

SEA 2023 – Open Panel Proposal
Southern Coastscapes of Early America

As this year's SEA biennial conference is set near the Chesapeake Bay, this panel proposes to explore the environmental geographies within the spaces that become the Maryland, Virginian, and Carolinian coastlines. While the "oceanic turn" in environmental criticism did much to refocus attention away from the terrestrial world that dominated scholarship in the 20th century, the littoral spaces that served as the first contact zones between European and Native peoples has been relatively underexamined. A recent "coastal turn" in ecocriticism has called attention to this oversight, though most of the scholarship focuses on the New England coastline. This panel invites papers that turn the ecocritical gaze south, to the coastal region that saw the first permanent English settlement on the American mainland. From the early failed colony at Roanoke, to the first permanent English settlement at Jamestown, to the establishment of Williamsburg and Washington as important political centers, the coastscapes around Virginia and the Carolinas have been integral to the cultural history of America. Any perspective on the significance, rhetorical use, or historical import of the southern coast is welcomed.

Please send a 250-word proposal and a short CV to dan_walden@baylor.edu by October 23.