OUR COMMUNITY

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is composed of Accomack and Northampton Counties. Accomack County was established in the Virginia colony in 1634. It was one of the eight original counties of Virginia. The County's name comes from a Native American word meaning "the othershore." In 1642, the name of the County was changed to Northampton. In 1663, Northampton was divided into two counties. The northern county took the name Accomack while the southern retained the name Northampton. (source: Accomack County Annual Fiscal Plan).

The 2020 Census reports Accomack having 33,413 residents and Northampton 12,282. With a combined **total of 45,695 residents**, there was little change in population since the 2010 Census. There are nineteen incorporated towns on the Shore. The Shore has no cities.

Accomack County towns: Accomac, Belle Haven, Bloxom, Chincoteague, Hallwood, Keller, Melfa, Onancock, Onley, Painter, Parksley, Saxis, Tangier, Wachapreague.

Northampton County towns: Cape Charles, Cheriton, Eastville, Exmore, Nassawadox.

Some basic demographic data includes the following from different enumerations since 2010:

Source: data.census.gov.	Accomack	Northampton
Median Household Income	$46,073	$47,227
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	19.5%	50.1%
Employment Rate	51.5%	50.1%
Housing Units	21,703	7,373
Total Households	13,438	5,148
Hispanic or Latino	3,430	1,068
Median Age (Va=38.5)	45.9	49.0
Language other than English Spoken at Home (16.8%)	11.5%	9.6%

Accomack County has a total area of 1,310 square miles, 455 square miles of land and 855 square miles (65.25%) of water, and is the 36th largest county in Virginia by total area. Northampton has 211.7 square miles of land area and is the 85th largest county in Virginia by total area. The four libraries are dispersed fairly on the Shore, being in the north (Chincoteague), south (Cape Charles), and then equidistantly in between in Nassawadox and Parksley. Each County has two libraries in the ESPL System.

Some of Accomack's largest employers include NASA-Wallops Flight Facility, Perdue Products and Tyson Farms meat plants, as well as the school system, and Riverside Regional Medical Center. Northampton County's largest employers include the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and the Ballard Fish and Oyster Company. Agriculture and aquaculture have historically been

key industries. Tourism continues to grow. The ESVA Heritage Center resources support many of the Shore's museums and historic programs and is considered to be a destination itself.

More information about the community can be found in these Regional Plans at https://espl.org/2022/03/10/eastern-shore-of-virginia-regional-plans/

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Eastern Shore Public Library helps build local nonprofit capacity with its information and technology resources.   Staff participate in regional coalitions and serve on nonprofit boards. Staff and library volunteers also provide outreach and activities at our partners' community events.

Besides the two counties and the Library of Virginia, organizational partners include

- Chincoteague Island Library
- Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation
- Friends of the Cape Charles Public Library
- Friends of the Eastern Shore Public Library
- Friends of the Northampton Free Library
- Town of Cape Charles

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation supports the Library's registration as a Funding Information Network member with Candid (formerly The Foundation Center). This support provides nonprofits fundraising training and access to the Foundation Directory database free of charge within the libraries.

Some of our community partners include:

- Community Partners of the Eastern Shore and its members, https://cpesva.org
- Davis Center in Whitesville, https://daviscenteresva.org/
- Eastern Shore Healthy Communities and its members, https://eshealthycommunities.org
- Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber of Commerce
- The Eastern Shore of Virginia Museum Network, operating under the auspices of Virginia Humanities
- Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission, https://visitesva.com/
- Northampton County Chamber of Commerce
- Tangier History Museum and Interpretive Cultural Center, under which the Muddy Toes Public Library operates, https://www.tangierisland-va.com/history/
- United Way of Virginia's Eastern Shore, https://www.esunitedway.org/