

**SUMMARY OF THE JOINT DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE & HARBOR TEAM MEETING**

**August 11, 2021 - 6:00 PM  
Video Conference**

***Attendees:***

*Angie Ashley Consulting:* Angie Ashley  
*Association of Maryland Pilots:* John Kinlein  
*Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works:* Chris Phipps  
*Baltimore County EPS:* David Riter  
*Chesapeake Bay Foundation:* Doug Myers  
*Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee:* Gary Gakenheimer  
*EcoLogix Group:* Mamie Parker, Steve Pattison  
*Hart Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee:* Paul Brylske  
*Kent Conservation and Preservation Alliance:* Doug West  
*Living Classrooms Foundation:* Christine Truett, Lorraine Warnick  
*Maryland Environmental Service (MES):* Christine Offerman  
*Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA):* Kristen Fidler, Kristen Keene, Margie Hamby, Holly Miller, Amanda Peñafiel  
*Masonville Citizens Advisory Committee:* Anita Kestel  
*Mahan Rykiel:* Isaac Hametz  
*North County Land Trust:* Rebecca Kolberg  
*North Point Peninsula Council:* Fran Taylor  
*Patapsco/Back River Tributary Team:* Stuart Stainman  
*Turner Station Conservation Teams:* Gloria Nelson, Larry Bannerman  
*University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES):* Elizabeth Price  
*US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE):* Trevor Cyran  
*Vulcan Materials:* Rob Flanagan  
*Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore:* Adam Lindquist

**Action Items:**

The USACE will present Seagirt Loop Study milestones future meetings to show progress as they are achieved.

**Welcome - Angie Ashley, CAC Facilitator & Adam Lindquist, CAC Chairman**

Adam Lindquist remarked about the recent Poplar Island tour which was attended by several committee members and went very well. Since the last meeting, Gwynnda the Good Wheel of the West was installed and has been running for a full month at the mouth of the Gwynns Falls. Although July was a relatively dry month, 14 tons of trash were collected.

Mr. Lindquist asked for a motion to approve the May meeting summary; the summary was approved without comments.

In response to the action item, MDOT MPA and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are working on the Mid-Bay project which includes discussions regarding the incorporation of oyster reefs.

**DMMP Mid-Year Report – Kristen Keene, MDOT MPA**

Despite unprecedented uncertainty and challenges, the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) continues to deliver on the mission to maintain the Port of Baltimore's 50-foot channel system as well as the commitment to science-informed decision making and stakeholder engagement.

The goal of the DMMP is to advance the recommendations and ensure long-term placement capacity. The Quarter 1 (Q1) and Q2 accomplishments are organized into three categories: Funding and Policy, Planning and Operations, as well as Outreach and Education.

*Funding and Policy:*

- MDOT MPA is advocating for \$38 million in federal construction funding on behalf of the USACE and tracking its inclusion in the President's Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 Budget, USACE FFY 2022 Work Plan, or as a Congressional community-designated project.
- The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2020 included language regarding beneficial use projects and the support for projects like the Mid-Bay project. This solidifies support for aquatic ecosystem restoration projects which deliver substantial environmental and economic benefits. This was completed in coordination with the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA).

*Planning and Operations:*

- The Cox Creek base dike was widened to 200 feet (ft) and an elevation of +36 ft Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW) using reclaimed borrow material from the adjacent upland property to build the foundation in order to raise the dikes to +60 ft MLLW.
- Implementation of the 2020 Innovative Reuse and Beneficial Reuse (IRBU) Strategy has begun; the Maryland Board of Public Works has approved five (5) contracts associated with the innovative reuse Request for Proposals (RFP) for research and development activities so far.
- The Ridgley's Cove demonstration project, which provided blended dredge material to serve as a capping material in the upland restoration of Ridgley's Cove, has been completed.
- Construction of Poplar Island Expansion project was completed, which increases the placement capacity to 69.8 mcy, adding 575 new acres of restored wildlife habitat for a total of 1,715 restored acres. Expansion activities began in March 2017 and were completed in 2021, with the first inflow into the expanded area also taking place this year.
- A 5-year inter-agency agreement for Hart Miller Island (HMI) was finalized; this agreement will help memorialize the roles and responsibilities between the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), MDOT MPA, and Maryland Environmental Service (MES).
- The Mid-Bay Pre-Engineering and Design (PED) Phase continues to advance.
- The Seagirt Berth 3 dredging, which included wideners and a turning basin to 50 ft, has been completed.
- Planning and site investigation studies are underway for another Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) site within Baltimore Harbor to inform location siting for the next pilot cell.
- MDOT MPA, USACE, and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) are actively coordinating to recommend potential alternative solutions for placement of dredged material in the Commonwealth of Virginia; currently dredged material is placed in open waters.

*Outreach and Education:*

- Stakeholder engagement & education programming expanded and transitioned to an all-digital format. Two (2) Spotlight Series webinars have been hosted, regarding Coastal Resiliency and the Mid-Bay project respectively.
- MDOT MPA coordinated with the Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA) to host a Virtual Hiring & Career Expo which engaged 29 employers and over 275 job-seekers.
- MDOT MPA is exploring hybrid approaches to future outreach events.
- Relationships have been forged with local Historically Black Colleges and Universities such as Morgan State and Coppin University.
- New guidelines for public access to DMMP sites are being developed to adhere to safety protocols in preparation for phased reopening.
- The HMI Citizens Oversight Committee (COC) formed the 'Friends of HMI' which will ultimately replace the HMI COC group which was formed 40 years ago.
- Gwynnda: The Good Wheel of the West installed at the mouth of the Gwynns Falls.
- Masonville Education Center remains closed however, outdoor events continue on campus.
  - The Maryland Geocaching Society's annual Cache Across Maryland attracted more than 200 visitors.
  - Masonville Cove opened for the first time for Memorial Day weekend, which attracted 46 visitors, 20 of whom were first time visitors.
  - Three eaglets hatched in the Masonville Cove uplands area; Masonville Cove is the home to one of the few known nesting pairs within Baltimore City limits.

*Q3 and Q4 Expected Milestones:*

- Masonville dike raising design and construction will begin.
- Negotiations continue for the acquisition of additional property adjacent to Cox Creek Expanded.
- MDOT MPA will test and implement COVID safe tours & events.
- Advertisement of public notice and hearing for Barren Island (Mid-Bay) permitting will occur.
- Fleming Park offshore restoration/resiliency design and engineering plans will be completed.
- MDOT MPA will launch an IRBU website tool to serve as a resource for stakeholders and provide a formal dredged material request process.

**Fleming Park Beneficial Use Project – Isaac Hametz, Mahan Rykiel & Larry Bannerman, Turner Station Conservation Teams**

Mr. Bannerman explained that in 2017, design students drafted drawings for the Fleming Park project, and Turner Station Conservation Teams and Mahan Rykiel took the reins and moved forward with the project. In April 2019, an initial cleanup of Fleming park was conducted with the local community.

Pre-design investigations (PDI) moved forward in 2020 and Mahan Rykiel was able to share the sampling results with the local community. Conceptual design plans to restore the site using dredged sediments are currently being refined.

Mr. Hametz stated that Mahan Rykiel has been working with Anchor QEA through the PDI to verify the base conditions of the design. The PDI covered bathymetry/topography, soil/sediment sampling, existing vegetation/habitat, and existing structures. There are a couple of different wetland types present in the area as well as a few pockets of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV).

The majority of the sediment samples fall into Category 1, which allows the most flexibility for beneficial use options.

Mr. Myers asked for clarification of the Categories. Ms. Keene explained that Category 1 material is suitable for unrestricted use in any setting; Category 2 material is suitable for commercial and industrial applications; Category 3 is similar to Category 2 but requires a cap; and Category 4 is ineligible for reuse. There is an option to blend the material to achieve the desired category, similar to the project at Ridgley's Cove.

Mr. Stainman asked if the ash and elm trees identified within the project area were healthy and if it was anticipated that they would continue to grow. Mr. Hametz replied that the quality of the vegetation was not evaluated; only category of wetland type based on the vegetation present.

Three areas were delineated through the PDI. Area 1 has dense SAV and some diverse habitat types, but it does not have a high-quality intertidal profile. Area 2 has the greatest opportunity for restoration. Area 3 is very similar to Area 1 but does not have an area of dense SAV habitat. Pylon structures were documented, mostly in the northern area, to evaluate construction access.

Implications for design include avoiding steep slopes, avoiding existing Baltimore County project footprint/vegetation, and avoiding the existing highway right-of-way. Different restoration footprints are being investigated that range from 1.8 acres to 3.8 acres as well as the potential for an open berm system. The PDI process also included wave modeling to understand how protective the berm will be in 10-year and 50-year storms.

The Turner Station Conservation Teams is a finalist in the Salazar Center Thriving Cities Challenge focused on finding innovative, nature-based solutions to improve the equity, health, and resilience of urban communities. The project is titled "Witness Trees" to honor past community leaders by coordinating with Baltimore County schools and Living Classrooms Foundation to teach students the history of Turner Station and how to plant oyster spat. Turner Station has been awarded a \$10,000 capacity-building grant to refine the proposal; the Grand prize is \$100,000. *Note: Since the meeting, the Witness Trees project was selected as one of eight projects to receive the grand prize of \$100,000. Congratulations to Turner Station Conservation Teams!*

Mr. Hametz presented an updated project schedule. The project team continues to coordinate with Baltimore County on the refined conceptual designs. Once the revised plans are completed, they will be brought to the community for input for finalization and then submitted to the resource/regulatory agencies for review and permitting.

### **US Army Corps of Engineers Report – Trevor Cyran**

*Maryland Approach Channels* - Approximately 785,00 cubic yards (cy) of material was dredged from the Craighill Angle Channel; work began in April 2021 and has been completed. Approximately 1,075,000 cy of material will be dredged from Swan Point; work is anticipated to be completed by the end of August 2021. The material from the Craighill Angle and Swan Point will be placed in the new Poplar Island expansion cells. These projects were awarded to Cashman Marnie for \$22.6 million.

Mr. West asked why dredging occurred during this past summer when it is typically conducted in winter. Mr. Cyran stated that the USACE got out of the cycle and the dredging off-season was to get back on cycle for the winter.

*Cape Henry* - Solicitation for Cape Henry was issued in July 2021 with an award anticipated in September 2021 and dredging in Winter 2021/2022. Approximately 2,350,000 cy of material will be removed and placed at Dam Neck Open Water Placement site.

*Harbor and Maryland Approach Channels* - Solicitation for the Harbor and Maryland Approach Channels will be issued by early September 2021 with award anticipated in October 2021 and dredging in Winter 2021/2022. Approximately 500,000 cy will be removed from the Fort McHenry channel and placed at the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF). Approximately 625,000 cy of material will be removed from the Cutoff Angle and 325,000 cy from the Craighill Entrance; material will be placed at Poplar Island.

*Poplar Island* - As mentioned previously, the expansion has been completed and the first inflow has been very successful; inflow is 90% complete and the material has gone into wetland cells 9 and 10, and upland cell 11. The northern access channel which was dredged in 2017 was successfully used during this contract; the two newly constructed spillways were also used during this contract. Placement for the next few dredging cycles will focus on the expansion cells, providing time for upland cells 2 and 6 to dewater and consolidate.

*Mid-Bay Islands* - The Barren Island component of the project continues to progress. The Value Engineering Study was recently completed which determines potential cost saving measures in the design and construction without sacrificing quality or the mission of the project. The project partnership agreement (PPA) between the USACE and MDOT MPA has been drafted and is with MDOT MPA for legal review. Construction of Barren Island is slated to begin in Summer 2022 (pending construction funding). Design for James Island is underway.

Mr. Kinlein conveyed frustrations from the Hoopers Island watermen over the neglect of their channel as the Barren Island project is moving forward. Mr. Cyran stated that the USACE and MDOT MPA are working with the local watermen to determine how to better execute the Barren Island component of the project, specifically for the Honga River.

*Seagirt Loop Study* - The study is moving forward and slated for plan selection in November of 2021. Substantive economic information should be available soon to determine if the study can be supported moving forward. Engineering and environmental work continues to progress which is being completed by MDOT MPA.

Mr. Stainman asked for clarification regarding the two years needed to complete a study. Mr. Cyran replied that the three-year study spread out over milestones; more milestones can be presented at future meetings to show the progression. The three years include refinement of the plan to include results of the study, costs, and review of by appropriate people.

Mr. Stainman asked when it is anticipated for the work to begin and end. Mr. Cyran replied that the study will conclude in 2023, and the USACE will aggressively pursue funding for design in 2024; design of the project could take a year or two. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2026.

## **Committee Reports**

*HMI Citizens Oversight Committee (COC)* – Paul Brylske

- The HMI COC had a meeting on the island in May which included a bird tour. The meeting was attended by Senator Salling and members of the newly established HMI Friends Group. There

was a report from a recent bird survey that identified four bald eagles, nine osprey, and several nesting species. The group also received a report on the monitoring activities.

- Summer activities such as biking, hiking, etc. are in full swing on the island, and there is now a snowball stand.
- The next HMI COC meeting is in September and it will be held on the island.

*Masonville Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC) – Anita Kestel*

- The MCAC was hoping to have an in-person meeting in June, but there were unforeseen facility issues; the next meeting will be held in October.
- The eaglets fledged in July; the hope is that a pair returns for another successful breeding season (there have been three successful seasons thus far).
- There have been over 1,200 visitors to Masonville Cove in 2021 (through July 31). The number of visitors in the past seven months was more than in the past three years annually.
- A fishing event was held in July which had 35 participants, 20% of whom were from the local zip codes. First time visitors comprised of 49%. Six people used the free uber transportation to get to the event. USFWS also hosted a fishing training event to teach attendees how to fish.
- Upcoming events include the Urban Wildlife Conservation Day on September 25<sup>th</sup> which will include free guided kayaking.
- In 2020, the Masonville Cove multi-modal trail was selected as one of two Federal Lands Access Program projects funded in Maryland. This project includes the design and construction of a shared-use path that links Masonville to the Gwynn's Falls trail and adjacent communities. The current project initiation phase includes stakeholder engagement and coordination to stay abreast of adjacent and related access improvement projects, both current and future. The design phase is expected to begin in 2022.

*Cox Creek COC - Gary Gakenheimer*

- The Cox Creek DMCF will be increasing in capacity from 6.5 million cy (mcy) to 21.5 mcy.
- The lateral expansion and vertical dike raising are underway. The base dike serves as the foundation for raising the dike to +60 ft MLLW and the dikes were widened to approximately 200 ft.
- The project has been fully funded in FY 21/FY22 to begin work on the +60 ft dike raising; the Notice to Proceed is anticipated to be sent to the contractor on August 16, 2021. Construction is anticipated for completion in early 2024.
- Increasing capacity is critical to maintaining a long-term plan for placement capacity of Harbor material and maintaining the 50-foot channel system necessary for the competitive movement of cargo and thousands of jobs associated with the Port.
- The Cox Creek Open House will be held on October 16, 2021.

**Round Table Remarks**

- The next Spotlight Series Webinar is scheduled for September 29, 2021, at noon; the webinar will focus on MDOT MPA's environmental initiatives.
- The next Harbor Team (HT)/Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2021.