



Hart-Miller Island

DREDGED MATERIAL PLACEMENT SITE

Quick Facts

- Located in the upper Chesapeake Bay, near the mouth of Back River in Baltimore County, Md.
- Working area of 1,140 acres
- Received Baltimore Harbor dredged material from 1984 to 2009
- Provided capacity for 100 million cubic yards of dredged material
- Provides important bird habitat and restored wetlands
- No negative effects on water quality
- Part of the Maryland state park system, receiving many visitors each year

Hart-Miller Island, located in the upper Chesapeake Bay, received material dredged from Baltimore Harbor shipping channels between 1984 and 2009. Originally, Hart-Miller Island was a chain of three islands that suffered from severe erosion. In 1970, port partners suggested using dredged material to restore the remnants of Hart Island and Miller Island to create more than 1,140 acres of habitat.

The project was the first of its kind in Maryland. It was especially challenging because the dredged material often came from contaminated sites in the Baltimore Harbor. Citizens, conservationists, and scientists sought assurance that the dike would not leak and harm fish, wildlife, or water quality. They also feared future commercial use of the island and shared concerns about noise, odor, and aesthetics.

To address these concerns, the Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee was formed in 1981. The committee has provided open dialogue with the communities surrounding the site and now oversees the conversion of the site to wildlife habitat and recreational use. Conditions on and around the island continue to be monitored to protect fish, wildlife, and water quality. No negative effects have been observed.

Hart-Miller Island is one of the first examples of the beneficial use of dredged material in the Chesapeake region. The project has restored and connected two eroding islands, and part of the site is open to the public as Hart-Miller Island State Park. In 2016, the south cell was added to the state park. Open seasonally and accessible only by private boat, the park includes eight miles of trails with breathtaking views of the Chesapeake Bay and a large pond. Bikes, paddleboards and kayaks can be rented on site.

A wide range of wildlife visits the island, including songbirds, owls, heron, deer, foxes, and muskrat. The Maryland Ornithological Society has observed 287 species of birds there, including a large number of waterfowl and migratory birds — at times creating the largest single concentration of waterfowl in the mid-Atlantic region.

For information, including public tours, email OutreachTours@menv.com or visit www.marylandports.com/greenport.

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