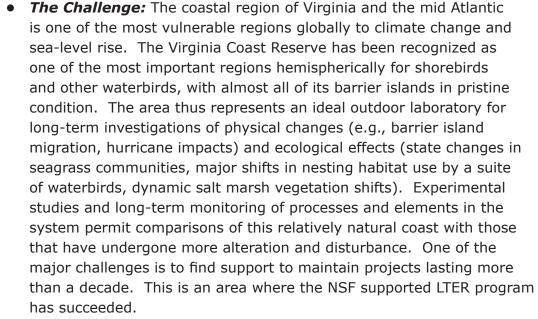


## **Patuxent Wildlife Research Center**

## Virginia Coast Reserve Long-Term Ecological Research Project: A Partnership of USGS, USFWS, NSF, University of Virginia, and Others....







• The Science: The USGS has had a long-standing role in the VCR LTER primarily in studying habitat use of a number of nesting waterbird species and in setting up several marsh elevation monitoring stations (SETs). The bird monitoring has evolved into a large partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Commonwealth of Virginia, and College of William and Mary where complete inventories of nesting birds are conducted every 5 years. These efforts allow scientists to model how changes in habitats may result in population changes of selected species.



• **The Future:** The ongoing research and monitoring that continues will enable scientists to learn whether the short-term predictions made about sea-level rise effects will in fact result in longer-term ecosystem changes. New work is also underway to determine how well certain parameters of wading bird species (e.g. growth rates of feathers, young) may be used as bioindicators of estuarine quality.

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