



April/May 2011

The Dredging *Link*

REI Tours Poplar Island *Port Sustainability Projects*

Business leaders from the national outdoor gear and apparel retailer REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.) traveled in April from its eastern and western region distribution centers for a tour of sustainability projects at the Port of Baltimore.

Most REI products intended for its eastern region have been arriving through Baltimore since 2007. With a strong environmental ethic for its operations, product stewardship, and shipping processes, REI has continually sought information about the port's stewardship and sustainability programs.

"We decided to invite REI for a comprehensive view of our efforts," said Joe Greco, deputy director of marketing for the Maryland Port Administration (MPA).

The two-day tour provided a whirlwind showcase of MPA's sustainability projects. Scott Searcy, international logistics manager for REI, was impressed.

"The port's stewardship impacts go far beyond the clean-up and restoration of the Chesapeake, but also include how the port can deeply impact local communities as well," Searcy said. "It is very impressive work and strategy on all accounts."

The guests learned about the beneficial use of dredged material in the best way possible: a close-up tour of Poplar Island, where dredged material has transformed eroded island fragments into a haven for wildlife. Citizens joined the group to explain how the dredging program helps to address the long-term challenges of land reclamation and shoreline buffers.

Continues on next page



Executives from REI participated in the same field experiences offered to students during their recent visit to Poplar Island.

Harbor Development | MPA World Trade Center
401 E. Pratt St. | Baltimore, MD 21202 | 1-800-638-7519



Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/PortOfBalt



REI Tours Poplar Island
(continued from front)

A harbor tour aboard the McAllister Tug included a water view of the Cox Creek dredged material placement site, where a demonstration project for the innovative reuse of dredged material is also underway. Community outreach was showcased with a stop at the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center, which opened through MPA sponsorship in 2010.

Site tours were paired with presentations on the MPA's effort to reduce pollution throughout its operations. For example, the MPA is working to reduce polluted stormwater runoff, support renewable energy, and emphasize environmental compliance within the port community.

Greco said that REI managers remained pleased with their decision to route East Coast cargo through Baltimore. More than that, they hope to use Baltimore as a model.

"We hope to highlight MPA's leadership and progress on sustainability efforts with our industry peers for future consideration," Searcy said.

Clean-Up for a Neglected Community Gem
(continued from right)

The BPA is a nonprofit group of business representatives that promotes the success and importance of maritime commerce in Baltimore. The BPA environmental committee emphasizes the port's role in environmental stewardship. "We try to do a couple of community clean-ups every year, to help out and engage with the community," said volunteer Dan Spack.

Their stats for the clean-up were impressive: 150 trash bags full of litter, 25 tires, a couch and recliner, two car doors, a staircase, carpet, two mattresses, three bicycles, a floor buffing machine, televisions, an air conditioner, metal rods, and more.

"I spoke with numerous volunteers who would like to join in the efforts to have future clean-ups here," said Missy Bishop, community initiatives manager of the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Coalition. "We were thrilled to hear all of the excitement about our park and what its future could be."

Clean-Up for a Neglected Community Gem

Partners in the Masonville Cove restoration effort extended their reach inland when they joined scores of community volunteers in an energetic clean-up at Farring Baybrook Park.

Seventy-five people volunteered for the event, with additional support from the city of Baltimore, Maryland Environmental Service, and the Maryland Conservation Corp.

The National Aquarium and Living Classrooms Foundation organized the work, and the Baybrook community coalition recruited volunteers.

Together, they pulled approximately 6.2 tons of trash and debris from the northwest city park during a two-day effort in early April.



Members and friends of the Port's maritime community volunteered to assist with the clean up effort at Farring Baybrook Park.



They found large amounts of trash blown in by the wind, as well as dumped items like computers, car doors, a floor buffing machine, and wooden staircase.

They filled approximately eight dump-trucks with invasive vines and downed trees, opening better access to the stream corridor and nearby paths.

"Farring Baybrook Park is one of the highest areas around the city, so you have a great view of the harbor from this gigantic park with big open spaces," said Laura Bankey, conservation manager at the National Aquarium. "But there had been no concerted efforts to clean up the park for a long time."

The Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA) drew approximately twenty volunteers to the event, many of whom work on the BPA environmental committee.

Continued on left

Announcement

Volunteers are needed to plant native grasses in a newly created marsh at Poplar Island. The National Aquarium is partnering with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Maryland Port Administration, Maryland Environmental Service and Ports America Chesapeake to involve community volunteers in the restoration of Poplar Island. Friday, June 10th is designated as Port of Baltimore day for this wetland creation project and all of our friends, colleagues, and families are invited to participate.

You must register with the National Aquarium at:

http://www.aqua.org/conservationevents_poplarisland.html. Space is limited so sign up now.