

PARADISE CREEK NATURE PARK
AN INITIATIVE OF THE ELIZABETH RIVER PROJECT
FACT SHEET

- The Elizabeth River Project is a community-based nonprofit organization founded in 1993 to restore the Elizabeth River to the highest practical level of environmental quality through government, business and community partnerships.
- Thanks to its 2,000 members and staff of eight, the Elizabeth River Project has completed numerous restorations. Projects to clean up some of the most severe contamination in the world are now under way at Money Point in Chesapeake, while its River Stars program has guided 59 industrial facilities to restore and conserve 649 acres of natural habitat on the river.
- After completing a five-year watershed management plan for Portsmouth's Paradise Creek, technical experts and stakeholders concluded that long-term stewardship of the creek would occur only by developing a park.
- In undertaking a \$15 million initiative to create Paradise Creek Nature Park, the Elizabeth River Project is ensuring long-term stewardship and conservation of one of the last tracts of undeveloped waterfront land along the Elizabeth River.
- Key partners in the park initiative have already committed \$10 million. Donors include the City of Portsmouth, Virginia Port Authority, Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program, Portsmouth Community Foundation, Portsmouth Partnership, The Beazley Foundation, and other community organizations and individuals.
- Along with the first public access to Paradise Creek, the 40-acre park will offer walking and canoe/kayak trails, children's play area, picnic pavilion, tidal and rain gardens, 11 acres of restored tidal wetlands, and a unique "off-the-paver-grid" interpretive center.
- The park's interpretive center will showcase an international model for green building – a building run completely on natural energy sources such as sun, wind and rain water.
- Studies have found that spending time in parks and green space reduces symptoms of attention deficit disorder in children and promotes students' abilities to study and focus intensely.
- The director of science for Portsmouth Public Schools enthusiastically supports Paradise Creek Nature Park, not only as a setting for student field experiences but as a vital part of the school system's solution to attaining Virginia's SOL benchmarks for full accreditation.
- Thanks to passionate support for the park, more than \$10 million of the \$15 million needed has already been raised. Plans are now being made for a community-based campaign to raise the remaining \$5 million.