

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY OF THE DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**August 20, 2024, 9:00 AM**

**Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Headquarters**  
**Harry Hughes Conference Room**  
**7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076**

***Members Attending:***

*DMMP Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) Liaison:* Adam Lindquist

*DMMP Management Committee Liaison:* Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

*Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR):* Secretary Josh Kurtz

*Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT):* Secretary Paul Wiedefeld

*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) North Atlantic Division, Philadelphia District (CENAP):*  
Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Beeman

***Others Attending:***

*Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA):* Rupert Denney

*Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF):* Matt Stegman, Esq.

*Council Fire:* George Chmael II

*Maryland DNR:* Richard Ort

*Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE):* Deputy Secretary Suzanne Dorsey, Matthew Rowe

*MDOT:* Sandy Hertz, Assistant Secretary Joe McAndrew

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

*Maryland Port Administration (MPA):* Nichol Conley, Margie Hamby, Holly Miller, Rachel Miller,  
Robert Munroe, Bill Richardson, Darren Swift

*Maryland Environmental Service (MES):* Dr. Charles Glass

*USACE North Atlantic Division, Baltimore District (CENAB):* Eric Lindheimer, Lieutenant Colonel  
Mark Pollak, William Seib, Doug Stamper

*USACE CENAP:* Michael Hart

*University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES):* Dave Nemazie, Elizabeth Price,  
Dr. Lisa Wainger

**1.0 Convene: Introductory Comments**

**Secretary Paul Wiedefeld, MDOT**

The August 20, 2024, Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) Executive Committee meeting was convened, and attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations. Secretary Kurtz stated that the Maryland DNR has a new authority through statute for the Waterway Improvement Fund to be able to layer in beneficial use (BU) for local dredging projects. Secretary Kurtz stated that Maryland DNR is looking to learn from the DMMP along with the history of BU and expressed appreciation to MPA and Port of Baltimore (POB) partners for the support and continued learning.

Secretary Wiedefeld acknowledged the passing of Mr. Doug Myers, Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Mr. Myers served the DMMP for many years and was a fierce advocate for protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay. Secretary Wiedefeld thanked those who have provided continued support in response to the shocking disaster of the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse. Secretary Wiedefeld put forth a motion to approve the December 4, 2023, DMMP Executive Committee meeting summary as written. The Executive Committee unanimously approved the December 2023 meeting summary.

## **2.0 Harbor Development 2024 DMMP Mid-Year Report**

**Holly Miller, MPA**  
**Darren Swift, MPA**

Ms. Miller began review of the progress made toward the recommendations outlined in the 2023 DMMP Annual Report. The recommendations are put forth to further support the POB in achieving success that will benefit the region economically, environmentally, and socially for decades. MPA continues to work closely with DMMP committee members, elected officials, state and federal agencies, non-profit and community organizations, business partners, and other stakeholders to build the future together.

The 2024 Recommendations were developed collaboratively with the DMMP Management Committee and are organized into three categories: Funding & Policy; Outreach & Education; and Planning & Operations. The DMMP team continues to adapt and innovate while delivering on the mission to maintain the POB's 50-foot-deep navigation channel system. Despite the Francis Scott Key Bridge tragedy, the first half of 2024 has still brought significant success as priority projects advance on or ahead of schedule. Communities continue to collaborate with MPA regarding planning and decision-making, and the DMMP remains committed to pursuing outcomes that are informed by science and equitably benefit all Marylanders.

### Funding & Policy

Ms. Miller stated that MPA continues to engage congressional delegations and federal and state partners to ensure favorable legislation, sufficient funding, and support for climate change and resilience planning. MPA submitted two requests to the Congressional Water Resources Development Act (WRDA): the authorization of construction on the Baltimore Harbor Anchorages and Channels Modification to the Seagirt Loop Channel, and full assumption of operation and maintenance of the Seagirt Loop Channel by the USACE for deepening work previously implemented by the State of Maryland. MPA is working with USACE to identify federal priorities and submit funding requests to the Congressional Delegation. This includes the USACE Federal Fiscal Year 2023 (FFY23) Work Plan that allocated \$3.22 million in operations and maintenance funding to dredge the Honga River and Tar Bay to improve access for water users. Additionally, USACE received \$3.6 million in the FFY24 Work Plan for further Honga River dredging. Once containment features are constructed at Barren Island, part of the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration (Mid-Bay) Project, the site can receive dredged material.

To help meet MPA's commitment and the State's target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, MPA applied for the new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) \$3 billion Clean Ports Program, which funds zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure along with climate and air quality planning at U.S. ports. A total of \$100 million was requested for equipment, infrastructure, and planning through two separate Notice of Funding Opportunities: the Zero-Emission Technology Deployment Competition and the Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition. Awarded funds would provide critical replacement of several pieces of equipment for DMMP sites and support to the POB's transition to zero-emissions operations, reduce diesel pollution through air emissions in port-adjacent communities, and ensure meaningful community engagement in the POB's emissions reduction planning and project development process.

MPA applied for the Invasive Species Eradication grant administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Invasive species pose a significant threat to the ecological, economic, and cultural integrity of sites. Additional funds would assist with targeted eradication efforts that will significantly reduce the level of effort needed for invasive control in the future. Unfortunately, MPA was notified on

August 14, 2024, that funds would not be awarded under this grant opportunity. MPA will be investigating similar opportunities in the future.

MPA and the University of Maryland received a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Climate Challenge Grant to study constructing vegetative berms from Baltimore Harbor dredged material and dredged material blends for flood protection. This involves creating and testing dredged material blends with specific criteria to identify a successful blend, including appropriate geotechnical properties, acceptable environmental properties, the ability to rapidly establish vegetation in a berm setting, and developing a Life Cycle Analysis model and Environmental Product Declaration. An optimized blend that best meets all criteria is being thoroughly tested, and results are expected in 2025.

Secretary Wiedefeld inquired if there is a schedule associated with MPA's application for the new EPA Clean Ports Program and if there is an associated funding match. Mr. Richardson stated that a decision is anticipated by the end of 2024 and that MPA, along with the other project partners, will provide a 20% match that is already included in the budget. Mr. Denney stated that it is important that the private sector is on board and following MPA's lead regarding the new EPA Clean Ports Program and efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Ms. Miller emphasized that MPA partnered with the private sector to ensure it is not just MPA but the entire POB that is acting to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Outreach & Education

Ms. Miller stated that MPA outreach efforts continue to prioritize environmental justice, diverse representation reflecting the communities served, and raising awareness about the POB's outcomes. Through pilot projects, MPA aims to investigate whether Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) is a feasible method for containment of Baltimore Harbor maintenance dredged material based on cost-effectiveness, human and environmental health and safety, and benefits to the state. A proposed second CAD pilot project has been paused due to concerns from citizens and regulatory and resource agencies. Legislation was introduced during the 2024 general assembly to establish a CAD Task Force. Though 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 Working 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. The BEWG will be the foundation for the CAD Subcommittee as the BEWG is comprised of a suite of scientific and technical advisors, including those from resource agencies that can support the CAD Subcommittee's investigation of whether to pursue CAD in Maryland. Focused stakeholder and community outreach is underway and will continue to ensure stakeholders are engaged throughout the process.

Mid-Bay public outreach and stakeholder engagement are ongoing as the construction and design of Barren and James Islands advances, and targeted efforts have led to increased engagement and dialogue with local water users regarding restricted safety zones related to the start of Barren Island construction.

Masonville Cove Partnership staff began implementing inclusive principles learned from the Co-designing Conservation course to better collaborate with communities to develop conservation goals, projects, and programs curated for local communities. Additionally, the Friends of Masonville Cove are leading an effort to install a new garden in front of the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center (MCEEC).

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). The program was grant funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

In May, with support from MPA and industry professionals, the Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA) hosted its sixth Hiring & Career Expo, bringing together 34 employers who shared job openings at all levels and conducted interviews with candidates of various educational and professional experience. Together, they matched five support organizations with workers impacted by the POB closure and over 300 jobseekers who learned about job openings, submitted resumes, and were pre-screened and interviewed. This was the largest event to date, and 100% of surveyed exhibitors indicated they would attend a similar event. The exit survey responses revealed that 75% of jobseekers found opportunities for which they will apply, and 78% of employers met candidates they are likely to follow up with for interviews or offers.

MPA and partners hosted the Masonville Cove Links WildSTEM summer internship in partnership with the National Links Foundation. The National Links Foundation is an international, not-for-profit organization. Additionally, the National Links Foundation is one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer organizations that is committed to enriching, sustaining, and ensuring the culture 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 four interns together 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.

Thus far in 2024, through 625 events, MPA has engaged with people over 16,000 times, including just under 10,000 student interactions from 426 different classrooms. Of the 426 total classrooms, 28% were Title I classrooms and just under 26% were Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) Green School classrooms.

### Planning & Operations

Mr. Swift stated that MPA continues implementing strategic operational initiatives aligned with the rolling twenty-year plan, including expanding DMCFs, optimizing capacity, and exploring new management techniques for sustainable, climate-resilient solutions. Ongoing implementation continues with inflow at the Poplar Island expansion along with the Masonville and Cox Creek DMCFs.

The Virginia Channels Bay Enhancement Working Group (VA BEWG) developed a shortlist of potential BU projects, sites, and concepts that could serve as an alternative to open water placement at the Wolf Trap Alternate Placement Site Northern Extension (WTAPSNE). USACE and MPA are investigating shortlist options that are environmentally acceptable, cost-effective, and logistically efficient. In 2023, USACE initiated a study to further refine the VA BEWG shortlist of open water placement sites and provided MPA with a technical memo in March 2024 that is currently under review. Once finalized, the VA BEWG will be reconvened for further discussions.

Poplar Island is an international model for the BU of dredged material. The approximately 1,700-acre site includes 70 million cubic yards (mcy) of dredged material capacity and currently 23 mcy of capacity remain. The next inflow is expected in the winter of 2024/2025.

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. The final elevation of +42 feet will result in the site gaining approximately 5.6 mcy of capacity. Additionally, the initial 30% design process is underway for the Masonville Cove Connector (MCC), a shared-use path providing safe and equitable access to Masonville Cove with completion of the 100% design anticipated in 2026. With funding from the FHWA Federal lands Access Program (FLAP), the MCC will run along Frankfurst Avenue, linking Masonville Cove to the Gwynns Falls Trail and adjacent communities. Robust stakeholder engagement continues to support collaboration in developing an option that serves all users of Frankfurst Avenue.

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 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 the 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. The design is expected to be complete in August 2024, with permitting in progress. 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.

The Mid-Bay Project is advancing, with notable progress on both Barren and James Islands. Extensive coordination efforts with appropriate stakeholders have and will continue to occur throughout the Mid-Bay Project design and site development. Significant engagement has occurred through annual public meetings, regulatory public hearings, newsletters, emails, and small group meetings. Engagement with regulatory stakeholders primarily occurs through quarterly workshop meetings, email updates, requested technical review, and additional smaller focus groups when needed. Outside of the working group meetings, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) met with MPA in October 2023 and May 2024 to review the original Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and discuss agency approval and support; historical footprint of the project area; clarification of potential mitigation needs; applicable laws and regulations; project constraints; and engineering with nature initiatives. Collaboration in 2024 is focused on setting up the adaptive management process, development of the monitoring framework, Barren Island wetland design, and engineering with nature modeling for James Island.

MPA has achieved significant innovative reuse (IR) and BU milestones and advanced toward strategic programmatic goals. The Cox Creek Sediment Technology and Reuse (STAR) Facility will explore IR opportunities. The site was formerly used for heavy industrial activities and requires remediation due to contamination, therefore MPA is working with MDE to develop remedial action plans for operable units

on the site with approvals already obtained for almost all the operable units. Short-term plans include setting up a geotextile tube field for drying dredged material near the Cox Creek DMCF, facilitating a closed-loop water collection and reuse system, and constructing a haul road between the two properties to enable easy and efficient access between the sites. Additionally, MPA is working on a draft Request for Information (RFI) to collect information for potential large-scale IR development and anticipates the RFI to be advertised in early fall of 2024. Discussions are underway with Baltimore City to supply dredged material as daily cover for the Quarantine Road Landfill. Two additional BU projects are also being implemented. MPA will contribute 1,200 cubic yards (cy) of dried dredged material for the Stoney Beach restoration and living shoreline project in northern Anne Arundel County, construction of which is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2024. The Race Street wetland area in Baltimore City, a former Honeywell contaminated site, is undergoing a revegetation project utilizing 500 cy of material, construction of which is underway.

The Maryland BPW has approved eight IR Research & Development (R&D) contract awards to-date for high-volume, sustainable reuse applications that support long-term capacity recovery, strategic planning initiatives and identify the critical steps to making large-scale IR a reality at the POB. All material supplied by MPA for these projects has been thoroughly tested according to the MDE Guidance Document for IRBU, 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 supplemental cementitious material. Separate from the R&D projects, a new opportunity emerged in 2024 with the potential to reclaim large amounts of capacity from Cox Creek DMCF. COMUS Sustainable Products research explores using dredged material as a natural pozzolan, or a supplemental cementitious material, to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with traditional cement production methods. Findings show that Baltimore Harbor dredged material can be used as a natural pozzolan and when blended with Portland Cement, creates a durable “green cement” since their proposed process does not include the use of any fossil fuels.

Mr. Munroe emphasized the importance of IR to the DMMP given the ability to recover capacity in the DMCFs. In close coordination with MDE, the R&D projects show the technical feasibility and environmental benefit of using dredged material innovatively. The results of the R&D projects thus far have been extremely encouraging and provide a glimpse into the bright future of IR for the DMMP. The next phase is to investigate the operational and financial aspects of the projects.

Mr. Swift stated that the Modification to the Seagirt Loop Channel feasibility study, a three-year effort to assess options to relieve the terminal's berth capacity bottleneck and enable more efficient vessel movement, has been completed. The Chief's report, signed on June 22, 2023, concluded the Feasibility Phase of the project and allowed it to transition to the Preconstruction, Engineering, and Design (PED) Phase. The PED Phase will officially begin when the design agreement is executed between MPA and USACE. The full design will have a cost share between USACE, 75%, and MPA, 25%.

### **3.0 Hart-Miller Island Reopening**

**Robert Munroe, MPA**

Mr. Munroe stated that, based on legislation, HMI was closed to dredged material placement in 2009; the legislation also discontinued MDE and BPW authority to approve permits to place dredged material within five miles of the site. However, in the legislative session earlier this year, House Bill 343,

originally drafted to alter the composition of the Cox Creek COC, was amended and passed. House Bill 343 Amendments include opening a large development site, with Tradepoint Atlantic (TPA) specified as the developer, and to receive dredged material at TPA's future dredged material facility. TPA has applied to build a DMCF with the USACE and part of the Alternatives Analysis that TPA is seeking is to place a portion of the dredged material at the Cox Creek and Masonville DMCFs. Another amendment to House Bill 343 allows the potential reopening of the north cell of HMI to the placement of dredged material from Baltimore County if an enforceable community benefits agreement (CBA) is executed with Baltimore County in consultation with the HMI COC by the end of 2024. Because the legislation does not open HMI to statewide dredged material placement and precludes Ports America Chesapeake, with whom MPA has a lease and concession agreement from disposing material at HMI, MPA will not be able to be involved in the operations and/or financial contributions if HMI were reopened. Despite this, MPA has been working closely with MDE, Maryland DNR, MDOT, and TPA to provide all historical information related to the operations of DMCFs to try and facilitate an ongoing dialogue between Maryland DNR, MES, and TPA. Related to the CBA, Baltimore County has formed a community-led Steering Committee with the responsibility of leading open discussions with core members and other stakeholders to develop options for the framework of a CBA. The team is committed to remaining transparent with respect to MPA's ongoing role and concern in ensuring the CBA stays consistent with the broad-based stakeholder input and success that the DMMP has had over the last twenty-five years.

Secretary Kurtz stated that Maryland DNR is tracking the CBA process closely. The CBA must be approved by December 31, 2024, which means that the Baltimore County Council must vote on the CBA by the end of October 2024. Maryland DNR attended the kickoff meeting the week of August 12, 2024, at which participants had mixed reviews regarding the potential reopening of HMI. Some community members who attended the kickoff meeting may have been a part of the site closing process in 2009 and voiced a wide variety of concerns related to the dredging, transportation of the dredged material, placement, and impacts to the functioning south cell which is a state park. In conjunction with monitoring the progress of the CBA, Maryland DNR is also coordinating with TPA to determine how much capacity would be needed. Although Maryland DNR is not a voting member of the Steering Committee, the intention is to attend all meetings to remain abreast of the CBA process and ensure the recommendations are feasible. Deputy Secretary Dorsey stated that MDE remains in a support role at this time and will continue to provide any expertise as is appropriate.

Mr. Denney stated that the Mediterranean Shipping Company, one of the world's leading container shipping lines, investing in the development of a new container terminal in the POB is staggering and should be encouraged as many ports would be interested in a similar opportunity. Mr. Denney emphasized the importance of ensuring that there will still be capacity at the Cox Creek and Masonville DMCFs for the smaller terminal projects. Additionally, Mr. Denney expressed concerns regarding the precedent set by reopening HMI, emphasizing the importance of maintaining community trust. There is potential for a negative impact on community relations if promises made to communities are perceived as reversible, undermining long-term confidence in the POB's operations and future projects. Mr. Munroe, in response to the comment regarding private sector capacity at DMCFs, stated that a request was made to MPA by TPA to have some potential capacity allotted to the project at the Cox Creek and/or Masonville DMCFs. MPA is mindful of the fact that Cox Creek DMCF is the federal standard for the USACE and therefore the USACE gets a certain capacity allocation every year. In addition, there are several other private sector projects that are planned for placement at the Cox Creek and Masonville DMCFs. Therefore, Mr. Munroe assured that both federal and private sector capacity needs are at the center of MPA's analysis in determining if there is any potential capacity at the Cox Creek and

Masonville DMCFs to offer TPA in the future. Placement of material from TPA would need to be spread out over several years which may be one of the driving factors behind TPA's pursuit to reopen HMI as that option provides a quicker solution to dredged material placement.

#### **4.0 USACE Reports**

**Lt. Colonel Jeffrey Beeman, CENAP**  
**Lt. Colonel Mark Pollak, CENAB**

##### USACE North Atlantic Philadelphia District (CENAP)

Lt Colonel Beeman acknowledged the Francis Scott Key Bridge tragedy and cohesive response among private, local, state, and federal entities, thanking the committee for their efforts and expressing pride to have been involved in that group. He informed the committee that Major General Butch Graham was selected as the next Chief of Engineers, with the change of command scheduled for the end of September.

Lt. Colonel Beeman reported that the FFY23 maintenance dredging of the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal was completed in March 2024. A majority of the approximately 500,000 cy dredged material was removed from the Worton Point area and was placed at the Pearce Creek DMCF. For FFY24 maintenance dredging, it is anticipated that the contract will be awarded by the end of 2024. Like previous years, maintenance dredging of the Upper Chesapeake Approach Channel and the C&D Canal is anticipated to result in approximately 500,000 cy of material either to be placed at the Reedy Point South facility or at the Pearce Creek DMCF depending on the location of shoaling.

Construction continues on the St. George's Bridge and is expected to be completed in October 2024 with plans developing for a ribbon cutting ceremony. The bridge remains closed to vehicular traffic. There are no air gap restrictions associated with the remaining work. Construction has begun on the Reedy Point Bridge work which is anticipated to be complete in April 2025. Planned activities include steel repairs, bearing replacement, and concrete pier repairs. There are no anticipated channel obstructions or air gap restrictions associated with the bridge construction and the bridge remains fully open to vehicular traffic. A contract for steel repairs and painting on Summit Bridge is planned for award in October 2024. The construction period will last about eighteen months and is not only expected to close the bridge but will also have some air gap restrictions associated with the bridge painting scaffolding. Any restrictions will be communicated once a contractor is selected, and the work plan is reviewed.

In support of the USACE goal to beneficially use 70% of all dredged material, a successful advertisement highlighting beneficial use of dredged material done by the Philadelphia District generated significant interest with potential contractors needing fill material for projects.

The replacement of the deep draft hopper dredge MacFarland maintained by the Philadelphia District remains on schedule for November 2027 delivery date.

##### USACE North Atlantic Baltimore District (CENAB)

Lt. Colonel Pollak echoed appreciation of collaborative effort on the FSK.

Lt. Colonel Pollak stated that the FFY24 maintenance dredging of the Baltimore Harbor Maryland Approach Channels was completed in March 2024. Approximately 300,000 cy of material was placed at the Cox Creek DMCF and approximately 1.2 mcy of material was placed at Poplar Island. Preparation for the FFY25 maintenance dredging is underway with the contract anticipated to be awarded in October 2024 and dredging beginning in November 2024. Approximately 460,000 cy of material is anticipated to be placed at the Cox Creek DMCF. Additionally, an estimated 1.8 mcy of material is expected to be placed at Poplar Island. In reference to the Baltimore Harbor Virginia Approach Channels, despite some

initial issues, the project is progressing with the contract award occurring by the end of September 2024 and dredging commencing in November 2024.

Construction is ongoing for Barren Island Phase I of the Mid-Bay Project and has reached 80% completion, with an anticipated completion date in October 2024. The Barren Island Phase II contract was awarded on August 12, 2024, and construction is anticipated to commence in November 2024. This will involve dredging in the Honga River, with the 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. Once Poplar Island reaches capacity, estimated between 2028 and 2032, material will be placed at James Island. Poplar Island has 22.7 mcy of remaining capacity and the next inflow is anticipated for November 2024.

The Seagirt Loop Modification project design agreement is expected to be executed in August 2024. Both the House of Representatives and Senate Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bills include Seagirt Loop Modification project for construction authorization.

Secretary Wiedefeld inquired about whether USACE anticipated the bill would be passed. Lt. Colonel Pollack replied that he did not anticipate anything preventing the bill's passage, and noted that the upcoming election could potentially cause a delay.

Mr. Ortt asked about the timeframe for dredging the Honga River. Mr. Lindheimer stated that he anticipates dredging to take place in winter, and timing is contingent on when the contract is awarded and notice to proceed (NTP) is given to the contractor. Mr. Ortt expressed interest in supporting USACE with outreach related to Honga River Dredging.

## **5.0 DMMP Committee Reports**

**Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, UMCES  
Adam Lindquist, CAC Chair**

### DMMP Management Committee

Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm introduced himself as the new president of UMCES, and thanked Ms. Miller for presenting the Mid-Year Report on his behalf. He expressed excitement in engaging in his role within the DMMP and continuing to provide support through science and effort for this vital program.

### DMMP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Mr. Lindquist echoed the sentiments expressed regarding the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse and praised the speed and professionalism in which the response was handled.

Mr. Lindquist highlighted a public plunge event hosted in Fells Point 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. Additionally, the Mr. Trash Wheel project turned ten-years-old in 2024, and Mr. Lindquist thanked MPA for their substantial contribution in funding all four trash wheels in Baltimore. He shared that through this successful investment, Mr. Trash Wheel, Captain Trash Wheel, Professor Trash Wheel, and Gwynnda the Good Wheel of the West collected a combined one million pounds of trash and debris from the Baltimore Harbor in 2023, a new milestone.

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 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. 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 at HMI along with the potential environmental impacts of the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse. Overall, the CAC has requested that Blue Water Baltimore, home of the Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper, participate in upcoming meetings related to CAD. Ms. Miller confirmed that Blue Water Baltimore has been invited to participate in upcoming CAD meetings. Mr. Rowe stated that, given the ongoing litigation, it may be challenging for MDE to discuss the Francis Scott Key Bridge at this time but are happy to participate in upcoming meetings to address as many citizens' concerns as able.

#### **6.0 Comments from the DMMP Executive Committee**

#### **Committee Members**

Secretary Wiedefeld welcomed questions and comments from the DMMP Executive Committee. Mr. Ortt expressed gratitude toward Secretary Wiedefeld and MDOT for providing funding for the stream gauges on the Patapsco River which are a great tool used for flood mitigation, safety, recreation, and coastal resiliency. Mr. Lindquist also expressed appreciation as many communities use the stream gauges for recreation.

#### **7.0 Adjourn**

Secretary Wiedefeld expressed gratitude to presenters and committee members and adjourned the meeting. The next DMMP Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for November 26, 2024.