

Eastern Shore Navigation Partnership Meeting

Welcome

- Wanda Thornton (Accomack County) provided opening remarks
- COL Olsen, US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
 - o Provided state of the Corps as affected by Sequestration (and potential furloughs)
 - No more earmarks granted on projects, Corps must “do more with less”
 - Projects are funded based on priority and with regard to all of the USACE Districts’ projects
 - Encourage stakeholders to obtain Congressional support “early and often”
 - Stressed that partnerships with other localities and local governments is key for project development
- CPT Little, US Coast Guard (USCG)
 - o Accolades to the Corps for the recent Thimble Shoal emergency project work
 - o Brief overview of the partnership with Corps and NOAA
 - o Echoed state of the Corps concerns
- Mike Darrow (USACE) provided an overview of the meeting

Funding – Mike Anderson, USACE

- President’s Budget: \$4.7 billion with a backlog of \$60 billion (which includes capability level aka- “If we had the funds this is what we could do”)
 - o Does not consider a long-term sustainable plan
 - o FY13 funding is 5-10% less than FY12
 - o Only 5% is allocated to low-use projects, or projects with less than million tons of commerce, and only 63 funded throughout the nation
 - o President’s FY13 budget in Virginia is \$23.6 million with \$529,000 for shallow draft navigation
 - Norfolk District has approximately 65 low-use projects in its inventory and kept “shelf-ready” in case funding occurs
 - o No appropriations for FY13 have been discussed in Congress
 - Stakeholders should still express to Congressmen what needs are present despite lack of earmarks
- Moved from “piece of the pie” to performance based budgeting (tonnage and use)
- Stakeholders should incorporate innovative funding solutions
 - o Examples – Homeowner’s associations fund raising, taxes, private funding
- Request for aid and partnership in completing the 6 Sandy Supplemental projects that are funded as efficiently as possible

- No set schedule or priorities for completion as some projects are in different stages of permitting, placement site identification, etc.

Updates – Doug Stamper, USACE

- Reviewed Federal channels and conditions handout
- Reviewed all high priority Eastern Shore projects and introduced the project managers

USCG – John Walters

- 5th District, Waterways Management Branch
 - Perform ice breaking when necessary
 - Coastal buoy tender – work with Corps to maintain
 - Construction/structure tender (draws 5') preferable operation with 6+ feet
 - Mark slews, deep water, and non-federally maintained with federal navigation
- Hazards to navigation in WCV:
 - Many buoys are moored but not floating (laying on side) with the sinker off-set creating hazards by not properly marking the channel and becoming an obstruction in the water
 - Plan to maintain and possibly add markers east to west (or shore to ocean) on a case-by-case basis
 - Also plan to remove or turn over ownership of north to south markers (or markers along the shore/ocean)
 - Concerns of what to remove and where:
 - USCG recognizes there are non-traditional uses for the markers
 - USCG will remove the piling and hazard to navigation for public safety or transfer marker ownership and maintenance to non-profit organizations or local communities
 - Grants available for communities seeking to obtain DoD/Federal Government property
 - Removal of aids to navigation is not a result of sequestration
 - Degradation of markers has been a concern for the past 10-15 years as the channels have shoaled and cut off deeper draft USCG maintenance vessel access to the markers

Current – Betty Grey-Waring, USACE

- Interactive discussion on current conditions of WCV promoting users to identify potential problem areas (I.e. – Channels in need of dredging, oyster concerns, beneficial use of dredged material, etc.)
 - Dredging concerns mentioned include:
 - Quinby Channel
 - Oyster Channel

- Lewis Creek (N end, between boards 4-6)
- Wachapreague Channel
- Parker Creek
- Southern portion of Hog Creek
- Gargathy Inlet (south)
- North and Sloop Channel
- Bradford Bay
- Southern end of Bogues Bay Channel, adjacent to Cat's Creek Bridge and Daymarker #74 (USCG vessels cannot pass)
- Greenbackville
- Quinby Inlet Entrance
- Some general concerns, suggestions, and topics discussed include:
 - "Money, placement area(s), and environmental permits are key to a project's development."
 - Beneficial Use
 - Desire for more beneficial use of dredged material and less overboard placement
 - Opportunities everywhere - Jet-spray material to build marshes in Bogues Bay, placed material in Quinby and Wachapreague for marshes, methods to maintain erosion control, involve businesses using dredged material
 - More identification and development of long-term placement areas
 - Surveys
 - Can surveys be performed to locate deep water?
 - How many condition surveys can be done in one year?
 - Try to rotate every 2-3 years
 - Access current surveys on the internet ESDS <http://rci.nao.usace.army.mil/ESDS/Disclaimer.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2Fesds%2FDefault.aspx>
 - "Time of Year Restrictions"
 - Birds and oyster activities create restrictions on dredging and placement of material due to environmental concerns like nesting or active culture areas
 - Prioritize by worst areas to cover by budget (aka most bang for the buck)
 - Need public input to determine where those are (*see interactive discussion list for problem areas*)
 - Choose one or two areas and understand in detail how the dredging will affect the system as a whole
 - Reduce dredging requirement

- Realign the channels to include deeper areas
- Dredge alternate “routes” from shore to ocean to overall reduce the amount of dredging required
 - Example - Town of Wachapreague could have ocean access via Bradford Bay Channel, Millstone Creek, and Upper Horseshoe Bend
- Areas where a Federal channel does not exist may be potential for USCG to pay Corps to dredge the area

Keys – Mike Darrow, USACE

- Handout: Funding alternatives summary
 - Emphasized combining funding sources
- Handout: WCV
 - Emphasized need
 - Project control depths versus current state
 - Projects funded versus projects in existence
 - Echoed a project needs a placement site, funding, and permits to move forward to construction
- Prioritize the needs
 - Need to know from stakeholders; not preferred to be chosen by Corps
 - Stakeholders need a unified voice
 - Example - Wachapreague involved USCG, governor, NASA-Wallops, community, etc. all said the need was high priority
 - Current funding based on tonnage
 - Hard to capture the data when multiple fisherman (fish, crabs, oysters, etc.) – help Corps capture that to use in justification for funding
 - Focus on value to the nation as well as tonnage
 - Use Congress/Senators to push towards getting additional funding and create urgency and support for projects
 - Use and find alternative funding sources since low-use projects are not typically funded unless harbor of refuge, sustenance, or matters of national security
 - Be proactive, not reactive

Delmarva – Stewart Hall/Becky Robinson

- “Delmarva Water Transport Committee” (DWTC)
 - Non-profit organization set up to be a unified voice
 - Direct relationships with USACE, USCG, local and federal government agencies, shippers, and fisherman
 - Main goal: Lobby to change the federal funding metrics from performance based to value to the nation and economic impact

- Examples of economic impact – No action alternative for eastern shore dredging means using western shore resources instead which negatively impacts product cost and area economics
 - I.e. Fuel and gas prices on East Coast are directly impacted by the transport that occurs on the WCV waterways
- Encourages users to look into alternative means of applying tonnage to improve value for navigation
 - Examples included – Cape Charles does not have a lot of tonnage but huge economic impacts, calculate weight of passengers on local fishing charters, seafood hauls, and commercial aggregate.
- Encourage creating a coalition for the Eastern Shore projects means a greater overall value to the nation upon requesting the project's completion
- Wicomico is “current” project (3 years until dredge construction)
- Circle of problems: Pocomoke River example
 - Cut funding to Pocomoke
 - Shippers use half tonnage
 - Reduction in tonnage reduces/removes funding even further
- Contact information
 - **DWTC21804@hotmail.com**
 - **DWTOnline.com**
 - April 12 – Annual Membership Luncheon (Federal, state, and local representatives present)
- Beneficial data included on the project may not always help but will never hurt the project and will assist the Corps in telling the story for why the project is needed

Closing

- Due-outs:
 - DWTC links
 - **Email:** DWTC21804@hotmail.com
 - **Website:** www.DWTOnline.com
 - ESDS link
 - <http://rci.nao.usace.army.mil/ESDS/Disclaimer.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2Fesds%2FDefault.aspx>
 - Slides from presentations
 - Final notes from Partnership meeting