

Civil Works Review Board (CWRB)  
Project Summary

Project Reviewed: Poplar Island, MD

Date of CWRB: 22 September 2005

CWRB Members: MG Griffin (DCG); Gary Loew (representing DCW); Tom Waters (Planning CoP); Don Basham (Engineering and Construction CoP); and Jerry Barnes (LRD RIT Leader).

Key Participants:

HQUSACE: CWRB Members, Ed Theriot (NAD RIT Leader), Office of Water Project Review (Colosimo, Einarsen, Warren, Fitzsimmons), Policy and Policy Compliance Division (Leef), Office of Counsel (Bayert) & Groska (NAD RIT).

NAD: Col Kiosich (VTC), Joe Vietri, Pete Blum,

NAB: LTC Hand, Robert Pace, Jim Jones, Jeff McKee, Scott Johnson & Mark Mendelsohn.

ASACW: Terry Breyman, Mark McKeivitt

OMB: None

Sponsor: Frank Hamons and Ron Burns (Maryland Port Administration)

OWPR Recommendation: Approval of the report for release for State and Agency review.

CWRB Decision Made: Approval of release of the report for State and Agency review and filing in the Federal Register.

Vote: Unanimous.

Key Issues/Questions Raised by the CWRB (in no particular order):

1. The district was asked about the position of Congressman Gilchrest relative to the project. It was explained that while Congressman Gilchrest has not taken an official position with regards to the project, he has not argued against it either. District indicated that they believed he supported Poplar Island but if he endorsed it, it would be like endorsing the dredging activity which he in general does not support.
2. The basis for the 75-25 cost-sharing was questioned. It was explained that the proposed cost sharing is consistent with policy as it is a beneficial use of dredged material.
3. It was not clear if the costs for dredging were included in the project costs. It was explained that only the incremental costs beyond what it would normally cost to transport and place-dredged material in open water were included in the project costs. Incremental costs borne to transport the dredged material to Poplar Island will come

out of the CG account while costs for maintenance channel dredging will continue to come out of the individual projects accounts of the O&M account.

4. District was asked about the public support of the project and they indicated general support has been received. The district did acknowledge that the public is concerned that the Corps will expand Poplar Island again in the future – the concern centers around the valuable Bay Bottom lands in the project area. The district explained that they had no plans to expand the Poplar Island again at another point in the future and that they recognized the concerns of the public.
5. ASACW wondered why the dredged materials from the C&D canal were being deposited in Poplar Island. The district indicated that only the dredged material from the approach channels to the C&D canal were planned for placement at Poplar Island.
6. ASACW also asked about whether there was a longer-term plan to meet the dredged material placement needs. The district explained that a DMMP had recently been developed and was undergoing higher authority review.

Other Issues of Note:

1. Some discussion about what an Island Community Unit was and what it represented was undertaken. It was agreed that while the metric may be technically valid, it would not mean much to the public nor those in the Administration. As a result, the district would be well advised to make sure that the report includes narrative that explains the project benefits in a way that others could come to the same conclusions. The use of weights in the decision-making processes needs to be better explained, as well.
2. Marrying of the CG and O&M appropriations may be problematic in the current performance based budgeting system and will require careful attention by the district.
3. MG Griffin asked whether a Center of Expertise for the beneficial use of dredged material existed. The general response was that it crossed many functional lines and in fact no one center existed. MG Griffin indicated that a Center of Expertise needed to be designated or created to facilitate an organized approach and development of guidance.

Attachments: Powerpoint handouts (including District Engineer, Division Engineer, Sponsor and Office of Water Project Review briefs); Project Summary; DE Transmittal Letter; Draft Chief of Engineers Report and MPA Statement of Support.