

Connecting our Past and Present  
 Middle James Roundtable Annual Meeting  
 September 12, 2023  
 Henricus Historical Park

9:00 – 9:15 welcome/introductions	
9:15 – 10:00 Keynote – Footprints on the James - Daniel Carr, VCU	
10:10 – 10:50 - Breakout 1	
History Track	Science Track
A Tobacco Tide: Cultural Context for the Upper Tidal James River Brendan Burke - VDHR	Rivanna Conservation Alliance Citizen Monitoring Claire Sanderson & Lisa Wittenborn - RCA
11:00 – 11:40 - Breakout 2	
History Track	Science Track
Atlantic Sturgeon: Past, Present and Future Matt Balazik – U.S Army ERDC	James River Watch Rosemary Pacuilla - JRA
11:45 – 12:20 - Lunch Pizza and Salad - Bring your own water	
12:30 – 1:10 – Breakout 3	
History Track	Science Track
Aquatic Species Introductions in the James River: An Overview of Past, Present, and Future Invasive Species Management. Clinton Morgeson – VDWR	Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative Expanding Data Use Beyond the Original Intent Liz Chudoba - ACB  Science Track
1:25 – 2:15 and 2:25 to 3:15 - Breakout 4  Henricus Tour  John Pagano	1:25 – 2:15 and 2:25 to 3:15 - Breakout 4  James River Association  Matt Scott and Nat Draper

## Speaker Biographies

### **Matthew Balazik**

Matt Balazik is a Research Ecologist in the Wetlands and Coastal Ecology Branch, Environmental Laboratory, of the U.S. Army Engineer Research Development Center (ERDC). For over two decades, he has researched how aspects of the environment and human activity effect aquatic organisms. His current major research area is providing an understanding if/how dredging impacts the environment with an emphasis on critical habitat and endangered species. Matt graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2012, while earning a Doctor of Philosophy in Integrative Life Sciences. He later did a Post-Doc at the same institution earning more than \$2M in research funding.

### **Brendan Burke**

Brendan Burke joined DHR in 2021 as the State Underwater Archaeologist. He works throughout the public waters of the Commonwealth to document our shared maritime heritage. His work with maritime landscapes takes him from the waters and beaches of the Eastern Shore to inland navigations of the Shenandoah Valley. Previously he was Assistant Director of the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program in St. Augustine, Florida where he worked with a team of archaeologists to excavate historic shipwrecks along the First Coast. Brendan completed his graduate work at William and Mary on the Anglo-Powhatan world and was co-author of *Shrimp Boat City*, a study of boatbuilding and maritime culture in northeast Florida.

### **Daniel Carr**

Daniel F. Carr is an Assistant Professor in the Biology Department of Virginia Commonwealth University. He has taught courses in introductory biology, botany and natural history since 2010. He graduated with degrees in History and Biology and holds a Masters Degree in evolutionary ecology from Virginia Commonwealth University. Prior to his job at VCU, Daniel worked in the outdoor industry and for the Boy Scouts of America at the Philmont High Adventure Base in Cimarron, NM. He has drawn on his experiences in outdoor education to design and conduct several river-based experiential summer classes. These are multi-week courses taught almost entirely in the field that center around river science and natural history. A native of Richmond, Virginia, Daniel enjoys canoeing, baked goods, bicycles and living in North Richmond with his family.

### **Elizabeth Chudoba**

Liz Chudoba is the Water Quality Monitoring Initiative Director for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. She graduated from the University of North Carolina Wilmington with a MS in Marine Science and Vermont Law School with a Masters of Environmental Law and Policy. Liz manages the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative, an initiative to integrate community science data into the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership, and other water quality monitoring projects.

### **Nat Draper**

Nat Draper joined the James River Association in April 2015. Before that, he was a public school science teacher in Henrico County for 16 years, serving both JR Tucker and Deep Run High Schools and teaching Earth Science and AP Environmental Science. He is always excited to see students grow in their knowledge of environmental studies and immerse themselves in hands-on learning. His interest in science sent him to Randolph Macon College where he received his degree in Environmental Studies. He then went to Virginia Commonwealth University for a Masters in Education. As the Senior Education Manager at the James River Association, he has the opportunity to present environmental education at the James River Ecology School on Presquile National Wildlife Refuge. He also works with many science specialists throughout the watershed to create Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for their students. His passion is to teach our next generation how to become advocates for the James River.

### **Clinton Morgeson**

Clint Morgeson is a Regional Aquatics Manager for the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) where he oversees the management of freshwater aquatic resources in a multi-county region of Eastern Virginia including the tidal James River. He works to carry out DWR's mission to Conserve, Connect, and Protect through a comprehensive aquatic resources management and outreach program that manages wildlife populations and habitats for current and future generations. Clint earned a B.S. and M.S. in Biological Sciences from Western Illinois University and Eastern Illinois University, respectively.

### **Rosemary Pacuilla**

Rosemary Pacuilla is a Seasonal Environmental Science Technician at the James River Association. She graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a major in

Environmental Studies and minors in Biology and Philosophy. Since she moved to Richmond, she has spent every summer enjoying the James River and she is excited to be able to work on projects that help monitor and protect this wonderful natural resource. Her main responsibility is working on the River Watch Program, which is a volunteer water quality monitoring program within the James River watershed. Volunteers collect samples from designated sites throughout the watershed weekly. Samples are processed for *e. coli* or *enterococcus* bacteria and data is uploaded to the James River Watch website before each weekend. The project keeps the public informed on how safe it is to recreate on the James River from Buchanan to Hampton.

### **John Pagano**

John D. Pagano fell in love with history while growing up in New York. After receiving his M.A. in Education from Virginia Commonwealth University he dove into the history world, working at Pamplin Park, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. He has been a historical advisor and military consultant for several historical films and documentaries and was a member of the delegation from Virginia who traveled to England in 2017 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of Pocahontas. Pagano has been the Historical Interpretation Supervisor at Henricus Historical Park for 16 years and recently wrote a book about Pocahontas' experience in England, he is currently working on another book focusing on Chesterfield County during the American Revolution.

### **Claire Sanderson**

Dr. Claire Sanderson started with RCA in February 2022. In her position, Claire oversees RCA's water quality monitoring efforts and manages and supervises the activities of more than 100 dedicated volunteers. Claire was a Seasonal Field Ecologist at Wild Ginger Field Services, where she assisted with invasive plant management, native plant landscaping, and data collection for stream and wetland delineation. Prior to this, Claire was a Research Associate in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation at Virginia Tech, and the Research Coordinator for the Centre of African Resources; Animal, Communities and Land Use (CARACAL), an NGO in Botswana. In these positions, she conducted extensive field and laboratory-based research, primarily studying human, wildlife and environmental health, water quality, antibiotic resistance, and the growing impact of climate change on these issues. Claire holds a Bachelor's degree in Animal and Veterinary Biosciences and a PhD in Veterinary Science from the University of Sydney. She most recently completed her Masters in Natural Resources at Virginia Tech.

## **Matt Scott**

As the child of a Navy officer, Matt grew up traveling the world. His perspective on outdoor experiences changed with a school hiking expedition to summit Mt. Kilimanjaro in 9th grade. Since then, he takes every chance he gets to be outdoors, exploring our world! His early outdoor experience led him to rowing on high school, college, and local teams on the James River and its tributaries. He studied Geology at the College of William and Mary to learn even more about this amazing planet. He loves living in Richmond, where he can be in an urban wilderness on the river in just a 5-minute walk from his house. To share his love of the outdoors, he earned a Master of Arts in Secondary Education and taught Earth Science and Oceanography at Freeman High School for 7 years. Armed with cameras, drones, and field sampling tools, he brought pieces of his field expeditions back to his classroom! Using innovative educational technologies like GIS and Augmented Reality, he recreated his trips as in-classroom experiences. Now with the James River Association, he can take education back outside and encourage young people to explore their environments like he did in school.

## **Lisa Wittenborn**

Dr. Lisa Wittenborn began working with RCA in spring 2017 as a benthic and education volunteer and soon after joined the staff. She became Executive Director in June 2020. Lisa oversees all aspects of RCA's work and has a special interest in water quality restoration projects. Prior to working with RCA, Lisa was the first director of the Mills River Partnership, a nonprofit watershed protection group near Asheville, NC. There, she helped initiate and manage programs in the areas of agricultural best management practices, environmental education, and watershed planning. Lisa has also worked as a Research Associate with the Environmental Resource Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a facilitator with The Keystone Center's Science and Public Policy Program in Washington, DC and Keystone, Colorado. Lisa has a B.A. in Environmental Science from the University of Virginia, a M.S. in Environmental Sciences and Engineering from UNC-Chapel Hill, and a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from UNC-Chapel Hill. Her Ph.D. focused on water quality policy and management.