



**FROM THE DESK OF JAMIE B. MADEJA, ESQ.,
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**JAMIE B. MADEJA'S PARTICIPATION AT DREDGING LISTENING SEMINAR WITH
BAKER ADMINISTRATION**

On behalf of MMTA, I attended a dredging listening seminar last week sponsored by the Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development and the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs. All attendees were asked to speak to the officials present about what priorities the Baker Administration should apply in funding dredging projects between now and January and into the decades to come. In advocating for the business of boating, I emphasized the dire need for dredging in order to help the boating community thrive and the hundreds of thousands of boaters contributing to the economy with jobs and spending relying on dredging.

It was clear that the primary focus for regulators and officials between now and January, when much money has to be spent, will be which geographic areas are represented by legislators or senior municipal officials with influence and who have worked on dredging projects which are either fully permitted or close to it, and which have local matching money ready. Only funding for municipal or regional governments will be funded, no private recipients. The officials present for the Baker Administration were focused on sincerely addressing the long deferred need to dredge all over the Commonwealth.

MMTA provided some suggestions to the officials which were well received as ideas for future planning, after January when most current state funds will have been allocated. First, MMTA presented the idea of low cost loan programs with an extended pay-back term for anyone dredging Commonwealth tidelands or even private tidelands on which facilities open to the public were located. Another point brought up by MMTA was the need for the Commonwealth to permit more disposal locations, including possibly Confined Aquatic Disposal cells, whether they were built by the private or public sectors.

The officials had no interest in funding testing of areas needing dredging, as they desire higher financial participation from municipalities and hope the municipalities will themselves pay for testing. This doesn't happen on tidelands owned by the Commonwealth and associated with recreational boating facilities, but unfortunately, regulators are not interested in funding testing at this time.

The Baker Administration is planning to spend 400% more this year on dredging than last year (no exact figure given) and they are very interested in seeing economic analyses of why an area needs to be dredged and, especially, the maintenance plan going forward and also partnership and stakeholder inclusion to minimize conflict and increase combined funding possibilities. The purchase of regional dredges was also raised.

Any MMTA member interested in seeing dredging get funded on the waterways should be in close touch with legislators and local municipal officials now and in the future, as they will be the Baker Administration's primary contacts.



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