FINAL SUMMARY OF THE COX CREEK
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
April 23, 2025 - 5:30 PM
Cox Creek Operations and Maintenance Complex
1000 Kembo Road, Curtis Bay, MD 21226
Hybrid Meeting

Attendees:

Anne Arundel Bird Club: Dawn Merino*
Arcadis: Albert Buell
Baltimore Industrial Group: Scott Dauphinais*
Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC) Facilitator: Angie Ashley
Maryland Environmental Service: Mackenzie Miller, Robert Natarian
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Katrina Jones, Kelvin Moulden, Joseph Ross, Darren Swift
Marylanders Grow Oysters: Carl Treff
Anne Arundel Patapsco River Alliance: Thomas Marston
Nabbs Creek & Stoney Creek Community: Susan Greene
Pasadena Sportfishing Group (PSG): Robert Christy*
Resident of Legislative District 31 & Chair of the Cox Creek COC: Gary Gakenheimer*
Riviera Beach Community: Amy Beall, Karen Wanner
Rock Creek Community: Ruth Sliviak
Scenic Rivers Land Trust (SRLT): Erin Kilbane
Stoney Beach Community: John Garofolo*
The Terrapin Institute: Marguerite Whilden
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Chesapeake Bay Field Office (CBFO): Dr. Ela-Sita Carpenter

* Denotes Cox Creek COC members.

Action Items:

- MPA will coordinate to have the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Key Bridge Rebuild Team present at the July 2025 Cox Creek COC meeting. *(Complete)*
- Mr. Swift will provide Ms. Sliviak with contact information for CSI Environmental to learn more about the geotubes. *(Complete)*
- MPA will invite law enforcement entities to the July 2025 Cox Creek COC meeting to address questions related to the Swan Creek Nature Trail (SCNT). *(Complete)*

1.0 Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Remarks **Angie Ashley, Facilitator**
Gary Gakenheimer, Chair

Meeting materials can be found at the following link: 04/23 Cox Creek COC Meeting. Ms. Ashley welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order.

Ms. Ashley reminded attendees that the Cox Creek COC is established in statute. During the last legislative session, House Bill 343, cross-filed with Senate Bill 20, was passed, updating the Cox Creek COC membership effective July 1, 2024. The bill outlines the statutory duties of the Cox Creek COC to require it to monitor the management of dredged material at the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF); advise MPA of complaints lodged by individuals affected by the redeposit of Anne Arundel County dredged material and other dredged material in the Cox Creek area; provide input and feedback to MPA regarding the management of dredged material at

the Cox Creek DMCF; and make recommendations to MPA on the potential impact that activities at the containment facility may have on nearby communities and natural resources.

Those interested in seeking appointments for the vacancies should apply via the Governor's Appointment Office online portal. Members are appointed by the Governor, who also determines the terms. This process is in progress, and to date, the Governor has appointed three of the twelve members, including Mr. Gakenheimer, representing Legislative District 31; Mr. Dauphinais, representing Baltimore Industrial Group; and Ms. Merino, representing recreational birding in Anne Arundel County. These appointment terms run from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2025. MPA staff have been coordinating with the Governor's Appointment Office, which noted on December 9, 2024, that the process would be suspended until after the legislative session ends in mid-April 2025. MPA encourages continued participation from community members and looks forward to additional appointments later in the year. Applicants interested in receiving an update on appointment status should contact Ms. Christal Henry, Placement Assistant at the Office of Appointments, through email at christal.henry@maryland.gov or by phone at (410) 693-5277.

Mr. Gakenheimer requested a motion to approve the January 22, 2025, Cox Creek COC meeting summary, which the Committee approved.

2.0 Project Update & IR/BU Implementation Update

Darren Swift, MPA
Kelvin Moulden, MPA

Mr. Swift stated that later in 2025, further excavation of the upland cell at the Cox Creek DMCF will occur to achieve the maximum amount of capacity. Prior to this excavation, a Cross Property Access Road (CPAR) will be constructed to establish a permanent connection between the Cox Creek DMCF and the Cox Creek Sediment Technology and Reuse (STAR) Facility to facilitate material transport between the sites. Construction of the CPAR began in mid-April 2025 and is anticipated to last six weeks.

The Cox Creek expansion resulted in unavoidable impacts to approximately 1.16 acres of non-tidal wetlands and 2.32 acres of non-tidal wetland buffer. As a result, MPA went on a search in the Gunpowder-Patapsco watershed to determine the location of a mitigation site. The search criteria included wetland sites only, hydric soils, three acres of potential restoration credit, no existing easements, no existing forest, nothing zoned for industrial or commercial use, and located within ten miles of the Cox Creek DMCF. While multiple sites exist within the search area which meet one or several of these criteria, the majority do not.

MPA identified the Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center for off-site mitigation. The Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center is in the Gunpowder-Patapsco watershed and would result in high-quality mitigated wetland and provide opportunities for outreach and education programming. The existing wetlands are fragmented, separated by disturbed, mowed, or otherwise maintained areas. By combining these areas with the grading of restored wetlands, larger wetlands with meaningful hydrologic connections to other systems can be restored. The site will be protected under a conservation easement that is 8.20 acres, in addition to ongoing monitoring and maintenance. The procurement process is anticipated to open mid-2025, with construction anticipated to begin in the fall of 2025 and last six months. MPA will perform all long-term maintenance and monitoring of the property in perpetuity.

This past fall into early winter, there were two inflow events at the Cox Creek DMCF. The first inflow event included 491,175 cubic yards (cy) of material from the dredging of the Curtis Bay and Fort McHenry channels. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) contractor used a hybrid

dredge, reducing diesel emissions throughout the process. This is one of the first hybrid dredges that have been used in the area. The second inflow event included 28,706 cy of the CSX coal pier dredging material. The upcoming fall of 2025 inflow events include approximately 27,000 cy from a small Baltimore County project; approximately 60,000 cy associated with some of the demolition and cleaning up of the Francis Scott Key Bridge; approximately 350,000 cy from Trade Point Atlantic (TPA)**; and approximately 172,000 cy from Colgate Creek. Ms. Whilden asked if the material being received from TPA has been factored into the twenty-year rolling plan for capacity and if TPA must pay a fee to MPA for accepting the material. Mr. Swift confirmed that the TPA material has been considered in capacity planning and that TPA will pay the standard tipping fee.

The dredging area related to the Colgate Creek dredging project is located between Seagirt Marine Terminal and Dundalk Marine Terminal. Berth improvements are being made to ensure vessels have enough water to dock safely, which involves associated dredging work. This project will involve the mechanical dredging of approximately 172,000 cy of sediment from Colgate Creek and will be the first time that MPA will use the Direct into Geotube (DIG) process. As the material is being dredged from Colgate Creek, it will be transported to the Cox Creek DMCF in a scow. The dredged material will be hydraulically pumped directly into the geotubes. The goal is to dewater and dry the anticipated 174,000 cy of dredged material. The contractor is utilizing Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) pre-approved polymers to assist in dewatering by separating the water from the solids. The current conceptual plan for the geotube dewatering field delineates three separate fields in the upland cell area of the Cox Creek DMCF. The resulting water will be pumped back into the Cox Creek DMCF until it meets the site's discharge permit, at which time it can be discharged. Much of this project will be occurring around the time of the annual Cox Creek Open House and therefore, will potentially be an exciting opportunity for attendees of the event to see the geotubes in action. The Cox Creek Open House will be held on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

USACE plans to modify the Seagirt Loop by deepening and widening the West Seagirt Branch Channel to -50 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW). This will allow vessels to safely leave the Seagirt Marine Terminal without turning around, much like a drive-through, thereby being much safer and more efficient while reducing fuel consumption and diesel emissions. MPA's latest estimate is that this project will result in approximately 1,175,600 cy of inflow into the upland cell of the Cox Creek DMCF. The project is anticipated to occur in the fall of 2026, at which point all additional excavation of the upland cell must be complete, and the Colgate Creek material can no longer remain in the Cox Creek DMCF upland cell. Therefore, MPA is working diligently to find a home for the Colgate Creek material by this deadline. Ms. Merino inquired if the Seagirt Loop project resulted from the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse, to which Mr. Swift clarified that the project was being planned prior to the incident and is unrelated. Mr. Swift clarified that the portion of the loop being deepened to -50 feet MLLW is already at -45 feet MLLW, however, needs to be deepened to allow the larger vessels calling on the Port of Baltimore (POB) to navigate safely.

Mr. Treff inquired why MPA decided to investigate geotubes as a dewatering and drying method. Mr. Swift stated that geotubes are a passive dewatering operation, and for the large volume of material the MPA anticipates receiving, geotubes are the best option. MPA previously engaged with CSI Environmental to conduct a geotube pilot project. Once the material was dewatered and dried, the geotubes were used for an off-site shoreline stabilization project. Those geotubes were significantly smaller than the geotubes that will be used to dewater and dry the Colgate Creek material to allow transportation off-site. There is no ability to relocate the larger geotubes, and therefore, once dry, the material will be harvested from the geotubes, and the geotubes will then be

disposed of. Ms. Merino asked for clarification on the composition of the geotubes. Mr. Swift stated that the geotubes are made from a high strength, woven geotextile fabric. Ms. Ashley stated that geotubes are often thought of in the context of erosion control. MPA has already investigated that usage and is now looking to investigate using geotubes as a quick drying mechanism for the material to be reused. Currently, the Cox Creek DMCF site staff remove material from the interior of the DMCF and manipulate it so that it dries via evaporation. The goal is for the geotubes to dry the material more efficiently and assist in capacity recovery since the material will go straight into the geotubes, not the DMCF.

Mr. Moulden stated that one of the fundamental questions is what will be done with the dredged material from Colgate Creek once it has been dewatered and dried in the geotubes given that by the fall of 2026 the material will no longer be able to be located in the upland cell area of the Cox Creek DMCF since the Seagirt Loop material will be inflowed to the upland cell. The quick turnaround for drying and removing the Colgate Creek material is yet another reason why geotubes are being used.

One option for the use of the Colgate Creek dredged material is as engineered fill at the site of the old Baltimore Sun printing facility. The Baltimore Peninsula Development Group anticipates needing approximately 700,000 cy of fill material associated with that project. MPA is working on providing estimated sampling, testing, and hauling costs. The material demand for the Baltimore Peninsula project far exceeds the quantity of material being dredged for the Colgate Creek project. As such, there is also an opportunity to reuse the surplus material from the Cox Creek DMCF expansion efforts.

A second option for using the Colgate Creek dredged material is as backfill at the BGE Riverside Generating Station where environmental remediation is underway. MDE Land Restoration Program requires excavation of impacted materials, mostly in an emergent wetland, to go to an appropriate landfill, and suitable dredged material is being sought for backfill. Current plans include the excavation of approximately 22,036 cy of material, which will be replaced in-kind with the same elevation and contours. Some backfill will include topsoil and potential stone or riprap, so it will not be one-for-one with available dredged material. As of MPA's last communication with the project team in February 2025, final plans were still in development, and it was suspected that an estimated 17,000 – 20,000 cy of dredged material would be needed.

As another option, MPA has regularly met with the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership and its project team to discuss, plan, and potentially supply dredged material for wetland restoration at the MedStar Harbor Hospital location. The quantities needed are yet to be determined as the Middle Branch Resiliency Initiative team continues developing the final design. Both the Kurt Iron Slip at Masonville Cove and the Baltimore City Quarantine Road Landfill have been considered as additional potential options for the Colgate Creek dredged material. The Kurt Iron Slip would be able to hold approximately 42,000 cy of material and could serve as an intermediate staging area for the Colgate Creek material before it reaches its ultimate end user. This option is not ideal as it would involve double-handling of the material. The Baltimore City Quarantine Landfill opportunity is less likely to materialize in the timeframe needed, however, MPA is still interested in pursuing a long-term memorandum of understanding (MOU) to provide dredged material for daily and intermediate cover.

The final three Innovative Reuse (IR) Research & Development (R&D) projects continue to make progress and are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2025. The University of Maryland

(UMD) is investigating the use of dredge material in constructing vegetated earth berms. UMD is on track to complete its project on time to present at the August 2025 Innovative Reuse Committee (IRC) meeting. Northgate Environmental Management is investigating the use of dredge material in developing cement clinker and supplementary cementitious materials. Northgate Environmental Management may also present at the August 2025 IRC meeting. HarborRock is investigating the use of dredge material to create lightweight aggregate and will most likely present at the first IRC meeting in 2026.

After a pause over the winter due to the waterfowl time of your restriction, the Stoney Beach shoreline project was scheduled to restart the week of April 21, 2025. This beneficial use (BU) project uses recovered dredged material to protect an eroding shoreline. Although there was a pause in construction, MPA worked internally to ensure the requested quantity would still be available at the Hawkins Point DMCF once construction resumed. MPA is excited to see the final product. Mr. Treff asked what qualifies as a BU project and if the project needs to be a certain size. Mr. Moulden stated that BU is the use of dredged material for restoring underwater grass, island restoration, stabilizing or eroding shorelines, and creating or restoring wetlands. The size of the project does not matter, only the intended use of the material. Mr. Treff made MPA aware of two potential BU projects and asked what the next steps would be to initiate the use of dredge material for those projects. Mr. Moulden stated that project teams are welcome to contact MPA for material request inquiries, and MPA will also assist projects in navigating the overall process.

Mr. Moulden stated that the Cox Creek STAR Facility Request for Information (RFI) has undergone several rounds of internal review at MPA. There are a couple of administrative and legal items to complete before it is finalized and advertised. The RFI seeks to gather information from potential large-scale IR operations at the Cox Creek STAR Facility. As a result of MPA's internal review of the RFI, it has been agreed that respondents will be highly encouraged to visit the site for an independent assessment. Future potential site occupants must gain firsthand knowledge of site conditions rather than relying solely on MPA's descriptions. MPA is strongly considering having a pre-selected day for respondents to tour the Cox Creek STAR Facility, which would be in addition to any respondent's request for an individual tour. Mr. Moulden emphasized that the RFI is not intended to select a respondent at the end of the advertising period but to gather information and dictate what further discussions are needed with potential respondents.

As part of MPA's efforts to reclaim capacity from the Cox Creek DMCF, MPA plans to set up a geotube dewatering field on the Cox Creek STAR Facility property adjacent to the Cox Creek DMCF. This has been identified as a potentially more cost-effective method to dewater dredged material to speed up its availability for IR and BU end use. The dewatering field, approximately 7 acres in size, is potentially capable of processing 5,000 cy to 7,000 cy per acre and will be integral to MPA's planned scale-up schedule for reclaiming capacity from the Cox Creek DMCF. Currently, MPA is planning the geotube field, stockpile locations, and material hauling routes on the property. It is exciting for MPA to have readily available material for IR projects and the capacity to continually dewater and dry material.

Ms. Merino expressed excitement toward the potential uses of the Cox Creek STAR Facility and its ability to reclaim capacity from the Cox Creek DMCF. Mr. Treff asked if the geotubes drain by gravity and if the geotubes can be reused. Mr. Moulden explained that a polymer is introduced to flocculate the material. The sediment then falls out of suspension, and the water is pumped off the top back into the Cox Creek DMCF before eventually meeting permit requirements and being discharged. Mr. Moulden added that once the geotubes are cut open and the material is harvested

the geotubes are unable to be reused. Ms. Sliviak inquired about a remediation plan in response to using polymers in the geotubes. Mr. Swift clarified that there is no pollution or waste from the polymers, as those biodegrade. There will be a geomembrane under the geotube field; however, that geomembrane will be collecting and diverting the water back to the Cox Creek DMCF. Mr. Swift offered to provide Ms. Sliviak with contact information for CSI Environmental to learn more about the geotubes.

Mr. Moulden stated that a third geotube initiative is occurring with dredged material, a IRBU Material Dewatering Pilot Project. The pilot project evaluates and compares the dewatering performance of various commercially available geotextile fabrics and flocculants. This will allow MPA to reduce sediment handling during the dewatering process, thereby increasing the throughput of dredged material for IR and BU whilst reclaiming capacity from the Cox Creek DMCF. With Phase I, a planning phase, complete, MPA has decided to move forward with Phase II of the IRBU Material Dewatering Pilot Project. Phase II consists of treatability testing, namely, laboratory testing and analysis of the selected geotextile fabrics and flocculants. A memo documenting results and recommendations for polymer and geotextile combinations to use in the full-scale study will be prepared.

The next IRC meeting will be held on May 13, 2025, in the Cox Creek Operations and Maintenance Complex Conference Room. Those interested in attending were encouraged to register through the DMMP website.

3.0 Swan Creek Nature Trail **Joseph Ross, MPA**

Mr. Ross presented a map of the SCNT, which was formally recommended by the Cox Creek COC to MPA for consideration in April 2019 as a part of a prioritized list. The SCNT will make an approximate two-mile loop in the Cox Creek Forested Conservation Easement Area. The SCNT will include three boardwalks and one pedestrian bridge to help navigate low and wet areas. Four outdoor classrooms have also been included in the SCNT design, with each classroom having a theme based on its location. Additionally, the design includes viewpoints at various elevations along with both informational and directional signage throughout. A spur of the trail leading to the shoreline was resurfaced with Category I IR material in the fall of 2024. Portable restrooms will be available at the trail entrance and near the existing birding platform, both locations of which will be highlighted on directional signage.

The final design for the SCNT has recently been reached, and construction is anticipated to begin in October 2025. MPA paid special attention to environmental considerations, and therefore, coordination related to Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) and Black Rail Time of Year Restrictions (TOYR) impacted the project schedule. Additionally, since the SCNT project received federal grant funding through SHA's Recreational Trails Program (RTP), the project requires additional federal coordination and approval prior to construction commencing, further impacting the project schedule. Based on TOYR and federal coordination, the updated project schedule includes the SCNT opening to the public in the spring of 2026. Much of the permitting and environmental coordination for the project is complete, and the remaining items include the 20-CP Permit, a general permit for discharges from stormwater associated with construction activity, and Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) Modification approval.

Given increased interest in fishing being permitted along the SCNT, MPA, and PSG participated in a site visit to identify potential fishing zones. Mr. Ross highlighted four potential fishing zones on an aerial map and stated that the criteria for final consideration will be based on safety, proximity

to the trail and classrooms, productive fishing, and other developing considerations. Final fishing zone selections will be made before the trail opening to the public.

Mr. Ross stated that MPA is working to have law enforcement agencies such as Maryland DNR Police, MPA Security, and MDTA Police present at the July 23, 2025, Cox Creek COC meeting to address questions regarding aspects of the SCNT project such as fishing, trespassing, emergency response, and enforcement of the trail's allowable and prohibited uses.

Ms. Merino asked what time the SCNT will be open in the morning. Mr. Ross clarified that the trail will be open during site hours, Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 3:00pm. Ms. Ashley added that once the trail is open, MPA will consider piloting weekend access and extended hours based on demand. MPA will closely monitor trail usage and feedback, and will investigate minimizing staff costs in extending trail hours. Ms. Merino recommended collaborating with Anne Arundel County to provide rangers who could help alleviate staff burden. Mr. Ross stated that the SCNT will be constructed on MPA property, which involves jurisdictional and enforcement obstacles. Ms. Ashley added that Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks are aware of the SCNT project.

Ms. Merino inquired if the trail would include distance markers so that if there is an emergency people can be easily located. Mr. Ross confirmed that the trail will include directional signage detailing distances to trail amenities that can be used. There will also be a sheet on the trailhead kiosk for visitors to sign in and out so that, if visitors are complying, MPA is able to determine how many visitors are on the trail. Ms. Merino recommended increasing compliance with signing in and out by stating that MPA uses the sheet to track usage, and that usage will be used to potentially add extended hours as an incentive.

4.0 Invasive Control and Forest Conservation Easement Darren Swift, MPA

Mr. Swift stated that Phragmites have been found intermingled with the grasses and cattails in the Swan Creek Mitigated Wetland (SCMW) and watershed areas. Phragmites is usually sprayed with an aquatic-safe glyphosate-based herbicide, such as Dow Rodeo or Roundup, between September and October. Based on the recent spread of Phragmites around the SCMW, control can start earlier, before it goes to seed. Herbicides are applied in compliance with MDE General Permit 17-E: General Discharge Permit for Discharges from the Application of Pesticides.

Chinese wisteria has been observed growing along the tree line around the southern end of the SCMW. It is usually controlled with the "cut and spray" method. Plants are usually cut at the base, and then the newly cut area is spot-sprayed with a triclopyr-based herbicide, such as Garlon 3A.

Porcelain-berry has been found throughout the north and south ends of the SCMW, including throughout the tree mitigation area in front of the observation deck. It is very difficult to chemically control due to the nature of the spreading vegetation, so manual removal is usually best, especially before berries appear. Once the vines are removed, they are left in a vegetative-free area to bake in the sun and then double-bagged in black trash bags.

Mr. Swift explained the purpose of the Cox Creek Forest Conservation Easement, which is to preserve and protect the property's environment and to maintain permanently open space values and the property's dominant scenic, woodland, and wetland character. The easement restricts industrial and commercial activities, display of advertisements, dumping, excavating, altering the wetlands, and harvesting trees that are not dead, diseased or invasive without prior approval from the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET). Ms. Kilbane added that the Cox Creek Forest

Conservation Easement was originally granted to MET and North County Land Trust (NCLT). NCLT was later dissolved, therefore, the Cox Creek Forest Conservation Easement was reassigned from NCLT to SRLT as the local land trust in 2022 with MET still being the co-holder. SRLT completes annual site visits of the property for regular monitoring. SRLT will work closely with MPA to ensure the area remains protected in perpetuity.

5.0 Wildlife Monitoring & Management Dr. Ela-Sita Carpenter, USFWS CBFO

Dr. Carpenter, an urban biologist for the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, provided an overview of wildlife management activities at Swan Creek, highlighting MPA's ongoing adaptive management strategy. This approach was established over a decade ago to identify target wildlife species to encourage or discourage at both Masonville Cove and Swan Creek, developing management strategies based on those goals, and continuously refining efforts using data-driven insights. Dr. Carpenter, who is also active in wildlife work at Masonville Cove, focused on four tasks managed at Swan Creek: deer monitoring, trail camera surveys, great blue heron rookery assessments, and, most recently, acoustic surveys for bat species.

The deer monitoring program involves annual fall surveys conducted over three consecutive evenings. During these surveys, teams drive transects around the wetland area using infrared cameras and red spotlight tools to detect and count deer. This effort, which has been ongoing since 2013, has provided long-term data that indicates a fluctuating but recently declining deer population at Swan Creek. While the precise cause of the decline remains uncertain, potential contributing factors include increased coyote presence, physical changes to the site such as fencing, and possible disturbances from human trespassers.

Trail camera surveys are designed to assess land mammal populations, particularly focusing on predators such as red foxes, coyotes, raccoons, and opossums. These species are of concern because of the potential to impact nesting bird populations by preying on eggs and nestlings. Cameras are strategically placed around the site, each baited with scented lures to attract animals and trigger motion-sensor video recordings. Over the past decade, these surveys have revealed interesting patterns, such as a cyclical red fox population spike every three to five years and an increasing presence of coyotes, including a documented pack in 2022 that disappeared the following year. The surveys have also captured footage of a diverse array of species, from turkeys and rabbits to snapping turtles and interspecies interactions like fox and raccoon confrontations, illustrating the area's rich biodiversity.

Dr. Carpenter reported on the monitoring of the great blue heron rookery, which was first identified around 2019. Tracking rookery activity has proven challenging due to seasonal wildlife restrictions. Surveys must be conducted after the nesting season ends in July and after autumn tree leaf drop, but before eagle nesting restrictions begin on December 15, leaving a narrow window when leaves have fallen but access is still permitted. As a result, data collection is inconsistent, and the observed number of nests has declined from an initial count of around twenty. Dr. Carpenter hypothesized that the drop may be attributed to nest collapse before surveys can be conducted, increased disturbances, or a shift in nesting locations to less visible or inaccessible areas.

In the past year, Dr. Carpenter initiated a new effort to monitor bat populations through acoustic surveys. Using specialized recording equipment, the team deployed detectors at Swan Creek for three nights during the late summer, a peak activity period for bats. The detectors capture echolocation calls that are analyzed using automated software to identify species based on their acoustic signatures. Results from the initial year revealed the presence of several bat species with

high confidence, including big brown bats, red bats, silver-haired bats, little brown bats, evening bats, and tricolored bats. The latter is especially notable, as it is currently under consideration for federal endangered status. Other species, such as the northern long-eared bat, a federally listed endangered species, were tentatively detected, though with lower confidence levels. This work is vital given the ecological importance of bats in pest control and their vulnerability to threats like white-nose syndrome.

Looking ahead, Dr. Carpenter is exploring drone technology to enhance survey capabilities. USFWS CBFO recently acquired a drone, which can potentially be used for both deer and bird nest surveys. Drone-mounted thermal imaging could improve deer population counts, while aerial surveys could help document great blue heron nests earlier in the fall, before leaves obscure visibility. This innovation could provide much-needed flexibility in data collection windows constrained by environmental and regulatory factors.

6.0 **Roundtable Remarks & Open Discussion** **All Attendees**

Mr. Christy stated that PSG will be holding two Kids Fishing Derby events at Fort Smallwood Park on June 21, 2025, and September 27, 2025. PSG is now partnering with the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT), and therefore, the fishing derbies are moving toward an environmental stewardship focus. Additionally, PSG is working with the Anne Arundel County Northern District Police Station and Eastern District Police Station to host Cops and Bobbers and Fish with a Cop fishing events, dates of which are in coordination. PSG is excited to once again provide youth fishing at the 2025 Cox Creek Open House.

7.0 Upcoming Events and Adjournment **Angie Ashley, Facilitator**

Ms. Ashley stated that the next 2025 Cox Creek COC meeting will be held on July 23, 2025. The final Cox Creek COC meeting of 2025 will be held on October 22, 2025. The Cox Creek Open House will be held on October 18, 2025.

** The 350,000 cy from Trade Point Atlantic (TPA) will now be placed at the Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility.