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Community Discussion: Catch the King Tide

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Community Discussion: Catch the King Tide

By Amy Matzke-Fawcett

The crowdsourced data collected during the "Catch the King Tide" project is being put to good use, as participants found out during a reflection event Dec. 13, held at Old Dominion University by the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency.

With the King Tide event on Nov. 5, the community helped add to the information used by researchers and localities for preventative flooding alerts, planning and maps, said Michelle Covi, assistant professor of practice at ODU.

"We're definitely getting this penetration. The entire region is starting to get on the same page," Covi said, noting that more research is forthcoming on the subject.



Michelle Covi addresses community members who attended the Catch the King Tide discussion event.

The King Tide event collected data from more than 500 Hampton Roads volunteers. Using a locally-created app, volunteers walked along the edges of flooded areas recording data points. Once collected, the data was transferred to researchers, who are using it to check the accuracy of flooding predictions, update maps and improve models.

The data will help bridge the gap between localities and residents, Covi said.

The data helped refine the maps, and tell researchers what the community knows: "Tidal flooding is not only a problem now, but is likely to continue to be a problem in Hampton Roads," said Derek Loftis, assistant research scientist at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, which is part of the Commonwealth partnership.

Although the initial event is over, the Sea Level Rise app and partnerships created with volunteers will be used to gather data during future flooding events, and new volunteers are welcome.

Attendees were also encouraged to share ideas on how to further educate communities and map areas previously unknown to flood, as happened during the "Catch the King Tide."

"Catch the King Tide" was a collaboration between local media and community partners including the Virginian-Pilot, the Daily Press, WHRO Public Media, WVEC-TV, Wetlands Watch and the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency, which is a partnership of ODU and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and Virginia Coastal Policy Center at William & Mary.

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