



Maryland
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MDOT MARYLAND PORT ADMINISTRATION RENEWS COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

(BALTIMORE, MD) --- The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the MDOT Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) have renewed and expanded a voluntary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to strengthen environmental initiatives at the Helen Delich Bentley's state-owned, public marine terminals.

The agreement calls for a continued committed effort to reduce diesel and greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency at the Port. The pact extends the original MOU signed five years ago by the agencies and adds MEA as a new partner.

"As this agreement shows, Baltimore continues to be a leader among green ports globally and Maryland continues to be a leader among states pushing relentlessly for clean air, public health, and climate action," Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles said.

"The public and private partners at the Port of Baltimore show every day that environmental stewardship can and must go hand-in-hand with job expansion and economic growth," MDOT Secretary Greg Slater said. "Reduction of diesel emissions, creative reuse of dredged material and projects like the Howard Street Tunnel expansion – which will increase rail capacity and reduce truck fuel consumption – are elements of our environmental commitment supported by this MOU."

As part of the agreement, the participating agencies meet monthly to discuss relevant air quality objectives, share information and collaborate to seek federal funding for air quality enhancement projects. MDE and MEA will provide technical assistance and assist with identifying and applying for both state and federal grants.

"MEA is proud to help drive clean, resilient energy and economic growth for the state through critical port upgrades that will benefit generations of Marylanders," said MEA Director Dr. Mary Beth Tung.

The parties also agreed to enhance climate resiliency and reduce air emissions, furthering policy objectives of Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act against the threat that climate change poses to Maryland. The agreement aims to seek increased input from nearby underserved communities when evaluating projects and programs to implement.

"This MOU represents a strong commitment by the Maryland Port Administration to our environment," said MDOT MPA Executive Director William P. Doyle. "We pledge to continue working closely with our environmental, labor and private sector partners such as the trucking community and Ports America Chesapeake to further reduce pollutants and clean the air at our marine terminals, and to reuse dredged sediment from shipping channels to rebuild long-eroded islands, creating native habitat and preparing for possible impacts from climate change."

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The cooperative efforts outlined in the MOU directly advance the health and sustainability of the Port of Baltimore, a major economic engine for the state. Since 2008, the Port has received more than \$14 million in state and federal funds to improve air quality.

The Port's Dray Truck Replacement Program, initiated in 2012, has replaced more than 250 trucks with cleaner, modern vehicles with the help of federal and state grants such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA). Dray trucks are vehicles that move containerized cargo short distances to and from ports to distribution facilities and warehouses. In addition, about 100 pieces of diesel cargo-handling equipment such as forklifts, top loaders, locomotives and tugs have been replaced or retrofitted. These efforts have helped lessen air pollution emissions at the Port of Baltimore by 5,100 tons since 2008.

MDOT MPA has also been recognized for its creative efforts to restore and protect water quality using innovative stormwater restoration techniques, such as an innovative algal flow-way device that removes excess nutrients from Baltimore Harbor. MDOT MPA has also helped restore an eroded stream at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, constructed a shoreline at an Anne Arundel County school and partnered with a local nonprofit to plant 1,500 trees around Baltimore.

Coastal restoration is another focus of MDOT MPA. The agency's Dredged Material Management Program uses sediment dredged from shipping channels leading to the Port of Baltimore to restore wetlands and eroding islands. Recently, construction was completed on the expansion of Poplar Island near Talbot County, adding 575 acres and capacity for another 28 million cubic yards of sediment through 2032.

MDOT MPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are now working on pre-construction engineering and design for the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration, which will rebuild James and Barren islands near Dorchester County and eventually replace Poplar Island as the state's primary site receiving bay channel dredged sediment. The project will rebuild two barrier islands, creating habitat and providing much-needed shoreline protection in Dorchester County. Pending permits, restoration at Barren Island could begin in 2022 with James Island following in 2024.

The project to expand the 126-year-old Howard Street Tunnel in Baltimore, which could begin construction late this year, will allow for double-stacked container trains to and from the Port of Baltimore. The project will increase container capacity and business at the Port. Over 30 years, it will help avoid 1.2 billion truck vehicle miles traveled and reduce fuel consumption by an estimated 137 million gallons.

The Port of Baltimore generates about 15,300 direct jobs, with nearly 140,000 jobs overall linked to Port activities. The Port ranks first among the nation's ports for volume of autos and light trucks, roll on/roll off heavy farm and construction machinery, and imported gypsum. It ranks 11th among major U.S. ports for foreign cargo and 10th for total foreign cargo value.

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