



Innovative & Beneficial Use

DREDGED MATERIAL AS A VALUABLE RENEWABLE RESOURCE

Quick Facts

- Approximately 4.7 million cubic yards (mcy) of sediment are dredged annually throughout the Bay, an amount that would fill the Ravens' stadium at least twice
- 1.15 mcy of sediment is dredged from the Baltimore Harbor channels each year
- The goal is to recover 500,000 cy of dredged material placement capacity annually
- Many options are available to safely use dredged material, including:
 - Roadway and construction materials
 - Manufactured topsoil
 - Land restoration
 - Landfill Cover
 - Restoration of eroded islands and wetlands
- MDE issued a Guidance Document for the innovative reuse and beneficial use of dredged material in August 2017

Dredging maintains safe passage for vessels making their way through the shipping channels that serve the Port of Baltimore, a key economic driver for waterborne commerce in Maryland. Removing sediment annually from the channels not only ensures the safety of our marine highway but also helps business at the Port of Baltimore continue to thrive.

Innovative Reuse is the recycling of dredged sediment in place of (or in combination with) other raw materials for manufacturing, construction and reclamation projects. Beneficial Use can benefit the environment by restoring wetlands and eroded shorelines and islands, with the potential to mitigate the effects of sea level rise. Innovative and beneficial use can spur innovation, benefit the environment, and contribute to the growth of Maryland's economy.

Currently, dredged sediment is transported to dredged material placement sites or used for beneficial habitat and ecosystem projects like the restoration of Poplar Island. All of these activities are permitted by environmental regulatory agencies, such as the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Years of testing and sampling data demonstrate no adverse impacts.

New Solutions Needed

Finding new placement capacity is a challenge in the Baltimore region. Property adjacent to the Port is densely populated and developed. New approaches to recovering capacity in existing placement sites and alternative management solutions are needed. Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) is actively exploring a variety of innovative solutions to recycle Harbor channel dredged sediment.

Making Innovative & Beneficial Use a Reality

MDOT MPA has set a long-term goal to recover 500,000 cy of dredged material placement capacity each year. MDE issued a Guidance Document and Technical Screening Criteria in August 2017 that enables opportunities for the successful reuse of dredged material in a variety of ways. In 2019, MDOT MPA utilized the Guidance Document to conduct two demonstration projects reusing dredged material as alternative daily cover at a landfill and as engineered fill at an MDOT MPA-owned site.

Close coordination with key partners ensures that future projects are safe to human health and the environment. Private sector, local governments, citizens and industry leaders continually provide important feedback, helping to promote the safe and economic use of dredged material.

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