

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 249

(Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Transportation)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Environment - Membership and Duties of Cox Creek Citizens Oversight
Committee - Alterations**

This departmental bill modifies the duties and membership of the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland Department of Transportation has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law:

Committee Duties

The Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee was established by Chapter 83 of 2001 to (1) monitor the redeposit of Anne Arundel County dredged material and other dredged material in the Cox Creek Area and (2) hear and dispose of complaints lodged by individuals affected by the redeposit of Anne Arundel County dredged material and other dredged material in the Cox Creek area.

The bill modifies the statutory duties of the committee to instead require it to (1) monitor the management of dredged material at the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility; (2) provide input and feedback to the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) regarding the management of dredged material at the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility; and (3) make recommendations on the potential impacts of management activity on nearby communities and natural resources.

Under current law, the committee must also appoint a member from the committee to serve as a liaison to the Innovative Use Advisory Committee. The bill modifies this requirement to reflect the current name of the committee (the Innovative Reuse Committee).

Committee Membership

Under current law, the Governor must appoint the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee members. The bill makes the following changes to the composition of the committee:

- instead of two members of the North County Land Trust, the committee must include two members of the land trust that holds the conservation easement of the Cox Creek Forested Conservation Easement Area;
- instead of one delegate to the Greater Pasadena Council who represents a waterfront community, the committee must include one individual who represents a waterfront community in northern Anne Arundel County;
- instead of one member of the Anne Arundel County Watermen's Association, the committee must include one individual who represents recreational birding in Anne Arundel County;
- the committee no longer includes one member of the Maryland Saltwater Sport Fishermen's Association; and
- instead of one member of the South Baltimore Business Alliance, the committee must include one member of the Baltimore Industrial Group.

Background: MPA purchased what is now the [Cox Creek site](#) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1997 and opened it for the placement of dredged material beginning in 2005. MPA recently acquired additional property near Cox Creek (specifically the former Kennecott Copper Refinery), which MPA advises is a critical step in advancing its Innovative Reuse Program, a key component of the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP). According to MPA, the foundation of DMMP begins with seven oversight and advisory committees, including the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee. Among other things, the committee provides recommendations to MPA regarding the operation of the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility. For example, as a result of a recommendation from the committee, MPA is developing a nature

trail adjacent to Cox Creek to facilitate learning and recreation in the Swan Creek wetland area.

Although MPA continues to work with the committee, MPA advises that the statute governing the committee is outdated. For example, MPA reports that current law references numerous defunct organizations. As a result, MPA advises that the committee has had difficulty obtaining a quorum for meetings and decision-making requirements. MPA further advises that the need for a diverse and active oversight committee is critical to continue to provide input and recommendations for DMMP. By updating the statute governing the committee, MPA advises that the bill is intended to allow for more coordination and collaboration with key stakeholders active in the area.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 16, 2024
rh/lgc Revised - Clarification - January 16, 2024

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Environment - Membership and Duties of Cox Creek Citizens
Oversight Committee – Alterations

BILL NUMBER: SB0249

PREPARED BY: Maryland Port Administration

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL
BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL
BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS