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# A Demonstration Project of the Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework: Effectiveness

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# A Demonstration Project of the Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework

Juita-Elena (Wie) Yusuf, Michelle Covi, Carol Considine, Burton St. John III, J. Gail Nicula

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## Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework

Incorporates key principles from the community resiliency literature:

- ❖ inclusive process that engages stakeholders across multiple social dimensions and across the whole-of-community;
- ❖ strong emphasis on surfacing local context and knowledge;
- ❖ integrated engagement where social and cultural factors are part of the process of engagement;
- ❖ explicit consideration of change mechanisms, such as structured conversations, deliberative dialogue, and participatory mechanisms.

## Little Creek/Pretty Lake Demonstration Project

**Purpose?** Apply ASERT framework in neighborhood spanning multiple city and government boundaries.

**Approach?** Focus group that (1) engages stakeholders in two-way dialogue; (2) acknowledges and addresses their concerns and resistance; (3) informs and educates stakeholders about adaptation strategies; (4) generates action-relevant knowledge for building community resilience.

**Benefits?** Deliberative and participative techniques help inclusive mix of stakeholders understand the problem and identify actions/solutions, while being sensitive to social, cultural, and community factors.

- ❖ Participatory mapping synergizes information and education with action-oriented dialogue and deliberation;
- ❖ Introduces varied perspectives, creates usable information, promotes active learning, and surfaces unexamined assumptions;
- ❖ Allows co-production of practice- and policy-relevant knowledge grounded in stakeholder values and the local context.

**End product?** Demonstration of a field-tested and application-ready stakeholder engagement framework that can be incorporated into planning and policy making processes.

## ASERT Effectiveness

### Process Quality or Procedural Justice

- 90% of participants were satisfied with the overall participatory and engagement process

### Inclusion or Access to Justice

- 43 participants from Virginia Beach and Norfolk, including those with military affiliation
- Diverse group of participants in terms of race, gender, age, level of engagement in the community
- 87% of participants rated the participatory mapping exercise as moderately or extremely easy to use
- 82% rated the discussion as moderately or extremely useful for facilitating community-wide discussion

### Quality of Information Generated

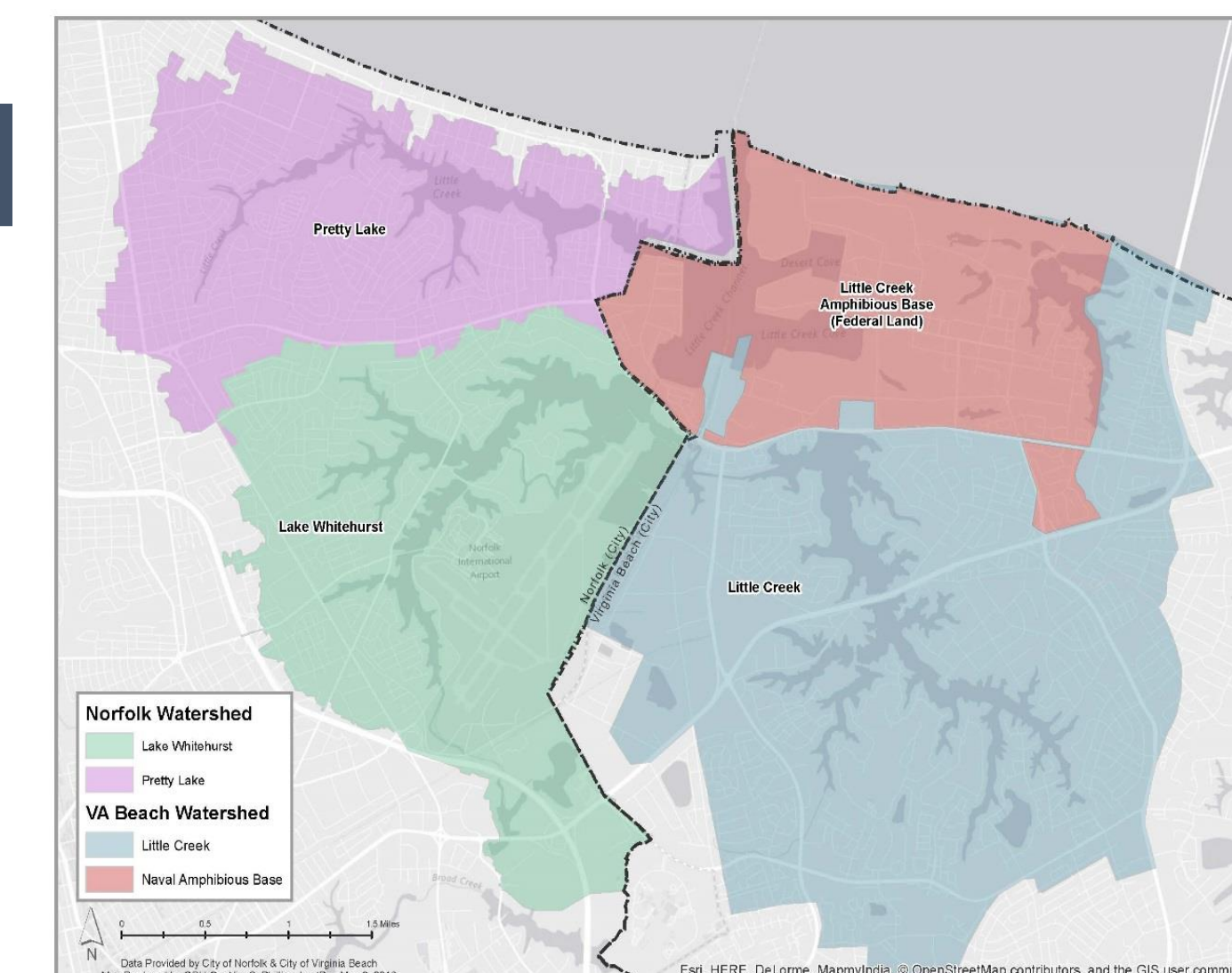
- 82% of participants rated the quality of the information generated during discussion as very good or excellent
- 89% rated the discussion as moderately or extremely useful for generating knowledge about adaptation

### Efficiency

- 83% of participants rated the focus group as moderately or extremely valuable relative to the time committed

### Enabling Action

- 81% of participants were moderately or extremely likely to take adaptation action
- 71% were moderately or extremely likely to support their community's adaptation efforts



Map of demonstration project area that includes multiple watersheds in two cities (Norfolk and Virginia Beach), and a federal military facility (Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base).



## Application of ASERT

Participatory mapping (weTable) to identify assets/challenges, and visualize risks/vulnerability

Facilitated discussion of adaptation actions, barriers, support needs

Prioritization of adaptation actions (using Audience Response System)

- ❖ 90-minute stakeholder focus groups
- ❖ 4 sessions in March-May 2016

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