

**FINAL SUMMARY OF THE
DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
March 19, 2025, 10:00 AM
World Trade Center Institute, Stanton Room
401 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202**

Attendees:

Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley
Association of Maryland Pilots: Captain Eric Neilsen*
Audubon Maryland-DC: David Curson*
Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA): Rupert Denney*
Chesapeake Bay Foundation: Gussie Maguire*
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC): Adam Lindquist (Chair)*
Council Fire: George Chmael
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Marni Dolinar*, Claire Spears
Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE): Heather Nelson*
Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): Richard Ortt*
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), The Secretary's Office (TSO): Allison Gost*
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Dave Bibo, Nichol Conley, Bertrand Djiki, Danielle Fisher, Rachael Gilde, 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*
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES): Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm*, Dave Nemazie
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (CENAB): Kiara Ehle, Caroline Etherton, Kevin Fenyak, Rachel Kierzewski, Eric Lindheimer*, Katie Perkins
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District (CENAP): Michael Hart*

*Denotes Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) Management Committee members.

Action Items:

- Based on the request from Mr. Denney, MPA will initiate informal conversations with private terminals to gather intelligence on their dredging plans for long-range planning purposes.

Convene and Welcome

Ms. Holly Miller, MPA

Meeting materials can be found at the following link: [3/19 Management Committee Meeting](#). Ms. Miller welcomed attendees, called the meeting to order, and encouraged ongoing participant engagement. Ms. Rachel Miller was announced as the new MPA Office of Navigation, Innovation and Stewardship (NIS) Budget and Contracts Manager. Ms. Miller also welcomed two new DMMP Management Committee members, Ms. Heather Nelson representing MDE and Ms. Allison Gost representing MDOT TSO.

Ms. Miller acknowledged the challenging time for MPA's federal partners and inquired whether there were any concerns, updates, or actions that MPA can take to offer support where able.

Ms. Perkins stated that both the Paul S. Sarbanes Ecosystem Restoration Project at Poplar Island (Poplar Island) and the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration (Mid-Bay) Project have been slightly impacted by some travel restrictions. Ms. Perkins expressed appreciation for the partnerships CENAB has, which allow state partners to provide construction oversight when federal representatives are unable. This arrangement is fully in place for the Barren Island portion of the Mid-Bay Project and

is partially in place for Poplar Island. Mr. Denney asked for clarification regarding the travel restrictions. Mr. Perkins stated that federal government civilian employee travel has been restricted, and special exemptions must be acquired to be able to travel. Given this, CENAB construction control representatives who ordinarily observe contractors working on site have limited ability to travel. While some exemptions have been granted, approvals must come from higher levels. For a period of one to two weeks, there was no CENAB oversight at Barren Island, but state partners were able to step in and assist, which is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Lindheimer stated that navigation projects for the year are unaffected, but there are concerns regarding the Survey Section and Debris Unit, as well as the potential reduction of probationary employees within the Department of Defense, which could later impact survey operations, including before and after dredge surveys. Additionally, federal government travel restrictions could impact personnel overseeing dredging contracts at Poplar Island and Barren Islands, as well as York Spit, though an extension has been granted to allow travel for quality assurance purposes. Another challenge arose in purchasing fuel when federal government purchase cards were shut off, preventing the acquisition of fuel for survey vessels, temporarily leaving the vessels docked and disrupting survey operations in Baltimore Harbor and other maintained channels. Mr. Lindheimer stated that, regarding future planning, CENAB's highest priorities are the Baltimore Harbor in Maryland and Virginia Approach Channels, and therefore, there is a continuous push to gain funding to conduct annual maintenance dredging, although it is unknown how the effort will be impacted. Mr. Denney asked, regarding dredging surveys, if it were possible for the work to be contracted to a private entity and paid for through alternative sources. Mr. Lindheimer confirmed that contracting a private entity is a possibility and something CENAB has investigated, however, it would be significantly more expensive. Mr. Hart stated that CENAP faced similar travel and expenditure challenges but noted a minimal impact on dredging, aside from some minor issues related to bridge work.

Mr. Watson added that due to local travel being restricted, NOAA's participation in the DMMP Management Committee meeting will be in a virtual capacity for the duration of the current policy.

Ms. Miller stated that all action items from the November 6, 2024, DMMP Management Committee meeting are complete and requested a motion to approve the associated meeting summary; the Committee approved.

Ms. Miller stated that on December 6, 2024, MPA held its DMMP Annual Meeting. Thanks were extended to all who were able to attend, and MPA looks forward to sharing more exciting updates at the 2025 DMMP Annual Meeting. The meeting featured a stakeholder panel discussion including three panelists representing navigation, innovation, and stewardship, with Maryland Port Commissioner Karenthia Barber serving as the moderator. Mr. Bennett Creighton from Ports America Chesapeake represented navigation, Mr. Miguel Lambert from Repurpose Aggregates represented innovation, and Ms. Nichole Werre from Severna Park Middle School represented stewardship. The 2024 DMMP Annual Meeting had the largest in-person attendance in recent years, with 120 attendees representing 65 organizations, a 30% increase over 2023. Online attendance was lower than in previous years, which was expected as MPA prioritized in-person participation. The 2024 DMMP Annual Report is now available and can be accessed on the [Maryland DMMP website](#).

2.0 Dredged Material Capacity Planning

Mr. Darren Swift, MPA

Mr. Swift stated that MPA was established in 1956 with the mission to stimulate the flow of waterborne commerce through the state of Maryland in a manner that benefits the citizens of the State. In service of that mission, NIS is responsible for maintaining the Port of Baltimore's (POB) channels in partnership

with USACE by ensuring sufficient long-term placement capacity and managing dredged material. Staff engage in a full range of activities from dredged material capacity planning, site engineering, managing operations at dredged material placement sites, as well as permitting process coordination and compliance. This work is rooted in the 2001 Dredged Material Management Act (DMMA) that established the DMMP.

Maryland's DMMP includes a rolling twenty-year plan that outlines the projected demand for dredged material, describes the need to regularly remove sediment from the POB's shipping channels, and identifies adequate placement capacity and/or alternative management solutions for dredged material. MPA has developed a comprehensive and formal procedure, referred to as long-range capacity planning, which identifies the twenty-year dredging demand and available placement capacity to assist MPA with project dredging needs, the available capacities of placement sites serving those channels, and alternative measures to extend the life of existing placement sites.

The Baltimore Harbor Approach Channel system is divided into four major channel segments. The Baltimore Harbor Channels are located west of the North Point – Rock Point Line established at the mouth of the Patapsco River. The Maryland Chesapeake Bay Approach Channels are the channels outside the Baltimore Harbor, leading east and south to the Maryland/Virginia border. The Virginia Chesapeake Bay Approach Channels are located from the Maryland/Virginia border to the ocean. The Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal and Approach Channels reach from north of the Tolchester Channel to the Maryland/Delaware border. Every year, nearly 5 million cubic yards (mcy) of sediment are dredged from these channels to maintain current depths and widths. This annual maintenance dredging activity is enough to fill up Ravens Stadium twice. Over twenty years, the approximate total projected dredging demand is nearly 100 mcy, with a more specific estimation placed at 96.5 mcy.

The Maryland Chesapeake Bay Channel segments require a total capacity of 42.3 mcy over twenty years, with Poplar Island and Mid-Bay serving as primary placement sites. After the inflow this winter, Poplar Island will have approximately 26 mcy of capacity remaining, which is expected to last through 2035. Since this is insufficient to meet long-term dredging needs, the Mid-Bay Project must proceed on schedule to ensure the capacity needed to place 42.3 mcy of dredged material over the next twenty years. With the new capacity that will come online with the construction of the Mid-Bay Project, MPA will have over 100 mcy of total capacity for Chesapeake Bay material. Planning, designing, permitting, and funding these island restoration projects takes a long time. With partners at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), MPA began preliminary discussions on the Mid-Bay Project in 2001 and started construction of Mid-Bay in earnest in 2022 by signing the Project Partnership Agreement.

Once Poplar Island reaches capacity in 2035, the Mid-Bay Project will accept the annual maintenance dredged material from the Maryland Chesapeake Bay channel segment. The Mid-Bay Project is comprised of two islands, Barren Island and James Island. Once completed, the Mid-Bay Project will accommodate an estimated 90 to 95 mcy of dredged sediment, providing placement capacity for more than thirty years.

Most of the material managed is outside of the Baltimore Harbor. Material that is dredged from the Baltimore Harbor Channels is only 23% of the total, or 22.5 mcy. Baltimore Harbor Channel material is defined by Maryland law as material to the northwest, or inside, of the North Point - Rock Point Line and must be placed in a confined manner in this region. However, when monitoring sediment quality, localized sediment quality tends to be similar within and beyond the North Point - Rock Point Line.

The active placement sites that receive material dredged from the Baltimore Harbor Channels are the Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) and the Cox Creek DMCF, both of which are undergoing expansion projects to increase capacity. Expansion projects, dredged material management techniques, and capacity recovery are ongoing methods that are used to increase the lifespan of these facilities.

The dike raising at the Masonville DMCF to an elevation of +30 feet is 50% complete and slated for completion ahead of schedule, likely by the end of 2025. The design for raising the dike to +42 feet is also underway. The final elevation of +42 feet will result in the site gaining 2.2 mcy of additional capacity, bringing the total site capacity to 10.4 mcy. At the Cox Creek DMCF, MPA completed the expansion construction by raising the upland dike, perimeter dike, and cross dike to +60 feet in 2024. MPA will complete the excavation of the upland cell by the fall of 2026. This will increase the overall capacity to 14.7 mcy. The feasibility study for the next expansion phase at Cox Creek, raising to +80 feet, is complete, and MPA has solicited design proposals. Construction is expected to begin in fiscal year (FY) 2030. The construction phase is projected to add 6.2 mcy of capacity to the project, bringing the total site capacity to 20.9 mcy. These facilities are assessed annually to ensure adequate capacity remains to accommodate the twenty-year dredging placement need.

With a projected need of 22.5 mcy over twenty years, the planned expansions at the Masonville DMCF and the Cox Creek DMCF nearly meet the requirement. Therefore, to meet the mandated mission, MPA began looking for innovative solutions. When innovative reuse (IR) and beneficial use (BU) are considered in capacity planning, there is improvement as IRBU projects will remove or divert material from the DMCFs, resulting in regained capacity. Current projections show that the IRBU Program will become instrumental in maximizing placement site capacity to ensure channel maintenance dredging needs can be accommodated during the twenty-year planning period.

MPA has acquired property adjacent to the Cox Creek DMCF for the purpose of furthering long-term innovative capacity recovery efforts through large-scale IR of dredged material. The Cox Creek Sediment Technology and Reuse (STAR) Facility will help with the capacity and demand planning beyond a twenty-year time frame. A master plan has been developed to identify short-term and long-term goals related to the IRBU Program for the property. One of the short-term goals is a pilot study for dewatering dredged material using geotextile tubes (geotubes). This marks a significant advancement, as MPA was previously limited by a lack of space to create a dewatering and drying operation.

For a long-term goal related to the Cox Creek STAR Facility, MPA is issuing a Request for Information (RFI) for the IR of dredged material to 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, implementation, scale, production rates, cost, and time frame for development and implementation. The ultimate purpose of any information received will be to develop a complete plan for IR operations.

MPA has also outlined long-term goals for scaling up the IRBU Program. Phased remediation and site preparation activities will allow dredged material processing to begin 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. To implement a full-scale IRBU Program, MPA is currently reviewing and revising the IRBU Strategy with the Innovative Reuse Committee.

The third objective of the DMMP rolling twenty-year plan is to identify alternative measures to extend the life of existing placement sites. This means MPA needs to continue working on optimizing capacity and must explore new dredged material management techniques.

The DMMA not only established the DMMP, but it also prioritized dredged material management options in the following hierarchy, which informs our program and capacity planning:

1. IRBU (implementation underway)
2. Upland sites and other environmentally sound confined capacity
3. Expansion of existing facilities (implementation underway)
4. Other options to meet long-term placement needs excluding redeposition in an unconfined manner

With limited dredged material placement capacity and a scarcity of vacant land for sale around Baltimore Harbor, in 2011 at the recommendation of the Harbor Team, MPA began exploring Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD). In CAD, dredged material is placed in a depression underwater rather than in a placement facility on land. CAD was investigated specifically for the management of maintenance material dredged from the Baltimore Harbor Channels when pinch points, such as construction delays at the DMCFs, arise in the twenty-year rolling plan. MPA completed a successful CAD pilot project but has additional lessons to learn about applying CAD in the Baltimore Harbor. A proposed second CAD pilot project has been paused due to concerns raised by community members and regulatory agencies. Another alternative method MPA is exploring is direct inflow into geotubes. This method involves placing dredged material directly into geotubes, bypassing traditional DMCF placement. Later this year, approximately 200,000 cy of dredged material from the Colgate Creek project will be directly placed in geotubes at the Cox Creek DMCF for drying rather than being placed in a Baltimore Harbor DMCF. Once the water drains from the geotubes and the material is dry, it can be innovatively reused or beneficially used. MPA will be evaluating this management method for future dredging projects as an alternative placement option to save capacity in the Baltimore Harbor DMCFs.

Long-range capacity planning is complex and continuous. MPA encourages stakeholders to remain engaged in this process as MPA works toward long-term solutions.

Mr. Denney asked whether material dredged from inside the North Point - Rock Point Line can be placed at Poplar Island. Ms. Miller stated that material from specific channel reaches has federal authorization to be placed at Poplar Island however, Baltimore Harbor Channels are not authorized. Mr. Denney asked if MPA is including the capacity recovery of material at the Cox Creek DMCF through IR when conducting long-term capacity planning, since that material can be used in other projects. Mr. Swift confirmed and stated that the goal is that the material placed at the Cox Creek DMCF annually would then be used in IR projects. Mr. Moulden added that the use of geotubes would allow dredged material to be diverted from Cox Creek DMCF entirely. Mr. Denney followed up and asked what happens to the geotubes in the long term. Mr. Djiki, Mr. Moulden, and Mr. Swift shared that the goal of the geotubes is to provide an accelerated drying process. Once the material is dry enough to be handled, the geotubes will be cut open and the material stockpiled, making it available for use. After the geotubes are cut open, they can no longer be used for drying; however, the geotextile fabric can be reused for other purposes. Ms. Miller stated that MPA is still investigating alternative drying technologies and that the use of geotubes is the first step in understanding the alternative techniques. MPA is dedicated to ensuring that dewatering and drying techniques are sustainable and involves examining the entire process.

Mr. Ortt asked if the dewatered and processed material from the Cox Creek DMCF could be used by the State for a BU project. Ms. Miller stated that if the material undergoes the appropriate testing and meets the project requirements, it is a possibility.

Mr. Nemazie asked if the water flowing from the geotubes during the dewatering process is monitored for quality. Mr. Swift stated that part of MPA's short-term planning for the Cox Creek STAR Facility is for the process to be a closed-loop system. Water resulting from the geotube dewatering process would be collected and pumped back into the Cox Creek DMCF and held until it meets MPA's water quality permits, at which time it can be discharged.

Mr. Watson asked for confirmation that the purpose of the geotubes was to accelerate the dewatering process, and the dried sediment would ultimately be transported to the Cox Creek STAR Facility. Mr. Swift confirmed. Mr. Watson followed up and asked whether the long-range planning incorporates future POB developments and projects that have the potential to increase the annual maintenance dredging quantities or if it is based solely on historical maintenance dredging averages. Ms. Miller made it clear that MPA has constrained capacity; therefore, the priority is maintenance dredging and ensuring the maintenance of the existing infrastructure. There is some consideration for future development and new work dredging projects, however, it is typically state and federal new work dredging projects that benefit all users as opposed to private projects that benefit one user. MPA recognizes that the Sparrows Point Container Terminal project is in the best interest of the State and therefore is trying to determine capacity availability to accommodate some of the material, although MPA did not plan to accept any of that material in the long-range planning efforts. Maintenance dredging of newly established channels is accounted for in MPA projections, and planning efforts include federal, state, private, and local dredging needs with maintenance projections calculated for each.

Mr. Denney added that there are over 23 private terminals in the POB and more than 35 piers. The BPA has been informally asking MPA to canvas these private terminals to understand long-term development plans and reiterated the request for the MPA to initiate informal conversations with private terminals to gather intelligence on dredging plans, even if small, for long-range planning purposes.

Mr. Ortt stated that increased marine traffic from deep draft vessels could potentially reduce the need for maintenance dredging due to propeller scouring based on previous studies, however this would need to be investigated further to determine validity.

3.0 CAD Subcommittee Progress and Lessons Learned

Ms. Rachael Gilde, MPA

Ms. Gilde presented on the CAD Subcommittee's progress and additional CAD outreach efforts that supported the affiliated recommendation in the 2024 DMMP Annual Report. Additionally, Ms. Gilde presented how MPA is weaving this work into the CAC, capitalizing on opportunities for DMMP outreach and engagement growth overall because of this work.

Ms. Gilde stated that one of the solutions that was suggested through DMMP committee collaboration was investigating CAD as a potential solution for pinch points along the twenty-year plan when managing Baltimore Harbor material. The sediment managed with CAD would be the same material placed in DMCFs, which is maintenance material from the federal shipping channels that passed screening criteria. Though CAD is used successfully in other ports, it would need to be vetted in the region to see if it could be permitted and if it would successfully confine material in the manner that Maryland law requires. Investigating new methods like CAD takes a long time from the original suggestion in 2011, to permitting and design, to executing an initial pilot in 2016. The first pilot answered some questions, but ultimately did not determine whether CAD was a viable option for Harbor Channel material management. MPA needed to know if there are enough areas that are deep enough and have the

sediment makeup necessary to build a confining CAD cell. The investigation continued in the direction of a second pilot, which would help MPA understand if there are conditions in the region that could accommodate what was found to be a successfully confining CAD cell. Fourteen years later, and the answer is still uncertain.

In that process, collaboration with regulatory agencies brought MPA to reengaging the Bay Enhancement Work Group (BEWG) as trusted scientific technical advisors to get input on potential locations for a second CAD pilot to continue the investigation. This led to the establishment of the CAD Subcommittee with BEWG members of specific expertise relevant to elements of CAD planning. Around that same time, MPA also became engaged with many community members who were not previously aware of the DMMP and were concerned upon hearing about CAD. MPA had the complex task of addressing technical concerns alongside community concerns, bringing people up to speed at diverse levels of knowledge and a wide spectrum of concerns and understanding.

This coincided with proposed legislation, which MPA conceptually supported, related to developing a task force to assess the use of CAD in Baltimore Harbor. While the legislation did not pass, the core intent influenced the formation and structure of the subcommittee. Consistent with the DMMP's historical commitment to transparency and inclusion, MPA expanded the subcommittee beyond BEWG members to include elected officials and community representatives. Established under BEWG, the CAD Subcommittee was tasked with exploring technical aspects of a second CAD pilot project, including environmental impacts and benefits, location selection, associated regulations, and socioeconomic benefits and effects. In line with the established process of the DMMP, the report generated as a result of the CAD Subcommittee will guide MPA decisions about additional studies to conduct prior to developing a permit application tied to a proposed location for a second pilot, if MPA were to proceed.

The CAD Subcommittee successfully convened six times in 2024 and 2025. The CAD Subcommittee reviewed and discussed the following topics:

- MPA's dredging and placement needs, long-range capacity planning, and a status update on the IRBU Program
- The 2016 CAD Pilot Project's scope, timeline, site selection rationale, permitting process, studies conducted, and outcomes that led to identifying the need for a second pilot
- Site selection process for a subsequent pilot project
- Community input and the consensus process
- Hydrodynamics
- Identified data gaps
- Project criteria scores to inform the final report

During the course of these meetings, the Maryland General Assembly session began, and MPA became aware of the introduction of Senate Bill 168, the Environmental Justice in CAD Act. Senate Bill 168 proposes to prohibit the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) from processing or making any recommendation to the Board of Public Works (BPW) regarding an application for the alteration of any tidal wetland or waters of the state submitted for the purpose of constructing a CAD within five miles of residential overburdened communities. It would also prevent the BPW from approving such projects in these areas. While MPA is evaluating the legislation to understand the full impact on the DMMP, if it were to pass and become law, its submission does not change the mission and the important work of the CAD Subcommittee.

Regarding legislation related to CAD, the original bill, Senate Bill 168F, amendments were filed, voted on, and passed. The bill was renamed the "Confined Aquatic Disposal Cells – Construction Moratorium". The environmental justice and prohibition on MDE and BPW from reviewing a permit application for a CAD cell was removed. In place of those components in the bill, a permit for a CAD cell in the Baltimore Harbor cannot be submitted to MDE or BPW for a period of four years. The bill, with amendments suggested by MPA, has passed over to the House of Representatives. Mr. Nemazie asked if the project, in its current stage, will be impacted if Senate Bill 168F passes the House of Representatives and becomes law. Ms. Miller clarified that the four-year moratorium would prevent the construction of a CAD cell, however, it would not prevent the CAD Subcommittee work, additional studies, or design that would still be needed to proceed.

Many dedicated community members joined community representatives at the CAD Subcommittee to observe the process, with an opportunity to interact with the committee members at each meeting. In addition to hearing presentations by community members and reviewing a summary of feedback related to CAD since June 2023, community members were asked to provide a succinct written summary of their questions and concerns. The CAD Subcommittee received 121 distinct questions and concerns and developed nine categories to organize input and determine its applicability to the CAD Subcommittee's objectives. At the January 2025 meeting, the CAD Subcommittee reviewed the categorizations and adjusted them as necessary through feedback and discussion. Because the work of the CAD Subcommittee would have to be completed before a permit application is created, there were some questions that the CAD Subcommittee could not address. These questions were noted accordingly and could be answered later in the process.

The finalized report will include recommended studies, a final scoring matrix, any dissents to consensus, all attribute parameter information, and community input. The report will be shared at the next BEWG meeting and at subsequent DMMP Management Committee, Executive Committee, and CAC meetings over the summer of 2025. Ms. Gilde expressed appreciation for the CAD Subcommittee members' time and dedication, which has been invaluable.

In addition to engaging with stakeholders through the CAD Subcommittee, MPA also embarked on a robust outreach and engagement program to inform and solicit community feedback about CAD. The goal was to raise awareness and foster community engagement by providing timely project information in easily accessible, interactive forums. MPA was able to facilitate a comprehensive exchange of information about POB dredging and needs, including the MPA capacity planning process and the potential opportunities CAD may offer as a dredged material management technique based on lessons learned from the previous pilot project and an exploration of how a new pilot project may be undertaken. Five small group briefings were held throughout 2024, introducing CAD to regulators and elected officials while addressing technical questions, reaching over 150 participants. MPA also leveraged its existing nine stakeholder oversight and advisory committees, ensuring transparency through regular updates and responsiveness to community and environmental groups. These efforts facilitated valuable discussions, built new relationships, and opened pathways for mutually beneficial outcomes while assessing CAD as a dredged material management option.

Over the past year, MPA has developed a range of communication tools to improve outreach and information sharing. This includes the creation of the CAD Bulletin, a new newsletter with a distribution list of over 200 individuals, as well as enhancements to the CAD webpage to provide more robust information and an online platform for feedback. Additionally, updated CAD information was made available through a factsheet and a Frequently Asked Questions document. MPA is expanding its engagement efforts in 2025 to ensure it can reach more people, create opportunities for more dialogue, and incorporate feedback into the planning process as it continues to explore CAD as an innovative

solution to dredged material management. This effort includes the work of the BEWG CAD Subcommittee. Updates to the community will also be provided at CAC meetings and other existing stakeholder forums.

MPA recognized that baseline information for new stakeholders could have better helped in understanding the risk, process, and limitations. Work through the CAC has been aimed at determining the best way to introduce DMMP work and communicate its scope effectively. Building on the success of the 2023-2024 program, MPA continues to expand its reach and impact in 2025. The groundwork for ongoing collaboration is set, ensuring long-term engagement and cooperation. Engagement efforts are expanding to include new and interested parties, ensuring a broad and diverse stakeholder base.

In a collaborative effort amongst CAC members at the February 19, 2025, meeting, MPA worked with attendees to identify a list of prioritized key topic areas that NIS can include in focused communications and identify a list of prioritized engagement methods. Through the facilitated session with members and a Google Form after the meeting, MPA asked the following:

1. What do you wish you knew when you joined this committee or first started working with us?

Members expressed a desire for earlier awareness of the rolling twenty-year planning process, the program's overall scope, and the distinct roles of agencies and stakeholders, including public versus private dredging operations. Additional knowledge gaps included sediment quality distinctions, such as Baltimore Harbor versus Chesapeake Bay and maintenance versus new work material, and a clearer understanding of DMMP committee roles, evolution and achievements. Respondents also emphasized the value of early communication around MPA's leadership in dredged material management and the benefits of IR and BU opportunities.

2. What suggestions do you have on how to raise awareness of dredging issues and get people excited about dredged material management?

Respondents recommended increasing grassroots outreach and education to highlight dredged material as a valuable resource and to build public confidence in its safe management. Suggestions included engaging younger audiences to foster a new generation of DMMP advocates, simplifying technical language, and integrating content into school curricula and local community discussions. Additional strategies included leveraging local political networks and using accessible media such as videos to demonstrate dredging in action. Some noted that public excitement could be improved by increasing general awareness of the POB and clarifying the public's role in the management process.

There are various types of stakeholder engagement embedded in the DMMP focusing on informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, and empowering stakeholders. Not all aspects of the DMMP allow for external influence, particularly due to laws and policies, however, there are always opportunities for learning and awareness. As stakeholders become more educated about the program, they are better positioned to collaborate effectively.

Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm suggested that framing dredged material as both an environmental and economic issue could help generate broader interest in reference to the CAC prompt responses. Highlighting its environmental challenges might engage younger audiences, while emphasizing economic impacts could resonate with more experienced stakeholders.

4.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
North Atlantic Division – Philadelphia District

Mr. Michael Hart, USACE

Mr. Hart stated that work is continuing related to the FY24 dredging contract. The team is finishing the section by Pooles Island and is preparing to move up to the Wornton Point section. The contract is for the removal of 300,000 cy of material from the upper Chesapeake Bay, with the placement of that material at the Pearce Creek DMCF. The contract is approximately halfway completed, with the anticipated dredging continuing through the end of the environmental window on March 31, 2025.

Additionally, there is bridge work scheduled to begin shortly on the Summit Bridge, the only bridge currently under construction. This work will result in an air gap reduction, which will be limited to half of the main channel at one time. The exact extent of the reduction is still unknown, as the contractor submittals are pending. Once those are received, the stakeholders will be informed. After completing work on one side of the bridge, the air gap restriction will shift to the other side.

North Atlantic Division – Baltimore District

Mr. Lindheimer stated that there is a new Navigation Section Chief, Ms. Jo Ann Grundy, who has been with CENAB for over twenty years and comes from the Programs Management Division.

Ms. Kierzewski stated that the dredging of York Spit Channel was originally scheduled for November 2024 but experienced contractor delays. The contractor began dredging on March 18, 2025, and dredging is expected to continue until July 2025. Dredging will start in Acceptance Section 1.

Mr. Fenyak stated that dredging work related to the Baltimore Harbor and Maryland Approach Channels began in early December 2024 and is currently taking place in Craighill Angle, moving southbound toward Craighill Entrance. The original plan was to finish by the end of March 2025; however, the project is about two weeks behind schedule and is now expected to be completed around April 16, 2025.

Ms. Perkins stated that the Seagirt Loop Modification Project design is underway for modification to the West Seagirt Channel. Site investigation surveys along with sediment sampling and testing have been completed, and the project is approaching 30% Design, which is anticipated by the summer of 2025.

The Poplar Island inflow from annual maintenance dredging is ongoing, with completion expected in the next month. Additionally, construction is underway to raise the dikes at Cell 6 and Cell 11, of which the work is planned to continue through November 2025.

Related to the Mid-Bay Project, Barren Island Phase 1 was completed in October 2024, and Barren Island Phase 2 is ongoing and will include Honga Channel dredging. For James Island, design is progressing as the team is investigating total life cycle cost and incorporating softer dike solutions into the design. Immediate engineering activities are focused on developing a smaller set of plans and specifications, which will be advertised and awarded as soon as funding is received.

5.0 Citizens Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Adam Lindquist, Chair

Mr. Lindquist commended MPA for the quick response to community concerns around CAD, acknowledging the hard work involved in addressing these issues. Mr. Lindquist reflected on the evolution of the CAC, noting that while dredged material management may not have been a concern in the past, it has become crucial to engage with and rebuild trust in the community. This is especially important as the community becomes more involved with projects that have a direct impact. Some citizens are still skeptical but noted that trust is slowly being rebuilt through transparency and engagement. Mr. Lindquist praised Mr. Swift's presentation at the February 19, 2025, CAC meeting for simplifying technical jargon and reintroducing foundational concepts to new participants.

Mr. Lindquist announced plans for a "Harbor Splash" event on June 28, 2025, where participants will jump into the Baltimore Harbor. Ms. Katie Pumphrey's second planned swim from Annapolis to the Inner Harbor, which will occur the week of May 19, 2025, was also highlighted.

6.0 Open Discussion

All Members

Mr. Curson stated that Audubon has been advocating for the Ecological Restoration Definition Bill, which stems from an ecological restoration study conducted by MDE a few years ago. The bill aims to define ecological restoration clearly, ensuring that permit holders can identify genuine restoration projects as opposed to those driven by commercial interests. The bill has successfully passed both chambers of the state legislature and is now in crossover, making its success likely. This is viewed as a positive development for the future of restoration efforts and permitting.

Mr. Curson gave an update on the salt marsh restoration planning effort, which has been ongoing for over a year, including the development of special models and holding workshops. A technical report has been produced and is in the process of being published online. A policy-oriented summary is also available, with a more technical-oriented summary to be released in about two months. The focus of the "Marshes for Tomorrow" plan is on high marsh areas, the most threatened zone of tidal salt marshes. The project used salt marsh birds as species drivers to set acreage goals and identified priority marsh areas for restoration, including Fishing Bay, Pocomoke Coastal Bays, and the Deal Island Peninsula.

Ms. Jones stated that the BPA is preparing for its 6th Annual Career and Hiring Event on May 1, 2025, at the Community College of Baltimore County, Dundalk. The BPA is currently recruiting exhibitors and will soon begin promoting the event to job seekers. The event aims to streamline the hiring process by allowing exhibitors to list job openings on the BPA website in advance, giving job seekers the opportunity to learn about hiring businesses prior to the event. Flyers for potential exhibitors in the maritime, transportation, and logistics sectors are available, and the BPA is actively seeking additional businesses to participate.

7.0 Adjourn

Ms. Holly Miller, MPA

Ms. Miller expressed appreciation for the in-person attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting. The next DMMP Management Committee meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2025.