

## Dredged Material Creates A Thriving Environment For Wildlife

The Port of Baltimore is in a unique position geographically — we are the western-most port on the eastern seaboard, a full 150 miles up the Chesapeake Bay from the Atlantic Ocean.

Our position offers specific advantages — we are the closest port to America's heartland and as such, provide goods from all over the world to a third of our nation's population. We also serve hundreds of U.S. companies, exporting their products to foreign markets.

Moving the largest vessels requiring 50-foot shipping channels up the Bay to our terminals requires a continuous program of dredging. The placement of dredged materials has been an issue frequently misunderstood and even more frequently debated. One point is clear, however — the Port of Baltimore has done a tremendous job of turning a potential negative into something extraordinarily positive, as demonstrated by the success of our Hart-Miller Island Restoration Project.

A feature on the South Cell on Hart-Miller Island in this issue details the wonderful results we have achieved by creating a 300-acre habitat for wildlife, along with an adjacent recreational destination for boaters, campers, swimmers and picnickers.

Also of note is the Coastal America Partnership Award bestowed last year on the MPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and our other partners for the restoration of Poplar Island, a Chesapeake Bay island located off the shores of Talbot County. Coastal America is a public/private alliance established in 1991 by President George H.W. Bush to promote the stewardship of our nation's coastal areas.

Dredged material is a valuable resource that can be put to many constructive uses. Engineers and

environmental scientists from numerous state and federal agencies have studied and monitored the composition of dredged material and have consistently found it safe to use for the various projects employed by the MPA for placement.

In addition to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, many other agencies have served as partners with us on these projects, including the Maryland Environmental Service, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. In fact, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is a member of the Executive Committee that oversees Maryland's Dredged Material Management Program. And the National Aquarium in Baltimore is using dredged material placement sites as educational venues for community learning.

If you need further convincing, arrange a visit to either Hart-Miller Island or Poplar Island through our offices. The herons, bald eagles, ospreys, diamondback terrapins, red fox and dozens of other wild life species thriving in these environments are proof positive of the success of our efforts.

  
James J. White  
*Executive Director*



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