

## Virginia Port Authority

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### News Release

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## Virginia Port Authority Makes \$490,000 Contribution to Paradise Creek Nature Park

**NORFOLK, VA** – The Virginia Port Authority [VPA] this week made its first – early -- payment on a \$50 million environmental mitigation plan that is focused on reducing the impact of the Craney Island Marine Terminal on the Elizabeth River.

The \$490,000 payment, made on Friday, Sept. 14, was delivered by Heather Mantz, the VPA's environmental director, to The Elizabeth River Project to assist with the cost of restoring 10 acres of tidal wetlands at Paradise Creek Nature Park, a project of the VPA, The Elizabeth River Project and the City of Portsmouth.

“There is still some state permitting that needs to be completed on Craney Island, but we understood that The Elizabeth River Project needed to proceed with purchase of the waterfront property in order to secure the site for our partnership project at the park, so we decided it was best to make the first payment a bit early,” Mantz said.

The Elizabeth River Project played an integral role in working with a team of stakeholders and regulatory agencies to develop an environmental mitigation plan for the Craney Island

project. The mitigation plan calls for a series of projects to restore more than 50 acres of wetlands on the river and clean up all known “hotspots” of contaminated sediment on the river bottom.

“We believe in The Elizabeth River Project’s mission and know the money for the nature park is being used in the best interest of the river and the community,” said Jerry A. Bridges, the VPA’s executive director.

Marjorie Mayfield Jackson, executive director of The Elizabeth River Project, said the 10 acres of wetlands to be restored at the nature park represent an important first step planned by VPA to offset the anticipated environmental impacts of the Craney Island expansion.

The VPA is working with the Living River Restoration Trust, a sister organization to The Elizabeth River Project, regarding potential oversight of the majority of the projects.

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**The Virginia Port Authority (VPA) is an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, reporting to the state Secretary of Transportation. The VPA owns and operates four general cargo facilities on behalf of the state: Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, Newport News Marine Terminal and the Virginia Inland Port in Warren County. The terminals are operated by Virginia International Terminals, Inc. (VIT) the non-stock, non-profit operating company. The VPA, through terminal earnings generated by VIT, is operationally self-sufficient. The VPA and correlating maritime industry is responsible for 165,000 jobs, \$762 million in business revenues and \$61 million in state and local taxes throughout the Commonwealth.**