forest and farm land);
- Outdoor recreation;
- Preservation of historic and cultural property;
- Protection of scenic landscapes;
- Protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

This specific Plan is a requirement associated with the County's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Agreement for Hurricane Isabel to mitigate recurring property damage claims due to flooding of residents in low lying areas. It is also a tool for establishing a foundation for future growth and development that is both sustainable and economically viable. The Hazard Mitigation Open Space Management Plan will be a part of a larger Flood Management Plan which is to be drafted in the near future by the County. Open space protected through the HMGP will also be considered as part of a larger county wide view of open space resources in the County's Comprehensive Plan



Land on Maryus Road: 35 Acres to be preserved and left natural.

The Plan involves the acquisition of twelve properties, both with residential houses, which will be demolished per the terms of the HMGP, and properties currently in their natural state. The acquisition of properties located in flood plains will meet the requirements of preserving open space listed above. Specifically the Plan will allow the County to:

- Eliminate private property damage and loss of life through removal of residential homes;
- Provide ecological benefits through preservation and protection of wetlands including:
 - Improve water quality by breaking down, removing, using or retaining nutrients, organic waste and sediment carried to the wetland with runoff from the watershed.
 - Reduce severity of floods downstream by retaining water and releasing it during drier periods.
 - Protect stream banks and shore lines from erosion.
 - Recharge groundwater, potentially reducing water shortages during dry spells.
 - Provide food and other products—such as commercial fish and shellfish—for human use.
 - Provide fish and wildlife—including numerous rare and endangered species—food habitat, breeding grounds, and resting areas.
 - Increase opportunities for recreation—bird watching, waterfowl hunting, photography—and outdoor education.
- Create opportunities for wetland mitigation;
- Provide an opportunity for a small nature trail for local school children;
- Provide land for future recreation opportunities for all County residents and visitors.

The Plan is an important step forward for Gloucester to reduce future damage claims and property losses, potential loss of life, while at the same time providing important ecological benefits which to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay and the quality of life for the citizens of Gloucester.

The plan may be amended to include additional properties that may be acquired either through the HMGP or other mechanisms that provide similar benefits to the community for hazard mitigation and ecological enhancement.

Key Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Leave acquired properties in their natural state.

Gloucester County's Open Space Management Plan will best serve the goals of storm water mitigation through a policy of acquiring properties to be retained as natural marsh, swamp, and grasslands in perpetuity. This recommendation will also best serve the preservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay.

Recommendation 2: Utilize acquired properties for public water access or other appropriate recreational purposes.

Secondary to the policy of allowing acquired properties to remain in their natural state, where the opportunity for public benefit exists, acquired properties should be utilized for recreational purposes. This includes uses such as water access, maintained park space, and trails.

Recommendation 3: Investigate the opportunities for leasing certain acquired properties to the Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority (PAA) for wetland mitigation.

The PAA has proposed leasing several of the acquired sites as potential wetland mitigation banks to provide for a local bank for compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to tidal wetlands as required by the Virginia Marine Resource Commission's Tidal Wetlands Mitigation Compensation Policy. The county will have to evaluate the benefits of the proposed lease agreement for consistency with the purposes outlined in the Plan.

Recommendation 4: Maintain properties along Jenkins Neck Road area that are current open fields in order to reduce the probability of future fire events in the community. This work would include general maintenance and the removal of dead wood and other potentially flammable debris from the sites to reduce the potential fuel for fires.

Property Acquisition

The following properties have been acquired, or are in the process of acquisition, by Gloucester County to be held as natural open space. Reference the map of "Properties Acquired by HMPG Funds" to view locations of acquired throughout the County's York District. Any future properties acquired as part of this plan will be left in their natural state unless and until specific recommendations are made regarding other uses consistent with the purpose of the plan.

2922 Horse Point Road Tax Map #53-50 2.0 Acres

This property is surrounded by marshland and located near the end of Horse Point Road. The property's culvert will be removed and the site kept natural. The terminus of Horse Point Road may provide an opportunity in the future as a public access site. If public access can be provided, this property may be a potential parking and staging area for launching of small boats.

9366 Guinea Road Tax Map #52-220 5.9 Acres

This property is a narrow wedge shaped parcel adjacent to Achilles Elementary School. The School Board will maintain and develop the property in accordance with requirements of the property

preserved as open space. Its proposed recreation use is to serve as a future fitness or nature trail for Achilles' students and the general public.

10412 Maryus Road Tax Map #53-333 35.97 Acres

This large tract of land is located behind the trailer park at the end of Beths Lane. It is primarily phragmites swamp land and therefore the culvert access be removed and the site kept natural.

10483 Maryus Road Tax Map #53-71 0.3106 Acres

This small parcel is mostly salt bushes. The culvert will be removed and the site will be left open and natural.

10124 Maryus Road Tax Map #53-286 1.0 Acres

This parcel is an open field located on the south side of Maryus Road. The culvert will be removed and the site will be left open and natural.

2164 Jenkins Neck Road Tax Map #530131 4.02 Acres

This site, located on the west side of Jenkins Neck Road has two separate parcels with a driveway. It is open land with a driveway and waterfront access. It is recommended for consideration for recreation opportunities and recreational water access. The site shall be maintained on a regular basis during the growing season by the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.

10623 Heron Point Road Tax Map #53-254F 0.6979 Acres

This is a small parcel located on Heron Point Road that includes phragmites, swamp, and marsh land. This property will be left in a natural state.

2151 Jenkins Neck Road Tax Map #53-158 0.5 Acres

This parcel, located on the east side of Jenkins Neck Road has tall pines, salt bushes, and vines. Pine trees that are dead or dying and that pose a hazard shall be cut down. At this time the site will be left natural, although it may serve as a trail extension for the recreation opportunity located across the street at the 2164 Jenkins Neck Road site.

2280 Maundys Creek Road Tax Map # 53-264 3.34 Acres

This parcel is located on the west side of Maundys Creek Road. This property will be left in a natural state.

2433 Maundys Creek Road Tax Map #53-310 7.170 Acres

This parcel is located on the east side of Maundys Creek Road. Access rights to the small family cemetery will be maintained per the covenants of the previous deeds. The majority of the property will be allowed to return to its natural state. A nature trail through the marshes is a secondary use of the site.

2060 Adlea Lane Tax Map #53-225 1.5 Acres

This parcel is located off Jenkins Neck Road. The previous owner of the site, who is also the current adjacent land owner, will maintain the site in "a yard like setting" through a formal lease with the County. The lessee will keep a homeowners policy on the property for liability as well. The lessee will be responsible for maintenance per a lease that will be subject to the County's leasing regulation in this document. If the lease is not executed or at anytime expires or is terminated, the property will be allowed to return to a natural state.

3173 Kings Creek Road Tax Map #47-199A 0.866 Acres

This is a small parcel located on Kings Creek Road that includes phragmites, swamp, and marsh land. This property will be left in a natural state.

Maintenance

All properties acquired will be monitored quarterly by Gloucester County's Department of Emergency Services. Emergency Services will also respond to any citizen calls as needed. General maintenance that is required to keep the properties compliant with the terms of the grant will be performed by the Gloucester County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department and the Sheriff's Office Work Release Detail Crew.

Any maintenance above and beyond the general work crew's ability, such as the removal of dead trees that might pose a hazard to life or property, will be conducted through the county's Department of Public Works – Buildings and Grounds Division. Any contractors brought in to work on the site will be contracted through the County's procurement procedures. The land located next to Achilles Elementary School (9366 Guinea Road) will be used and maintained by the Gloucester County School Board.



Land on Jenkins Neck Road: 4.02 Acre site to be maintained on a regular basis.

Funding

Required maintenance funds for the sites will come from the applicable department's general fund budget. No salary or payments for the general maintenance of the site will be paid to the inmates comprising the Gloucester County Sheriff's Office Work Release Detail Crew.

Should the County wish to develop any of the sites into public parks or recreational uses the plans for such use will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) for review and comment before being placed into the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Lease/Use of Properties

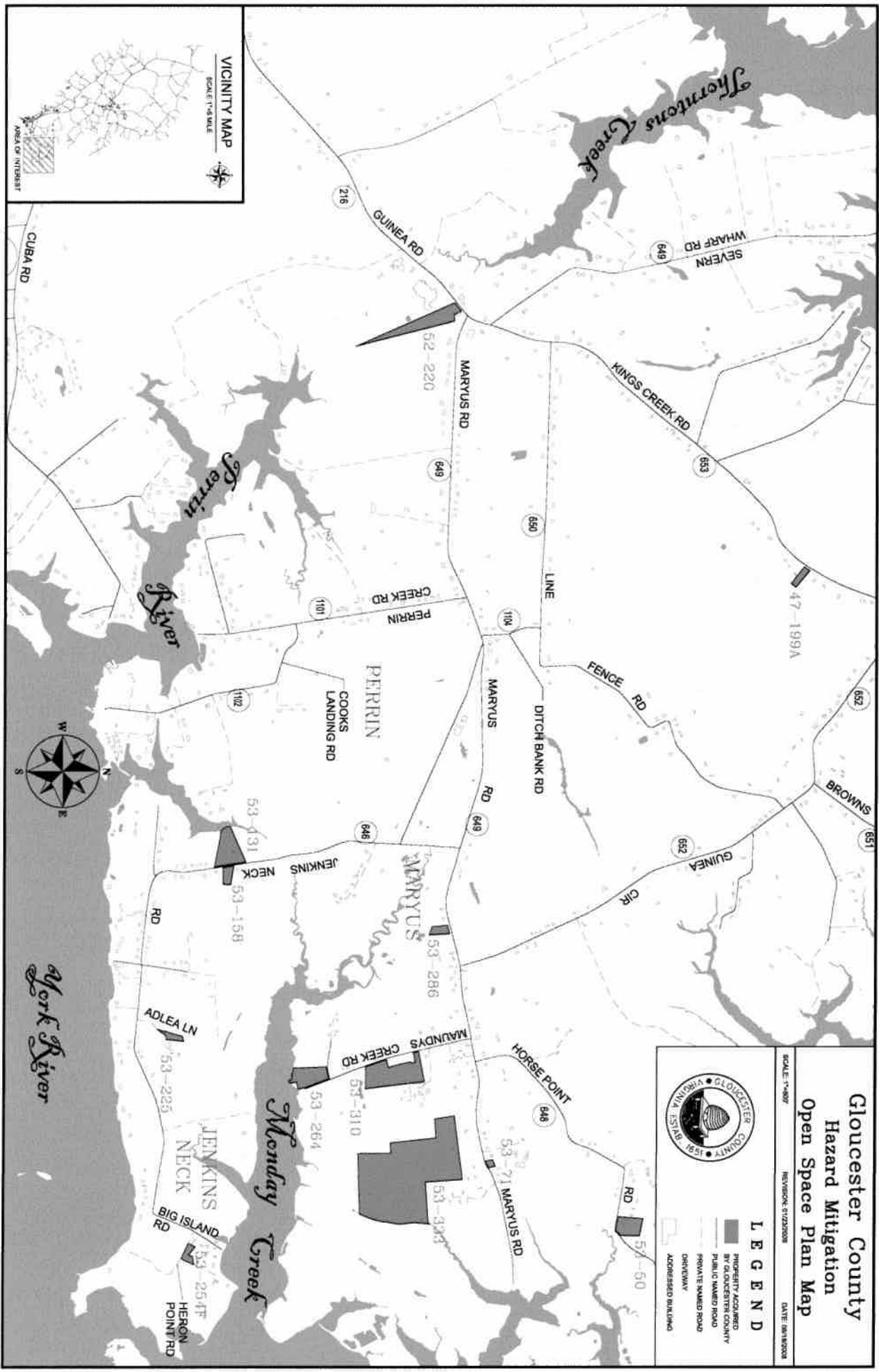
All properties in which a second party (private owner, utility company, non-profit agency, etc.) requests a lease or easements for a term of one year or longer will have their agreements reviewed by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management prior to execution. Any temporary agreements or leases lasting less than one year will be subject to the County's general leasing procedures.

Gloucester County Hazard Mitigation Open Space Plan Map

SCALE: 1"=800' REVISION: 01/20/08 DATE: 08/18/08



- LEGEND**
- PROPERTY ACQUIRED BY GLOUCESTER COUNTY
 - PUBLIC NAMED ROAD
 - PRIVATE NAMED ROAD
 - DRIVEWAY
 - ADJACENT BULKHEAD



VICINITY MAP
SCALE: 1"=4 MILE

AREA OF INTEREST

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