

**FINAL SUMMARY OF THE
DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
November 6, 2024, 10:00 AM
Hybrid Meeting**

Attendees:

Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley

Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA): Rupert Denney*

Council Fire: George Chmael

Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Kenna Oseroff, Claire Spears

Maryland Geological Survey (MGS): Stephen Van Ryswick*

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

Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): Richard Ort*

Maryland Department of Transportation, The Secretary's Office: John Denniston*

Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Dave Bibo, Danielle Fisher, Margaret Hamby, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller*, Rachel Miller, Robert Munroe, Kelvin Moulden, Amanda Peñafiel, Joseph Ross, Darren Swift, Nathan Thompson

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

Rukert Terminals Corporation: Andrew Gray*

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

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (CENAB): Trevor Cyran, Kevin Fenyak, Rachel Kierzewski, Eric Lindheimer*, Ian Griffith

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

*Denotes DMMP Management Committee members.

Action Items:

- MPA will incorporate DMMP Management Committee feedback into the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and 2025 Recommendations.
- The Association of Maryland Pilots will be advised of CAD Subcommittee updates through, for example, meeting minutes and meeting recordings.

1.0 Convene and Welcome

Ms. Holly Miller, MPA

Meeting materials can be found at the following link: [11/6 Management Committee Meeting](#). Ms. Miller welcomed attendees, called the meeting to order, and stated that all action items from the September 18, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting are complete. Ms. Miller requested a motion to approve the September 18, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting summary; the Committee approved.

Ms. Miller welcomed MPA's newest staff member, Mr. Kelvin Molden, Chief of Innovative Reuse Strategy and Partnerships. Prior to joining MPA, Mr. Moulden most recently served as an Assistant Division Chief at the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) Office of Material Technology. Prior to SHA, Mr. Moulden's experience included serving as Director of Laboratory Services for a materials testing lab tasked with performing quality assurance and quality control testing, analysis, and reporting. As the new Chief of Innovative Reuse Strategy and Partnerships, Mr. Moulden hopes to draw on his materials experience in helping to promote, guide, and implement MPA's innovative reuse (IR) and beneficial use (BU) projects and initiatives.

Ms. Miller announced that MPA is renaming the Office of Harbor Development to better reflect the office's role in the organization, which includes the oversight and maintenance of the navigation channels through the application of state-of-the-art approaches, and with an overriding commitment to stewarding the resources of the Chesapeake Bay in collaboration with its stakeholders. The department's new name, the Office of Navigation, Innovation and Stewardship (NIS), captures these priorities and positions the department for future success. While the name has changed to better reflect the department's focus, the mission remains unchanged as NIS continues its commitment to supporting the economic growth of the Port of Baltimore (POB) while sustaining Maryland's communities and environment. For over 23 years, MPA has implemented the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP), identifying long-term solutions for the nearly 5 million cubic yards (mcy) of sediment that are dredged from the shipping channels each year that connect to the POB. The new department name aligns with the continued focus on innovation and sustainable solutions for dredged material management, prioritizing environmental stewardship, compliance, and building partnerships with citizens and other stakeholders.

2.0 Discussion of Draft 2024 Annual Report

Mr. Darren Swift, MPA
Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, UMCES

Ms. Miller stated that the Committee members received the draft 2024 DMMP Annual Report via email with a request for feedback.

Mr. Swift elaborated that the DMMP Annual Report is from the DMMP Management Committee to the DMMP Executive Committee but is made publicly available for all those interested in the DMMP. The DMMP Annual Report is comprehensive of the entire DMMP. The DMMP Annual Report provides an overview of the DMMP's long-term dredged material management plans; highlights key accomplishments from 2024 and the essential partnerships that have led to success; and provides recommendations for continuing to build upon the DMMP's excellence in 2025.

MPA and the DMMP Management Committee can be proud of the contributions that all DMMP committees have made towards the DMMP successes in 2024. In 2024, working from its rolling twenty-year plan, the DMMP moved forward briskly to carry out strategic operational initiatives. Top priorities were Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) expansions, exploration of new management options, and stakeholder engagement.

Funding & Policy

Mr. Swift stated that MPA continues to engage congressional delegations as well as federal and state partners to ensure favorable legislation, sufficient funding, and support for climate change and resilience planning. State transportation programs are facing funding constraints and the current state funding levels may not provide the investment levels needed to meet the state's goals. The Maryland congressional delegation continues to be integral to ensuring the POB receives adequate federal funding and authorization for critical infrastructure and ecosystem restoration projects. MPA works very closely with partners at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to identify federal priorities and advocate for project needs with the congressional delegation.

The POB has brought in millions of dollars in federal and state grant funding for programs that benefit maritime commerce and the surrounding communities and region. MPA has successfully leveraged external funding for its sustainability endeavors from federal programs such as the Federal Emergency Management Administration Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program.

MPA worked closely with congressional members to draft language in Congress' 2024 bill to reauthorize the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). This biennial legislation authorizes flood control, navigation, and ecosystem restorations for USACE. WDR 2024 is currently in conference and anticipated passage of the bill is pending.

The Masonville Cove Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership consisting of MPA, Living Classrooms Foundation, the National Aquarium, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are the primary collaborators forming the Partnership. Fundraising efforts have more than doubled MPA's initial seed funding, resulting in over \$5.3 million in grants and donations since 2006 and over \$500,000 in 2024 alone.

Legislation was introduced in this year's Maryland General Assembly to amend the composition and responsibilities of the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC). MPA worked with legislators to update the membership to accurately reflect active organizations in the area in addition to the current active members. MPA supported, with amendments, House Bill 343, cross-filed with Senate Bill 20, and legislation was passed updating the Cox Creek COC membership effective July 1, 2024. The Governor is currently reviewing applications to fill vacancies on the Cox Creek COC. The same legislation, not sponsored by MPA, also included an amendment to reopen the Hart Miller Island (HMI) North Cell, allowing it to accept dredged material from nearby Baltimore County projects including the large-scale Tradeport Atlantic (TPA) project, with the execution of an enforceable community benefits agreement. At this time, TPA is no longer pursuing the utilization of HMI as a placement option.

The State Highway Administration (SHA), in partnership with MPA, has drafted a material specification for the inclusion of dredged material in SHA's standard specifications for construction and materials in 2025. This significant development will bring about a positive change in the construction industry. It will support end users, like private developers, who can refer to the materials specifications as policy guidelines, ensuring that construction projects are completed to a high standard and protecting public safety. This will be crucial for end users who want to innovatively reuse dredged material.

In response to an Executive Order signed April 20, 2007, establishing the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, MPA developed a policy entitled "Incorporating Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Information into the Public Marine Terminal and Harbor Development Process." The policy identified the need to make infrastructure and facility improvement decisions to maintain a competitive advantage for Maryland and to accommodate projected long-term growth and waterborne cargo. The first assessment was completed in 2010, and an update to the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Recommendations Report is currently underway.

Planning & Operations

MPA continues navigating a path to the future by implementing strategic and operational initiatives aligned with the rolling twenty-year plan, including expanding DMCFs, optimizing capacity, and exploring new dredged material management techniques. Ongoing implementation continues with material inflow at the Paul S. Sarbanes Ecosystem Restoration Project at Poplar Island (Poplar Island) expansion, and at the Masonville and Cox Creek DMCFs.

Through robust and innovative planning processes, sufficient dredged material placement capacity is projected for the next twenty years; however, MPA will need to continue to identify and work through the planning process to have sufficient dredged material placement capacity beyond fiscal year (FY) 2044. Facilities must continue to be carefully managed to maximize capacity, adhere to project construction schedules, and incorporate capacity recovery and dewatering strategies. Current projections

show that the IRBU program will become instrumental in maximizing placement site capacity to ensure MPA can accommodate channel maintenance dredging needs during the twenty-year planning period.

MPA and the IRBU program are at the forefront of implementation by using dredged material in sustainable and resourceful applications. Pilot studies could begin as early as 2025 at the Cox Creek Sediment Technology and Reuse (STAR) Facility, a site that was formerly used for heavy industrial activity and requires remediation due to the previous uses. MPA purchased the property in 2022 with a settlement that included an administrative consent order with MDE and the previous site owner, providing a roadmap for remediating the site over the next ten years. This is an exciting step forward. Previously, MPA was limited by a lack of space to create a dewatering and drying operation. Now, readily available material for IRBU projects and the capacity to dewater and dry material continually will result in significant progress.

MPA is planning to issue the Cox Creek STAR Facility Request for Information (RFI) by the end of 2024. This RFI will address large-scale IR of dredged material, informing site development and preliminarily identifying potential IR processes that could take place on the site. Respondents will be asked to provide detailed information regarding the proposed operations, how those would be implemented, the scale of the operation, production rates, and time frame for development and implementation. The ultimate purpose for any information received will be to develop a complete plan for IR operations development at the Cox Creek STAR Facility in FY26, the start of a five-year scale-up period, during which the Cox Creek STAR Facility will process gradually increasing volumes of dredged material. Approximately 1.2 mcy of dredged material is anticipated to be recovered from the Cox Creek DMCF during the five-year scale-up period.

The Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW) has approved nine IR Research and Development (R&D) contract awards for sustainable reuse applications that support long-term, strategic planning initiatives and identify critical steps in making large-scale IR a reality at the POB. Results from six of the IR R&D projects have been shared, and the products show potential for large-scale implementation. In October 2024, the Maryland BPW approved a ninth and final IR R&D contract to HarborRock to convert dredged material into supplemental cementitious material and lightweight aggregate. Results are expected in early 2026. MPA will evaluate the IR R&D projects for lessons learned, adaptive management approaches, and scalability, focusing on future opportunities to recover capacity at the Cox Creek DMCF. It is from these projects that MPA feels confident that the IRBU program is primed for capacity recovery at the Cox Creek DMCF using the Cox Creek STAR Facility.

Senate Bill 353 was filed in January 2024 seeking formation of a Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) Task Force, but the bill was not passed into law. Regardless, MPA is committed to an inclusive process and has moved forward with a CAD Subcommittee under the DMMP's Bay Enhancement Working Group (BEWG). The BEWG consists of a suite of scientific and technical advisors, including those from resource agencies, that support the CAD Subcommittee's investigation. The membership and objectives of the CAD Subcommittee are modeled after those outlined in the CAD Task Force legislation. The CAD Subcommittee members are exploring technical aspects of a second pilot project including environmental impacts and benefits, location selection, associated regulations, and socioeconomic benefits and impacts to aid in meeting the state's long-term dredged material placement needs. The CAD Subcommittee will develop a group consensus and submit a report to the DMMP Management Committee and DMMP Executive Committee in mid-2025. Mr. Denney inquired if the Association of Maryland Pilots is represented on the CAD Subcommittee. Ms. Miller stated that the Association of Maryland Pilots is not represented on the CAD Subcommittee given that the investigation falls outside

of the navigation channels. Mr. Denny recommended that the Association of Maryland Pilots be advised of CAD Subcommittee updates through, for example, meeting minutes.

MPA's innovative approach to environmental restoration using dredged material is the foundation for the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration (Mid-Bay) Project. The Mid-Bay Project is advancing with notable progress on both Barren and James Islands. Mid-Bay will begin to use dredged material beneficially as Poplar Island placement capacity is reached. In partnership with USACE and MPA, the project will restore 2,144 acres of valuable remote island habitat within the Chesapeake Bay while providing a total capacity of 90 to 95 mcy over the next thirty or more years.

Poplar Island is world-renowned for its innovative, and effective BU of dredged material to restore remote island habitat. Lessons learned are already being incorporated into the planning and design of the Mid-Bay Project. The restored island is a popular stopover for migratory birds along the Mid-Atlantic Flyway and provides a home to a wide variety of wildlife. Official 2024 bird censuses have identified 198 species, with 32 species confirmed as breeding onsite and another 20 species likely to be breeding. Species documented at Poplar Island for the first time in 2024 include neotropical cormorants, willow flycatchers, and bay-breasted warblers. The goals of research at Poplar Island are to maximize climate resiliency and habitat restoration and develop a set of lessons learned to be applied to other BU projects. Multiple studies have been completed or are underway assessing the relationships between wetland restoration using dredged material and nutrient cycles, greenhouse gases, and long-term resiliency in the face of projected sea level rise.

In 2024, MPA achieved a significant construction milestone at the Cox Creek DMCF by raising the upland dike, perimeter dike, and cross dike to +60 feet, increasing overall capacity to 14.7 mcy. The feasibility study for the next expansion phase, raising to +80 feet, is complete and MPA has initiated design efforts. Construction is expected to begin in FY30. The construction phase is projected to add 6.2 mcy of capacity to the project, bringing the total site capacity to 20.9 mcy. The related mitigation, a nontidal wetland restoration and creation project at Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center, is pending finalization of the conservation easement with USACE. MPA plans to submit a request to the Maryland BPW to secure the easement in early 2025 at which time construction can commence.

The Cox Creek COC continues to provide input to MPA regarding the management of dredged material at the Cox Creek DMCF and to make recommendations on minimizing the potential impacts it may have on the communities and natural resources in the area. A recent project demonstrating this collaboration is the Swan Creek Nature Trail (SCNT). Developed in coordination with the Cox Creek COC and community stakeholders, the SCNT is a community enhancement project to create an approximate two-mile loop in the forest conservation easement area. The design includes boardwalks, a bridge, outdoor classrooms, and information and directional signage. The project has received \$179,316 of federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation Recreational Trails Program. The design is complete, and a groundbreaking was held on October 19, 2024, at the Cox Creek Open House. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025. The goal is to open the SCNT to the public in late 2025.

Dike raising at Masonville DMCF to an elevation of +30 feet is 30% complete and slated for completion ahead of schedule, likely by the end of 2025. The dike raising to +30 feet first required drainage improvements on one of the neighboring terminal lots. The steep slope design of the expanded dikes will maximize DMCF capacity, taking approximately thirty months to complete. The design for raising the dike to +42 feet is taking place concurrently with construction to +30 feet. The goal is to have a gap of only a few months between construction to +30 feet and to +42 feet. Design work for +42 feet began in August 2024 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2025. The final elevation of +42 feet will

result in the site gaining additional capacity, which is critical to maintaining the 50-foot channel system necessary for the competitive movement of cargo and the thousands of jobs associated with the POB.

All on-site and off-site mitigation for the impact of Masonville DMCF construction is complete. As part of the mitigation, MPA has helped create an innovative approach to reducing trash in Baltimore neighborhoods and surrounding waters. Captain Trash Wheel, commissioned and owned by MPA, has been in place at Masonville Cove for six years. In 2024, Captain Trash Wheel removed 8.7 tons of trash and surpassed an important milestone, with over 51 tons of debris removed from the waterways in six years.

HMI is a haven for boaters in the northern Chesapeake Bay. It provides the public with recreational opportunities and the chance to encounter many different species of plants, insects, and wildlife, including abundant migrating bird populations. Over 34,800 people visited in 2024 to fish, camp, boat, swim, bike, hike, and picnic. This year, 208 species of birds were observed on official censuses, with 30 species confirmed as breeding on site. Two new birds were seen on HMI for the first time in 2024, the white ibis and cerulean warbler. Since its establishment in 1981, the HMI COC has ensured an open dialogue between the communities surrounding the site and MPA and has provided oversight on dredged material inflow and operations activities. HMI COC is the longest standing MPA committee. Dredged material placement ceased at HMI in 2009. Since then, the HMI COC has been engaged in developing the closure plan for the site and worked to create the Friends of HMI State Park, which is a volunteer group. The South Cell portion of the HMI State Park opened for seasonal recreational use on June 10, 2016, and MPA continues to partner with the Friends of HMI State Park to enhance the community experience.

Outreach & Education Recommendations

Mr. Swift stated that environmental justice, diversity in representation, and increasing public knowledge about the POB are top priorities for MPA, which has long recognized that the POB's success and that of the DMMP depend on Marylanders' collaboration and support. Key goals are to reflect the communities that MPA serves and to pursue outcomes that equitably benefit all Marylanders. To help people understand the importance of the POB, MPA has built a model engagement program, creating widely accessible initiatives that restore the environment and enhance the quality of life for all communities. MPA offers a variety of community engagement options including meetings, site tours, exhibits at community events, and environmental education programs held both virtually and in classrooms. Tours to community members, business leaders, representatives of nonprofit organizations, and elected officials help stakeholders stay well informed and up to date on POB operations. These are important opportunities for MPA to receive feedback and fresh ideas on its environmental stewardship.

In 2024, the DMMP continued to invest in educating and collaborating with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. MPA NIS staff bolstered new relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), faith-based organizations, and civic organizations. These relationships extended from the formal DMMP committee structure to education programs for adults and students and expanding stakeholder partnerships.

With support from MPA and industry professionals, BPA hosted its sixth Hiring & Career Expo, bringing together 34 employers and more than 300 job-seekers, making it the largest held to date. The event also matched five support organizations with workers impacted by the POB closure. In exit surveys, 75% of job seekers said they learned about opportunities for which they will apply, 78% of employers said they intended to interview or make offers to candidates they met, and 100% of exhibitors said they would attend a similar event again. Mr. Denney recognized the efforts of Ms. Jones in making

the BPA Hiring & Career Expo a success. Mr. Denney recommended that, for those who participated in the expo and wish to return, a bus tour of the POB or a boat tour of the Baltimore Harbor be organized to show what working for the POB entails.

For four college interns from local HBCUs, the Masonville Cove Links WildSTEM summer internship proved to be a deeply enriching experience, highlighting the importance of environmental awareness, integration, and justice. As intern Irvin Bonsu described it, the program made “a powerful statement on the need for more environmental awareness, integration in life, and justice.” Now in its second year, the program provides interns with exposure to conservation career paths, practical experience, and a pathway for future conservation careers and leadership opportunities. Participants came from Bowie State University, Coppin State University, and Morgan State University. The program is affiliated with The Links, Inc., an international volunteer service organization of more than 16,000 professional women of color. The internship was generously funded by the Campbell Foundation, Brown Advisory, and private donor Truman Seamans. The program’s success is exemplified by a participant receiving a job offer from Brown Advisory.

As MPA navigates toward tomorrow, the wisdom of the DMMP's ongoing investments in innovation and collaboration is clear. By supporting strategic improvements in the POB's capacity, the DMMP's work enhances the state’s economy to the benefit of all Marylanders. Its work in IRBU and its commitment to science-based environmental stewardship benefit all the state’s living resources. While pursuing its mission to increase waterborne commerce and advance key initiatives and studies, MPA will continue to work closely with its partners and stakeholders and emphasize strong sustainability practices and goals in 2025 and beyond.

2025 Recommendations

Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm stated that, like the sections of the 2024 DMMP Annual Report, the 2025 Recommendations are organized into the three categories of Funding & Policy, Planning & Operations, and Outreach & Education. Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm highlighted a couple themes from each category that help align the DMMP with important policy and social initiatives related to planning for climate resiliency and greenhouse gas emission reductions, addressing environmental justice and equity issues, and focusing on the long-term future of the youth who will inherit the results of the DMMP’s work.

The Funding & Policy Recommendations are consistent with those included in the 2023 DMMP Annual Report to maintain a high level of support and funding for DMMP projects. These recommendations place an emphasis on collaboration, partnerships, and increasing climate resilience planning.

The Planning & Operations Recommendations have been updated and expanded to incorporate specifics related to several topics including, among others, climate resiliency, equitable access, BU and carbon sequestration, and efforts related to the Cox Creek STAR Facility to drive forward IR and capacity recovery. The list of recommendations has also been updated by priority order based on USACE input. The fourth recommendation was updated to collaborate closely with sister state agencies and the HMI COC as future uses of HMI are considered.

The Outreach & Education Recommendations are focused on further enabling transparency and collaboration with the DMMP’s stakeholders, including environmental justice efforts, recommendations specific to the use of CAD, and STEM career development opportunities.

Mr. Denney emphasized the importance of positioning dredging operations as an investment rather than a cost, especially given recent shifts in state and federal funding dynamics. Governor Moore's \$3.1

billion transportation budget cut and Senator Cardin’s retirement have raised concerns about the ease of procuring federal funds. Mr. Denney concluded that this results in the need for increased state commitment to dredging operations and a stronger emphasis on demonstrating economic benefits and advertisement. To secure future funding, Mr. Denney suggested that the DMMP Annual Report could emphasize statistics on direct and indirect job creation and economic impacts more prominently. Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm added that regardless of state and federal shifts, it is still in best practice to frame this as an economic positive return investment opportunity, as competition for limited resources will take place regardless. Mr. Munroe added that discussions surrounding these concerns are ongoing.

Mr. Munroe, on behalf of MPA, expressed gratitude to the DMMP Management Committee for all the important work that is being done. MPA recently received an almost \$150 million Clean Ports Program grant, a component of which will be allocated toward planning and design. The great work conducted by DMMP committees led to the success of MPA receiving the grant. This grant will support initiatives to decarbonize and electrify POB operations, showcasing how broad stakeholder involvement can lead to tangible benefits.

Mr. Rowe suggested the inclusion of adaptive management practices in the recommendations, highlighting its role in continuous learning and is often a major piece of what is done for each project. Mr. Van Ryswick stated that the report mentions evaluating alternative approaches to manage dredged material, highlighting the IRBU program and CAD. Mr. Van Ryswick inquired if there are any additional alternative approaches to manage dredged material beyond IRBU and CAD being considered and is there interest within the DMMP to explore other alternatives that could alleviate capacity concerns if the IRBU market does not fully develop, ensuring that CAD does not become the inevitable solution. Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm and Ms. Miller both agreed that this will be a discussion moving forward into 2025 and that the recommendations are written broadly so that it can be reasonably encapsulated.

3.0 Adjourn

Ms. Holly Miller, MPA

Ms. Miller stated that DMMP Management Committee comments will be incorporated into the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and 2025 Recommendations. Once comments are addressed the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and 2025 Recommendations will be distributed to the DMMP Management Committee for further review and finalization.

Ms. Miller announced that the 2024 DMMP Annual Meeting will be hosted both virtually and in-person on December 6, 2024, at MedStar Harbor Hospital. The 2024 DMMP Annual Meeting is an opportunity to celebrate the year’s accomplishments and learn more about what MPA will be focused on in 2025.

The next DMMP Management Committee meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2025.