



## BE A JAMES CHANGER

### CHANGE THE JAMES AND THE JAMES WILL CHANGE YOU

STEWARDSHIP  
40%

A 2017 survey measured how engaged residents across the Chesapeake Bay watershed are in individual stewardship. Residents of the James River watershed scored just above average at 40%. Imagine the state of the James when we are all doing what we can to protect our river. Learn more about how your decisions can change the James by visiting [thejamesriver.org/what-you-can-do](https://thejamesriver.org/what-you-can-do).

### AMERICAN SHAD

#### The Founding Fish on the Brink of Collapse In America's Founding River

American shad, often called America's Founding Fish because of their important historical and cultural role, face a gauntlet of threats during their migrations to and from spawning grounds in the James River. In each round trip to their home river, these intrepid swimmers are blocked by dams, sucked up in water withdrawals, preyed on by invasive catfish, and caught in nets set for other species. These overwhelming threats have brought American shad to an all-time low and our first ever 0% score in the history of the State of the James Report. Given the dire situation, Virginia must develop an emergency recovery plan that clearly identifies immediate restoration actions, but it will take a long-term and sustained effort to bring American shad back from the brink of collapse in the James.

0%  
AMERICAN SHAD



Visit [thejamesriver.org](https://thejamesriver.org) to learn how you can help ensure the future health of the James River through our programs.



To truly understand what it means to have a Grade A James River, we invite you to take an underwater video journey, including more than 400 years of the river in less than four minutes! Use your phone's camera to access our James River Virtual Reality Experience through the QR Code.

### ABOUT THE JAMES RIVER ASSOCIATION

The James River Association is a member-supported nonprofit organization founded in 1976 to serve as a guardian and voice for the James River. Throughout the James River's 10,000-square mile watershed, the James River Association works toward its vision of a fully healthy James River supporting thriving communities. The James River Association believes that when you change the James, the James changes you. With offices in Lynchburg, Scottsville, Richmond, and Williamsburg, the James River Association is committed to protecting the James River and connecting people to it.

[thejamesriver.org](https://thejamesriver.org) (804) 788-8811 [info@thejamesriver.org](mailto:info@thejamesriver.org)

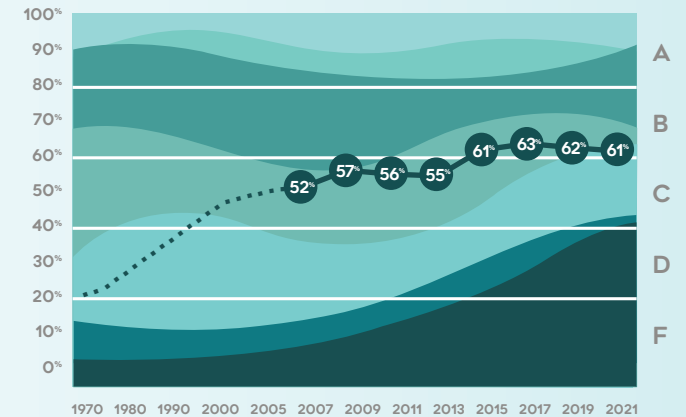


# STATE OF THE JAMES 2021

B-

## KEY CONCLUSIONS

- ➔ The overall score remained a B- but dropped 1 point from 2019.
- ➔ The full impact of 2018's heavier than normal downpours can now be seen through stalled progress toward phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediment pollution reductions.
- ➔ Some indicators such as oysters and tidal water quality showed resilience by bouncing back from the surge of rainwater and pollution.
- ➔ Looking ahead, climate change presents many challenges, including heavier and more frequent rainfall, that will increasingly impact the overall health of the James River. We must adapt to our changing climate by investing in and strengthening protection and restoration actions that promote resilience.
- ➔ American Shad fell to an alarming 0%, a dangerous sign for the iconic species so integral to the history and culture of the region. Virginia must develop an emergency recovery plan for American Shad in the James River because there is no current plan for managing the threats they face.



### STATE OF THE JAMES SHOWS A RESILIENT RIVER

## 2021 BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY RIVER



### DRINKING WATER

2.7 million people rely on the James River for water, making it Virginia's largest source of drinking water.



### RIVERSIDE PARK VISITATION

Riverside parks along the James and its tributaries saw 6.2 million visitors in 2020 - an increase from the 5 million visits counted in 2018. Richmond's James River Park System saw the most visitation in 2020 with 2.1 million visits counted.



### SEAFOOD PRODUCTION

4.6 million pounds of commercial fish and shellfish were landed from the James in 2020, a total dockside value of \$14.4 million. The James is home to some of the largest oyster reefs in the world - 754,650 pounds of oysters were harvested in 2020, a total value of \$9.4 million and more than 24% of Virginia's total oyster harvest.



### HUNTING & FISHING LICENSES

590,043 people registered boats and purchased hunting and fishing licenses in the watershed in 2020.



### PUBLIC RIVER ACCESS

There are hundreds of places to enjoy the James and its tributaries. 47 public access sites have been added in the watershed since 2013.





# STATE OF THE JAMES

2021

SCORE | GRADE

RIVER HEALTH	64%	B-
RIVER RESTORATION EFFORTS	58%	C+
OVERALL	61%	B-

GRADING SCALE: A 80%-100% B 60%-79% C 40%-59% D 20%-39% F LESS THAN 20%

