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For Immediate Release  
March 31, 2017

## HRSD BREAKS GROUND ON SWIFT RESEARCH CENTER DURING MULTI-BENEFIT CELEBRATION IN SUFFOLK

SUFFOLK – [HRSD](#), together with Governor Terry McAuliffe, Secretary of Natural Resources Molly Ward, and several other state and local representatives today broke ground on the new Sustainable Water Initiative for Tomorrow ([SWIFT](#)) Research Center. The multi-benefit celebration also featured the City of Hampton and HRSD's signing of the first Hampton Roads Water Quality Credit Agreement and a ceremonial ribbon-cutting for HRSD's Extensometer.

The multi-benefit ceremony celebrates the advancing of HRSD's SWIFT initiative:

- Purifying HRSD's already highly treated water to meet drinking water standards in order to replenish eastern Virginia's groundwater supply by recharging the Potomac Aquifer.
- Increasing the efficacy of regional and state efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay, while decreasing costs
- Reducing the rate of land subsidence, by mitigating some of the impact of sea level rise on coastal communities in Hampton Roads.

"SWIFT holds promise to address some of the most pressing environmental issues of our time. While SWIFT is not reliant on new technology, the Research Center will provide needed data to ensure the Commonwealth's precious groundwater resources are protected and enhanced for generations to come," remarked Secretary Ward. "I am especially proud that my home town is the first Hampton Roads locality to partner with HRSD through SWIFT to find a more cost effective way to address their stormwater obligations required to meet the Chesapeake Bay restoration goals."

HRSD General Manager, Ted Henifin added, "Such an ambitious initiative would not be possible without supportive partnerships like those we celebrate today with the Commonwealth, the USGS, the City of Hampton and our talented design-build team of Crowder-Hazen. Together we continue to move toward multiple sustainable solutions to the water challenges facing our region."

The SWIFT Research Center is expected to open in April 2018 and will be able to purify one million gallons of water per day using advanced treatment processes. This purified water will match existing groundwater and will be used to recharge the Potomac Aquifer, demonstrating the effectiveness of groundwater replenishment on land subsidence. The Extensometer, a specialized instrument used to measure the variance between the land surface elevation and the bedrock below within sub-millimeter accuracy will be used to measure SWIFT's impact on land subsidence.

**About SWIFT:** SWIFT is a water purification project in eastern Virginia that seeks to ensure a sustainable source of groundwater to meet current and future needs in the region. The project will take HRSD's already highly treated water that would otherwise be discharged into the Elizabeth, James or York rivers and purify it through additional rounds of advanced water treatment to produce

drinking quality water. The purified water will then be treated to match the existing groundwater chemistry and added to the Potomac Aquifer, the primary source of groundwater throughout eastern Virginia. This will ensure a sustainable source of groundwater while addressing environmental challenges such as Chesapeake Bay restoration, sea level rise and saltwater intrusion.

**About HRSD:** HRSD's mission is to protect public health and the waters of Hampton Roads by treating wastewater effectively. A political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, HRSD was created by public referendum in 1940 and currently serves 18 cities and counties in southeast Virginia, an area with a population of 1.7 million.

***HRSD Vision:*** *Future Generations will inherit clean waterways and be able to keep them clean.*

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