

May/June ECO Port Newsletter

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May/June 2021

20th Anniversary of DMMA

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Maryland's Dredged Material Management Act (DMMA), a state law borne of conflict turned to collaboration that has guided the successful management of dredged material in ways that are good for our economy, our communities, and our environment.

What led to the DMMA?

In the 1990s, the Port was seeking sites to accommodate future dredged material placement needs. Several sites under consideration including "Site 104" near Kent Island and "Site 170" at the mouth of the Patapsco River met stiff opposition. Strong disagreement among stakeholders about the credibility of information caused public opinion to shift, which created the political dynamic needed to reset the way in which the Port made decisions. This dynamic led to the DMMA, which for the first time established a hierarchy of preferred options for managing dredged material and refreshed the collaborative process through which policy recommendations are made for Maryland's Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP).

The new process included an Executive Committee, prescribed by law through Senate Bill 830, which includes key members of the governor's cabinet and federal partners. The Executive Committee was charged with making policy recommendations to Maryland's Governor regarding the long-term management of navigation channel dredged material in Maryland.

How have things changed over the last 20 years?

Port leaders learned a lot about being more transparent and inclusive with stakeholders and ensured that citizen input to the decision making process was meaningful. Twenty years later, the DMMP Committee structure remains critical to Maryland's DMMP and the success of the Port of Baltimore. Learn more at maryland-dmmp.com/.



Masonville Provides Safe Harbor for Wild Indigo

In a previously unused greenhouse at [Masonville Cove](#), hundreds of wild indigo plants are under the care of Ela-Sita Carpenter, an urban wildlife biologist based primarily at Masonville Cove for the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#). The plants will soon serve as a butterfly nursery for frosted elfin, small, brown butterflies that only lay their eggs on wild indigo or wild lupine. The larvae must feed on one of these two plants to survive and the pine barren habitats that support these plants are increasingly rare.

“The idea is to grow these plants in the greenhouse until they are sturdy enough to withstand deer browsing — a year or two — and then relocate them to land where frosted elfin are known to occur,” said Carpenter.

Read more about this exciting project in an article featured on [Medium.com](#).



Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently researching frosted elfin to determine if the butterfly needs federal protection.

Photo Credit: Judy Gallagher



Photo: This previously unused greenhouse at Masonville Cove offers a safe place to grow wild indigo, protecting them from deer and other wildlife, until the plants are hardy enough to become a butterfly nursery.

Photo Credit: Ela Carpenter

Head Start Terrapins Released on Poplar Island

Despite school building closures and setbacks caused by the pandemic, the partnership program that gives terrapins a “head start” in classrooms before their release on [Poplar Island](#) was able to carry on thanks to its very dedicated partners.

On May 24, a small group was able to release eight terrapin that had been nurtured by the [Maryland Environmental Service](#) (MES), [National Aquarium](#), [Anne Arundel County Public School’s Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center](#), and [Prince George’s County Public School’s William S. Schmidt Center](#).

Throughout this unusual school year, more than 100 classes participated in virtual programing with an affiliate partner and enjoyed a live stream to watch the terrapins grow.

Enjoy this [vlog](#) featuring Dr. Willem Roosenburg, the [Ohio University](#) professor who leads the terrapin research at Poplar Island.



Photo: During their time in the head start program, the turtles grow to the size of a 3- to 5-year-old wild terrapin, increasing their odds of survival once released in the wild. Pictured here are two terrapins born on Poplar Island the same year and time of year. The one on the left remained in the wild on Poplar Island, while the one on the right is a head start terrapin.

Photo Credit: MES

Maryland Port Administration Reels in the Grand Prize BUBBA

After first reeling in the “Most Innovative Stormwater Permit Implementation” category award, MDOT MPA went on to the next round and won the prestigious grand prize Best Urban BMP in the Bay Award from the [Chesapeake Stormwater Network](#). The award, also known as the BUBBA, recognizes the best urban stormwater practices and programs in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.



Exemplary project examples include an algal flow-way on the Dundalk Marine Terminal, a new living shoreline of 5,000 native plants installed at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center on the Severn River, a large underground sand filter that absorbs and treats the runoff from nearly 14 acres at the Fairfield Marine Terminal, urban tree planting projects in Baltimore City, and stormwater pond and stream restoration projects installed at the [Maryland Zoo](#) in Baltimore.

Interagency Voluntary Agreement Strengthens Commitment to Environmental Initiatives

In April, MPA signed an updated [Interagency Voluntary Agreement](#) along with MDOT, (MDE, and the [Maryland Energy Administration](#) (MEA). Originally signed five years ago, the renewed agreement adds MEA and will continue to strengthen air quality initiatives at the Helen Delich Bentley's state-owned, public marine terminals.

"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."

"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."

Read about many of the accomplishments achieved since the original agreement was signed [here](#).



COMMUNITY

BPA's Virtual Career Expo a Big Success

In the spring, the [Baltimore Port Alliance](#) (BPA) hosted a Virtual Hiring & Career Expo. This event marked the second annual BPA hiring expo and brought together 29 employers and more than 275 registered job-seekers.

As co-chairs of the BPA Education and Outreach Committee, Katrina Jones of MDOT MPA and Scott Senko of [NYK Line](#) worked with a small team to coordinate the event. "Working with our community, education, and workforce development partners, we recognized the need to create a pipeline to connect job seekers with transferable skills and experience to industry employers in maritime, transportation, and logistics," said Jones.

The Port is an economic engine for the State of Maryland, generating about 15,300 direct jobs and nearly 140,000 jobs that are linked to Port activities. Opportunities exist at all levels, from high school senior to recent college graduate to seasoned professional.



*Photo: The BPA supports the maritime industry and the Port community by connecting applicants and employers to build a stable workforce pipeline and promote meaningful career options.
Photo Credit: Courtesy Photo*

South Baltimore Youth Turn Trash to Treasure

[South Baltimore Community Land Trust's](#) (SBCLT) youth leaders teamed up with the Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA) to find creative ways to reuse dunnage - cargo packing material from ocean-going vessels - keeping it out of the landfill and giving it a second life.

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Facilitated by Rupert Denney, general manager of [C. Steinweg](#) (Baltimore) Inc, and Bill Richardson, MDOT MPA General Manager of Safety, Environment & Risk Management (SERM), co-chairs of the BPA's Environmental Committee, wood dunnage was donated by C. Steinweg Group and steel blocking and bracing frames by [BWC Terminals](#).

The dunnage found new life in projects such as benches, neighborhood art, and in a recycling station built by students from [Benjamin Franklin High School at Masonville Cove](#).

"Thank you to the Baltimore Port Alliance, C. Steinweg Group, and BWC Terminals for supporting the vision of our youth leaders," said Meleny Thomas, executive director, SBCLT.



Top Photo: Unloading some of the donated wood. **Bottom Photo:** Meleny Thomas, executive director, SBCLT and Rupert Denney, co-chair of the Baltimore Port Alliance Environmental Committee, check out the recycling station built by students from Benjamin Franklin High School at Masonville Cove.

Photo Credit: South Baltimore Community Land Trust (Note: All photos were taken prior to the Covid-19 pandemic)

OUTREACH

Spotlight Series Webinar: Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration

The second virtual webinar in the MDOT MPA Spotlight Series took place on May 19, 2021. The webinar focused on Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration, a future dredged material placement site that will restore and expand beneficial island habitat in the Chesapeake. Moderated by Kristen Keene, MDOT MPA, speakers included Holly Miller, MDOT MPA; Trevor Cyran, USACE, Angie Sowers, USACE; and Chris Guy, USFWS.

If you missed the webinar, you can view it in its entirety on MDOT MPA's You Tube Channel, [here](#). You can also view the first webinar in the series, [Advancing Coastal Resilience through Dredged Material Management](#), which took place on February 24, 2021. Moderated by Jill Lemke, MDOT MPA, the webinar featured Ram Mohan, [Anchor QEA](#); David Curson, [Audubon Maryland-DC](#); and Kristen Keene, MDOT MPA.

Mark your calendar for the next webinar which will focus on MDOT MPA's environmental initiatives It is scheduled for September 21, 2021, from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Our meetings are open to the public. Since these meetings are virtual, if you are not on a meeting distribution list and would like to attend, please visit maryland-dmmp.com for details and access information.

Masonville Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting - June 15th at 5:30PM

Virtual

or questions or to confirm attendance please visit maryland-dmmp.com.

DMMP Management Committee Meeting - June 23rd at 10:00AM

Virtual

or questions or to confirm attendance please visit maryland-dmmp.com.

Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee Meeting - July 14th at 10:00AM

Virtual

or questions or to confirm attendance please visit maryland-dmmp.com.

Hart-Miller Citizens Oversight Committee Meeting - July 20th at 6:30PM

Virtual

For questions or to confirm attendance please visit maryland-dmmp.com.

DMMP Executive Committee Meeting - July 27th at 10:00AM

Virtual

For questions or to confirm attendance please visit maryland-dmmp.com.

[MDOT MPA Website](#)

[Port of Baltimore Magazine](#)

[Environment Website](#)

ECO Port Newsletter is the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration's bi-monthly update of projects and programs that help the agency contribute to a thriving economy, environmental stewardship, and community partnerships. As always, we thank the many private sector businesses, government leaders, communities, and individual citizens who have helped make these achievements a reality.



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