



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

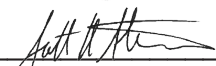
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_



James City County  
Virginia Association of Counties (VACo)  
Achievement Awards 2025 Submission  
Special Stormwater Criteria (SSC)

Submitted to  
Virginia Association of Counties (VACo)  
Achievement Awards  
[gharter@vaco.org](mailto:gharter@vaco.org)  
Attn: Gage Harter, VACo Director of Communications

James City County Stormwater and Resource Protection Division  
General Services Department  
101-E Mounts Bay Road  
PO Box 8784  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8784

June 30, 2025

## **Executive Summary**

In 2004, James City County (JCC) approved *Special Stormwater Criteria* (SSC) as a watershed management goal following adoption of the first approved watershed management plans in the County. Updates were needed based on the regulatory changes, the new Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook, and land cover changes to watersheds within JCC since 2004.

Stormwater and Resource Protection (SRP) Division staff worked to update the SSC to align with these changes and achieve the goals outlined in the newest adopted watershed management plans in the county. JCC staff in the SRP Division began work in Fall 2024 to review and update the measures contained in the SSC.

The updates to the SSC were completed by SRP staff so there was no additional funding needed outside of regular salaries. SSC meetings were held internally to review the old criteria, discuss those measures that were still beneficial and applicable based on current stormwater regulations, and discuss the criteria that needed updating. Several draft iterations of the document were developed, reviewed, and modified through this process lasting approximately six months.

JCC's SRP Division took the challenge head-on, leveraging in-house expertise to conduct a comprehensive six-month update process with no outside funding needed. The result? A leaner more flexible SSC document condensed from 39 practices and nine pages of text down to just 13 refined and practical measures on four pages, all crafted to work *with* today's development challenges. The recently updated *Special Stormwater Criteria* (SSC) consists of a local regulatory reboot that transforms a decades-old set of stormwater rules into a modern, and impactful model for watershed management. Feedback on the SSC from the development community has been overwhelmingly positive.

### **State the problem, challenge, or situation faced by the locality**

In 2004, James City County (JCC) approved *Special Stormwater Criteria* (SSC) as a watershed management goal following adoption of the first approved watershed management plans in the County. SSC were developed as a result of goals and priorities established by approved watershed management plans to: 1) reduce impacts to high quality streams, and 2) provide enhanced water quality treatment of stormwater runoff. These criteria were considered to be one step above and beyond traditional County stormwater management criteria focusing more on the aspects of site design and source control as opposed to additional stormwater treatment at the end of stormwater drain collection and conveyance systems.

Objectives of *Special Stormwater Criteria* (SSC) include:

- Protection of stream reaches from accelerated channel erosion;
- Protection of conservation areas from the impacts of stormwater runoff;
- Protection of high-quality wetlands from the effects of altered water level fluctuation;
- Development of more effective criteria and locations for stormwater practices in watersheds for new development and redevelopment; and
- Retrofitting existing facilities and uncontrolled areas of the watershed to improve water quality.



As the stormwater regulations at the state level evolved, SSC that were developed back in 2004 were no longer considered above and beyond and required an update to avoid redundancy with current stormwater regulations.

### **When are Special Stormwater Criteria (SSC) Applied?**

Special Stormwater Criteria (SSC) are applied to plans of development under the following two (2) situations.

**SSC Type 1 Watershed Management Plans.** Special Stormwater Criteria is required for projects located in areas with an approved watershed management plan.

**SSC Type 2 Variance Process.** Special stormwater criteria designation is required as a condition placed on a project as a result of the granting of a waiver or exception to the County's Chesapeake Bay Preservation or Erosion and Stormwater Management ordinances. For example, SSC may be applied to a project as a result of an administrative or Chesapeake Bay Board approval to impact Resource Protection Area (RPA) or as a result of administrative approval to impact steep slopes or to vary from established minimum standards & specifications as outlined in the Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook.

Application of specific SSC measures for a project is dependent on whether the project is located in a watershed with an approved watershed management plan per JCC or through a variance process. The number of SSC measures, ranging from 1 to 7 unit measures, are based on the disturbed area for the project.



### **How are Special Stormwater Criteria (SSC) Applied?**

Special Stormwater Criteria (SSC) measures are applied to the project in accordance with the matrix shown in Table 1 and the Menu of SSC Measures shown in Table 2. No more than one (1) of the same Special Stormwater Criteria measure can be selected to meet SSC criteria.

**Table 1 - Special Stormwater Criteria Application Matrix**

<b>New Development and Redevelopment Projects</b>		
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Disturbed Area</b>	<b>Measures</b>
SSC Class 1	2,500 square feet to 10,000 square feet	1 unit measure from the SSC Menu
SSC Class 2	10,000 square feet to 1 acre	2 unit measures from the SSC Menu
SSC Class 3	1 to 10 acres	3 unit measures from the SSC Menu
SSC Class 4	10 to 50 acres	5 unit measures from the SSC Menu
SSC Class 5	50 to 200 acres	7 unit measures from the SSC Menu
SSC Class 6	200 acres or more	Contact VESMP (Virginia Erosion and Stormwater Management Program) Authority for Pre-Application meeting and determination.

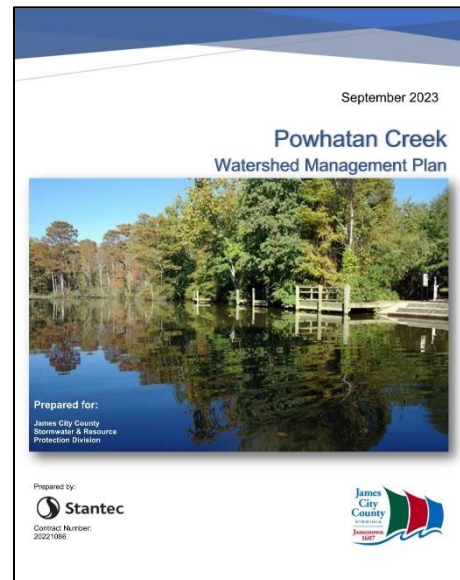
Disturbed Area is the total area of the land-disturbing activity (LDA) for the project as defined in the Erosion and Stormwater Management Ordinance (Chapter 8 of the County Code).

### **State how the program fulfilled the awards criteria (innovation, partnering or collaboration and a model for other localities)**

The recently updated *Special Stormwater Criteria* (SSC) consists of a local regulatory reboot that transforms a decades-old set of stormwater rules into a modern, and impactful model for watershed management. Originally adopted in 2004, SSC were designed to preserve high-quality streams and improve water quality above and beyond traditional requirements. Fast forward to 2024, thanks to evolving state stormwater regulations and changing local land use patterns those original criteria were due for a strategic refresh. Updates were needed based on the new Virginia Erosion and Stormwater Management (VESM) Regulation (Chapter 875), the newly updated Chapter 8 of the County Code, the new Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook, and land cover changes to watersheds within JCC since 2004.

SRP staff worked to update the SSC to align with these regulatory changes and achieve goals outlined in the newest adopted watershed management plans for the county, including but not limited to:

- Improve water quality to satisfy Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and work to remove impairments.
- Refine the current stormwater and other related County requirements to not only offset the effects of further development but create opportunities to improve upon existing degraded areas and direct connection of impervious surfaces to waterways.
- Restore degraded streams where possible and continue to protect high-quality streams.



**Tell how the program was carried out, including financing and staffing, and the program's results**

The updates to the SSC were completed by JCC SRP staff so there was no additional funding needed outside of regular salaries. SSC meetings were held internally to review the old criteria, discuss those measures that were beneficial and considered to still be applicable based on current stormwater regulations, and discuss those criteria that needed updating. Several draft iterations of the document were developed, reviewed, and modified through this process lasting approximately six months.



JCC's Stormwater and Resource Protection (SRP) Division took the challenge head-on, leveraging in-house expertise to conduct a comprehensive six-month update process with no outside funding needed. The result? A leaner more flexible SSC document condensed from 39 practices and nine pages of text down to just 13 refined and practical measures on four pages, all crafted to work *with* today's development challenges. The 13 measures in the new SSC (see Table 2 below) provide options to designers to allow flexibility in meeting the criteria. Feedback from the development community has been overwhelmingly positive due to the clarity, ease of use and common-sense approach to stormwater management. One takeaway from the in-house staff review and update process involved making sure that the criteria were easy to understand, follow, and implement on appropriate project submittals to JCC. James City County's SSC update is proof that thoughtful regulation can inspire better outcomes, not just enforce minimum standards. JCC has set a new bar for watershed management.





**Table 2 - Menu of Special Stormwater Criteria Measures**

Type/ Number	Unit	Description	Notes
SSC #1	1 unit	Shared parking.	Legal shared parking agreement in place; meets Planning requirements.
SSC #2	2 units	Retrofit a ranked priority offsite Best Management Practice (BMP).	Per approved watershed management plans.
SSC #3	3 units	Construct offsite BMP in a previously "Uncontrolled Area."	BMP must be designed and constructed in accordance with the Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook and JCC Administrative Guidelines and Standards.
SSC #4	2 units	Retrofit an offsite BMP.	Not previously identified in an approved Watershed Management Plan (WSMP).
SSC #5	2 units	Contribute towards a one-for-one program to fund offsite improvements in the watershed.	Program would be at a unit cost per square foot of impervious cover.
SSC #6	1 unit	Post-construction infiltration/filtration stormwater BMPs in Handbook (limited to P-FIL-04 and P-FIL-05).	This BMP would be in addition to measures required for VESMP compliance; BMP must be designed and constructed accordance with the Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook and JCC administrative guidelines and standards.
SSC #7	1 unit	Manufactured Treatment Device (MTD).	Project must still comply with VESMP standards on-site per Chapter 8 of the County Code. This would be in addition to measures required for VESMP compliance. MTDs must be approved by DEQ.
SSC #8	1 unit	Enhanced outlet protection measures at pipe and channel outfalls.	Applied site-wide, all major storm pipe outfalls sized for 100-year storm.
SSC #9	3 units	Stream restoration	Not previously identified in an approved WSMP.
SSC #10	3 units	Stream restoration of ranked priority stream.	Per approved watershed management plans.
SSC #11	2 units	Provide 25% additional water quality treatment in the VRRM (Virginia Runoff Reduction Method).	Project must still comply with VESMP standards on-site per Chapter 8 of the County Code; overtreatment cannot be accomplished with the purchase of nutrient credits; treatment must be provided on-site.
SSC #12	2 units	Increase the level of attenuation for the 1, 2, 10, and 25-year storms to 25% below calculated pre-development flows.	
SSC #13	2 units	Use rainfall multiplier of 1.2 for post-development calculations and no multiplier for pre-development calculations.	Aligns with recommendations in latest WSMPs and draft Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Resilient Design Standards.