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Examples of Programs and Projects in Virginia that would benefit from H.R. 4914, the Coastal Jobs Creation Act of 2010

The Coastal Jobs Creation Act of 2010 (H.R. 4914) is new legislation that creates jobs for fishermen and coastal communities as fish populations rebuild. The following are examples of key programs in Virginia that could benefit from H.R. 4914:

Chesapeake Bay Marine Debris Prevention and Removal

During the 2009-2010 season, 66 watermen and their vessels were employed to remove more than 10,000 “ghost traps” (lost or abandoned traps that remain on the ocean floor and kill wildlife) from approximately 400,000 acres of Chesapeake Bay. The Center for Coastal Resource Management at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Chesapeake Bay Office in the program to remove marine debris and ghost crab pots in the Bay¹.

Cooperative Research Programs

The Virginia Sea Grant Office coordinates cooperative research between scientists and commercial fishermen through the Sustainable Fisheries Program². The program employs fishermen to conduct research with scientists to improve fishing gear and reduce bycatch (capture of non-target ocean wildlife) in the whelk and horseshoe crab, black sea bass, and sea scallop fisheries.

Habitat Restoration Projects

The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (Virginia CZMP) has the authority to fund a variety of habitat restoration projects through the Coastal Resource Improvement Program. Recently, the Virginia CZMP and several partners created 55 new jobs through the Virginia Seaside Bays Restoration Project³ that will restore oyster reefs, scallops and seagrass beds in Chesapeake Bay. In addition to these programs, additional opportunities for research and restoration are available through the Chesapeake Bay Virginia National Estuarine Research Reserve, located on the York River Estuary.

Improvements to Local Observations for Recreational and Commercial Vessels

H.R. 4914 authorizes funding for research and deployment of integrated observations systems, such as the Chesapeake Bay Observing System. Funding for integrated observation technologies will enhance real-time forecasting to improve maritime safety for recreational and commercial vessels, and will increase efforts to protect important marine resources.

Virginia Marine Mammal Stranding Centers

The Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center and VIMS are official marine mammal stranding centers. In 2009, the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center received approximately \$200,000⁴ to develop better stranding response techniques in Virginia, and collaborated with commercial fishermen to reduce dolphin entanglements and mortality in pound nets near Cape Henry, Chesapeake Bay.

For more information, please contact:

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Please also visit our website for more resources at www.endoverfishing.org

¹ Virginia Institute of Marine Science, *Ghost Pot Program a “Win-Win”*: http://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/topstories/ghost_pot_2010.php.

² Virginia Sea Grant, *Sustainable Fisheries*: <http://web.vims.edu/adv/fisheries/sustainfish.html?svr=www>.

³ Virginia DEQ, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program, *Virginia Seaside Heritage Program*: <http://www.deq.state.va.us/coastal/vshp/>

⁴ NOAA Fisheries, Office of Protected Resources, *2009 Prescott Proposals Funded*:
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/prescott/proposals/funded/2009.htm#va>