

Virginia Crossroads: Flood Resilience across the Commonwealth

Friday, March 27, 2026, 9:00am - 4:30 pm ET; reception to follow

CODE Building Irving Theater, Charlottesville, VA

Purpose

Researchers, decision-makers, and practitioners from across Virginia will explore how actionable science can strengthen flood resilience efforts, share lessons from the field, and build connections that support future collaboration.

Agenda

- 8:30 am Registration (*coffee and refreshments available*).
- 9:00 am **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Amanda Purcell, Associate Director of Climate Crossroads, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
Al Grasso, President, Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine
Jonathan Goodall, Professor and Director of the UVA Engineering Link Lab, University of Virginia
- 9:15am **Panel 1: Urban Flooding.** Across Virginia's cities, heavier rainfall, aging infrastructure, and rapid development are intensifying flood risks in complex and uneven ways. This panel will explore how local governments and researchers are translating data into practical solutions for long-term resilience.
Moderator: **Marcus Aguilar**, City of Roanoke
- **Daniel Medina**, City of Alexandria
 - **Brian Batten**, Dewberry
 - **Tom Allen**, Old Dominion University (ODU)
 - **J. Derek Loftis**, Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)
- 10:00am **Audience Q&A**
- 10:30am *Networking break (coffee and refreshments available).*
Participants encouraged to have conversations about Panel 1 with people they don't already know.
- 11:00am **Panel 2: Rural Flooding.** Flooding in rural communities presents distinct challenges, from limited capacity and dispersed infrastructure to the cascading impacts on transportation, agriculture, and small-town economies. This discussion will highlight lessons from across the Commonwealth on building resilience in rural areas.
Moderator: **Tanya Denckla Cobb**, University of Virginia

- **Maria Mutuc**, Virginia Department of Transportation
- **Chris Bell**, Damascus Town Manager
- **Majid Shafiee-Jood**, University of Virginia
- **Patricia Nylander**, Virginia Department of Forestry

11:45am **Audience Q&A**

12:15pm *Lunch and networking.*

Participants encouraged to have conversations about Panel 2 with people they don't already know.

1:30pm **Panel 3: Innovation.** Innovation in flood resilience extends beyond better data and forecasting to include new approaches to infrastructure design, financing, policy, and cross-sector collaboration. This panel will explore how emerging technologies, practical solutions, and implementation pathways are helping communities reduce risk, recover more effectively, and build resilience across Virginia.

Moderator: **Jessica Whitehead**, ODU

- **Jay Bernas**, Hampton Roads Sanitation District
- **Paul Robinson**, RISE Resilience Innovations
- **Julie Shortridge**, Virginia Tech
- **Debbie Messmer**, Virginia Department of Emergency Management

2:15pm **Audience Q&A**

2:45pm *Networking break.*

Participants encouraged to have conversations about Panel 3 with people they don't already know.

3:15pm **Student Flash Talks** (3-minutes each)

Moderator: **Julia Davis**, University of Virginia

4:00pm **Reflections**

Matt Dalon, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Ann Phillips, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

4:15pm **Closing Remarks**

Nat Draper, Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine

4:30pm *Adjourn public program.*

4:30-6:30pm *In-person networking reception and poster session.*

Thank you to all of the members of our event planning committee! We are grateful to our for their support and participation:

Marcus Aguilar, City of Roanoke

Matt Dalon, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Julia Davis, University of Virginia, COVES Fellow

Celso Ferreira, George Mason University

Jonanthan Goodall, University of Virginia

Jen Irish, Virginia Tech

Ann Phillips, U.S. Navy (retired)

Majid Shafiee-Jood, University of Virginia

Jessica Whitehead, Old Dominion University

Nat Draper, Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine

This event is hosted in collaboration with UVA Engineering, the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, and the National Academies Climate Crossroads Initiative.

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