

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

**Attendees:**

*Arcadis:* Albert Buell

*Baltimore Industrial Group:* Scott Dauphinais\*

*Community Member:* Eleanor Johnstone

*Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC) Facilitator:* Angie Ashley

*Maryland Environmental Service (MES):* Tim Carney, Saeka Foreman, Robert Natarian

*Maryland Natural Resources Police (NRP):* Corporal Connor Heavner, Sergeant Michael Greenfield

*Maryland Port Administration (MPA):* Captain Kathleen Bowen, Danielle Fisher, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller, Kelvin Moulden, Joseph Ross, Darren Swift

*Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Police:* Captain Michelle Mount, Lieutenant James Claytor

*Pasadena Sportfishing Group (PSG):* Robert Christy\*, Robert Schmidt

*Resident of Legislative District 31 & Chair of the Cox Creek COC:* Gary Gakenheimer\*

*Rock Creek Community:* Ruth Sliviak

*Rockview Beach Community:* Bev Soucy, Mike Soucy

*Scenic Rivers Land Trust:* Erin Kilbane\*

*Stoney Beach Community:* John Garofolo\*

\* Denotes Cox Creek COC members.

**Action Items:**

- MPA will continue to coordinate with law enforcement and emergency personnel regarding the Swan Creek Nature Trail (SCNT), including hosting safety exercises.
- Ms. Fisher will review the feedback from the Cox Creek Open House session and incorporate recommendations into future planning.

**1.0 Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Remarks**

**Angie Ashley, Facilitator  
Gary Gakenheimer, Chair**

Meeting materials can be found at the following link: [07/23 Cox Creek COC Meeting](#). Ms. Ashley welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order.

Ms. Ashley noted there will be one edit to the April 23, 2025, Cox Creek COC meeting summary to separate two affiliations that were combined. Mr. Gakenheimer requested a motion to approve the April 23, 2025, Cox Creek COC meeting summary with the edit, which the Committee approved.

**2.0 Project Updates**

**Darren Swift, MPA**

Mr. Swift shared planned Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) inflow events for 2025 into 2026. Trade Point Atlantic (TPA)'s material which was originally planned to be placed at the Cox Creek DMCF will now be placed at the Masonville DMCF. This is due to the estimated volume of 770,000 cubic yards of dredged material that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) anticipate will be dredged from the Seagirt West and Brewerton Channels. The estimated 172,000 cy

of dredged material from Colgate Creek will be directly inflow into geotubes to be dewatered and made available for IRBU projects. Ms. Jones inquired about an estimated date of when the fall inflow events will occur. Mr. Swift stated that the fall inflow events will occur in October 2025, some of which will occur during the Cox Creek Open House.

Mr. Swift stated that 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 identified the Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center (GVOLC) for off-site mitigation. MPA received final approval from the Board of Public Works (BPW) on July 16, 2025, to have the environmental easement at the GVOLC. MPA will start the procurement phase to issue the Invitation for Bid (IFB) with the goal of construction beginning in late summer or early fall of 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. Progress on the CPAR was delayed due to receiving large amounts of precipitation and awaiting the arrival of some materials. All materials have arrived, and the team is now waiting for the area to dry so construction can resume.

Colgate Creek dredging project is located between Seagirt Marine Terminal and Dundalk Marine Terminal. Berth improvements are also being made to ensure vessels have enough water to dock safely. Approximately 172,000 cy of sediment will be mechanically dredged from Colgate Creek and will be placed directly into geotubes. This will be the first time that MPA will use the Direct into Geotube (DIG) process. The reason MPA is managing the Colgate Creek Dredged Material with this method is because we do not have the capacity in one of our Harbor DMCF's. Dredging will begin in late August and be completed by October. It is anticipated that the material will take two to three months to dry in the geotubes. Once the material is dried, it will either be hauled directly to the targeted innovative reuse (IR) projects or to the Cox Creek STAR Facility for stockpiling. 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 will be discharged. Contractors have continued to make progress as the geotextile has been laid in the designated fields, and access roads have been created. 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 inflow to the upland cell. The quick turnaround for drying and removing the Colgate Creek material is yet another reason why geotubes are being used.

#### Options for Colgate Creek Dredged Material IRBU Placement:

- Hawkins Point South Cell DMCF - 44,000 cy
- Kurt Iron Slip at Masonville Cove - 60,000 cy
- Baltimore Peninsula - 700,000 cy (total material demand)
- BGE Riverside Generating Station - 22,000 cy
- South Baltimore Gateway - Harbor Hospital Wetland Creation Project - Unknown Quantity
- Baltimore City Quarantine Road Landfill - Unknown Quantity

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

1. The University of Maryland (UMD) is investigating the use of dredged material in constructing vegetated earth berms, simulating rain events to measure how quickly the water moves through the earth berm and to see if there are any constituents of concern. UMD will present at a future Innovative Reuse Committee (IRC) meeting.
2. Northgate Environmental Management is investigating the use of dredge material in developing cement clinker and supplementary cementitious materials (SCM). SCM helps make cement more durable and prevents water intrusion. Northgate Environmental Management will present findings at the November 2025 IRC meeting.
3. HarborRock is investigating the use of dredged material to create SCM and lightweight aggregate. HarborRock will most likely present at the first IRC meeting in 2026.

The Stoney Beach shoreline beneficial use (BU) project used 1,596 cy of dredged material provided by MPA to protect an eroding shoreline. In addition to providing dredged material for BU projects, MPA also coordinates the testing of the material, assists in navigating the MDE Guidance Document, and provides risk assessment memos. Mr. Garofolo stated that a variety of vegetation has been planted which the Stoney Creek Community is monitoring and maintaining. Mr. Garofolo asked if MPA has started to reach out to other communities about assisting with similar projects. Mr. Swift stated that conversations are happening within the IRC about implementation, and it is anticipated that community outreach associated with IRBU projects will begin in the future.

Mr. Swift stated that the Cox Creek STAR Facility, adjacent to the Cox Creek DMCF, is divided into five operable units due to the need for remediation and the administrative consent order. The Upland Area will be the first available area for IR, as no further action is expected to be required by MDE for remediation efforts. MPA has a five-year goal of scaling up and reclaiming capacity from the Cox Creek DMCF. MPA has initiated engineering investigations to assess the suitability of the Lower Settling Basin area for setting up a temporary dewatering field for geotubes. This would be the best option as it is effective and inexpensive, and the system would be very similar to the closed-loop system utilized by the Colgate Creek project. MPA is anticipating advertising the Request for Information (RFI) for prospective users and developers of the Cox Creek STAR Facility in the near future. Mr. Swift noted that MPA will not be manufacturing IR products but will instead be partnering with the private industry. Advertisement of the RFI will allow MPA to connect with prospective end users. Tour dates will be offered for respondents of the RFI to visit the Cox Creek STAR Facility. The primary purpose of the Cox Creek STAR Facility is for the IR of dredged material and to reclaim capacity to keep the Cox Creek DMCF open as long as possible to manage Baltimore Harbor dredged material.

MPA presented the final Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) Report to the Bay Enhancement Working Group (BEWG) on June 6, 2025, and to the Management Committee on June 18, 2025. The report will next be presented to the Executive Committee this Fall. After the report is presented to the Executive Committee, it will be made available on the [Maryland DMMP website](#). MPA will present the report at the September 2025 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. It was emphasized that the second CAD pilot project is currently on hold.

MPA recently initiated a pilot project to explore the feasibility of discharging water from the Cox Creek DMCF on demand, all while maintaining compliance with the water quality permit. Mr. Swift mentioned the utilization of biochar, where activated carbon is used to filter the water. MPA expects to have feedback from the consultant by October 2025, and the consultant may present findings on the pilot project at the next Cox Creek COC meeting on October 22, 2025.

Mr. Garofolo inquired about the permit request to remove some of the forested areas between the

Cox Creek DMCF and the Cox Creek STAR Facility. His concerns were communicated to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) about the loss of additional forested areas and the intention to use conservation credits elsewhere in Maryland as opposed to in the Patapsco River watershed. Mr. Swift stated that the permit was requested as a precaution in case a line of trees needs to be removed to make space for the stockpile area. MPA evaluated the Patapsco River watershed for the use of the conservation credits; however, the area is highly developed, leaving limited opportunity, and therefore, the credits were instead applied to a tree bank in Anne Arundel County. It is a common practice to find a location where the credits can be used as soon as possible, so the project can move forward. Additionally, the intent of the Cox Creek STAR Facility is for industrial use, so the area will likely be cleared for large-scale IR and continued development of the property. While these credits will be applied outside of the direct area, MPA has a stormwater management plan and an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan approved by MDE to minimize sediment entering the river as well as protect local water quality.

Mr. Gakenheimer inquired about the transportation of dredged material for the BGE Riverside project. Mr. Swift stated that the team determined it would be easier to place the material once dried. It will require 2,000 dump trucks to transport the material, as each truck can only approximately hold 10 cy.

Mr. Soucy asked for the definition of inflow. Mr. Swift stated that inflow is the activity of depositing dredged material into the DMCF. The dredged material arrives by barge and water is added to make a slurry so that it can be hydraulically pumped directly into the DMCF. If the quantity is small, it can also be scooped into dump trucks and unloaded into the DMCF.

### **3.0 Birds of Cox and Swan Creek**

**Tim Carney, MES**

Mr. Carney, a Senior Environmental Specialist at MES, previously led a variety of on-site monitoring efforts, including water quality testing and vegetation surveys at Cox Creek DMCF.

When MPA acquired the Cox Creek DMCF site, the local birding community volunteered to conduct bird surveys at the site and report their findings to MPA. Birds serve as important indicators for assessing the success of habitat restoration efforts. Through these surveys, many state-listed rare, threatened, and endangered (RTE) bird species have been identified, and habitats have been restored to support their breeding. Conducting multiple surveys over consecutive years enables biologists to track changes in the bird community over time. These findings highlight some of the environmental benefits associated with DMCF sites.

Records indicate that a total of 285 different bird species have been observed at the Cox Creek DMCF and Swan Creek Mitigated Wetland (SCMW). Since 2021, several new species have been recorded at this site, including Slaty-backed Gull (the first state record), Franklin's Gull, Yellow Rail (last documented in Anne Arundel County in 1980), Western Kingbird, and Black-capped Chickadee. Additionally, new breeding species identified in the area since 2021 are American Black Duck, Virginia Rail, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

The Maryland DNR orchestrates a Breeding Bird Atlas aimed at identifying all bird species that breed in the state. During the atlas, Maryland is divided into 3-mile by 3-mile blocks, with a primary atlaser assigned to each block. The first Breeding Bird Atlas took place in the 1980s, and the most recent iteration ran from 2020 to 2024. In the Curtis Bay Central East block, which includes the Cox Creek DMCF, SCMW, and part of the Hawkins Point DMCF, the latest atlas reported 59 confirmed breeding species, 10 probable breeding species, and 22 possible breeding species.

Mr. Carney stated that there are Saturday birding events that occur on the fourth Saturday and sometimes the second Saturday each month, where birders can explore the Cox Creek DMCF and SCMW. There is no limit to the number of participants; however, birders are required to fill out an RSVP and sign a waiver to participate. Timing fluctuates based on daylight. There is also a mailing list for the Saturday events, and interested individuals can be added to it.

There is a resident pair of Bald Eagles that have been observed nesting in the SCMW since 2017. In 2025, the pair fledged at least two chicks.

All bird sightings at the site are reported to eBird.org. The Cox Creek DMCF and SCMW hotspot was ranked #7 out of nearly 2,000 hotspots in Maryland for total species observed in 2025, with 188 species recorded. The site also ranked #6 in Maryland all-time with 285 different species observed. The Cox Creek DMCF and SCMW ranked #1 in Anne Arundel County in 2025, and #2 in the county all-time.

To inquire about bird tours at Cox Creek, Hart-Miller Island, Hawkins Point, and Masonville, contact [birdingtours@menv.com](mailto:birdingtours@menv.com). To inquire about bird tours at the Paul S. Sarbanes Ecosystem Restoration Project at Poplar Island (Poplar Island) contact [poplartours@menv.com](mailto:poplartours@menv.com).

Mr. Soucy asked if Green Herons are commonly seen in Anne Arundel County. Mr. Carney stated that Green Herons are freshwater pond birds and are regularly seen in April and May, but by the breeding season in June, they become more secretive and harder to spot.

#### **4.0 Swan Creek Nature Trail**

**Joseph Ross, MPA**

Mr. Ross stated that the Swan Creek Nature Trail (SCNT) project is awaiting federal approval of the bid package by the State Highway Administration (SHA), among other administrative items for the project to be advertised. Since the SCNT project received federal grant funding through SHA's Recreational Trails Program, the project requires additional federal coordination and approval prior to construction commencing.

A site walk took place at the end of June 2025 where MPA staff coordinated with law enforcement and emergency response entities to address some concerns raised in previous Cox Creek COC meetings.

Captain Bowen of MPA acknowledged that the team involved with the SCNT project is committed to conservation and creating a recreational space for all to enjoy. Captain Mount and Lieutenant Claytor of MDTA have helped coordinate the police effort at the Cox Creek DMCF among other sites.

Captain Mount stated that the primary goal of the law enforcement agencies is to support the SCNT project by continuing to perform periodic checks of the area, which will likely increase once the SCNT is open to the public. Although the site is MDTA Police's primary jurisdiction, MDTA Police will continue to work closely with the Anne Arundel County Police Eastern District to respond to incidents on site as needed. Once MPA establishes the rules for the SCNT, authority agencies will respond accordingly if trespassers are located on the property.

Sergeant Greenfield of Maryland Natural Resources Police (NRP) explained that they would uphold state laws and regulations regarding catch-and-release fishing. While some parks have additional fishing regulations, those rules are enforced at the county level. The NRP will educate the public about potential violations occurring at the county level and will communicate any incidents to the

appropriate agency for further enforcement.

Mr. Garofolo inquired about whether emergency agencies have the necessary vehicles that will allow access to the entire conservation area, as well as the means to communicate throughout the area. Mr. Ross confirmed that there are access roads that most all-wheel drive vehicles can access. Some areas on the property would be more challenging to access with a standard vehicle. Ms. Miller noted that there is an ATV on site that could be used during an emergency. Sergeant Greenfield confirmed that while NRP is constantly patrolling the area, due to limited staff and potential distance, having an ATV on site for staff to utilize is imperative for time-sensitive situations. Captain Mount stated that the Fire Chief suggested having single wheel gurneys to help access visitors in an emergency. Mr. Schmidt confirmed that Anne Arundel County Fire Department has a single wheel gurney at the Harold Harbor Station but does not have access to an ATV. Captain Mount suggested that once the SCNT is complete, a map should be created to outline an extraction method for emergencies and be shared with all emergency agencies involved.

Regarding communications, Mr. Schmidt stated that contact information could be added to the Anne Arundel County Fire Department Computer-Aided Dispatch system and suggested that when the map is created, different regions of the site should be labeled (i.e. Area A) so that emergency responders can easily identify the location of the emergency. It was also noted that if someone calls 9-1-1 from the site, a pin can be dropped on a map to show the location within 30 feet if the call is active long enough.

Mr. Moulden inquired which agency would respond if a visitor dialed 9-1-1 on the SCNT. Mr. Schmidt stated that the call would go to an Anne Arundel County Police dispatcher who then would decide if the call needed to be redirected to another jurisdiction, like MDTA or NRP.

Mr. Garofolo inquired more about communications regarding trespassing and law enforcement agencies accessing the ATV during off-hours. Mr. Moulden stated that as of right now, no one will be permitted on site when there is no staff on site. The staff on site will be the liaison between the first responders and the emergency location. There will be a sign-in sheet at the SCNT trailhead to keep track of visitors. The logistics will need to be determined, and if it becomes mandatory, staff will be present to reinforce the sign-in procedure. Mr. Schmidt stated that if an emergency occurs after hours first responders from entities like the Anne Arundel County Fire Department will procure the resources needed to respond to the incident. These efforts can take time, so it would be preferred to have an MPA staff member on site after hours or designate someone who can come to the site if first responders need access.

Mr. Garofolo inquired whether training exercises will be performed once maps and protocols are established. Representatives from the various law enforcement agencies agreed that running through exercises to work through these situations once plans are established would be beneficial. Mr. Ross stated that these conversations will continue throughout the process, and communication with law enforcement agencies will be ongoing.

## **5.0 Cox Creek Open House Planning**

**Danielle Fisher, MPA**

Ms. Fisher announced that the Cox Creek Open House is scheduled for October 18, 2025. The Cox Creek Open House showcases a variety of MPA projects and community resources. MPA will send out promotions and reminders for the event as it approaches. MPA is seeking input on specific aspects of event planning.

Ms. Fisher reviewed some highlights from the 2024 Cox Creek Open House. In 2024, there was a total of 212 participants, 50 of whom were children, and 48% were first-time visitors. Additionally, 49% of the participants were from target zip codes, which include Pasadena, Curtis Bay, and Glen Burnie. A postcard promotion was sent out to target these zip codes and, in 2024, 35% of participants reported attending the event due to receiving the postcard.

A guided bird tour is offered in the morning prior to the Cox Creek Open House, as well as self-guided birding in the SCMW throughout the event. Van tours of the Cox Creek DMCF are also provided as a part of the event and are usually well received, as the site is generally not open due to active construction. Participants will also get to see the geotubes in action this year for the first time. There will also be various exhibitors at the event showcasing MPA sites, DMMP projects, and community resources. The Cox Creek Open House also provides youth fishing hosted by PSG.

A list of the exhibitors that have been invited to the 2025 Cox Creek Open House was shared with the committee, with exhibitors who have accepted the invitation specifically called out. Ms. Fisher asked attendees to write down suggestions for groups and organizations that should be invited to the event. Mr. Christy confirmed that PSG will be attending the open house and hosting youth fishing.

Ms. Fisher asked attendees to share how other events in the community are promoted. MPA aims to expand the promotion of the Cox Creek Open House and explore new ways to engage the community. MPA will once again be sending postcards for the event to target areas.

Ms. Fisher reminded attendees that the Cox Creek Open House is family-friendly, free, and open to the public. Registration is not required. Ms. Ashley noted that more information about the exhibitions will be added to the [Maryland DMMP website](#) as planning continues.

## **6.0 Roundtable Remarks & Open Discussion**

**All Attendees**

Ms. Ashley informed attendees that all upcoming events including DMMP Committee meetings and the Cox Creek Open House, can be found on the [DMMP Engagement Calendar](#). The Anne Arundel County iMPAct Report can also be accessed on the [Maryland DMMP website](#).

## **7.0 Upcoming Events and Adjournment**

**Angie Ashley, Facilitator**

Ms. Ashley stated that 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.