



# Monitoring

FOR DREDGED MATERIAL PLACEMENT SITES

## Quick Facts

- State and federal permits, which set environmental standards, are required for all dredged material placement sites
- Compliance monitoring tracks both water quality and the effectiveness of environmental restoration projects
- The MDOT MPA conducts extensive voluntary monitoring beyond permit requirements
- Monitoring waters surrounding placement sites has found no adverse environmental impacts to date

Developing and operating a dredged material placement site in Maryland is a lengthy and complex process. State regulations regarding the placement of dredged material, combined with environmental permits required by the Maryland Department of the Environment and the US Army Corps of Engineers, generally lead to several years of planning prior to construction, as well as additional monitoring once the placement site is operating.

The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) conducts monitoring to ensure that placement sites comply with permits.

- **Discharge monitoring:** This addresses water that is released from the placement site. It measures acidity, alkalinity, total volatile suspended solids, turbidity, metals, nutrients, priority pollutants, and living resources. Permits determine the frequency of monitoring and reporting as well as discharge limits for many of these elements. Water cannot be released from the placement sites unless permit limits are met.
- **Mitigation monitoring:** Mitigation occurs when MDOT MPA offsets environmental impacts at the project site by conducting an environmental mitigation project elsewhere. Mitigation is often a requirement of constructing a new dredged material placement site. For example, the Masonville placement site enclosed water along the shoreline; MDOT MPA made environmental improvements in the area next to the placement site, known as Masonville Cove, to compensate for the loss of open water. MDOT MPA monitors mitigation projects such as the Masonville Cove restoration, tree plantings, wetland construction, trash interceptors, and reef and fish habitat to ensure successful environmental outcomes.
- **Habitat restoration:** Poplar Island is an example of restoring wildlife habitat using dredged material. Detailed monitoring of wetlands, wildlife, underwater grasses, sediment quality, and other factors is critical. Restoration strategies are adjusted as the project evolves.

MDOT MPA also conducts extensive voluntary monitoring beyond permit requirements. For example, MDOT MPA has been monitoring the waters surrounding the Hart-Miller Island placement site for more than 35 years, where no adverse environmental effects have been noted to date. Similar monitoring has been ongoing at the Cox Creek and Masonville placement sites since they began operations. Monitoring reports on all MDOT MPA dredging activities are available by contacting [greenport@marylandports.com](mailto:greenport@marylandports.com).

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