Why a water degree?
Water: Resources, Policy, and Management is an interdisciplinary, holistically integrated bachelor of science degree specializing in water that includes training in water science, policy, and management to ensure that water is a sustainable resource.

What could be more important?
Water connects society and the environment through energy, food, climate, ecological, health, and economic systems. It is vital to sustaining human life.

Who might find this degree a good fit?
Students interested in water resources and the environment who seek an interdisciplinary approach to their education and who enjoy science, policy, natural resources, and working with people.

What are career options?
• Hydrologist
• Water supply manager
• Environmental scientist or consultant
• Water conservation specialist
• Water quality analyst
• Water resource planner

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Curriculum
The bachelor of science degree in Water: Resources, Policy, and Management comprises 120 credits, distributed among the following categories of courses:

- Curriculum for a Liberal Education (general education; 36 credits)
- Water Core (18 credits)
- Writing (3 credits)
- Water Law, Planning, and Economics (9 credits)
- Geospatial Technology (3 credits)
- Water Science (12 credits)
- Water Policy (12 credits)
- Restricted Electives (18 credits)
- Free Electives (9 credits)

The curriculum is based on an interdisciplinary mix of coursework in water science and water policy, taught by faculty members with extensive teaching experience who are highly qualified to provide comprehensive, innovative coverage of appropriate subject matter.

Students select one area of focused study from a choice of water science specializations (aquatic ecosystems, hydrology, water quality, and water treatment and public health) and one area of focused study from a choice of water policy specializations (watershed management, international water management, water policy, planning, and economics, and water, climate, energy, and global issues).
Integrating Water Science, Policy, and Management

The need for sustainable management of water resources at local, regional, and global scales is unprecedented and has been identified as one of the key environmental, economic, engineering, and social challenges for the 21st century. Adequate availability and quality of fresh water is fundamental to all life and requires an interdisciplinary approach to tackle the complex issues involved with the planet’s expanding demands for and limitations of this resource. Climate change, population growth, and food and energy needs are converging to create complex water challenges affecting both people and the environment.

Scientists and policymakers now recognize the complexity of managing water sustainably and the need for professionals trained both broadly and technically.

Virginia Tech’s bachelor of science degree in Water: Resources, Policy, and Management addresses the protection and development of water resources by providing the interdisciplinary training required to meet water challenges and opportunities now and in the future. The degree will be overseen by an advising committee with representatives from five colleges.

Meeting the Water Challenge: Disciplinary Depth and Breadth

The bachelor of science degree in Water: Resources, Policy, and Management offers students the ability to focus on a specialty in water science and a specialty in water policy and management, while gaining broad and interdisciplinary training necessary to tackle the most challenging environmental problems the world faces today.

Photo on right: Coursework for the water degree includes many opportunities for field studies, in which students learn to assess water resources.

Careers in Water Science, Water Policy, and Water Management

As the number and complexity of water problems increase, so does the wave of water-related opportunities for scientific expertise, knowledge, and innovative solutions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has predicted 18 percent growth in water-related employment from 2010 to 2020, which is much higher than the average for all other occupations. Many of these jobs are with federal and state agencies and nongovernmental organizations, as well as with architecture, urban planning, engineering, scientific, and technical consulting firms.