

## **Summary of Questions Received During the April 1, 2020**

### **Conowingo Dredging Pilot Project Public Webinar**

#### **Q1: Will there be water quality monitoring during the dredging? How will this work?**

Q1: This project will operate under a Non-Tidal Wetland Permit that will be issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). MES will abide by all water quality monitoring specified within this permit.

#### **Q2: How many dump trucks of sediment are expected?**

A2: Approximately 70 truckloads are expected during the pilot project.

#### **Q3: Will you be dredging at the Peach Bottom Marina to support the dredging equipment?**

A3: At this time, additional dredging is not anticipated during the pilot project. If there is an issue with water depth for the equipment, it will be brought as close to shore as possible and long reach equipment will be utilized to offload sediment.

#### **Q4: Have there been noise and traffic studies done for impacts of the staging area activities?**

A4: Noise studies have not been conducted; however, the project must abide by all construction noise ordinances. Primary activities are anticipated to occur during daylight hours (generally 7 AM – 6 PM).

#### **Q5: This for the dredging part of the pilot project. What about coring part?**

A: This Webinar is being held to comply with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) requirements for the Non-Project Specific Use Application. Although this project has two components, FERC is focused on the dredging portion, therefore this Webinar specifically focuses on the dredging pilot project and impacts to the local boat ramps. There is a sediment characterization component of the project, which will not be regulated by FERC. Per MDE's request, the scope of the original dredging pilot project was expanded to include this work.

#### **Q6: Is there a way to print this deck?**

A6: Yes, this presentation will be made available on MDE's website.

#### **Q7: What is the anticipated outcome of this dredging?**

A7: The purpose of the pilot project is not only to look at the feasibility and how dredging will be done, but to examine potential innovative uses of material behind the dam.

**Q8: When is the proposed start date?**

A8: Once all necessary permits and approvals are received, the project may begin. MES expects work to begin during late fall to early winter 2020. An update will be given once the permits are received.

**Q9: Why is the dredging being performed at the MD/PA line vs directly behind the dam where we know the sediment is an issue?**

A9: Site selection was based on coordination held with Maryland Geological Survey regarding representative sediment types. The dredging area selected is also: distanced from the dam, thus removing potential impact to the dam's operations and increasing safety; is in relatively shallow water; and was in close proximity to the original staging area selected.

**Q10: Peach Bottom Road Boat Launch is free. The Marina charges for the use of their launch. Will fees be waived or subsidized while the boat launch is not available for public use?**

A10: MES will coordinate with necessary parties to answer this question. (At this time there are no additional updates as coordination is still occurring.)

**Q11: Will the sediment be dried out at the Marina or shipped wet?**

A11: The material dredged from the Susquehanna River will be primarily dewatered on a barge. Once placed at the staging area, additional dewatering will occur. The material will be transported slightly wet.

**Q12: Has Exelon already granted approval to access the reservoir for this work or is the timeline contingent upon their approval (in addition to the FERC/MDE permits)?**

A12: Exelon has not issued a Right of Entry for the pilot project at this time. It is anticipated that Right of Entry for the dredging project will be provided by Exelon after the Non-Project Specific Use is approved by FERC.

**Q13: If the project purpose is for feasibility of beneficial reuse, and the project area is unique in water depth and grain size (sand not mud), how useful is this project?**

A13: The site was selected due to known conditions at the area including sediment type, water depth, and proximity to the original anticipated staging area. Although there are areas with a higher silt content, sediment in the dredging footprint is representative of a portion of sediments within the Conowingo basin. It is known that reuse is possible for different sediment types; the reuse process is being evaluated through this project. By utilizing material that we know can be reused, it gives us options to test the process without being too restrictive.

**Q14: Where will the sediment be moved to once it is dewatered?**

A14: The material will be transferred by truck to a Maryland stockpiling and storage facility until the end use is determined.

**Q15: Do you anticipate any change in the water flow as a result of the dredging?**

A15: Changes in the river's water flow are not expected as a result of the dredging.

**Q16: If the sediment can't be reused, will the dredging still occur behind the dam?**

A16: Currently, the focus is on the pilot project. It is anticipated, that although the dredged material from the pilot project will most likely not be used for beneficial use (shoreline restoration etc.), it will qualify for uses such as construction fill or a blended product.

**Q17: During the dredging, will the lake water quality be monitored to ensure it is safe for swimmers?**

A17: As discussed in Q1, MES will abide by all water quality monitoring specified within the Non-Tidal Wetland Permit issued by MDE. At this time, water quality issues are not anticipated.

**Q18: Do you anticipate using Polyacrylamide Flocculants for turbidity control during the dredging operation?**

A18: Flocculants will not be utilized to control turbidity during the pilot project. Turbidity will primarily be controlled through use of a turbidity curtain.

**Q19: Where will results of the study be posted?**

A19: All reports and associated data will be submitted to MDE. It is assumed that MDE will make the related reports publicly available.

**Q20: Are these comments being used as official FERC comments?**

A20: Comments received during this Webinar and the public commenting period will be supplied to FERC in the Non-Project Specific Use Application.

**Q21: Once the pilot is complete, what is the anticipated timeframe to move forward with the full dredging project?**

A21: Currently, there is only an active pilot project. A larger project may be discussed once results from the pilot project are available and reviewed.

**Q22: Can someone get back to BCCA if there will be water quality monitoring during the dredging process? What does the proposal say?**

A22: As specified in Q1, water quality monitoring will be performed if required under the Non-Tidal Wetlands Permit. The permit application is on public notice and can also be found on MDE's website. Those who are interested may submit comments on the permit application through April 16, 2020.

**Q23: Is this the same permit that was provided for review last year?**

A23: The permit that is most likely being referenced was related to the previous larger 25,000 cubic yard dredging project that had the staging area located in Harford County. This Non-Tidal Wetlands Permit application references the reduced dredging amount of 1,000 cubic yards and the smaller staging area in Pennsylvania.

**Q24: Why did the staging area change to PA from the original site?**

A24: The original project consisted of a larger dredging volume (25,000 cubic yards) and a significantly larger staging area. When the new Request for Proposals was released, it gave the bidders freedom to choose to choose an alternate staging area. The awarded contractor chose a much smaller staging area for the reduced dredging volume (now 1,000 cubic yards) that had less environmental and logistical concerns.

**Q25: Why was the scope of the pilot project downsized so significantly?**

A25: The bids received on the original proposal were not found to be economically feasible. The new Request for Proposals gave the bidders freedom to choose a dredging project, a sediment characterization study, or both, but capped bids at \$3 million. This resulted in the awarded contractor reducing the amount of dredging.

**Q26: Why is the dredging so far north of the dam? Wouldn't it better closer?**

A26: As stated in Q9, the dredging area was selected because: it has a representative sediment type, it reduces safety and engineering concerns caused by working in close proximity to the dam, it has a relatively shallow water depth, and was in close proximity to the original staging area selected.

**Q27: Was the project advertised for construction?**

A27: The pilot project was already advertised. Northgate Dutra Joint Venture was awarded the contract through a competitive bid process.

**Q28: Do you have all necessary permits?**

A28: At this time, MES does not have all required permits. The project will not occur until permits are issued.