

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
September 18, 2024, 10:00 AM  
Hybrid Meeting**

***Attendees:***

*Angie Ashley Consulting:* Angie Ashley

*Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA):* Rupert Denney\*

*Chesapeake Bay Foundation:* Gussie Maguire\*

*Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC):* Adam Lindquist\*

*Council Fire:* George Chmael

*Maryland Environmental Service (MES):* Marni Dolinar\*, Claire Spears

*Maryland Geological Survey (MGS):* Stephen Van Ryswick\*

*Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE):* Matthew Rowe\*

*Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR):* Richard Ortt\*

*Maryland Port Administration (MPA):* Nichol Conley, Bertrand Djiki, Danielle Fisher, Rachael Gilde, Margaret Hamby, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller\*, Rachel Miller, Robert Munroe, Amanda Peñafiel, Joseph Ross, Darren Swift

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries:* Jonathan Watson\*

*Rukert Terminals Corporation:* Andrew Gray\*

*The Terrapin Institution:* Marguerite Whilden

*University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES):* Dave Nemazie, Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm\*

*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (CENAB):* Joe Bieberich, Trevor Cyran, Kevin Fenyak, Eric Lindheimer\*

*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District (CENAP):* Michael Hart\*

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):* Robbie Callahan\*

\*Denotes DMMP Management Committee members.

**Action Items:**

- MPA will update the 2025 Recommendations listed in the 2024 DMMP Annual Report prior to the November 6, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting.
- Members of the DMMP Management Committee will provide ideas on how to prioritize the 2025 Recommendations within each of the three recommendation categories by September 30, 2024.

**1.0 Convene and Welcome**

**Ms. Holly Miller, MPA**

Meeting materials can be found at the following link: [9/18 Management Committee Meeting](#). Ms. Miller welcomed attendees, called the meeting to order, and stated that all action items from June 20, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting are complete. Ms. Miller requested a motion to approve the June 20, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting summary; the Committee approved. Ms. Miller recognized the new members of the Committee including Gussie Maguire, Chesapeake Bay Foundation; Kevin Schabow, NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office; and Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, the new President at the UMCES and the Vice Chancellor for Sustainability at the University System of Maryland.

Ms. Miller acknowledged the passing of Mr. Doug Myers, a long-time DMMP Management Committee member. Mr. Myers, Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Maryland Senior Scientist for nearly twelve years, was a marine biologist and fierce advocate for protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay. Known for

his deep environmental knowledge and passion for Chesapeake Bay restoration, Mr. Myers was consistently working to ensure excellence across all DMMP projects.

## **2.0 Harbor Development Update**

**Mr. Darren Swift, MPA**

Mr. Swift stated that, following last summer's successful "Youth Birding Week with the Port of Baltimore" program, the summer youth program expanded to two weeks. In addition to birding and visits to DMMP sites, this year's experience introduced students to maritime-related career paths. While based out of Masonville Cove, participants enjoyed trips and learned from expert birders at various DMMP sites including Hart-Miller Island (HMI) and Paul S. Sarbanes Ecosystem Restoration Project at Poplar Island (Poplar Island).

An American White Pelican has been observed at the Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) since June 10, 2024. This is the first recorded sighting of an American White Pelican at Masonville Cove. Poplar Island, another MPA site, is currently hosting another American White Pelican that arrived May 30, 2024. Resident breeding populations are found in Texas and Mexico. Migratory breeding populations spend the summer in the Midwest and Canada and winter in southern California, the Gulf States, Mexico, and Central America, making the American White Pelican an extremely rare species to see on the East Coast.

Mr. Swift added that on September 14, 2024, MPA celebrated Urban Wildlife Conservation Day at Masonville Cove. The event included a full day of free, family-friendly activities including outdoor games, guided nature walks, fishing, birding, boat rides, tours of the Masonville DMCF, and more. MPA and the Masonville Cove Partnership listened to feedback and requests from the community and enhanced offerings to draw new visitors and the biggest attendance yet with well over 200 participants.

MPA and partners hosted the Masonville Cove Links WildSTEM summer internship in partnership with the National Links Foundation, an international, not-for-profit organization. The National Links Foundation is one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer organizations that is committed to enriching, sustaining, and ensuring the cultural and economic survival of African Americans and other people of African ancestry. The Masonville Cove WildSTEM summer internship focused recruitment at local Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and brought together four interns to explore conservation careers in non-traditional college majors, providing exposure to conservation career paths, practical experience, and a pathway for future conservation careers and leadership opportunities. The Masonville Cove WildSTEM summer internship was generously funded by the Campbell Foundation, the Brown Advisory, and a private donor Truman Semans. At the Urban Wildlife Conservation Day event on September 14, 2024, the interns received a governor's citation for participation in and completion of the program.

A proposed second Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) pilot project has been paused due to concerns from citizens and regulatory agencies. Legislation was introduced during the 2024 general assembly to establish a CAD Task Force. Though the legislation did not pass, MPA remains committed to the effort to study CAD with vested stakeholders. A CAD Subcommittee is being established under the DMMP's Bay Enhancement Work Group (BEWG) to explore technical aspects of a second pilot project, including environmental impacts and benefits, location selection, associated regulations, and socioeconomic benefits and effects. This subcommittee includes representation from community members to ensure interested parties are engaged in the process. The first CAD Subcommittee meeting was held on September 12, 2024, focusing on the purpose of forming the committee, long-term capacity planning, the Innovative Reuse and Beneficial Use (IRBU) Program, and the need for a second CAD pilot project.

Dike raising at Masonville DMCF to an elevation of +30 feet is 30% complete and is slated for completion by the Spring of 2026. The dike raising first requires drainage improvements on one of the neighboring Mercedes Benz lots, followed by raising the dikes to +30 feet. The design for raising the dike to +42 feet began in the second half of 2024 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2025.

In 2023, MPA achieved a significant construction milestone at the Cox Creek DMCF by completing the raising of the upland dike to +60 feet, providing 8.5 million cubic yards (mcy) of additional placement capacity. The Alternatives Analysis for the next expansion phase, raising to +80 feet, is complete and MPA is beginning to solicit proposals from consultants for design. MPA plans to submit a request to the Board of Public Works (BPW) to secure the easement and begin constructing the Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center mitigation project for Cox Creek DMCF expansion once all permit approvals are obtained. Progress has also been made on the Swan Creek Nature Trail (SCNT) adjacent to the Cox Creek DMCF, developed in close collaboration with the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC). The SCNT will create an approximately two-mile loop through the forest conservation easement area, providing valuable outdoor recreation and education opportunities along with enhanced access for surrounding communities. Construction is anticipated to begin in December 2024, with the goal of opening the trail to the public in 2025. MPA will host a groundbreaking ceremony at the Cox Creek Open House on Saturday, October 19, 2024.

In November of 2019, MPA advertised a Research and Development (R&D) Request for Proposal (RFP) for dredged material end use applications. The Maryland BPW has approved eight R&D contract awards to date for high-volume, sustainable reuse applications that support long-term capacity recovery, and strategic planning initiatives and identify the critical steps to making large-scale IR a reality at the Port of Baltimore (POB). All dredged material supplied by MPA for these projects has been thoroughly tested according to MDE's IRBU guidance document, meeting all necessary criteria. Results from six of the IR projects have been shared, and the products such as manufactured brick, soil reengineering for sod growth, incorporating dredged material in concrete mixtures, and use as a lightweight aggregate show potential for large-scale implementation. MPA recently received approval from the Maryland BPW for an eighth IR R&D project with Northgate Environmental Management to explore the use of dredged material as cement clinker as well as a supplementary cementitious material. MPA is also preparing to award a ninth and final project, with final approval by the Board of Public Works expected to be provided on October 2, 2024. MPA has learned a lot from these projects and is excited for the future.

The robust pipeline of IR projects is a pivotal factor in defining the need for the Cox Creek Sediment Technology and Reuse (STAR) Facility, which will be Maryland's first center for IR. The Cox Creek STAR Facility, adjacent to the Cox Creek DMCF, was purchased by MPA in December 2022. MPA is working through an administrative consent order with the previous property owner and MDE to guide a ten-year phased remediation process. Upon purchase, the property was divided into five operable units (OU) for remedial activities and the development of Remedial Action Plans (RAPs), which are required to be submitted to and approved by MDE before moving forward with remediation activities and, ultimately, site development. MPA has received approvals on the RAPs for almost all OUs and the outstanding OU RAP will be submitted by late October, or early November of 2024. The first OU available for development will be the Upland OU, followed soon after by the Settling Basins OU. Development of the design for remediation efforts outlined to MDE in the RAPs is underway. Some of the work includes the demolition of various structures on the property to prepare for site development.

Mr. Swift provided a snapshot of the short-term plan for MPA at the Cox Creek STAR Facility. Currently, MPA is planning a geotextile tube (geotube) field, stockpile locations, and material hauling

routes on the property. This is exciting for MPA to have readily available material for IR projects and the space to continually dewater and dry material. This has been an issue in the past as MPA was limited by a lack of space to start a dewatering and drying operation. MPA aims to reclaim 500,000 cubic yards (cy) of capacity from the Cox Creek DMCF over the next five years. MPA investigated hauling options for the excess material including utilizing the existing roads to haul material or using a direct haul route between the two sites. MPA found that using a direct haul route provided a shorter access route which minimizes hauling time and emissions along with allowing for the use of off-road haul trucks that can be loaded faster and carry much larger loads of material. This option also allows all construction traffic to be kept between the sites and off the public roads. The Cross-Property Access Road is currently at 90% design.

For future site development of the Cox Creek STAR Facility, MPA is executing a master site development plan with a focus on large-scale capacity recovery. A Request for Information (RFI) is anticipated to be advertised by the end of 2024. Mr. Swift emphasized that a potential developer does not have to participate in the R&D RFP to be considered eligible to submit a response to the RFI. After receiving the submittals MPA will review the information prior to any offers being made. Submittals will include a market analysis of products, economic impact statements for the immediate area and the state of Maryland, and contract terms such as the amount of space needed and length of the contract. Once the information has been reviewed and verified, MPA will engage with prospective developers to start negotiations for development. MPA anticipates that construction at the Cox Creek STAR Facility could begin within the next two years. The IR program will look significantly different in the coming years as MPA will start ramping up to recover 500,000 cy of capacity or more annually and as a result, the dikes at the Cox Creek DMCF may not need to be raised to +80 feet.

Mr. Denney recommended that, given the overlapping components of capacity recovery, it may be useful for MPA to develop a bar chart to visually present the volumes of capacity anticipated to be recovered by each activity at the Cox Creek STAR Facility over time. Mr. Swift expressed appreciation to Mr. Denney for recommending a potential outreach tool for MPA to consider developing as the Cox Creek STAR Facility project progresses. Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm expressed excitement toward the work that MPA is completing through the IR program and encouraged increased communications regarding the innovative work to garner more public interest and support. Mr. Swift agreed that there is a lot of public excitement surrounding the work being conducted through the IR program. Mr. Ortt added that it could be interesting to examine how MPA, along with other state agencies such as Maryland DNR and MDE, reuse material that would otherwise be treated as waste. Ms. Miller stated that MPA works hard through the DMMP's robust outreach initiatives to reach as many interested stakeholders as possible and is open to recommendations as to how to improve as MPA is planning for 2025.

### **3.0 2025 Annual Report Recommendations**

**Ms. Holly Miller, MPA**

Ms. Miller stated that MPA has begun preparations for drafting of the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and recommendations for 2025. Information is currently being gathered to assess progress in various areas and to plan for the future of DMMP operations and impact. A draft of the 2024 DMMP Annual Report will be shared in advance of the November 6, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting, where the report will be presented and discussed.

Ms. Miller stated that MPA has received positive feedback regarding the evolution of the DMMP Annual Report format and increased engagement with the content. MPA has once again sought to prepare a consumable format that will maintain the momentum built with stakeholders. The 2024 DMMP Annual Report will be organized by Points of Pride, Areas of Focus, and Recommendations which are divided into three main categories including Funding & Policy; Planning & Operations; and Outreach &

Education. The management of dredged material is complex and the DMMP is greatly enhanced by diverse stakeholder involvement that helps ensure the greatest social, environmental, and operational impacts are delivered and sustained. The DMMP leverages a series of stakeholder oversight and advisory committees that assist in the implementation of the DMMP. The committees anchor that engagement and advise on virtually all elements of the DMMP.

The Harbor Development staff have reviewed the 2024 DMMP Recommendations put forth in the 2023 DMMP Annual Report to further support achieving success that will benefit the region economically, environmentally, and socially for decades. Updates have been made in draft form for 2025 based on the implementation of those recommendations. These suggested updates are intended to initiate discussion, not to serve as final decisions. Ms. Miller requested that the Committee review and provide comments on the draft recommendations with an eye toward 2025.

#### Funding & Policy Recommendations

The Harbor Development staff recommends removing the language specific to the Maryland Green Purchasing Commission that is listed in the second Funding & Policy recommendation. Initially, this was an example of leveraging partnerships and stakeholders. Mr. Swift has been working with the Maryland Green Purchasing Commission and feels that the work is complete and therefore specific reference to the group can be removed. This change does not mean that MPA will not seek to leverage partnerships and stakeholders or will move away from working with groups such as the Maryland Commission on Climate Change. Instead, it reflects the completion of this particular task while maintaining a broader focus on collaboration with other partners. Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm stated that, by also sitting on the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, there is an opportunity for a connection to be made between the Maryland Commission on Climate Change and the DMMP. Ms. Miller expressed appreciation toward Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm for providing a connection to the Maryland Commission on Climate Change as it is a group that MPA would like to increase engagement with moving forward. Mr. Ortt stated that the mention of the Maryland DNR Regional Sediment Management Plan in the second Funding & Policy recommendation requires additional follow up coordination as the Regional Sediment Management Plan MPA is looking for may not align with what Maryland DNR is constructing. Regardless, Maryland DNR is interested in working with MPA on the recommendation and additional internal coordination will be necessary to ensure that Maryland DNR is providing the proper engagement. Ms. Miller expressed understanding that efforts are evolving and therefore if specific mention of the Maryland DNR Regional Sediment Management Plan is no longer appropriate the language can be updated.

Ms. Miller stated that, related to the third Funding & Policy recommendation, Harbor Development staff suggested adding language to include not only seeking available funding but also partnerships for DMMP-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction projects. This change aligns with feedback received from Mr. Denney emphasizing the importance of not only seeking funding opportunities but also exploring potential partnerships for these initiatives. For example, MPA recently applied for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Ports Grant, which involved a coalition of multiple partners. By updating the language, MPA aims to ensure that future funding opportunities are considered alongside possibilities for collaboration with other stakeholders. Mr. Rowe stated that the recommendations are high-level and therefore do not specify the types of relationships and partnerships the recommendation is referencing. While it may not be applicable to add more specificity to the recommendation itself, the DMMP Management Committee may request additional specificity in the future to assist MPA in addressing these recommendations. Ms. Miller agreed that MPA purposefully keeps the recommendations high-level to not limit MPA's options on how the recommendations are

addressed. Partnerships is a general term that allows the DMMP committees the flexibility to define what those partnerships are and what they look like.

#### Planning & Operations Recommendations

Ms. Miller stated that the Harbor Development staff recommends leaving the first recommendation unchanged as it is a multi-year recommendation that is still relevant and one that MPA is committed to continuing progress on. MPA remains dedicated to conducting capacity and dredging demand planning beyond the 20-year timeframe and is still striving to achieve capacity recovery through the 2020 IRBU Strategy. The second recommendation, related to the Cox Creek STAR Facility, focuses on preparing the site for the implementation of long-term, large-scale IR and capacity recovery efforts. The Harbor Development staff recommends adding “and issue a Request for Information (RFI)” to the second recommendation as an RFI is important in advancing the implementation of large-scale IR at the Cox Creek STAR Facility. Like the first recommendation, the Harbor Development staff recommends leaving the third recommendation unchanged as incorporating the potential impacts of climate change and facilitating the use of nature-based and climate-resilient solutions is still extremely relevant.

Related to the fourth recommendation, focusing on Hart-Miller Island (HMI), the Harbor Development staff recommends striking the previous language and instead replacing it with language to support the HMI COC and sister state agencies as the reopening of HMI is explored. Mr. Denney expressed concerns regarding the precedent set by MPA becoming involved in the reopening of HMI, emphasizing the importance of maintaining community trust. Ms. Miller expressed appreciation for Mr. Denney’s comment. Due to contractual obligations, MPA will have to take a step back and assume a supporting role related to the reopening of HMI. The fourth recommendation acknowledges that MPA is not walking away from HMI entirely as there is still a future obligation to restore HMI into a state park, however things have changed. Additionally, the HMI COC is still a DMMP committee and therefore, regardless of MPA’s involvement in the operations of HMI, the goal is to continue supporting that committee. Mr. Nemazie stated that the word “explored” in the proposed language does not seem appropriate and recommended “considered” as an alternative. Ms. Whilden inquired about the remaining capacity of HMI. Ms. Dolinar responded that HMI has about 8 mcy of capacity remaining and emphasized that the volume is an estimate based on previous data as there has not been a recent survey to quantify the remaining capacity. Ms. Whilden requested clarification as to why there is so much capacity remaining at HMI. Ms. Miller explained that, based on the Dredged Material Management Act (DMMA) of 2001, HMI had to be closed by December 31, 2009, regardless of whether it had reached capacity or not. MPA attempted to use as much of that capacity as possible prior to the closure of HMI, however, some capacity remained. Additionally, since HMI’s closure, the material has consolidated over time creating additional capacity in the cell.

Ms. Miller stated that the fifth and sixth recommendations were also suggested by Harbor Development staff to remain unchanged due to the continued relevance. In addition to updating the six recommendations from the previous year, the Harbor Development staff suggest the inclusion of a seventh recommendation activating the Bay Enhancement Working Group (BEWG) to review and provide recommendations to MDE regarding the IRBU guidance document related to BU in the Baltimore Harbor to make implementation more transparent and predictable.

Mr. Rowe expressed concern about the BEWG potentially making recommendations that are out of the scope of MDE’s authority, specifically that the recommendations coming from the BEWG will require an immense amount of time and resources that do not have relevance to permitting or MDE’s regulatory authority. Mr. Swift suggested that MDE assist in filtering some of the ideas that come out of the BEWG

before becoming recommendations to assist in setting those boundaries. Ms. Miller emphasized the importance of MDE’s involvement given that MDE is the regulatory authority.

Mr. Watson expressed concern regarding whether the BEWG should be making recommendations to MDE on the IRBU guidance document. Alternatively, the BEWG could focus on evaluating the environmental suitability of harbor material for reuse and identifying knowledge gaps. Findings could then be shared with MDE, allowing for the consideration of the information in the decision-making process without direct prescriptive recommendations from the BEWG. Ms. Miller expressed appreciation for Mr. Watson’s perspective and added that the recommendation was created thinking about those who are seeking to do IR and BU. These interested parties use the IRBU guidance document as a road map, therefore, the document should provide a more predictable process for the industry. The recommendation could be reframed to identify what information is needed from regulatory and resource agencies to consider BU in the Baltimore Harbor. Mr. Watson added that the IRBU guidance document applies statewide whereas the recommendation highlights dredged material in the Baltimore Harbor specifically, which is another layer that would need to be flushed out.

Ms. Whilden inquired about reactivating the Harbor Team since BEWG has been reactivated and both were historically significant. Additionally, concern was expressed over the number of current active committees. Ms. Whilden also requested the establishment of a committee for Poplar Island and Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration (Mid-Bay) Project. Ms. Miller stated that the DMMP has a robust committee structure. Several years ago, the Harbor Team combined with the CAC because there was a lot of overlap in membership between those two committees. Ms. Whilden expressed interest in learning how the Harbor Team developed the recommendations provided in the 2011 report.

Mr. Lindheimer asked if the 2025 Recommendations are listed in order of priority and, if not, whether a prioritized list should be established. Ms. Miller confirmed that the recommendations are not listed in order of priority, however, MPA would be open to prioritizing the list of recommendations.

#### Outreach & Education Recommendations

Ms. Miller stated that the Harbor Development staff suggests leaving the first Outreach & Education recommendation unchanged, related to prioritizing the environment by working closely with affected communities. For the second recommendation, MPA proposed to edit the language to identify diverse community engagement opportunities in order to recruit members for all DMMP committees. This adjustment reflects the need to find opportunities before recruitment can be successful. The Harbor Development staff also recommends updating the language of the third recommendation to include collaboration with established extracurricular programs for youth to increase access to DMMP sites and encourage the implementation of creative ideas as a pathway to thriving career opportunities. Ms. Ashley recommended removing “extracurricular” from the proposed language since MPA engages with youth through schools as well.

The Harbor Development staff suggested updating the language for the fourth recommendation which is related directly to CAD. The proposed change is to update the focus from developing and implementing a comprehensive outreach and engagement strategy to simply implementing the strategy that was developed this year. The recommendation continues to focus on CAD in the Baltimore Harbor and the importance of investigating emerging dredged material management approaches. The proposed revision includes specific language regarding initiating the BEWG CAD Subcommittee to further evaluate the concept of CAD, adding specificity to the recommendation. Mr. Denney suggested specifying engaging with communities in the fourth recommendation. Ms. Miller acknowledged that while community engagement is an extremely important part of this recommendation and all outreach

MPA conducts, there are also important regulatory and resource agencies, stakeholders, and legislative representatives who also had concerns about the project. The recommendation is strategically worded broadly to encompass more than just communities; however, the last portion of the recommendation may be able to be updated to include the fact that there is community representation in the BEWG CAD Subcommittee.

Mr. Nemazie asked if the recommendations typically omit legislation-related recommendations. Ms. Miller confirmed that the recommendations do not purposefully omit legislation and that, if deemed necessary, a related recommendation would be included under the Funding & Policy category of recommendations. In the past there have been recommendations that have included legislation, however, looking into 2025 it was not applicable.

Ms. Miller encouraged Committee members to submit any additional comments or suggestions to MPA to ensure that the 2025 Recommendations reflect efforts that the Committee supports. The 2025 Recommendations will be included in the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and presented to the DMMP Executive Committee on behalf of the DMMP Management Committee.

#### **4.0 Collaborative Session Recap**

**Ms. Danielle Fisher, MPA**

Ms. Miller stated that at the June 20, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting MPA hosted an interactive session to uncover new ways to amplify impact and improve coordination within DMMP efforts. Appreciation was expressed to all who participated in that collaborative session.

Ms. Fisher stated that the interactive activity aimed to identify synergies among the various organizations and uncover new ways to amplify impact through improved coordination. The objective was to work to review, identify, and prioritize collaborative projects and initiatives that will benefit the DMMP and its stakeholders. During the collaborative session, the Committee was divided into four groups with each focused on one of four topic areas reflective of the 2024 Recommendations including resilience and climate change; habitat creation and restoration; education and workforce development; and environmental justice and equitable access. The feedback provided has been integrated into MPA's work throughout the year and will continue to inform MPA initiatives moving forward.

#### Resilience and Climate Change

During the collaborative session, it was suggested that MPA review current project sites and determine if current and planned elevations are acceptable in relation to predicted sea level rise. Depending on the findings of the investigation MPA could prioritize the project sites to be addressed in a timely manner.

Ms. Fisher reported that MPA has been actively addressing this suggestion. In response to an executive order, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change was established in April of 2007. As a result, MPA developed a policy entitled "Incorporating Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Information into the Public Marine Terminal and Harbor Development Process." This policy identified the need for MPA to make infrastructure and facility improvement decisions to maintain a competitive advantage in Maryland as well as to accommodate projected long-term growth in waterborne cargo. The first assessment was completed in 2010, and currently, an update to the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Recommendations Report is underway to include MPA facilities. The facilities include the DMCFs and land bases, Cox Creek, Masonville and Hart-Miller Island, Cox Creek STAR Facility, Poplar Island, Mid-Bay and mitigation sites including Masonville Cove and the Swan Creek Mitigated Wetland and associated Forest Conservation Easement. The goal of this effort is to inventory, model, and analyze these facilities for a risk assessment that highlights various levels of sea level rise, storm surge, and a combination of these two elements. The resultant data sets will help guide the final report, which will



include recommendations for future programming of capital investments. The coastal resiliency project is separated into three phases. Phase 1 is focused on the development of a comprehensive vulnerability assessment and is currently underway.

#### Habitat Creation and Restoration

During the collaborative session, it was emphasized that invasive species control is needed at all DMCF sites, including Phragmites removal. Ms. Fisher highlighted Mr. Denney’s contribution of including the private sector in a joint effort to create a more diverse geographic approach especially as the private sector struggles with invasive species control at its sites as well.

MPA applied for an Invasive Species Eradication grant administered by the USFWS. The project sites, including the Cox Creek DMCF, Masonville DMCF, and Poplar Island, represent critical biodiversity conservation and habitat restoration areas. Unfortunately, MPA was not awarded that grant. MPA will be coordinating with USFWS to receive feedback on the grant application submitted and will use that feedback to inform how to proceed and be competitive in seeking other funding opportunities to address invasive species control.

#### Education and Workforce Development

During the collaborative session, it was recommended that MPA continue to enhance the career expo by creating a Digital Maritime Job Portal and inviting employers to post openings and updates based on their hiring needs.

On May 2, 2024, MPA in partnership with the BPA, hosted the largest Hiring and Career Expo to date. A key feature of the expos is the Digital Maritime Job Portal; however, many people mistakenly believe the portal is only active during the Fall and Spring timeframe when the expos take place, although it is available year-round. To address this misconception and expand its use, MPA discussed ways to expand the portal as a go-to resource for maritime employment, similar to platforms like Indeed. This includes encouraging employers to post jobs regularly and informing job seekers through outreach and engagement. Since websites require regular maintenance, there’s an opportunity to create capacity for keeping the portal updated with new job listings. Additionally, there is an opportunity to explore funding options to support the site's year-long functionality, ensuring it remains a valuable resource for both employers and job seekers.

#### Environmental Justice and Equitable Access

During the collaborative session, there was discussion regarding the robust Poplar Island tour and education program and its overall success in meeting the needs of those requesting access to Poplar Island. The group discussed an eventual opportunity at Mid-Bay to duplicate the successful tour program at Poplar Island to provide equitable access to that site. MPA is excited to have the opportunity to establish a successful tour program at Mid-Bay similar to the one that has thrived at Poplar Island. Tours to James Island will likely begin in ten or more years. The tour program concept will be advanced when James Island is constructed.

Ms. Fisher thanked those who provided feedback as a part of the collaborative session and reiterated that MPA looks forward to continuing to collaborate regarding the various recommendations and projects.

**Mr. Eric Lindheimer, CENAB**  
**Mr. Joe Bieberich, CENAB**  
**Mr. Kevin Fenyak, CENAB**  
**Mr. Trevor Cyran, CENAB**

North Atlantic Division – Philadelphia District

Mr. Hart stated that USACE continues to work on the maintenance dredging contract for Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (FFY24). There has been a delay due to survey collection, but the contract is anticipated to be advertised in approximately two weeks. The contract will likely be awarded in early November 2024 with dredging operations beginning in December 2024. Maintenance dredging of the Upper Chesapeake Approach Channel and the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal is anticipated to result in approximately 500,000 cy of material to be placed at the Pearce Creek DMCF.

North Atlantic Division – Baltimore District

Mr. Lindheimer expressed immense appreciation to the Baltimore District project managers for leading various projects to completion while much of the Navigation Branch was assisting with Francis Scott Key response efforts. Mr. Lindheimer announced that Mr. Bieberich would be leaving the position of Acting Chief of the Navigation Section on Friday, September 20, 2024, and expressed gratitude to Mr. Bieberich for supporting the group.

Mr. Bieberich stated, in reference to the Baltimore Harbor Virginia Approach Channels, approximately 2.6 mcy is expected to be dredged from York Spit and placed at the Wolf Trap Alternate Placement Site Northern Extension (WTAPSNE). The bid opening was successful and the documents for the contract award are being prepared. The contract is anticipated to be awarded in late September 2024 with dredging to begin in mid-November 2024.

Mr. Fenyak stated that, in reference to the Baltimore Harbor Maryland Approach Channels, the contract FFY25 maintenance dredging went out for solicitation on August 13, 2024, and the bid opening occurred on September 17, 2024. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in October 2024 with contract completion by the end of March 2025. About 218,000 cy will be dredged from Curtis Creek and 333,000 cy will be dredged from Fort McHenry Channel to be placed at the Cox Creek DMCF. Additionally, an estimated 1.7 mcy is expected to be dredged from Cutoff Angle, Upper Range, Craighill Angle, and Craighill Entrance to be placed at Poplar Island.

Mr. Cyran stated that the Baltimore Harbor Anchorages and Channels Modification to the Seagirt Loop Channel (Seagirt Loop Modification) project design agreement was sent to route for execution. Both the House of Representatives and Senate Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bills include the Seagirt Loop Modification project for construction authorization. Design is anticipated to take two years after which the team should be allowed to move forward with the construction of the modification.

For Poplar Island, the Cell 6 and 11 dike raisings contract for \$8.9 million was awarded to Lindstrom Excavating Contractors in August 2024. This will not increase the overall capacity of Poplar Island as these dike raisings were already accounted for in calculating the capacity of Poplar Island. There is still about 33% capacity remaining, approximately 22 mcy.

Construction is ongoing for Barren Island, Phase I of the Mid-Bay Project, and is approaching 90% completion, with an anticipated completion date in October 2024. The Barren Island Phase II contract of \$40 million was awarded on August 12, 2024, and construction is anticipated to commence in November 2024. This will involve dredging in the Honga River, with material placed at Barren Island. Additionally, the James Island initial design is ongoing. The contract package for the first phase of

restoration, specifically focused on the island perimeter, is being assembled. The first contract is expected to be awarded in the fall of 2025, with construction commencing shortly after. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) is being wrapped up to be submitted by November 2024 abiding by legislation stating that it must be completed within two years. The team hosted a meeting with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works on August 20, 2024, regarding commencing construction of James Island ideally in September 2025, and funding is not in an ideal position.

## **6.0 Citizens Advisory Committee Report**

**Mr. Adam Lindquist, CAC**

Mr. Lindquist highlighted a public plunge event hosted in Fells Point on June 23, 2024, where approximately 150 people jumped into the Baltimore Harbor showing that improved water quality in the Baltimore Harbor now allows for periods when water-based recreation, including swimming, is deemed safe as it meets water quality standards through routine testing. Ms. Katie Pumphrey participated in the plunge three days prior to completing a historic 24-mile swim from Sandy Point State Park to the Baltimore Harbor. Mr. Lindquist expressed gratitude toward MPA for playing a part in making the Baltimore Harbor swimmable once again. The event was science-driven, with daily water quality monitoring occurring at five sites around the Baltimore Harbor and compared to MDE's standards for recreational beaches in Maryland. MPA also plays a key role in helping to intercept trash through the fleet of trash interceptors, including Mr. Trash Wheel, ensuring the water is clean. Baltimore City Department of Public Works also played a vital role in keeping the Baltimore Harbor free of sewage.

The last CAC meeting was hosted on May 8, 2024, at which community members expressed some concerns surrounding the decision to consider reopening HMI and the CAD pilot program. The CAC is not opposed in principle to the reopening of HMI however the CAC did express disappointment in the process of the amendment to House Bill 343, which did not involve citizens' consultation or input. The CAC is concerned about the pace of the project and how the community benefits will be distributed. It is encouraging that Baltimore County has now formed a Steering Committee to advise the community benefits agreement (CBA) and that members of the HMI COC are represented on that committee. Related to CAD, the CAC, and other concerned citizens now wish to hear from MDE at the upcoming September 25, 2024, CAC meeting. The citizens agreed that MPA as the regulated entity has thoroughly provided information related to CAD and the dredged material placement process overall and are now interested in hearing from MDE as the regulator. Specifically, there is interest in hearing more about the process for regulating dredged material placement at current sites, potential CAD sites, and HMI along with the potential environmental impacts of the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse. Ms. Miller stated that MDE is not available to attend the CAC meeting on September 25, 2024. *[Please note: Upon additional requests from MPA, MDE was able to attend and speak at the September 25 CAC meeting].*

## **7.0 Roundtable Remarks and Open Discussion**

**All Members**

Mr. Denney stated that the Baltimore Sun has published an article about Maryland's six-year capital transportation plan being decreased by \$1.3 billion. The article includes Maryland Transportation Authority (MDOT) Secretary Paul Wiedefeld stating that thousands of projects in the system preservation program, which at \$7.4 billion accounts for the largest portion of MDOT's plans, were being evaluated to determine which ones are at a logical point to defer until more money is available. The article goes on to state that another targeted area is the development and evaluation program which includes projects for planning studies, preparation for environmental studies, and preliminary design with priority going toward projects where any planning efforts would otherwise be lost if deferred. Based on these portions of the article, Mr. Denney inquired how much of the development and evaluation program is at risk. Ms. Miller stated that MPA will not be immune to budget cuts, however, guidance

has been received that the DMMP will be largely preserved in terms of funding. Secretary Paul Wiedefeld does recognize the importance of the DMMP and the implication the DMMP has on keeping the navigation channels open. This guidance is subject to change as the situation evolves.

**8.0 Adjourn**

**Ms. Holly Miller, MPA**

The next DMMP Management Committee meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2024.