

2025 RRBC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 24, 2025
The Center at Belvedere



9:30	●	Check in <i>Refreshments available</i>
9:45	●	Ann Mallek , RRBC Chair <i>Welcome</i>
10:00	●	Joe Lerch , VACo <i>Land Use & Planning Considerations</i>
10:40	●	Hannah Somers , DEQ <i>Water Supply Planning Regulations</i>
11:10	●	Break <i>Networking and tabling</i>
11:30	●	Bethany Houchens , RWSA <i>Local Water Supply Planning</i>
12:10	●	David Hirschman <i>Local drought and flood records</i>
12:40	●	Lunch
1:30	●	Julie Bolthouse , PEC <i>Data center impacts</i>
2:10	●	Lisa Wittenborn , RCA <i>Closing remarks</i>

MEET THE SPEAKERS



Ann Mallek | Chair, RRBC

Supervisor Mallek represents the White Hall Magisterial District on the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors and is the long standing Chair of the Rivanna River Basin Commission. She is an Educator and Program Coordinator for Central Virginia for the Virginia Museum of Natural History. She received her BA in Zoology from Connecticut College and serves on the Blue Ridge Committee for Shenandoah Park Relations, Historic Preservation Committee, Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority Committee, and Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board. She was the 2024 president of VA Association of Counties and continues to serve on their Environment, Energy, and Land Use Committee. She also serves on the Local Government Advisory Committee to the EPA Administrator.



Joe Lerch | Director of Local Government Policy, VA Association of Counties

Joe serves as Director of Local Government Policy for VACo. He earned his B.S. in geology from William & Mary and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Virginia Tech. Joe has worked as a planner for the Cities of Fairfax and Richmond, and Spotsylvania County. He also served as a Planning Commissioner for the City of Fredericksburg. His is a member of American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association, The Virginia Rural Planning Caucus and National Association of Counties. Previously, Joe served as the director of environmental policy for the Virginia Municipal League and was the Secretary/Treasurer for the Virginia Energy Purchasing Governmental Association (VEPGA).



Hannah Somers | Water Supply Planning & Analysis Program Manager, DEQ

Hannah Somers is the Manager of the Water Supply Planning & Analysis Program at the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. Hannah has an educational background in Environmental Science and Water Law and Policy; and professional experience with local government public works operations, regional-level water supply stakeholder groups, and environmental consulting. In her role at DEQ, Hannah works with state, local, and citizen stakeholder groups to facilitate effective water supply planning in accordance with the Water Supply Planning Regulation. Her program is part of the VA DEQ's Office of Water Supply, tasked with ensuring long-term viability of water resources across the state.



Bethany Houchens | Water Resources Coordinator, Rivanna Authorities

Bethany Houchens joined Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority in 2016 as the Water Resource Intern. Following the internship, she became the Water Quality Specialist where she was in charge of reservoir monitoring and potable water distribution sampling. She was promoted to Water Resource Coordinator in 2024. In this position she provides guidance in water supply management, source water protection and management. This includes keeping up to date DEQ permits for the operation and implementation of our surface water withdrawals. She was born and raised in Albemarle County and has a passion for preserving and improving our raw water resources.



David Hirschman | Hirschman Water & Environment, LLC

David J. Hirschman manages Hirschman Water & Environment, LLC, a consulting firm located in Charlottesville, VA, specializing in water resources planning and management. He has over forty years of experience with stormwater and water resources management in the public, private, academic, and non-profit sectors. Dave has worked extensively with the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP) program, serves as field liaison for the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and participates in many design and planning projects for water quality and flood resilience. He served as Albemarle County's Water Resources Manager from 1993 to 2004. Dave has a B.A. in Biology from Duke University and Master of Urban & Regional Planning from Virginia Tech.



Julie Bolthouse | Director of Land Use, Piedmont Environmental Council

Julie Bolthouse is the Director of Land Use at Piedmont Environmental Council where she's worked for 15 years. Piedmont Environmental Council's mission is to protect and restore the lands and waters of the Virginia Piedmont, while building stronger, more sustainable communities. She holds a Bachelors in Fisheries Science with a minor in Watershed Management and two Masters degrees in Urban Affairs and Planning and Natural Resources. Her advocacy work has allowed her to work on a wide variety of land use issues over the past decade but for the past four years she has had a heavy focus on the environmental and community impacts of the growing data center market in Virginia.



Lisa Wittenborn | Executive Director, Rivanna Conservation Alliance

Lisa Wittenborn is the Executive Director of the Rivanna Conservation Alliance, where she has been overseeing all aspects of the nonprofit's river conservation work for the past seven years. She has more than twenty years of experience in environmental nonprofit and project management, stakeholder engagement, environmental outreach and education, research, and hands-on landscape restoration work. Lisa studied environmental science as an undergraduate at UVA, and has a Master's and Ph.D. from UNC-Chapel Hill, focused on environmental and water quality management. She loves spending time outside with her two teenage boys and husband, and working on her property near Charlottesville, Va.