

Board of Visitors

February 6-8, 2019

Page 1 of 2

VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE

**SUMMARY OF OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET INITIATIVES SUBMITTED
TO THE 2019 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

OPERATING REQUESTS

Monitor Bay Grasses

\$386,668 (ongoing) 2.8 FTE

Submerged bay grasses are a critical living resource in the Chesapeake Bay that supports valuable fish and crab resources. VIMS has conducted a bay-wide annual survey of Bay grasses since 1987, with considerable support from EPA, NOAA and the State of Maryland. The results of the annual survey are vitally important to the Commonwealth because: (1) Bay grass acreage is embodied in Virginia's water quality standards; (2) the Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources must report annually to various Virginia House and Senate Committees on the status of Bay grass abundance from the annual surveys (*Code of Virginia* §2.2-220); (3) Bay grass acreage is an important component of the blue crab fisheries management plan (*Code of Virginia* §28.2-203.1); (4) Bay grass survey maps are used by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission in evaluating aquaculture lease applications; and (5) Bay grass acreage is used as a metric for attainment of the restoration goals established by the Chesapeake Bay Program and its partners, including the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition, the *Governor's Workgroup on Shellfish Aquaculture* has identified a key issue for the continuing development of oyster aquaculture in Virginia to be the development and implementation of best management practices that promote the co-existence of this important industry and bay grasses. With declining federal support and rising costs for this survey, we are seeking to establish a stable funding base for maintaining the Virginia portion of this valuable survey and to ensure that aquaculture can co-exist with bay grasses.

Commonwealth Coastal Research Fellows

\$200,000 GF (ongoing)

To ensure that VIMS will continue to provide the most relevant new knowledge and solutions for the Commonwealth when they are needed, we are requesting funding to support a new Commonwealth Coastal Research Fellows (CCRF) program at VIMS. The CCRF program will allow VIMS to support graduate student research that strategically advances VIMS' advisory mission in areas such as aquaculture, fisheries management, storm surge modeling, shoreline adaptation, water quality research (including the science of dead zones and harmful algal blooms), and management and resilience approaches. The requested amount will support five (5) Commonwealth Coastal Research Fellowships annually. Each fellowship will allow deep student engagement in research that has immediate and fundamental relevance to natural resource issues in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Awards will be made through a competitive process and judged based on relevancy of the research to VIMS' advisory service mandates.

CAPITAL OUTLAY REQUESTS

Construct New Oyster Hatchery

\$18,900,000 GF (one-time)

Supports the construction of a new 22,000 square-foot state-of-the-art Oyster Hatchery that will house space for industry and economic development, oyster restoration, and educational and training space. The new hatchery will be a single story masonry and concrete wet lab building featuring a brood stock lab, spawning lab, larvae cultural families lab, larvae culture lines labs, setting lab, algae lab, experimental lab, workshop, shared and field labs, and support spaces.