

Earth Day on the Rappahannock

In-Person Event Summary Report



May 1, 2025 | Earth Day on the Rappahannock Summary



Event Overview

Earth Day on the Rappahannock is an annual community festival held at Old Mill Park in Fredericksburg, VA in celebration of Earth Day to bring together environmentally focused organizations, agencies, and community groups. The festival promotes environmental awareness, sustainability practices, and community engagement through educational booths, interactive activities, and family-friendly programming.

On April 26, 2025, the Arcadis team represented DCR and the VFPMP by hosting an educational booth with information on the VFPMP development process and opportunities for members of the public to provide feedback on the plan.

Booth Engagement

The Arcadis team interacted with more than 45 members of the public at DCR's educational booth. Members of the Arcadis team shared information about DCR and the VFPMP and solicited feedback on the planning process through conversations with event attendees.

COMMON THEMES AND OBSERVATIONS

- Some visitors were already familiar with DCR, but the majority had not previously heard about the VFPMP or other initiatives.
- Most visitors expressed interest in learning more about DCR and ongoing VFPMP efforts. They received informational materials at the booth and were provided additional resources, including instructions for completing the survey and accessing the project webpage.
- Several attendees indicated they were not personally concerned with flooding issues, noting that their properties had not been directly impacted.
- Most visitors were residents of Fredericksburg or Spotsylvania County.
- A small number of visitors shared personal experiences with flooding, primarily related to stormwater drainage issues or elevated river levels near their homes.
- Visitors who shared personal experiences with flooding were directed to the Flood Story App, which was well-received and recognized as a valuable resource.
- A few attendees expressed interest in potential volunteer opportunities with DCR.
- One visitor provided feedback that some survey terminology, such as references to "levees" and "pumps," may not be easily understood by the public.

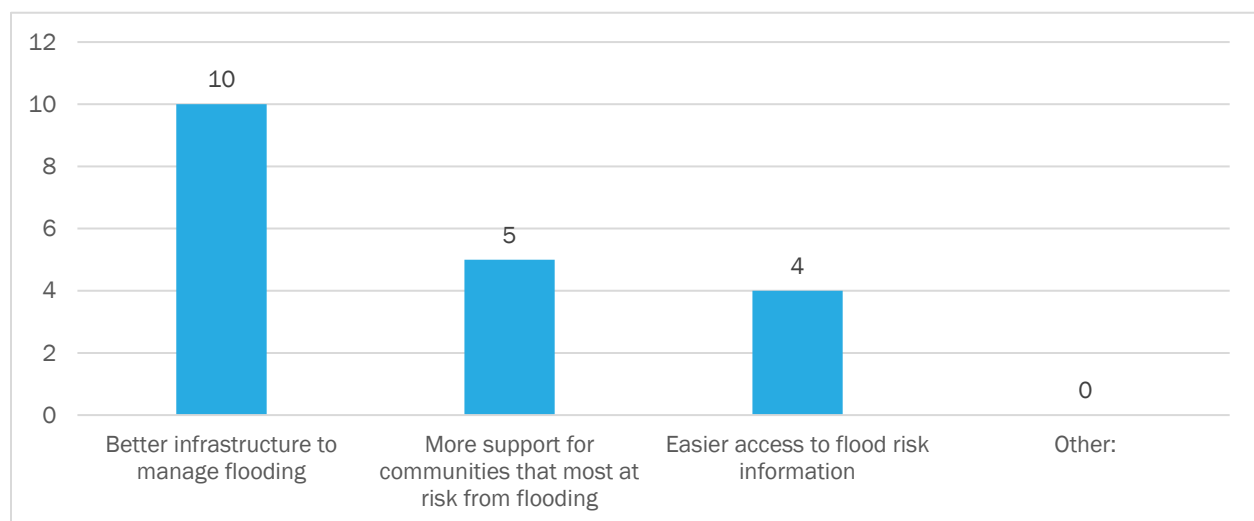
- A couple of visitors inquired about access to localized flooding data, noting a perceived lack of easily available information to assess personal and community flood risks. They were directed to DCR resources/website for additional information.
- Some visitors were interested in learning ways to better protect their homes and properties, requesting resources on stormwater management techniques and systems (e.g., bioretention ponds).
- Staff from the City of Fredericksburg’s floodplain management team, who were hosting a nearby booth, visited to learn more about the VFPMP efforts.
- Most children who visited the booth actively participated in creating art for the “Wishes for the Future” wall. Through their drawings of green spaces, trees, plants, infrastructure, and visions of hope, they engaged in conversations about flooding and resilience in a way that was both creative and easy to understand.
- Both children and adults were excited about the giveaway items. Specifically, the compass whistles, magnifying glasses, and wildflower seed paper.

SURVEY COLLECTION

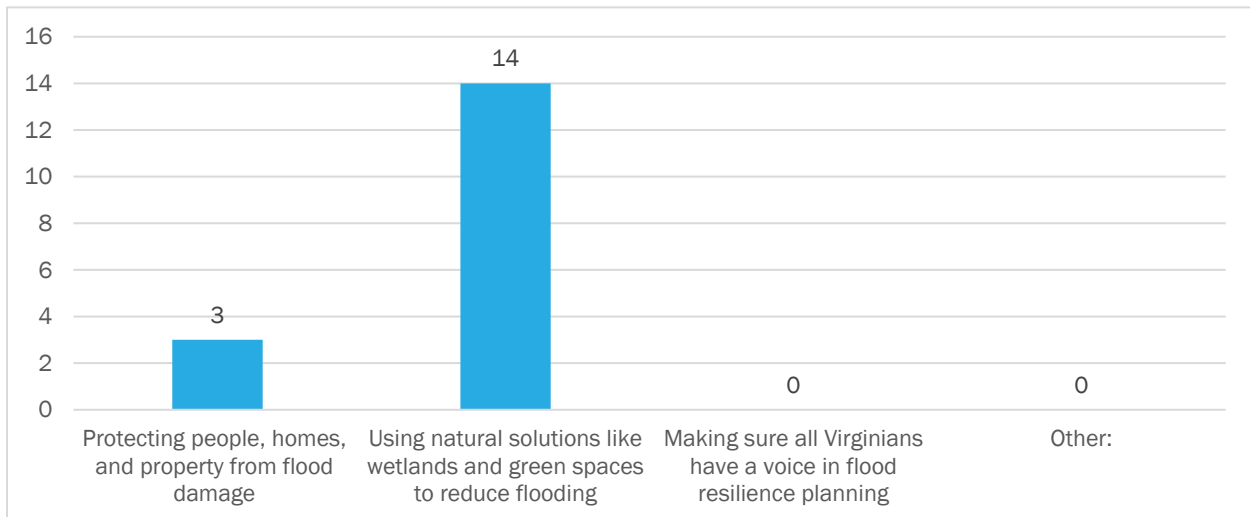
The Arcadis team collected 17 in-person surveys from event attendees. Visitors were asked to fill out the paper survey at the booth, and DCR representatives assisted when needed. Visitors were also directed to the QR code to take the long-form survey.

The in-person surveys prompted responses to the questions displayed in the graphs below. Graphs represent survey responses collected during the Earth Day on the Rappahannock event.

What do you believe are the greatest flood resilience needs in the Commonwealth?



What is your greatest priority to advance flood resilience needs in the Commonwealth?



General Notes

- Overall, the event was heavily family-oriented, with the majority of visitors being adults with small children.
- The "Wishes for the Future" wall proved to be an effective tool for connecting with children and facilitating family discussions around resilience and environmental stewardship.
- There was a general lack of awareness among visitors regarding DCR's broader flood resilience planning efforts. However, after hearing more about the VFPMP and other initiatives, visitors noted the value of the ORP's efforts.
- Many attendees who initially perceived flooding as a distant concern acknowledged the significance of flood resilience planning when discussing recent major flood events elsewhere, particularly in North Carolina. Conversations helped reinforce how flood risks can impact human life, quality of life, and property, even outside of past personal experiences.

Event Photos

DCR BOOTH



WISHES FOR THE FUTURE WALL

