

**FINAL SUMMARY OF THE
DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
November 26, 2024, 1:30 PM
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Headquarters
The Secretary's Office Boardroom
7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076**

Members Attending:

DMMP Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) Liaison: Adam Lindquist
DMMP Management Committee Liaison: Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm
Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE): Secretary Serena McIlwain
Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): Secretary Josh Kurtz
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT): Secretary Paul Wiedefeld

Others Attending:

Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA): Rupert Denney
Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF): Matt Stegman, Esq.
Council Fire: George Chmael II
Maryland DNR: Richard Ortt
MDE: Brandon Brooks, Tammy Roberson, Matthew Rowe
Maryland Geological Survey (MGS): Stephen Van Ryswick
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Johnathan Daniels, Jennifer Guthrie, Margie Hamby, Amira Hairston, Holly Miller, Rachel Miller, Robert Munroe, Bill Richardson, Darren Swift
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Dr. Charles Glass, Mackenzie Miller
The Association of Maryland Pilots: Eric Nielsen
USACE North Atlantic Division: Doug Stamper
USACE North Atlantic Division, Baltimore District (CENAB): Lacy Evans, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Pollak
USACE North Atlantic Division, Philadelphia District (CENAP): Timothy Kelly
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES): Elizabeth Price

Action Items:

- Information regarding the DB Avalon, North America's first hybrid dredge vessel, will be shared with the DMMP Executive Committee. *Complete*

1.0 Convene: Introductory Comments

Secretary Paul Wiedefeld, MDOT

The November 26, 2024, Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) Executive Committee meeting was convened, and attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations. Secretary Wiedefeld put forth a motion to approve the August 20, 2024, DMMP Executive Committee meeting summary as written. The DMMP Executive Committee unanimously approved the August 2024 meeting summary.

2.0 Port Highlights

Johnathan Daniels, MPA

Mr. Daniels thanked Secretary Wiedefeld for the opportunity to address the DMMP Executive Committee and expressed appreciation for the collaborative response of MPA staff, CENAB, maritime personnel, and the State of Maryland to the Francis Scott Key Bridge tragedy.

The Port of Baltimore (POB) has not only rebounded but has reached a point where new opportunities

are emerging to support MPA's mission of stimulating waterborne commerce. This mission is achieved, in part, through the efforts and support of the DMMP Executive Committee. The assistance provided by the DMMP committees enables MPA to reflect on past successes and challenges while charting a course for future development. Central to this planning effort is a new Master Vision Plan. MPA is currently preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to outline a twenty-year, multi-phase approach. This plan will define the POB's global role and guide the implementation of critical infrastructure to support long-term growth.

The management of dredged material remains a cornerstone of ensuring the POB's continued viability, instilling confidence among carriers regarding long-term operational capacity.

Throughout 2024, the POB has achieved notable success. Roll-on/roll-off equipment volumes in September 2024 were 33% higher than in September 2023, reflecting both recovery and growth. Similarly, breakbulk cargo volumes are up 28% compared to the prior year. On the container side, the POB has reached 90% of 2023 vessel counts and 85% of container movement levels. At Seagirt Marine Terminal, gate transactions are averaging 3,500 per day, with projections of increasing to 4,500 per day by mid-to-late first quarter of calendar year 2025.

Several new services are anticipated at the POB as industry alliances continue to shift, creating opportunities for larger vessels to call on the POB. The Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) will introduce a reconfigured West Coast India-to-East Coast United States service with vessels averaging 14,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs). Additionally, other MSC lines are expected to bring vessels approaching 16,000 TEUs. The ability of MSC and other carriers to safely navigate these large vessels to and from the POB is a direct result of the DMMP's critical work.

The POB is also experiencing growth in its cruise operations. The POB and Carnival Cruise Line signed a five-year contract extension that will take effect on January 1, 2025, and includes a five-year renewal option. Efforts are underway to expand partnerships with Royal Caribbean and other cruise lines to enhance the POB's impact as a cruise destination. The POB's single cruise terminal is being fully utilized for both turnaround and in-transit operations, which attract new clientele to the region. Recently, the *Azamara Journey* made an in-transit stop at the POB as a part of a thirteen-day Canada and Colonial America cruise that embarked in Montreal and concluded in Miami. The POB is collaborating with Azamara to facilitate additional in-transit stops in the future. Meanwhile, Crystal Cruises and AIDA Cruises are scheduled to visit the POB in 2026. Another cruise line has approached the POB for a proposal to establish home-port operations, prompted by reconfigured preferential berth days.

Given the POB's remarkable growth and success, proper planning for future infrastructure and operations is essential. Continued work with the DMMP will be essential to ensure the sustainability of the POB. The POB remains committed to collaborating with stakeholders to ensure sustainable and resilient development. These efforts will focus on evolving in partnership with the community, rather than overwhelming it, to secure the POB's place as a leading hub for maritime and cruise activities.

3.0 2024 DMMP Annual Report

Holly Miller, MPA

Darren Swift, MPA

Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, UMCES

Ms. Miller, Mr. Swift, and Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm reviewed highlights from the 2024 DMMP Annual Report including recommendations for 2025.

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

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

Funding & Policy

Ms. Miller stated that MPA continues to engage congressional delegations as well as federal and state partners to ensure favorable legislation, sufficient funding, and support for climate change and resilience planning. As many are already aware, the State transportation program is facing funding constraints and the current state funding levels may not provide the investment levels needed to meet the State's goals. The Maryland congressional delegation continues to be integral to ensuring the POB receives adequate federal funding and authorization for critical infrastructure and ecosystem restoration projects. MPA works very closely with partners at USACE to identify federal priorities and advocate for project needs with the congressional delegation.

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

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

Legislation was introduced in this year's Maryland General Assembly to amend the composition and responsibilities of the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (C O C). MPA worked with legislators to update the membership to accurately reflect active organizations in the area in addition to the current active members. MPA supported, with amendments, House Bill 343, cross-filed with Senate Bill 20, and the legislation was passed updating the Cox Creek C O C membership effective July 1, 2024. The Governor is currently reviewing applications to fill vacancies on the Cox Creek C O C. The same legislation also included an amendment to reopen the Hart-Miller Island (HMI) North Cell, allowing it to accept dredged material from nearby Baltimore County projects including the large-scale Tradepoint Atlantic (TPA) project, with the execution of an enforceable community benefits agreement. At this time, TPA is no longer pursuing the utilization of HMI as a placement option.

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), in partnership with MPA, has drafted a material specification for the inclusion of dredged material in SHA's standard specifications for construction and materials in 2025. This is currently in the clearinghouse process at SHA and MPA is hopeful that it will be included in the next publication of specifications.

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

Planning & Operations

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

Through the twenty-year rolling planning process, material placement has been projected for the next twenty years; however, the DMMP will need to continue to identify and work through the planning process to have sufficient dredged material placement capacity beyond fiscal year (FY) 2044. MPA must continue to manage its facilities to maximize capacity, adhere to project construction schedules, and incorporate capacity recovery efforts through the innovative reuse (IR) and beneficial use (B U) program. Current projections show that the IRBU program will become instrumental in maximizing capacity to ensure MPA can accommodate channel maintenance dredging needs during the twenty-year planning period. MPA believes that the IRBU program will ensure capacity needs in the Baltimore Harbor.

MPA's IRBU program is at the forefront of implementation by using dredged material in sustainable and resourceful applications. A pilot study for dewatering dredged material using geotextile tubes (geotubes) will begin as early as 2025. This is an exciting step forward. Previously, MPA was limited by a lack of space to create a dewatering and drying operation. Now, MPA can have readily available material for IRBU projects and the capacity to dewater and dry material continually which will result in significant progress towards capacity recovery.

MPA is planning to issue the Cox Creek Sediment Technology and Reuse (STAR) Facility Request for Information (RFI) by the end of 2024 or early 2025. The RFI will address large-scale IR of dredged material by informing site development and identifying potential IR developers and processes that could take place at the Cox Creek STAR Facility. Respondents will be asked to provide detailed information regarding the proposed operations, how those would be implemented, the scale of the operation, production rates, and time frame for development and implementation. The ultimate purpose for any information received will be to develop a complete plan for IR operations development at the Cox Creek STAR Facility. The goal is for large volume 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. Approximately 1.2 million cubic yards (mcy) of dredged material is anticipated to be recovered from the Cox Creek DMCF during the five-year scale-up period.

Mr. Denney highlighted that in the 2024 DMMP Annual Report states that MPA's goal is to recover 0.450 mcy of dredged material annually from FY30 and beyond and emphasized how significant that volume is in terms of capacity recovery. Mr. Denney inquired if the intention is to have one contractor,

or several contractors utilize the Cox Creek STAR Facility for IR operations. Ms. Miller responded that the goal is to have several entities on the property including MPA drying material for various projects. Mr. Swift added that the idea is to diversify how dredged material is being reused by allowing several contractors to make use of the property.

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

Senate Bill 353 was filed in January 2024 seeking the formation of a Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) Task Force, but the bill was not passed into law. Regardless, MPA is committed to an inclusive process and has moved forward with a CAD Subcommittee under the DMMP's Bay Enhancement Working Group (BEWG). The membership and objectives of the CAD Subcommittee are modeled after those outlined in the CAD Task Force legislation. The CAD Subcommittee members are exploring technical aspects of a second pilot project including environmental impacts and benefits, location selection, associated regulations, and socioeconomic benefits and impacts to aid in meeting the state's long-term dredged material placement needs. The CAD Subcommittee will develop a group consensus and submit a report to the DMMP Management Committee and DMMP Executive Committee in mid-2025.

The Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration (Mid-Bay) Project is advancing, with notable progress on both Barren and James Islands. Mid-Bay will begin to accept 2 to 3 mcy of annual dredged material from the Maryland Chesapeake Bay channel segments as Poplar Island placement capacity is reached in 2035. Throughout 2024, MPA and USACE worked closely with community members, especially watermen, to limit the potential impacts of construction on livelihoods.

Poplar Island is world-renowned for its effective B U of dredged material to restore remote island habitat. Lessons learned are already being incorporated into the planning and design of the Mid-Bay Project. The goals of research at Poplar Island are to maximize climate resiliency and habitat restoration and develop a set of lessons learned to be applied to other B U projects. Multiple studies have been completed or are underway assessing the relationships between wetland restoration using dredged material and nutrient cycles, greenhouse gases, and long-term resiliency in the face of projected sea level rise. The research supports important DMMP recommendations to incorporate the potential impacts of climate change and facilitate the use of nature-based and climate resilient solutions into long-term DMMP project planning.

MPA achieved a significant construction milestone at the Cox Creek DMCF by raising the upland dike to +60 feet, increasing the overall capacity to 14.7 mcy. The feasibility study for the next expansion phase, raising to +80 feet, is complete and MPA has initiated design efforts. Construction is expected to begin in FY30. The related mitigation, a nontidal wetland restoration and creation project at Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center, is pending finalization of the conservation easement with USACE.

MPA plans to submit a request to the Maryland BPW to secure the easement in early 2025 at which time construction can then commence.

The Cox Creek C O C continues to provide input to MPA regarding the management of dredged material at the Cox Creek DMCF and to make recommendations on minimizing the potential impacts it may have on the communities and natural resources. A recent project demonstrating this collaboration is the Swan Creek Nature Trail (SCNT). Developed in coordination with the Cox Creek C O C and community stakeholders, the SCNT is a community enhancement project to create an approximate two-mile loop in the forest conservation easement area. A groundbreaking was held on October 19, 2024, at the Cox Creek Open House. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025 and MPA hopes to have the SCNT open to the public in late 2025 or early 2026.

Dike raising at Masonville DMCF to an elevation of +30 feet is 30% complete and slated for completion ahead of schedule, likely by the end of 2025. The design for raising the dike to +42 feet is 60% completed and is occurring concurrently with construction to +30 feet. The goal is to have a gap of only a few months between construction to +30 feet and to +42 feet. Design work for the +42 began in August 2024 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2025. The final elevation of +42 feet will result in the site having a total capacity of 10.4 mcy which is critical to maintaining the fifty-foot channel system for the competitive movement of cargo and the thousands of jobs associated with the POB.

Since its establishment in 1981, the HMI C O C has ensured an open dialogue between the communities surrounding the site and MPA. While HMI may have been considered for reopening this year, it remains a haven for boaters in the northern Chesapeake Bay. The site provides the public with recreational opportunities and the chance to encounter many different species of plants, insects, and wildlife, including abundant migrating bird populations. Over 37,700 people visited HMI in 2024 to fish, camp, boat, swim, bike, hike, and picnic. This year, 219 species of birds were observed on official census, with thirty species confirmed as breeding on site.

Outreach & Education

Ms. Miller stated that environmental justice, diversity in representation, and increasing public knowledge about the POB are top priorities for MPA, which has long recognized that the POB's success and that of the DMMP depend on Marylanders' collaboration and support. Key goals are to reflect the communities that MPA serves and to pursue outcomes that equitably benefit all Marylanders. MPA has built a model engagement program, creating widely accessible initiatives that restore the environment and enhance the quality of life for all communities. Tours for community members, business leaders, representatives of nonprofit organizations, and elected officials help stakeholders stay well informed and up to date on POB operations. These are important opportunities for MPA to receive feedback and fresh ideas on its environmental stewardship.

MPA's education and outreach efforts in 2024 have produced more than 21,000 interactions at nearly 800 events, including engagements with over 14,000 students. In 2024, 540 classrooms were engaged, of which 30% were certified as Green School classrooms by the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) and 32% were in Title I schools where high numbers or high percentages of children are from low-income families.

With support from MPA and industry professionals, BPA hosted its sixth Hiring & Career Expo, bringing together 34 employers and more than 300 job-seekers, making it the largest held to date. The

event also matched five support organizations with workers impacted by the POB closure. In exit surveys, 75% of job seekers said they learned about opportunities for which they will apply, 78% of employers said they intend to interview or make offers to candidates they met, and 100% of exhibitors said they would attend a similar event again.

2025 Recommendations

Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm stated that because of the thoughtful, proactive, and strategic input provided by the DMMP Management Committee members and others throughout the development process, the 2024 DMMP Annual Report includes fourteen key recommendations for 2025. While pursuing its mission to increase waterborne commerce and advance key projects, initiatives, and studies, MPA will continue to work closely with its partners and stakeholders and emphasize strong sustainability practices and goals in 2025 and beyond. Like the sections of the 2024 DMMP Annual Report, the 2025 Recommendations are organized into the three categories of Funding & Policy, Planning & Operations, and Outreach & Education. Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm highlighted a couple themes from each category that help align the DMMP with important policy and social initiatives related to planning for climate resiliency and greenhouse gas emission reductions, addressing environmental justice and equity issues, and focusing on the long-term future of the youth who will inherit the results of the DMMP's work.

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

The Planning & Operations Recommendations have been updated and expanded to incorporate specifics related to several topics including, among others, climate resiliency, equitable access, B U and carbon sequestration, and efforts related to the Cox Creek STAR Facility to drive forward IR and capacity recovery.

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

Mr. Kelly stated that the 2009 legislation that closed HMI also prevented open water placement of dredged material and inquired if there is a possibility that open water placement would be reopened as a placement option. Ms. Miller stated that the amendment to reopen HMI did not include any language regarding open water placement.

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

Secretary Wiedefeld put forth a motion to approve the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and 2025 Recommendations as written. The DMMP Executive Committee unanimously approved the 2024 DMMP Annual Report and 2025 Recommendations.

4.0 USACE Reports

Timothy Kelly, CENAP
Lt. Colonel Mark Pollak, CENAB

USACE North Atlantic Philadelphia District (CENAP)

Mr. Kelly stated that construction on the St. George's Bridge is complete. Construction has begun on the Reedy Point Bridge which is anticipated to be complete in April 2025. There are no anticipated channel obstructions or air gap restrictions associated with the bridge construction. USACE is investigating deflection systems for the bridges to ensure bridge safety.

Mr. Kelly stated that the bid opening for the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2025 maintenance dredging of the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal is anticipated to open December 4, 2024. Maintenance dredging of the Upper Chesapeake Approach Channel and the C&D Canal is anticipated to result in approximately 400,000 cy of material to be placed at the Pearce Creek DMCF. USACE is reopening the Delaware City Dredged Material Disposal Site, a 340-acre site, capacity of which will be used for the ranges adjacent to the C&D Canal. Currently the site has a capacity of 1.8 mcy, however, USACE plans to raise the dikes to increase capacity.

USACE North Atlantic Baltimore District (CENAB)

Lt. Colonel Pollak stated that the contract for the FFY25 maintenance dredging of the Baltimore Harbor Maryland Approach Channels was recently awarded. Approximately 500,000 cy of material is anticipated to be placed at the Cox Creek DMCF. Additionally, the Notice to Proceed (NTP) was issued on November 15, 2024, for an estimated 1.8 mcy of material to be placed at Poplar Island. This contract was awarded to Curtin Maritime, Corp which plans to use North America's first hybrid dredge vessel, the DB Avalon. Curtin Maritime, Corp will be coming from Puerto Rico and mobilizing at the beginning of December 2024. Mr. Ortt requested information be provided regarding the hybrid dredge vessel so that DMMP Executive Committee members can capitalize on areas such as greenhouse gas savings and climate change.

In reference to the Chesapeake Bay Virginia Approach Channels, approximately 2.6 mcy of material is expected to be dredged from York Spit and placed at the Wolf Trap Alternate Northern Extension Placement Site. The contract was awarded on September 30, 2024, to Weeks Marine from Covington, Louisiana. The NTP was issued on November 15, 2024.

Barren Island Phase I of the Mid-Bay Project has been completed and the Barren Island Phase II contract was awarded on August 12, 2024. NTP for the Barren Island Phase II contract was issued on October 3, 2024, and mobilization is anticipated in mid-December 2024. Barren Island Phase II will involve dredging in the Honga River which is anticipated to occur in the winter of 2026 into 2027. Additionally, the James Island initial design is ongoing with the modeling efforts wrapping up. The contract package for the first phase of restoration, specifically focused on the island perimeter, is being assembled. NEPA efforts including the supplemental environmental impact study have been completed and additional concurrent analysis for enhancing Engineering With Nature features is being conducted in collaboration with USACE partners. The goal is to begin the restoration of James Island in the fall of 2025 in preparation to accept material once Poplar Island reaches capacity. Poplar Island has 22.7 mcy of remaining capacity and the next inflow is anticipated for January 2025.

Planning and preparation for the Seagirt Loop Modification project is ongoing as USACE awaits authorization. In conjunction with MPA, USACE has developed a project management plan and design agreement. The design agreement was executed in September 2024 with the first design phase beginning in October 2024. Preliminary engineering design activities are underway. The hydrographic surveys have been completed with the next step being soil sampling and soil bearings to assist in influencing planning. Planning activities related to the design documentation report for the 30% plan began

November 18, 2024, through which preliminary design drawings will be produced. Both the House of Representatives and Senate WRDA bills include Seagirt Loop Modification project for construction authorization.

5.0 DMMP Committee Reports

Adam Lindquist, CAC Chair

DMMP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Mr. Linquist stated that 2024 has been an impressively busy year. In October 2024 the Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore issued its Healthy Harbor Report Card which celebrates all the progress that has been made in improving water quality in the Baltimore Harbor in no small part because of mitigation funding from the POB. Additionally, the Mr. Trash Wheel project, thanks to the support of MPA, turned ten-years-old in 2024. The public plunge event hosted in Fells Point was also highlighted where about 150 people jumped into the Baltimore Harbor showing that improved water quality in the Baltimore Harbor now allows for periods when water-based recreation, including swimming, is deemed safe as it meets water quality standards through routine testing.

Similarly, 2024 was a busy year from the DMMP and the CAC. Community members have shown significant interest and focus on the DMMP in 2024 with increased attendance and dialogue at the CAC meetings. From the potential reopening of HMI to exploring another CAD pilot project, the focus from community members has noticeably increased. Appreciation was expressed to MPA for continuing to maintain and expanding its stakeholder engagement efforts where needed. As a member of the CAD Subcommittee, Mr. Lindquist witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by the need to explore new technologies, engage with regulators, and explain complex projects and processes to the public. It is important that MPA dedicates the time to work with stakeholders which is ever more challenging with the spread of misinformation over social media platforms.

Mr. Linquist implored MPA to remain transparent, to continue developing new engagement tools, and to stay steadfast in its commitment to stakeholder engagement even though it is often challenging. Specifically, there has been a lack of transparency around the criteria for CAD which has resulted in public confusion. MPA's mission critical work and significant infrastructure projects will require full stakeholder support as competition for state and federal resources will likely increase. The CAC is ready to assist in seeking public support and funding for MPA and DMMP projects as necessary. In reviewing the 2024 DMMP Annual Report, the intentional language to engage stakeholders that reflects the diversity of the communities adjacent to and impacted by the POB is well supported.

Mr. Lindquist stated commitment to ensuring that the public continues to be engaged in the dredged material management process which will keep the POB expanding, improving, and innovating thereby enabling Maryland to continue to thrive.

6.0 Comments from the DMMP Executive Committee

Committee Members

Secretary Wiedefeld welcomed questions and comments from the DMMP Executive Committee. Secretary Kurtz underscored the importance of MPA's impressive public outreach efforts and stated that many agencies can learn from the way in which MPA meaningfully engages with the public. Secretary McIlwain thanked MPA and USACE for continued support.

7.0 Adjourn

Secretary Wiedefeld expressed gratitude to presenters and DMMP Executive Committee members and adjourned the meeting.