

MEDIA RELEASE

VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VMRC and Town of Tangier Partner to Address Marine Obstructions Around Tangier Island

HAMPTON, VA - The Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the Town of Tangier have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to cooperatively identify and address derelict vessels and other obstructions in state waters on and around Tangier Island.

Signed September 10, 2026, by VMRC Commissioner Joseph D. Grist and Tangier Mayor Ooker Eskridge, the agreement establishes a framework for identifying derelict vessels, obstructions and hazardous property that may be appropriate for removal.

Tangier's island geography presents unique challenges when abandoned vessels and other marine obstructions occupy the limited space available along its shoreline and waterways. These obstructions can also create navigational and environmental concerns.

"Working waterfronts are essential to Tangier Island, and usable waterfront space is especially valuable in a community where so much of life and commerce depends on access to the water," said VMRC Commissioner Joseph D. Grist. "This agreement gives VMRC and the Town a clear way to work together to identify problem vessels and obstructions and develop solutions that reflect Tangier's unique circumstances."

Abandoned and derelict vessels are recognized as a marine pollution concern in Virginia's waterways and can affect marine habitat and navigation. Working together, VMRC and Tangier will evaluate these concerns and determine appropriate next steps.

"The waterfront is an essential part of life and work here on Tangier," said Mayor Ooker Eskridge. "Removing derelict vessels and other obstructions can help keep the waterfront accessible for our citizens while also improving the appearance of the island for our visitors. We look forward to Tangier and VMRC working together to find solutions to these issues."

VMRC and Tangier will continue working together to improve access, navigation and conditions along the island's waterfront.

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