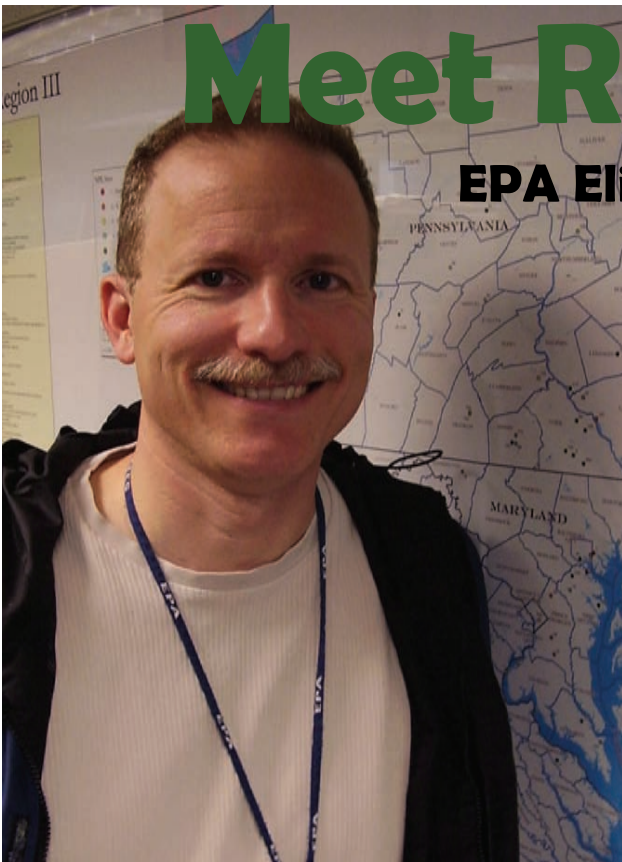




Meet Randy Sturgeon

EPA Elizabeth River Remediation Coordinator

The following is an excerpt from a conversation with Randy about EPA's role and his work on the Elizabeth River:

My goal as EPA's Elizabeth River Remediation Coordinator is... to ensure EPA continues to provide all the support and resources we can to make the Elizabeth River safe. This means applying sound science to assessing, cleaning and revitalizing sites; restoring wetlands, and involving stakeholders and community members along the way.

I plan to accomplish that goal by... making sure EPA's involvement goes beyond federal oversight- that we continue to be a key, valuable stakeholder in the process. As EPA's Elizabeth River Coordinator, I want our involvement to be as seamless as possible while we continue improving the quality of the river on different levels. EPA is involved with assessing sites along the river; we recently added the Peck Iron site to the National Priorities List; we're continuing to address the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, and we're helping to facilitate construction of the new Jordan Bridge. We plan to start physical cleanup of one of the area's most toxic sites- the Atlantic Wood Industries Superfund site- this year and complete cleanup by 2013.

What makes this task challenging... are the many sources of contamination; the proximity of these sources, and the degree of contamination involved. This area has had a long history of industrial use, and it shows. We're dealing with an aquatic environment, so you can't clean just one area without considering all the areas in and

**“People who affect change
are those who refuse to give up.”**

around the river. It's also a challenge to take into account all stakeholder views- especially when those views conflict- and balance them with our federal authority to try to reach a solution that works. But experience shows that it can be done!

What we've learned along the way... is the only way we can effectively clean the River is to approach it holistically... to look at the entire area when making cleanup decisions, as opposed to each of us trying to solve problems separately.

What has made the biggest impression on me is... the sheer number of stakeholders who have committed years of their lives to working tirelessly towards improving the Elizabeth River's conditions. Not only is the number of stakeholders a Testament to this community's commitment, but the level of involvement and expertise each partner displays towards achieving long-term goals still makes an impression on me when we get together. Working with these stakeholders is not only a privilege, but the commitment that each brings to the table elevates everyone's game.

My hope is that... one day we'll all be able to experience an Elizabeth River that is completely safe for the people whose livelihood and recreation depend on it.

What Marjorie Mayfield of the non-profit Elizabeth River Project says about Randy... “Randy is persistent and he's a big thinker – two things that are critical for persevering with environmental restoration of an urban river.”

My ethos is... to find win-win solutions.

As the EPA's Elizabeth River Remediation Coordinator, Randy Sturgeon expertly combines the roles of remedial project manager and federal coordinator with his characteristic commitment to protecting public health and the environment. Having worked on the Elizabeth River since 2004, Randy has seen EPA's role in addressing contaminated sites expand to a much more comprehensive approach to assessment, cleanup and redevelopment. In addition to his work in addressing the Atlantic Wood Industries Superfund site, his coordinator role comprises working with Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality, the Elizabeth River Project, and many others to do whatever is needed to, as the local slogan succinctly states, 'make the goo go.' A long-time Pennsylvanian who resides in the suburbs of Philadelphia with wife Audrey and their three school-age children, Randy describes how he has developed a personal connection to the River and its inhabitants. This connection, coupled with his coordinator role, keeps him strongly committed to working with public and private stakeholders to achieve long-term swimmable & fishable goals for what has long been considered one of Virginia's most toxic rivers.

