

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 19, 2014

Chairman Plummer called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

Approval for the November 19, 2014 Meeting Agenda

- Director Peditto requested time to discuss the March 18th Wildlife Advisory Commission meeting.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gregor moved to accept the November 19th Wildlife Advisory Commission (WAC) Meeting Agenda with the requested addition.
 2. Commissioner Compton seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from August 20, 2014 Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gregor moved to approve the August 20th meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Rodney seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Presentation of 2013 Conservationist of the Year Award - Presentation to Mr. Jerry Harris by Director Paul Peditto and Larry Hindman, Waterfowl Project Leader.

- Director Peditto acknowledged that this award is on behalf of not only Wildlife and Heritage Service but also from the Wildlife Advisory Commission. Director Peditto thanked the members of the Commission for their participation.
- Mr. Hindman outlined Mr. Harris' many accomplishments in support of his receiving the award.
[ATTACHMENT A]
 1. Mr. Harris has been a leader in regional waterfowl conservation for more than six decades. Mr. Hindman presented the 2013 Conservationist of the Year Award to Mr. Jerry Harris.
- Mr. Harris provided a summary of his efforts with waterfowl habitat on his farms along with helping other property owners learn and improve waterfowl habitat. Mr. Harris thanked the Commission and staff for the award.
- Chairman Plummer expressed that some hunters like Mr. Harris who are conservationists not only take from the resource but also give back to the resource.

Game Program Update – Presentation given by Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader.

- Mr. Harvey provided a presentation on Deal Island WMA. **[ATTACHMENT B]**
- The Commission received a copy of the presentation entitled “Adapting to Change at the Deal Island WMA Impoundment”. **[ATTACHMENT C]**
- Bill Harvey and Hutch Walbridge received the Employee of the Year Award for their work on improving habitat and managing water levels at the Deal Island WMA Impoundment.
- Questions and Answers Section.
 1. Commissioner Boyles-Griffin asked when staff will see the results of the herbicide work on Deal Island Impoundment.
 - a. The management of phragmites is a difficult task. There are so many seeds on site that staff have to focus on the control of phragmites instead of eradicating it, because it is almost impossible to eradicate phragmites.
 2. Commissioner Michael asked what the Wildlife and Heritage Service's goal is for Deal Island WMA Impoundment.

- a. The goal is to return Deal Island WMA Impoundment to its prior status as a functional and thriving waterfowl impoundment with superb waterfowl habitat, fish and plant habitat and wildlife-dependent recreation.
3. Commissioner Rodney asked if the herbicide kills any fish and/or wildlife in that area.
 - a. The herbicide that was used is the safest kind for aquatic environments and wetlands.
- Chairman Plummer thanked Bill Harvey for the Deal Island WMA Impoundment Update.

Break

Information and Education Program Update – Presentation given by Patricia Handy, Information and Education Manager.

- Patricia Handy, Information and Education Manager presented the Information and Education Program Update in a Power Point Presentation. [ATTACHMENT D]
- Ms. Handy recognized Kerry Wixted, Natural Resources Biologist, for her many outreach accomplishments, including training 849 educators about Project Wild.
- Archery in the Schools Program is possible with the assistance of the Maryland Bowhunter's Society. This provides archery training from 4th to 12th grades. Crisfield students went to the 2014 National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) Tournament.
- The Wildlife and Heritage Service social media sites have grown 190% from last year.
- The Hunting and Shooting Sports Program does not replace the Hunter Safety Course. This program provides the “next step” for novice hunters and shooters so that they will feel comfortable moving forward in the shooting and hunting sports as a result of their experience in the workshop.
- Information and Education Program Workshops are posted on the DNR website and the DNR events calendar.
- Discussion ensued about the availability of the hunter safety course during the hunting season.
 1. Director Peditto added that the Natural Resources Police, Safety Education Program received over 3000 requests for a field day for the Hunter Safety Course in the last two months. Director Peditto mentioned that WHS does not manage the Hunter Safety Course and that NRP receives the grant money to manage this effort.
 2. Commissioner Compton mentioned that he has observed in his Hunter Safety Courses that the age group is thirteen and younger in the classroom setting, very few adults. Most of the adults are taking the online classes.
 3. Director Peditto added that Patricia Handy just completed a survey among our staff as to who are not certified hunter education instructors to try to get them included in the list. WHS does not get funding for this. NRP receives the funding for the safety courses.

Maryland Farm Bureau Update - Presentation given by Matt Tefteau, Assistant Director of Government Relations

- Mr. Tefteau provided a summary update in the Maryland Farm Bureau – November 19, 2014. [ATTACHMENT E]
- Mr. Tefteau mentioned that Pete Jayne, Associate Director and Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader will be attending the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in December.
- Maryland Farm Bureau worked with Maryland Environmental Service to implement tire drop-offs in several counties in Maryland. There was a press release with Maryland Department of Environment, Maryland Environmental Services, and Maryland Farm Bureau which announced that seven million pounds of farm tires that were collected.
- MFB thanked Director Peditto and Associate Director Jayne for organizing the Deer Stakeholders meeting in October.

1. The MFB recommended four items: weapon of choice for DMP, expanding the hunting seasons, expanding the sharp shooter program for the farmers, and commercializing the sale of venison.
- Chairman Plummer asked Mr. Tefteau about when the farmers are speaking about using these tools for a balanced herd, what is the farmers' description of a balanced herd. Chairman Plummer added that we have a biological standpoint of a balance herd.
 1. Mr. Tefteau responded that there is a region by region answer to that. Some may want zero damage, others maybe more. Mr. Tefteau indicated that he does not have an answer to that question.
 2. Commissioner Fratz mentioned that he has learned to live with it. Commissioner Fratz commented that he could not accept that for a while, but he has learned to do so. Commissioner Fratz added, of course this is during a time period when Western Maryland had more damage than the Eastern Shore.
 3. Chairman Plummer expressed that the concept of owning a business and there is an "act of god" that impacts my business; there is insurance for that. Farmers have insurance for "act of god" and the farmers have the crop damage permits. Chairman Plummer outlined that we have given the farmers so much...how much more can we give to farmers to reduce the herd – we cannot get to a zero deer herd. Chairman Plummer would like to know the acceptable number from the farmers for a balance herd that takes it beyond the science definition of a balanced herd.
 4. Commissioner Michael mentioned that there is more deer in Region B than in Region A. There is no controversy in Region A as there is in Region B with the farmers.
 5. Associate Director Jayne mentioned that WHS recognized that Maryland's deer herd is not uniform. There are some landowners who have managed their local deer herd very well. WHS also recognized that landowners accept different degrees of damage from the deer herd; it is a cultural view. Associate Director Jayne highlighted that WHS has estimated that Maryland has around 227,000 deer statewide. Associate Director Jayne also pointed out it is a challenge to manage what people may tolerate as a balanced herd culturally and one based on science. It is a risk to pick a number because of the various landscapes that Maryland has across the state.
 6. Commissioner Gulbrandsen mentioned that the farmer has control over the lease agreements, which can outline terms – the farmer has the opportunity to offset the loss or mitigating by encouraging hunting.
 7. Director Peditto mentioned that many farmers only want people that they know to hunt their lands and these same farmers do not take as many deer that they can but, these farmers want more tools. Director Peditto pointed out that WHS cannot fix the part about getting farmers to allow more people on their property to take deer to reduce the herd.
 8. Discussion ensued about farmers and managing the deer herd scenarios.
 9. Commissioner Fratz presented final comment that DNR has worked really hard to find unique ways to help the agricultural community.

Old Business

- Deer Stakeholders Meeting Discussion - Associate Director Jayne handed out a summary of the Deer Stakeholders Meeting along with the attendance roster. **[ATTACHMENT F]**
 1. There was good attendance at the October 8th Deer Stakeholders Meeting.
 2. Staff received good input.
 3. Staff also heard that there is a need for more outreach from Game Management. There is a need for a better understanding of the deer management permit system, particularly, landowners' liability along with renewal of leases.

4. Comments were received about opening the Firearms Season sooner.
5. Comments were received about selecting the more productive Sundays to strike a balance.
6. Comments were received about some of the DNR lands which are not hunter accessible.
7. Staff agreed to review the Deer Management Permit and Sharp Shooter Permit process. Comments were received about the commercial sale of venison. Staff agreed to have conversations about this topic. There is no sale for wild venison in this Country.
 - a. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked - how cost effective is it for a hunter to kill a deer and find a buyer for the venison?
 - b. Commissioner Gulbrandsen pointed out that in Maryland small scale livestock farming goes through a cooperative processor so it may be relative easy to incorporate.
 - c. Mr. Tefteau mentioned that MFB thinks this topic is worth discussing.
 - d. Director Peditto indicated that staff members have done some research. There are very few processors of venison in Maryland. FHFH is up to \$70.00 a deer for processing hunter-donated deer into basic ground venison. This is based on an average 60 to 70 pound deer. With that in mind, the cost has to be worth the time and money of the hunter when considering the cost to process, fuel costs to hunt and kill deer, ammunition and firearms, etc; and only certified processors of meat for general public consumption would be eligible, not the smaller 'road side' or venison donation processors.
 - e. Commissioner Boyles Griffin outlined that her constituents both non-hunters and hunters are not big fans of commercial sale of venison.
 - f. Director Peditto added that this is a discussion for economics and not biology. This is where staff will need some help.
 - g. Commissioner Gulbrandsen commented that Mr. Tefteau would have access to some of the top research on this topic, which is basically agricultural.
8. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked about a discussion related to landowners who enter conservation easements potentially be required to allow hunting in order to get a conservation tax benefit.
 - a. Associate Director Jayne recalled a discussion about this. Staff will add more information as part of the property outreach. If someone enters in a conservation easement, Associate Director Jayne does not foresee staff requiring hunting, but staff may provide information and benefits of hunting.
 - b. Commissioner Michael mentioned that Forest Stewardship and Forest Management Programs have tax benefits, so incorporating deer management could be an incentive for tax benefits.
 - c. Director Peditto added this would be difficult to enforce. Director Peditto mentioned that Pennsylvania goes through this with Pennsylvania Crop Damage Permit holders. They are required to be available for public hunting to get bonus deer management permits. This works for Pennsylvania because most of those landowners are open to allowing the public on their property to manage deer.
 - d. Commissioner Gulbrandsen indicated that a lot of these easements are prioritized based on Maryland Department of Planning research. The individuals that are putting together critical areas could basically prioritize wildlife management areas.
 - e. Director Peditto explained that WHS has a catalog of areas that guide staff with simple acquisitions or easement protection. Green infrastructure mapping that staff use and it is available to the public. WHS staff communicated to the foresters who are working with landowners that perceive to have abundant deer populations that would limit forest succession – make it clear to these landowners that they must have deer management as a tool as part of the suite of options.
9. Question and Answer Section:

- a. Chairman Plummer asked are there contractors that remove roadkill deer and, if so, where are deer disposed. Director Peditto responded that some of the deer end up in the landfills. Now, if it is a roadkill that is on a public road then who ever manages that road will pick up the roadkill; otherwise, a person will have to pay a Deer Salvage Permit Holder to come get it.
10. Sunday hunting options and local Sunday hunting bills discussion ensued.
- a. Chairman Plummer highlighted that the Commission can reach out to different interest groups; such as the Maryland Horse Council and the Maryland Hunting Coalition to draft a universal Statewide Sunday hunting bill.
 - b. Chairman Plummer agreed to have a conversation with the Maryland Hunting Coalition and the waterfowl community along with have a discussion with Commissioner Michael about presenting a compromise that both sides could live with.
 - c. Commissioner Michael insisted that it is not the role of the horse council to reach out to the hunters that the hunters need to come to them at this point.

New Business

- The March 18th Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting will be a Western Maryland field day. Please contact Ms. Tracey Spencer if you need accommodations. The Commission should keep in mind that the Commission will get a week or so notice for this event, due to elements that may impact the site visit.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 P.M.

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room; Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

Members:	L. Compton, G. Fratz, T. Gregor, S. Boyles Griffin, E. Gulbrandsen, J. Michael, J. Plummer, C. Rodney, and B. Wojton
Absent:	
Guest:	M. Tefteau, J. Harris
Staff:	P. Handy, B. Harvey, L. Hindman, P. Jayne, P. Peditto, and T. Spencer

**WILDLIFE & HERITAGE SERVICE**

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April 30, 2014

Ms. Karina Stonesifer
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife and Heritage Service
Tawes State Office Building
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Karina:

It is indeed my pleasure to nominate Mr. Jerry Harris for consideration for the Department's Conservationist of the Year award.

Jerry has been a leader in waterfowl conservation for more than six decades. In 1962, he started the first Ducks Unlimited (DU) Chapter at the University of California at Berkley. Jerry has been a DU sponsor for 39 years and is a Grand Slam Life Sponsor and Platinum Legacy Sponsor. Jerry currently is a member of Ducks Unlimited President's Council, DU's Development and Conservation Program Committees. Jerry also gives an appreciable amount of his time to serving on the Board of Directors of Ducks Unlimited and Waterfowl Chesapeake, a Maryland-based non-profit whose mission is to create, restore and conserve waterfowl habitat in the Chesapeake Bay Region. Together they help draw awareness to protecting area wetlands. He served as a member of the Delta Waterfowl Foundation Board from 2009 through 2012. Jerry is also a member of the Dorchester DU Committee and Maryland Waterfowl Association.

Jerry owns and manages three farms in southern Dorchester County where the focus is to provide high quality habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl. The areas include a mixture of impoundments and associated uplands. Jerry has owned Mallard Haven River Farm at the head of the Honga River for nearly 20 years and has transformed it from an open pasture to an ideal stopover site for thousands of mallards, green-winged teal, pintails and other waterfowl migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. When he purchased the farm in the late 1990s, the farm was little more than an open pasture with a ditch down the center. Initially, he battled saltwater intrusion and high-tide floods of the Chesapeake Bay. His solution involved closing off the connection between the ditch and the Bay and creating a freshwater storage area that can now hold up to 6.5 million gallons of water used to enhance water levels and waterfowl foods to meet the dietary needs of waterfowl in adjacent impoundments. With financial assistance from the State of Maryland, Ducks Unlimited, and North American Wetland Conservation Act grants, he built berms to create a series of separate water impoundments for use by waterfowl across 80 acres of the 230-acre farm.

Recently Jerry has been incorporating moist soil management of several shallow-water impoundments on the three farms he manages in Dorchester County; all three farms are enrolled in conservation easements. Moist soils management is good for the wildlife and the farmer: it cuts

fertilizer use, and mechanical tilling is only needed about once every five years.

In 2013, Jerry organized and hosted a meeting of local landowners and State and private waterfowl managers to initiate a network of fact sharing of best management practices for improving wetlands and managed impoundments for wintering and migratory ducks and other wetland dependent wildlife. As a follow-up in 2014, he hosted the first DU Field Experience Event in Maryland. The event brought together over 60 property owners from Eastern Shore counties with the purpose of learning and sharing experiences to improving waterfowl habitats.

Today, waterfowl abundance has increased in the wetlands of southern Dorchester and other areas of the Eastern Shore because of the leadership, stewardship, and tireless efforts of Jerry Harris. As you can see from this brief summary of accomplishments, Jerry has made significant contributions to the conservation of wildlife in Maryland and is deserving of the recognition as Conservationist of the Year.

Sincerely,

Larry Hindman
Waterfowl Project Manager

Nominated by:

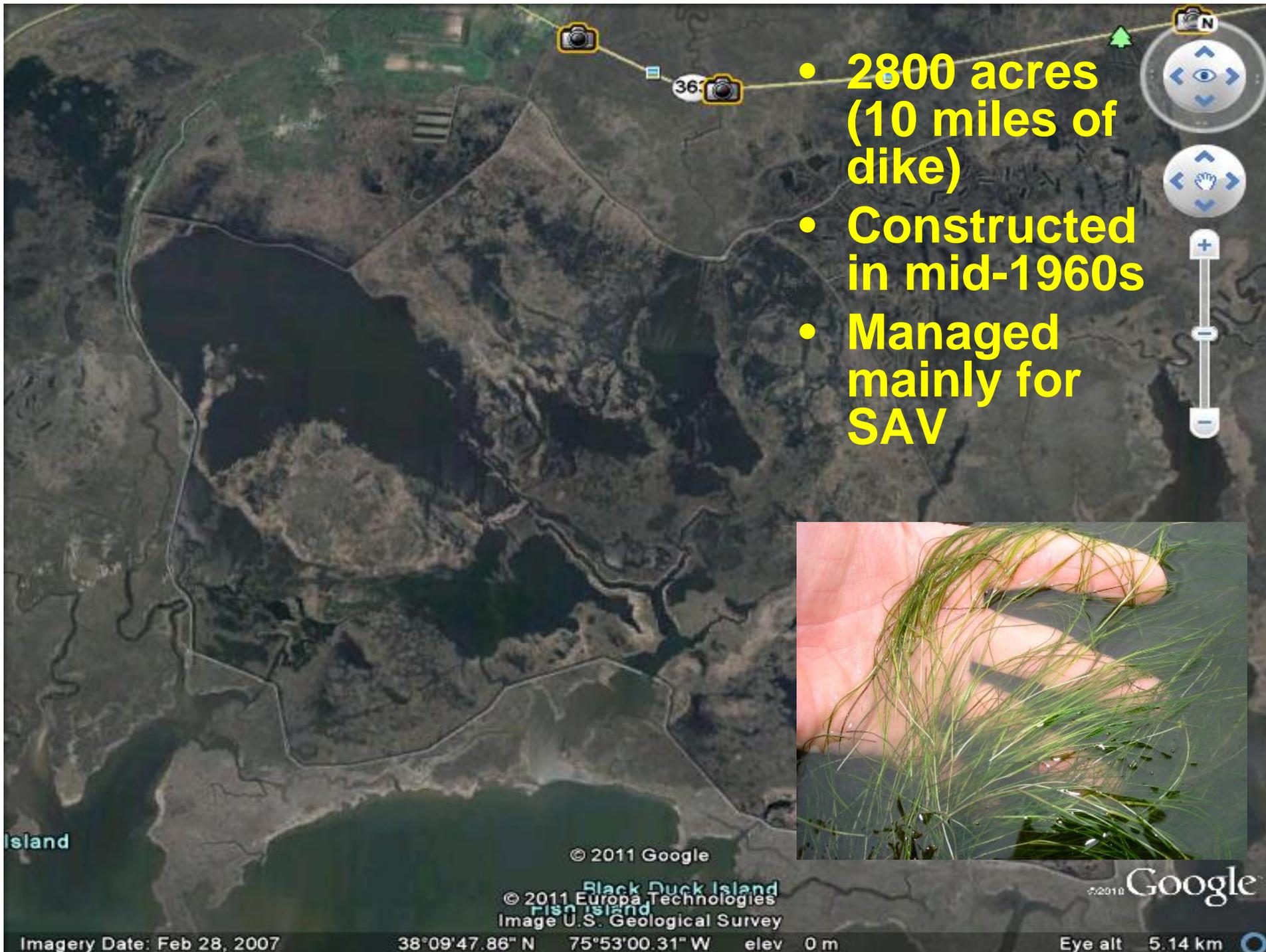
Larry Hindman, CWB®
Waterfowl Project Leader
Maryland DNR
Wildlife and Heritage Service
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Cambridge, MD 21613
lhindman@dnr.state.md.us

ATTACHMENT B

Deal Island WMA Impoundment Management



SCOTT HOOPY 2005



- 2800 acres (10 miles of dike)
- Constructed in mid-1960s
- Managed mainly for SAV



Island

© 2011 Google

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Image U.S. Geological Survey

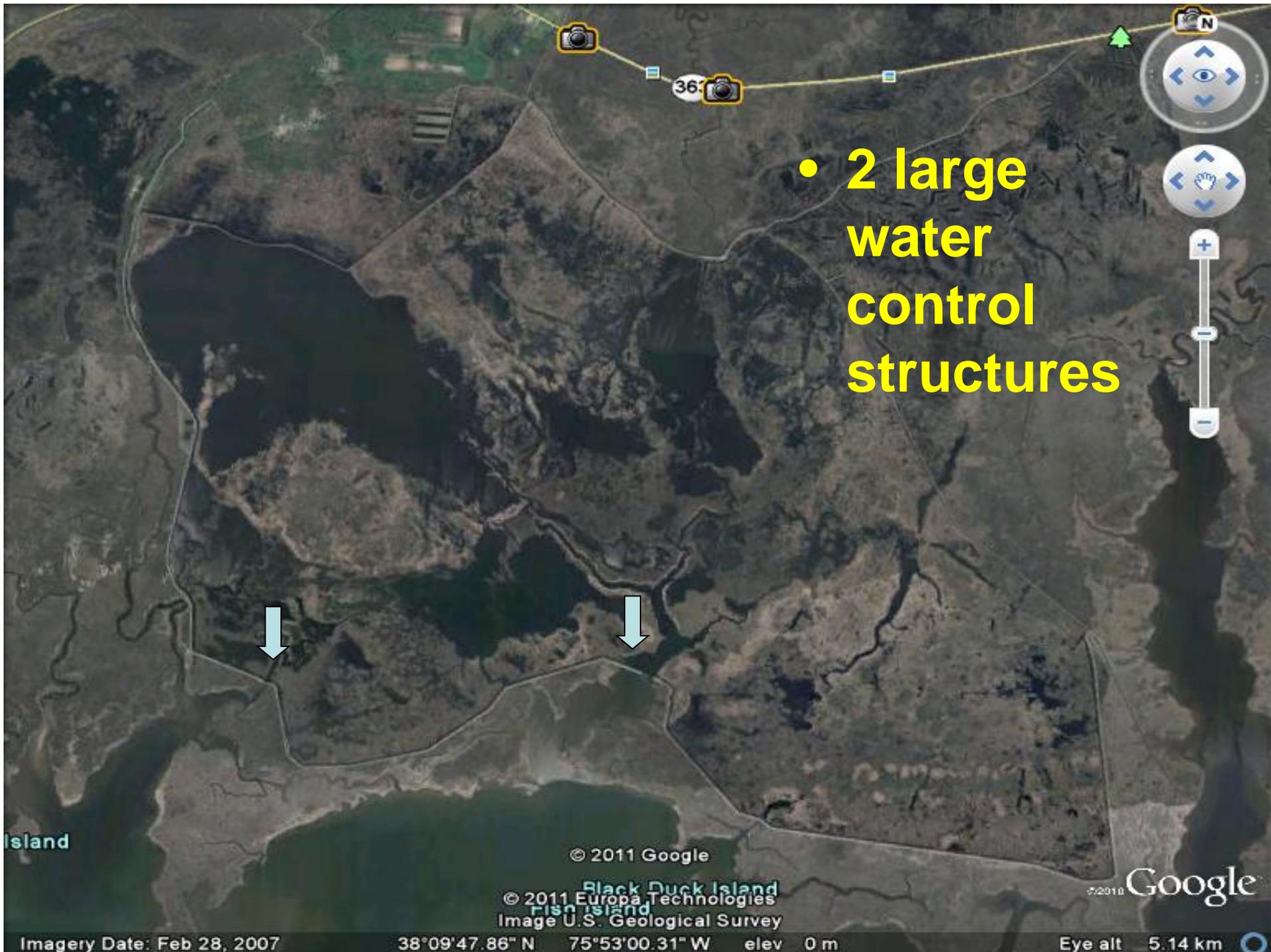
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Imagery Date: Feb 28, 2007

38°09'47.86" N 75°53'00.31" W elev 0 m

Eye alt 5.14 km





- 2 large water control structures



Island

© 2011 Google

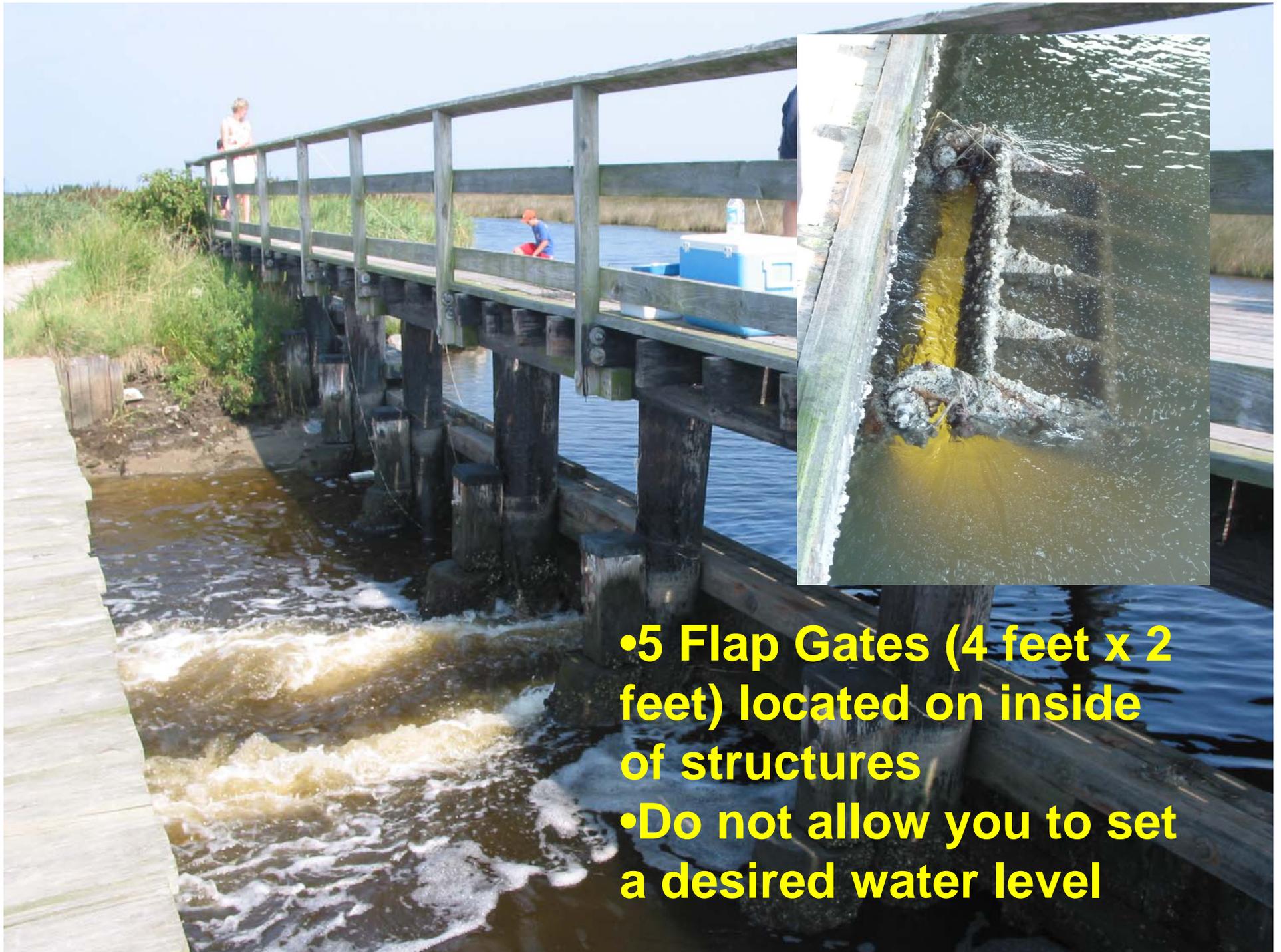
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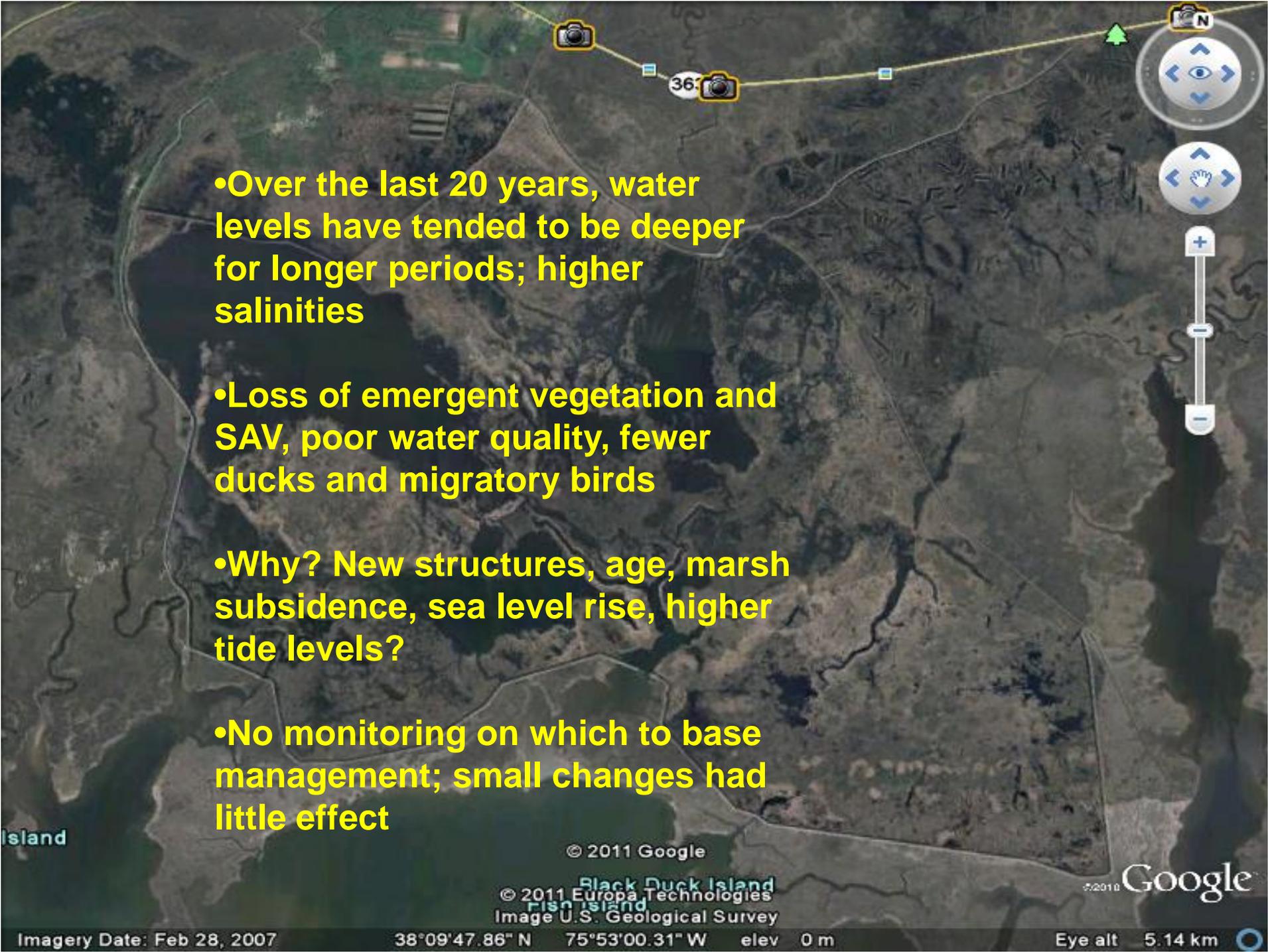
Imagery Date: Feb 28, 2007

38°09'47.86" N 75°53'00.31" W elev 0 m

Eye alt 5.14 km



- 5 Flap Gates (4 feet x 2 feet) located on inside of structures
- Do not allow you to set a desired water level



•Over the last 20 years, water levels have tended to be deeper for longer periods; higher salinities

•Loss of emergent vegetation and SAV, poor water quality, fewer ducks and migratory birds

•Why? New structures, age, marsh subsidence, sea level rise, higher tide levels?

•No monitoring on which to base management; small changes had little effect

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Image U.S. Geological Survey

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Imagery Date: Feb 28, 2007

38°09'47.86" N 75°53'00.31" W elev 0 m

Eye alt 5.14 km

Monitoring

- Water levels
- Salinity
- Emergent Vegetation
- SAV
- Water quality



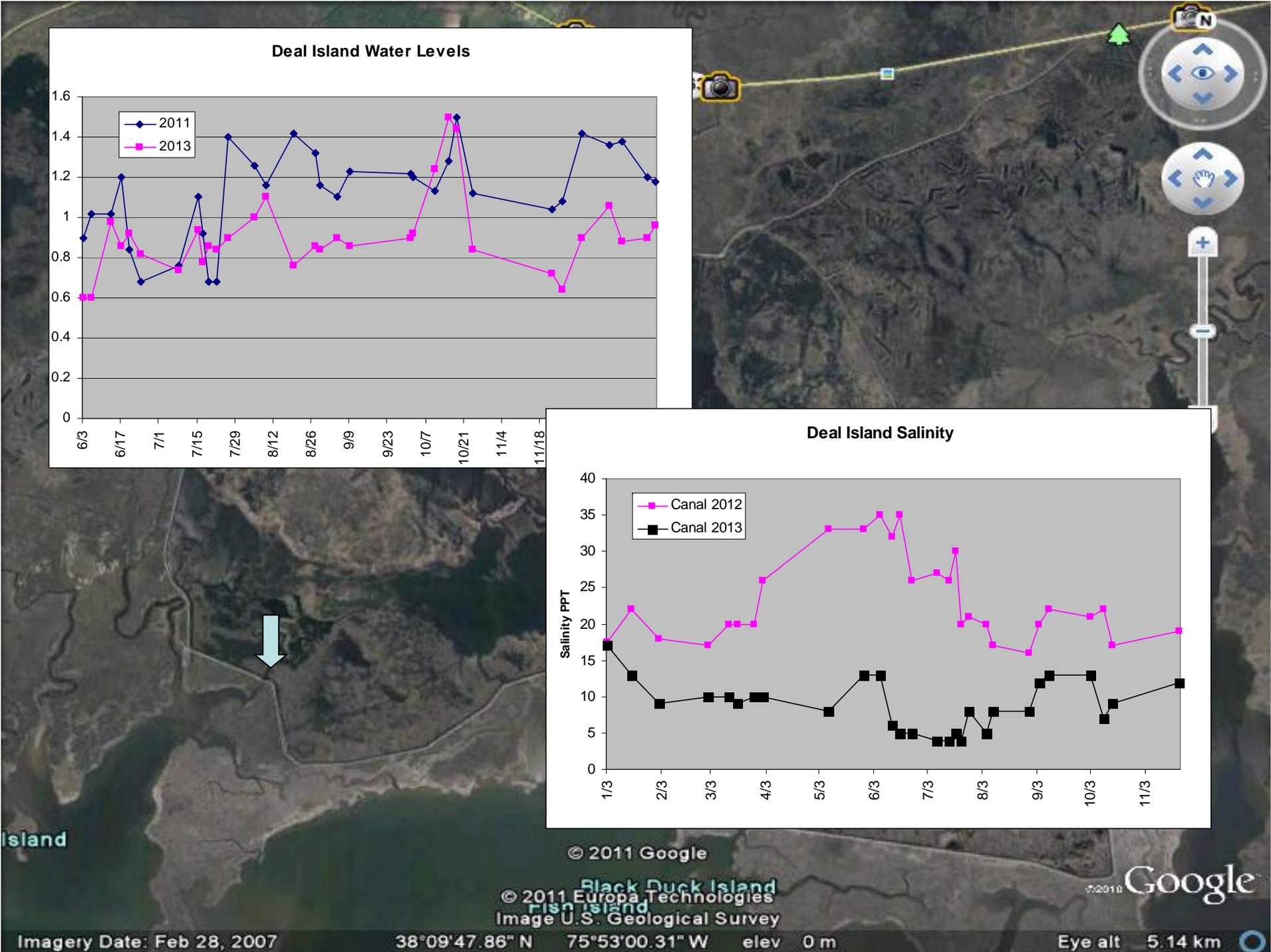
NAWCA Small Project Grant

Partners

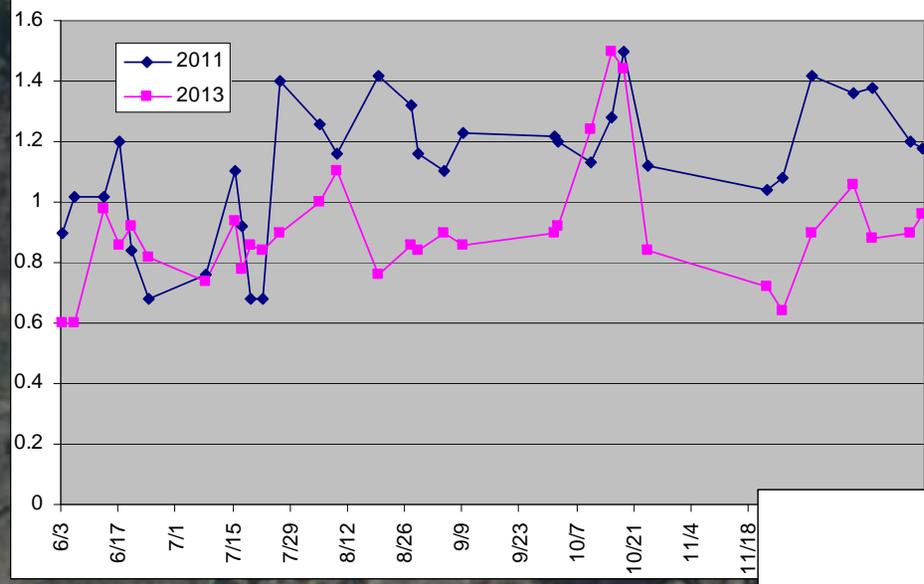
- DU
 - MD Waterfowler's Assoc.
 - Agri-Drain Inc.
 - Estuarine Research Reserve
- Grant total \$66,400
 - Project total \$185,000
 - Elevation survey
 - 4 water control structures
 - Phragmites control
 - Install stainless flap gates
 - Re-vegetate marsh along Big Water



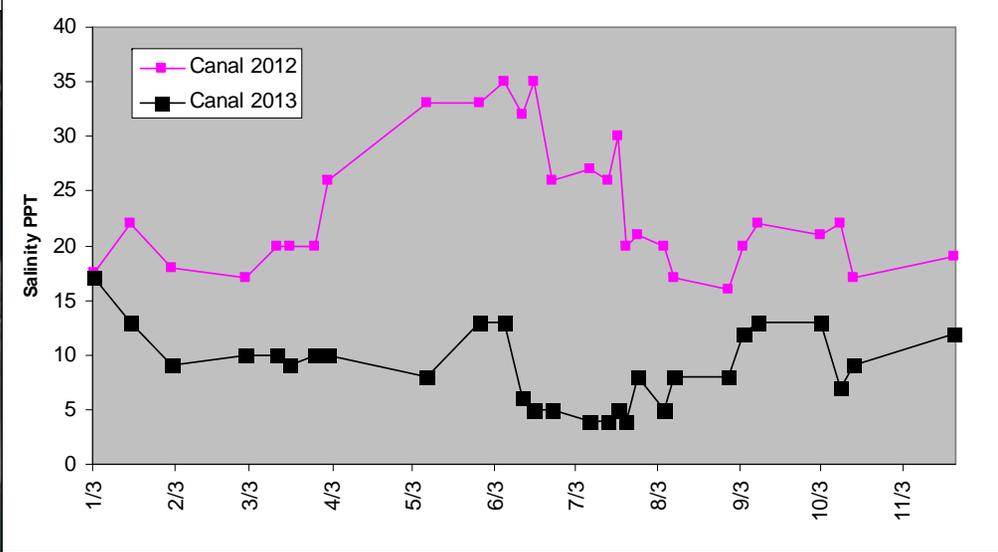




Deal Island Water Levels



Deal Island Salinity



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Image U.S. Geological Survey

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Imagery Date: Feb 28, 2007

38°09'47.86" N 75°53'00.31" W elev 0 m

Eye alt 5.14 km



Island

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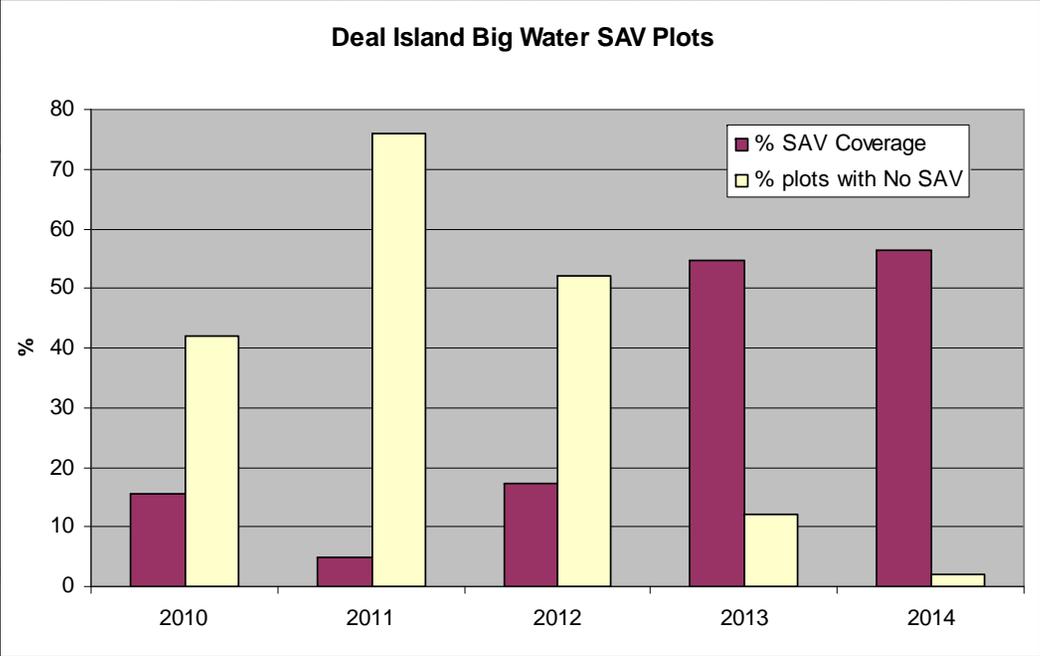
Black Duck Island
Fish Island
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Image U.S. Geological Survey

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Imagery Date: Feb 28, 2007

38°09'47.86" N 75°53'00.31" W elev 0 m

Eye alt 5.14 km



BW33





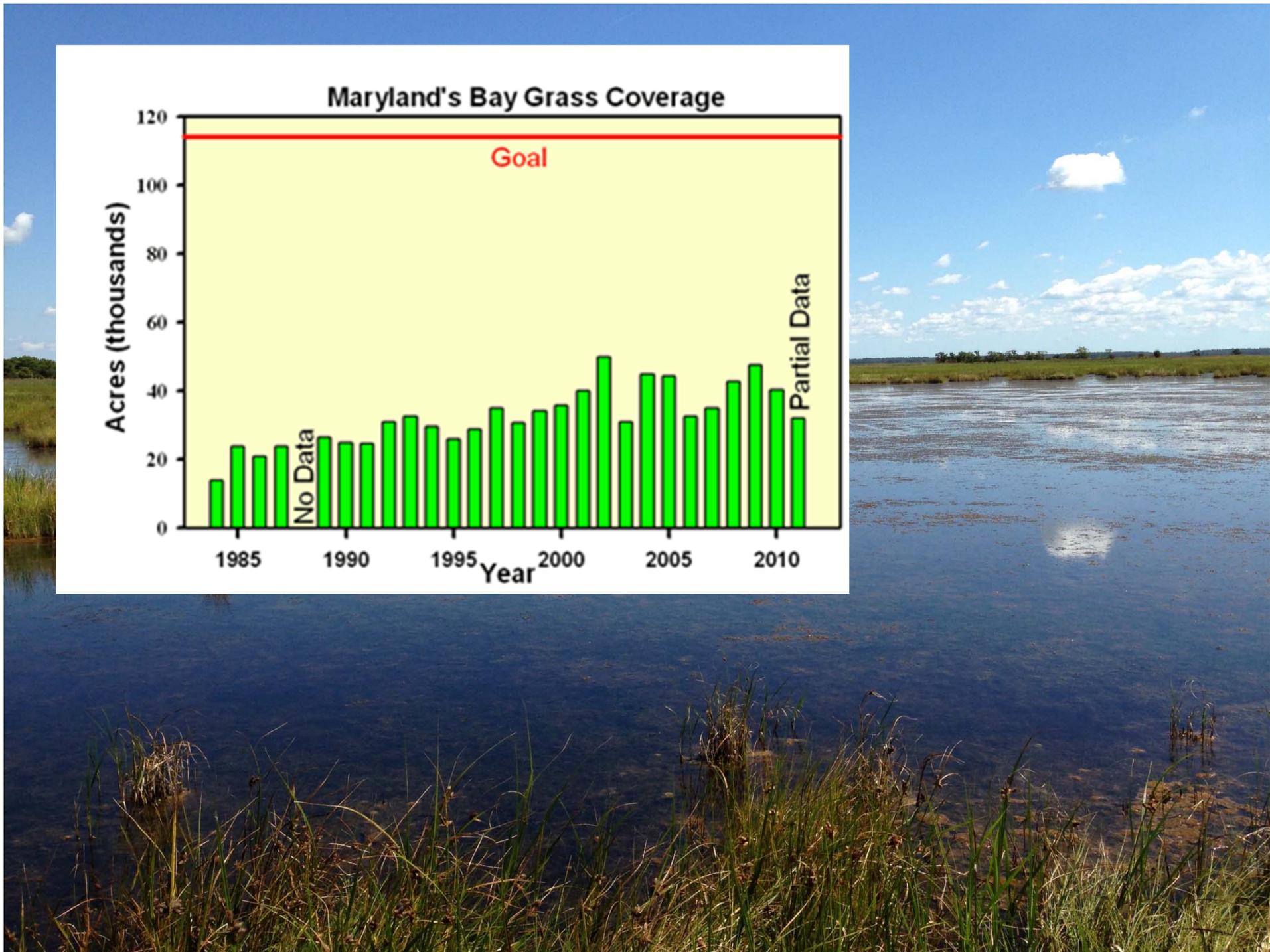
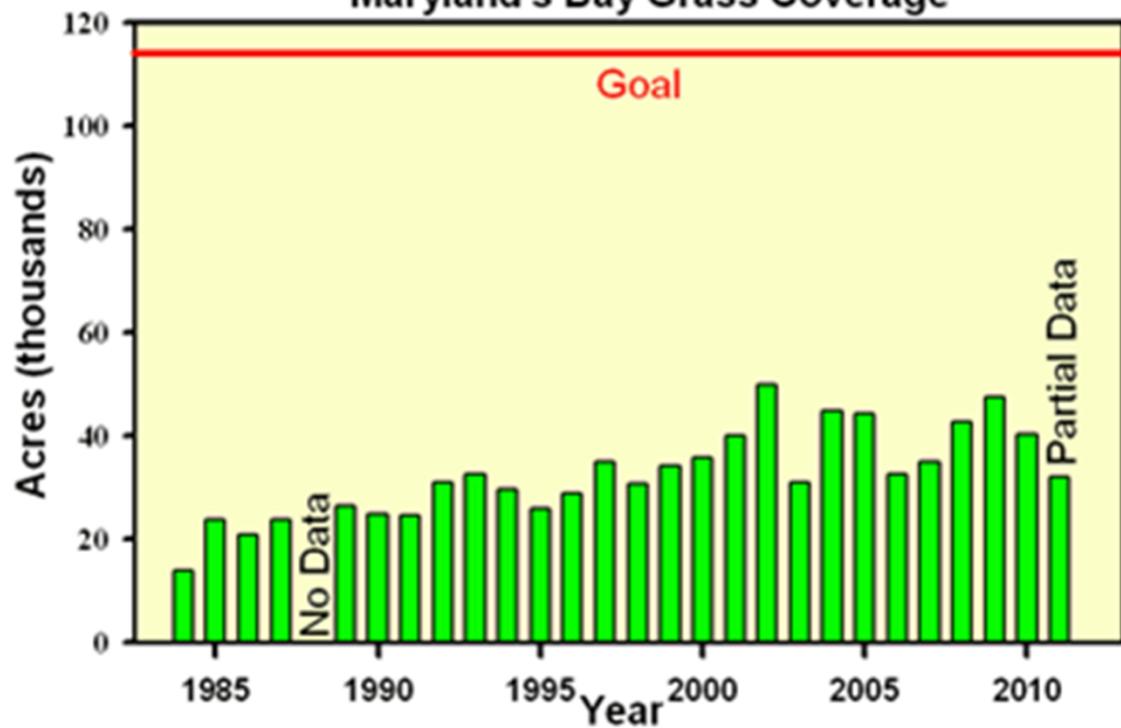


Hunter Access

- **Gas motors now prohibited between October 1 – March 31**
Mud motors



Maryland's Bay Grass Coverage

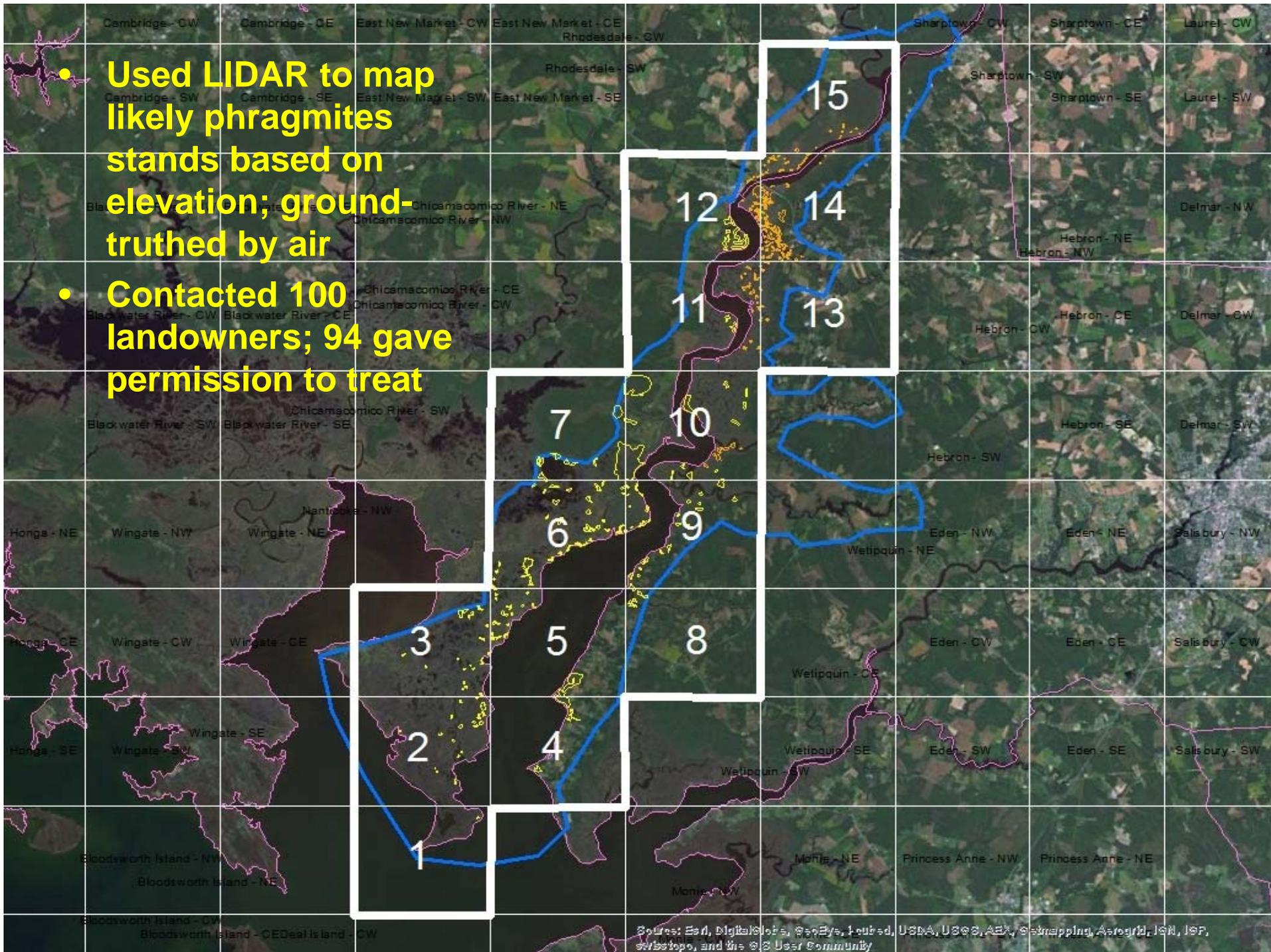


Phragmites Control on the Nanticoke River



Hurricane Sandy Recovery Funds

- \$400,000 received to treat 2,000 acres/year for 2 years along Nanticoke River
- Funds were administered through USFWS Chesapeake Bay Field Office
- MD DNR coordinated field work
- Audubon MD-DC



- **Used LIDAR to map likely phragmites stands based on elevation; ground-truthed by air**
- **Contacted 100 landowners; 94 gave permission to treat**

Sources: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, ISF, Swisstopo, and the GIS User Community







- **2,024 acres treated**
- **Helicopter can carry about 14 acres worth of mixed herbicide**
- **Work took about 4 weeks; 145 helicopter loads**
- **Work will be repeated next year**

WETLANDS

Adapting to Change at the Deal Island WMA Impoundment



The impoundment is managed for submerged aquatic vegetation, mainly wigeon grass, that grows in most pond areas.

Natural resource managers are human and once managers settle into a comfortable management regime, they sometimes stay there too long. Such was the case at the Deal Island Wildlife Management Area, a 13,000 acre property located in Somerset County, Maryland. This state-owned land is located on a peninsula created by the confluence of

the Wicomico and Manokin Rivers that juts into Chesapeake Bay. The property is comprised mainly of tidal wetlands with a small amount of forest and uplands.

In the early 1960's, 2,800 acres were impounded with an earthen dike. Water control structures were placed across two former tidal creeks. The impoundment is managed for stable water levels to encour-

age growth of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in the dozens of ponds, ranging in size from $\frac{1}{2}$ acre to several hundred acres. Emergent marsh, mainly salt hay, saltmarsh cordgrass, black needle rush, and saltmarsh bulrush cover about 2/3 of the impoundment.

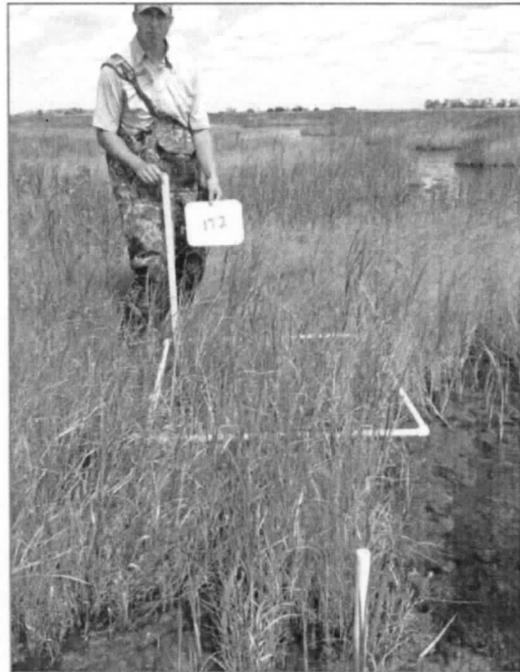
For several decades, this impoundment was a fabulous location for waterfowl, wad-

ing birds, and a wide variety of other migratory birds. Peak counts of waterfowl exceeded 20,000 birds including large numbers of wigeon, gadwall, and a variety of other puddle ducks. Waterfowl hunters and bird watchers flocked to the impoundment. During the summer and early fall, crabbers lined up to catch the abundant and amazingly large blue crabs.

Sometime in the mid-1990s we began to notice problems – fewer ducks and a less diverse bird community, SAV became much less abundant. We made a few changes to the hunting program but we made no changes to the water management nor did we have any monitoring to provide clues as to what was going on. We limped along for another decade, often lamenting the decline, but changing very little. The place had been so good for so long, that without clear goals, change was difficult.

Habitat Monitoring

By 2009 it was clear that the impoundment was not going to magically return to its former grandeur on its own. We committed to a monitoring program that included regular measurements of wa-



Vegetation plots were used to monitor changes in emergent vegetation.

ter depth and salinity, and yearly measurements of SAV and emergent vegetation. A couple things were readily apparent. Depending on rainfall and tide levels, water

levels were frequently above the marsh level for extended periods, sometimes for weeks at a time. After a couple growing seasons we noticed a pretty clear relationship with loss of emergent vegetation and less SAV during growing seasons with particularly high water levels. Loss of SAV was much worse in larger ponds (> 25 acres) than in smaller ponds. Examining sets of satellite photos over time, it was clear that we had lost emergent marsh along the margins of many ponds. Periodic water quality measurements showed high levels of total dissolved solids and poor water clarity in many of the larger ponds.

We developed a working hypothesis that the main problem with the impoundment was excessively high water levels. The loss of emergent vegetation releases soil and organic matter into the ponds, reducing water clarity and negatively affecting SAV growth. Furthermore, SAV itself has a remarkable affect on water quality, reducing wave action and improving water clarity. The loss of SAV starts a vicious cycle of increased turbidity and wave action, making reestablishment of SAV that much more difficult.




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Above: One of two large piling and plank water control structures at Deal Island impoundment. Below: Four in-line water control structures being installed.



Management Goals and Objectives

We established a management goal of improving the productivity of the impoundment and particularly the large ponds. These ponds had suffered a dramatic reduction in SAV and are particularly important for waterfowl. Our objectives were: (1) to stop and perhaps reverse the loss of emergent vegetation and (2) increase the abundance and coverage of SAV, espe-

cially in the larger ponds. We continued to monitor water levels and salinities as well as SAV and emergent vegetation.

Water Control Modifications

The impoundment was constructed with two large water control structures spanning former tidal creeks. The structures were built with treated pilings and planks and movement of water occurred

through 5 openings (2'x 4' each). Flap gates located on the impoundment side of the structures open when tide on the outside is higher than the water level inside the impoundment, and close when the tide recedes. Release of water can be achieved only by winching open the flap gates, allowing water to flow from the impoundment when the tide level outside the impoundment is lower than the level inside. There is no mechanism (e.g., riser and boards) that allows a water level to be set and maintained. The amount of water that enters the impoundment (or leaves when the gates are winched open) is highly variable depending on factors that affect the tide level (e.g., wind, storms, and lunar events). The top of the piling and plank structure serves as an emergency spillway.

Despite limited and clumsy water management capabilities, these structures served us well for several decades. The impoundment was amazingly productive and required very little water level manipulation. Whether the change in water levels over the last 20 years, is due to sea level rise, marsh subsidence, differences between the original and replaced structures, or some combination, is unknown. However, the result has been higher salinities that are nearly identical across the impoundment, loss of some emergent wetlands to flooding, and a subsequent decrease in the abundance and diversity of SAV (now exclusively wigeon grass, but formerly several less salt tolerant species as well).

Clearly we had a need for better water management capabilities. In 2010, we modified the piling and plank water control structures by adding stainless steel flap gates on the outside of the structures. This allowed us to reduce or eliminate the regular influx of tidal water from the Manokin River. With all the gates closed, tidal water only enters the impoundment when exceptionally high tides top the emergency spillway. The frequency with which this happens varies with storms, winds, and lunar phases but averages once every couple weeks. This change made an enormous difference in keeping water levels from getting too high. However, we still lacked a way to set and maintain a given water level. We considered modifying the piling and plank structures but thought better of that given their age (about 30 years) and location. Furthermore, we preferred separating the location of the in-coming and exiting water

to improve impoundment flushing.

The final piece of the water management puzzle was to add four in-line water control structures with risers and boards on 24 inch pipes about 1 ¼ miles from the nearest piling and plank structures. The structures drain into an adjacent tidal creek. We used Agri Drain structures constructed with 100% stainless steel and plastic polymer to withstand the high salinities. Since the main function of these structures was to release water and maintain a desired water level, we added stainless and plastic polymer flap gates to prevent high tides from entering the impoundment from the tidal creek.

With these modifications, we have a much improved water management system. Tidal inflows occur through or over (in the case of extra high tides) the piling and plank structures located along the Manokin River, but they occur much less frequently than in the past. If water depth exceeds desired levels, it drains over the top stoplog boards of the four in-line structures. The new structures have worked beautifully, nearly eliminating the need for regular water control adjustments.

We continue to do regular water and

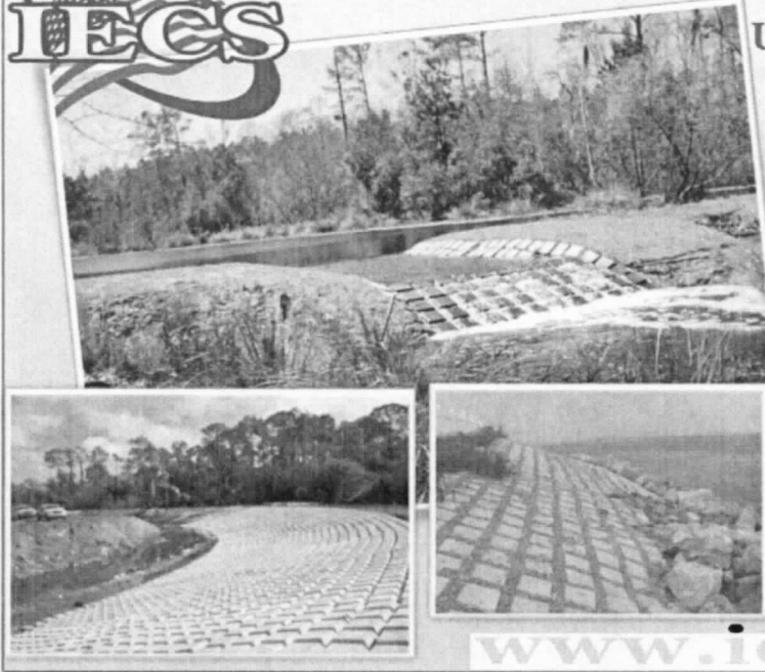


Representatives from partnering organizations meet to view project results.

habitat monitoring. The modifications have created a flow-through system that has improved flushing and water quality. Following storms or high tide events, water levels return to desired levels within a few days and we have seen re-colonization by emergent plants in some areas where emergent plants were lost to flooding. With

less tidal influence, salinities have returned to a gradient with fresher water located in the higher elevation parts of the impoundment. SAV growth has improved dramatically and waterfowl numbers have responded in kind. Although only time will tell for certain, we are well on the way to meeting our management goals.

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Dealer Inquiries Welcome

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WETLANDS

Partnerships

As public land goes, the Deal Island impoundment rates high on the public interest list with its heavy use by waterfowl hunters, bird watchers, crabbers, and kayakers. This can sometimes be a two-edged sword but in our case it created a great opportunity to form a partnership. We teamed up with Ducks Unlimited, Agri Drain Corporation, Maryland Waterfowler's Association, and the National Estuarine Research Reserve to submit a North American Wetlands Conservation Act small project grant. The work funded by the grant and matching funds included

control of phragmites, restoration of emergent marsh, and water quality monitoring, as well as the new water control structures and modifications to the existing structures. The total project cost over 3 years was \$218,500 of which \$66,400 was grant funds. Without this grant, it would have been years before we could put together enough funds to get this work done.

Lessons Learned

Adaptive natural resource management is all the rage. In its simplest form, this involves defining a problem, designing and implementing a solution, monitoring,

evaluating the results, and adjusting management. With one large impoundment we were unable to test our hypotheses in an experimental sense, but regular monitoring, evaluation, and adjustments made it possible to make reasonable assessments about what we needed to do to meet our objectives and then to measure our success. Many of us lack the expertise, funding, or time to implement adaptive resource management with a high degree of scientific rigor. However, every resource manager should try to incorporate the principals as they approach management problems. From our perspective, regular monitoring, even if it is only simple visual observations, is absolutely crucial for successful management of natural resources.

Following the project, on May 6, 2014, Ducks Unlimited presented Charlie Schafer, President of Agri Drain Corporation, the "Excellence in Conservation Award" for his contributions to wetland restoration on Deal Island on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. **L&W**

by Bill Harvey & Charlie Schafer

Bill Harvey is the Game Bird Section Leader for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. He supervises all aspects of habitat and population management for game birds including waterfowl.

Charlie Schafer is President of Agri Drain Corporation, located in Adair, Iowa. Agri Drain is a complete manufacturer and supplier of products for drainage water management, wetlands, ponds, lakes, and erosion control.

For more information, contact Bill Harvey, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 828B Airpax Road, Suite 500, Cambridge, MD 21613, Phone: 410-221-8838 ext. 108, Fax: 410-221-0026, Email: bharvey@dnr.state.md.us. Or contact Charlie Schafer, President, Agri Drain Corporation, 1462 340th Street, Adair, IA 50002, Phone: 1-800-232-4742, Fax: 1-800-282-3353, Email: info@agridrain.com.

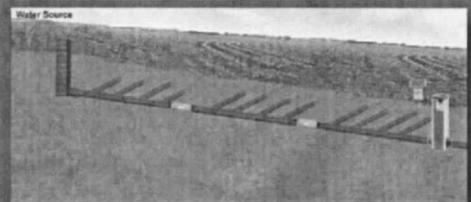
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*Wildlife & Heritage Service
Information & Education*

November 2014



I & E Highlighted Programs

- Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW)
- Project WILD
- Jr. Hunter Field Days
- Mentored Youth Hunts
- National Hunting and Fishing Day
- Envirothon
- Education Trunks
- Habi-chat/ Wild Acres
- Black Bear Conservation Program
- MD Archery in the Schools Program
- Hunting & Shooting Sports Program



- The workshops introduce women to a variety of activities equally balanced between hunting and shooting, fishing, and non-harvest sports like canoeing and camping.

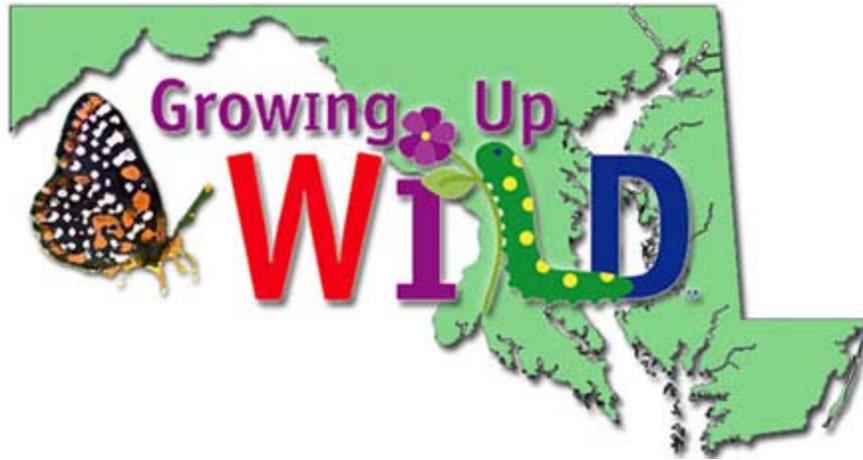


- Held one 3-Day Fall Workshop
 - Participants choose from a list of 40 activities.
- Held 2 mini-workshops (Beyond BOW)
- 127 women attended
- Over 3000 on our mailing list

- Still going strong!

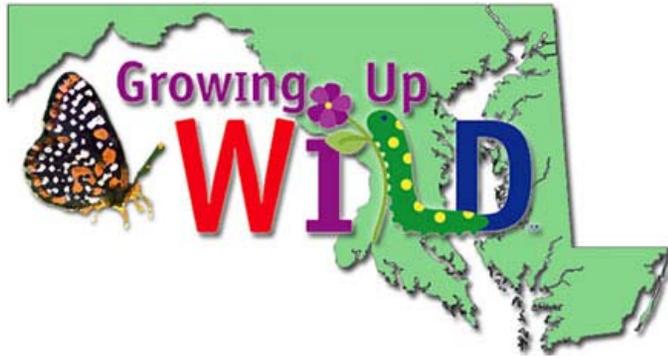


- One of the most widely used education programs.
- International
- Focus on wildlife
- Audience: K-12
 - Each activity adaptable to specific grades.



- Growing Up WILD
 - An early childhood education program
 - Children ages 3-7





Project **WILD**
Let's get WILD,
Maryland!

A black crab is positioned to the left of the word 'Maryland!', and a black lizard is to the right.

- Held 46 Workshops training 849 educators
- Used by schools, sportsmen's groups, humane society, girl scouts, boy scouts, 4-H groups
- Books are free with training



Junior Hunter Field Days

- Purpose:
 - Increase youth interest in wildlife conservation
 - Instill hunter ethics
 - Increase youths interest in hunting as a life long pursuit



Junior Hunter Field Days

- Reached ~650 youth in 2014
- 7 events
- High demand
- Going strong!



Mentored Youth Hunts

- Mission:
 - Every year hundreds of youths complete a hunter safety class, but not all go on to become hunters.
 - This program will:
 - Identify those youth
 - Provide a positive experience that will encourage them to pursue hunting as a lifelong activity
 - Provide a forum for youth to hunt with a mentor and interact with wildlife professionals.

Mentored Youth Hunts

- Offered 3 Mentored Youth Hunts in 2013-14 Season
- Plan on offering 3 Mentored Youth Hunts in 2014-2015.





NATIONAL
HUNTING AND FISHING
DAY[®]

■ Mission:

- to encourage individuals and families to get involved and stay involved in outdoor activities like hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities.



NATIONAL
HUNTING AND FISHING
DAY®

- Annually, 4th Saturday of September.
- This was it's 8th year.
- Held at the Associated Gun Clubs of Baltimore on Sept 27th, 2014 (10am-4pm)
 - 700+ people in attendance.



Envirothon



- The Envirothon program is an exciting and fun way for high school students to learn about the environment.
- We offer training to teachers and students in Wildlife in all MD counties.

Education Trunks

- Black Bear Education Trunk
- White-tailed Deer Education Trunk
- Furbearer Education Trunk
- Turkey Education Trunk (NEW)
- Locations Throughout Maryland
 - Added- Baltimore City



Education Trunks

- Contains hands on educational materials
- Contains a Teachers Guide
- Can be signed out for up to 2 weeks at a time
- Free



Wild Acres



- Online information
- How to provide suitable habitat for wild animals in you backyard



HabiChat

- A Quarterly Newsletter (free online) for steward's of Maryland's Backyard Wildlife.
- Covers a multitude of topics, including habitat tips, feeding wildlife, native plant profiles, Maryland wildlife, youth activity.



Black Bear Conservation Program

- The Black Bear Conservation Stamp Program began in 1996. Authorized by the Maryland General Assembly, the stamp (and other items) generates funds that are used to compensate farmers who have reported damage to agricultural crops caused by black bears.



Black Bear Conservation Program

- 2013 raised
\$3,455.30



Archery in the Schools

- MD NASP's mission is to promote student education through participation in the sport of archery with the focus being to provide international style target archery training in the 4th - 12th grades.
- Topics are taught through classroom instruction, positive communication and hands-on activities.
- We currently have 89 schools in 17 counties participating and 6 non-school organizations (Boy Scouts of America, Izaak Walton League-Rockville Chapter, Greenbelt Youth Center, Methodist Church- Christ's Service Brigade, Summer Camps, and home school groups).

Archery in the Schools

- Maryland's Second annual NASP Tournament
 - April 5th, 2014
 - Hagerstown Community College



Social Media

- WHS are administrators for 5 Social Media outlets
 - Facebook:
 - Wildlife & Heritage Service
 - Maryland Natural Areas
 - Becoming an Outdoors-Woman
 - Maryland Conservation History
 - Twitter: Wildlife & Heritage Service
 - Flickr: Wildlife & Heritage Service



Hunting & Shooting Sports Program

- Goals:
 - provide the 'next step' for novice hunters/shooters
- Mini-workshops
- Grant NSSF



Hunting & Shooting Sports Program

- 9 workshops in 2014



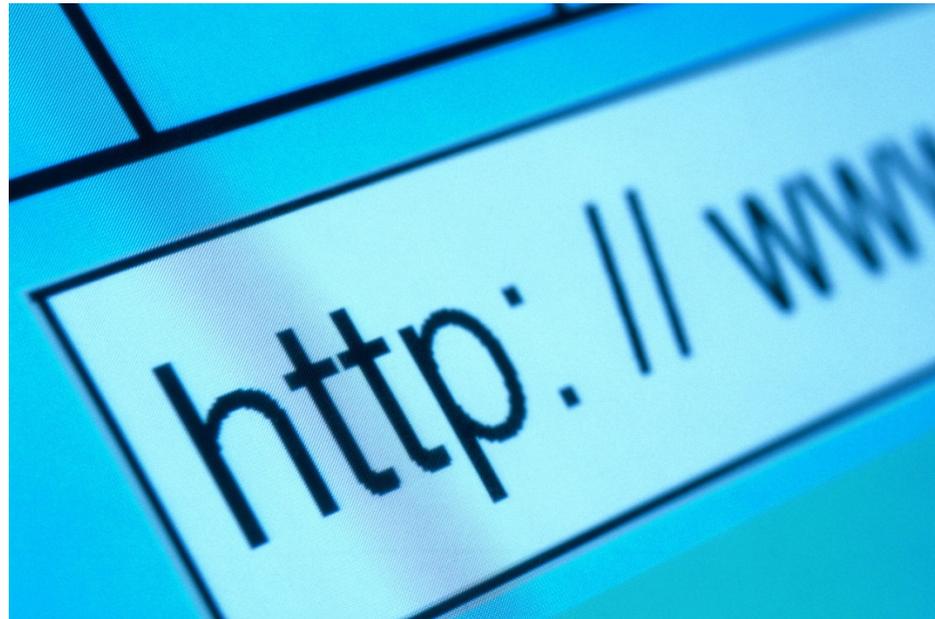
News Releases

- WHS has written and released 56 news releases in 2013.



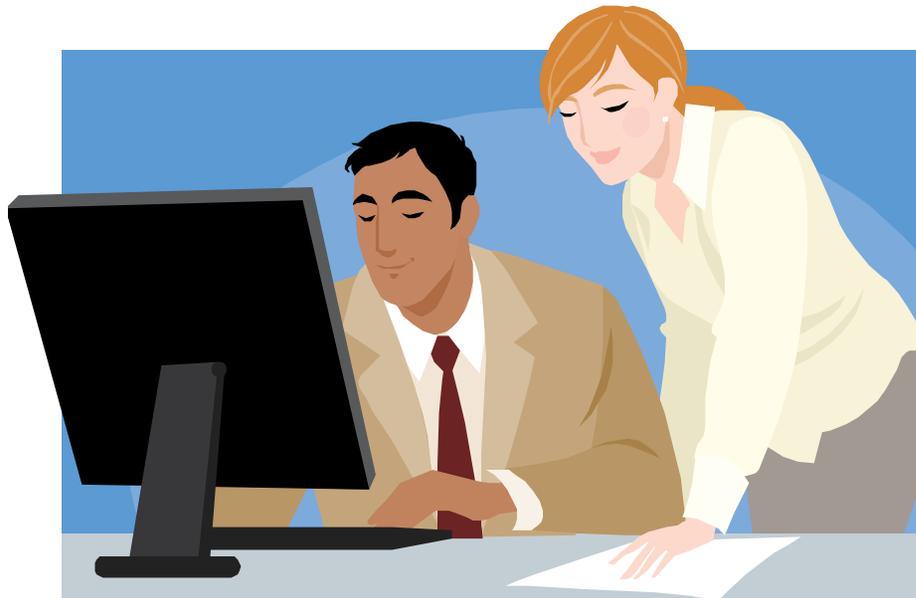
Webpage Updates

- WHS Internet Content Managers have updated web pages 292 times in 2013.



Customer Service & Volunteer Hours

- WHS personnel has responded to 934 customer service requests in 2013



Any Questions?



John White

Delmarva fox squirrel, photo by John White



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

November 19, 2014

Wildlife Advisory Commission
DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service
580 Taylor Avenue
Tawes State Office Building, E-1
Annapolis MD 21401-2352

Re: Maryland Farm Bureau- November 19, 2014 WAC Update

Update from Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry (FHFH)

Thank you very much for the continued support of the DNR (Wildlife and Heritage Service) and the support of the MD State Grant to help cover donated deer processing costs. We are looking forward to a successful season providing meat to over 65 food banks and feeding groups across the state. We are at 702 deer billed for so far – this is very preliminary (especially before the firearms season) – and not reflective of total number of deer donated currently (many butchers don't send first bill until after firearms season or even until the end of the season in January) This number is on a good pace comparatively to last year at this point in the season – last year being a record year of 4,330 deer donated.

Update from Maryland Farm Bureau's Wildlife Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of Deer Management stakeholders meeting on October 8, 2014. Maryland Farm Bureau's First Vice President, Wayne Stafford and Board Member, Billy Bishoff attended on behalf of the Maryland Farm Bureau. During the meeting, both representatives made the following suggestions to the group of stakeholders.

- Repealing the weapon of season restriction for landowners' agents harvesting deer under crop damage permits during hunting seasons. Weapon of choice!
- The Commercial sale of Venison in the State of Maryland. This may include a 3-5 year sunset provision and also only limited to region A (Everything east of Washington County)
- Expanding the hunting season within reasonable dates.
- Farmers view using DMPs as a management tool rather than a recreation opportunity. They would like to see a balanced herd and the ability to use rifles and see an expanded sharpshooter program.

**Deer Management Options Stakeholder Meeting
Gwynnbrook NRP Office
October 8, 2014**

Hunting Options:

- More deer were brought in to butcher shops when we had a one week firearm (FA) season. The two week season may net less hunting time per person. Noted the importance of Sundays on 'additional' deer harvest.
- Noted the importance of the 'opening day effect' influencing harvest.
- An antlerless only FA season may not see a lot of interest.
- A FA season early when the corn is still standing may not be effective – be careful with the timing.
- Splitting the 2 week FA season up may be more effective (1 week at a time). Would increase the 'opening day effect'.
- Additional youth opportunities would be a good idea. (e.g. Archery season)
- Be careful of too much youth opportunity – may lessen the overall interest and impact.
- Try an earn-a-buck program? Especially with an earlier FA season. Require hunters to take a doe prior to taking any bucks.
- The Natural Resources Police (NRP) have concerns over enforcing the requirement to take does first.
- Require hunters to prove they harvested does.
- There is very little hunting pressure the last two weeks of January.
- Any changes should be focused on areas where the deer problems are.
- Sundays are important for some non-consumptive users as well.
- Have we looked at increasing public hunting opportunities? For example, Program Open Space - purchased lands exist that have no hunting allowed.
- Create an 'apprentice' hunter situation instead of 'youth' opportunities. This would allow all new hunters to try hunting with a mentor, regardless of age.
- Increased bag limits have led to under-utilized deer – some hunters are not using all the available venison.
- NRP has concerns over an early October FA season that is antlerless only – hunters would be tempted to shoot bucks instead of antlerless deer.
- Md Bowhunter's Society – Concern over additional early FA opportunities (same week in October as muzzleloader (ML) season). If we do it, require doe only by archery hunters as well.
- Landowners can help by ensuring antlerless take on private lands.
- Some farmers have given up on using bows to control deer, favoring more efficient firearms when allowed.
- Increasing the October FA opportunity would help avoid conflicts with rabbit hunters (and other small game hunters) later in the year. Small game hunters lose access when FA season is open. Therefore, additional January FA seasons would negatively impact small game hunters.

- A previous stakeholder group discussed avoiding overlapping seasons and generally looked at it in a negative light. Be aware that FA seasons impact other hunters and non-hunters.
- We need to add opportunity instead of replacing ML season with FA season.
- Need an outreach program to contact private landowners and educate them about the importance of taking antlerless deer. Help the property owners enforce bag limits.
- Focus harvest on older female deer – avoid button bucks.
- Need to address hunting opportunities on lands owned by local governments.
- Have we explored incentivizing private landowners to allow antlerless harvest (e.g. tax break or economic benefit)?
- Can DNR include deer management as a requirement on land easements (e.g. POS & rural legacy purchases)?
 - Look at this as an educational aspect – what landowners can do to manage deer on their property.
 - Encourage long-term deer management through the easements
- Focus on Forest Management Plans regarding antlerless harvest as well.

Expand Sunday Hunting Opportunities:

- Do we know why counties with no Sunday hunting opportunities haven't pursued Sunday hunting? How would HO CO gain Sunday hunting?
- There are close to 6 million Marylanders and approximately only 1-2% of them hunt. Baltimore & Howard County Sunday hunting bills have been heavily opposed. Non-hunters request one day a week with no hunting.
- Clarification that non-hunters aren't necessarily opposed to hunting, in fact many support it.
- Has there been a study of people getting hurt as a result of Sunday hunting? It is safe.
- Since Sunday hunting occurs on private land only, it's ultimately up to the landowner whether or not to allow it.
- Fox chasers/houndsmen also have a stake in sharing the resource. This group supports the status quo of Sunday hunting. Have we given consideration to splitting opportunity up by time of day (e.g. only morning or evening hours open to hunting)?
- Allow Sunday hunting for all species on private land.
- There are currently more deer harvested via Sunday hunting than DMPs during the entire year. [Editors note: this is not exactly true; Sunday hunting harvest is slightly lower than the statewide DMP take].
- Have we tracked the change in harvest in relation to the number of days open to hunting? (e.g. 1 week season vs. 2 week season).
- The MD Horse Council has no intention of rolling back statewide Sunday hunting.
- There is more opportunity for youth to hunt with Sunday hunting. More deer are being donated to FHFH as well.

- A lot of Region A hunters work 6 days/week – Sunday hunting would definitely benefit these rural residents.
- Sundays become additive (in regards to losing opportunity) – it appears to not influence the overall deer harvest numbers. Not all Sundays are created equal (e.g. ML Sundays aren't effective). Open up western MD Sunday hunting on public lands.
- Fox chasers/equestrians in Carroll Co support Sunday hunting.
- Private land hunting does impact others, as an example, there is a problem with injured deer crossing property boundaries and creating a situation with neighbors who don't allow hunting.
- Concern that taking away Sunday opportunities may cause hunters to drop out of the hunting ranks. This is valuable for hunter recruitment and retention as well as harvest.

Additional Hunting Options (Additional Outreach):

- A lot of missed opportunity for additional hunting – (e.g. NPS Sharpshooting operations). Other state lands, private golf courses, etc should be explored as well.
- A lot of farmers and large property owners don't understand the limited liability involved with hunting on private lands. Outreach to teach this may be beneficial.
- Outreach to neighboring states could help (e.g. PA with abundant deer population).
- Agriculture boards and Forestry boards could be used to reach out to their landowners. Focus on local government outreach regarding land use. DNR should be proactive regarding outreach.
- Reach out to western states and other states re: how they increase hunting opportunities on private lands.
- Opposed to the So MD extended FA season model (SB 966).
- Possible legislation may be introduced in 2015 to modify some of the provisions of SB 966.
- Increase antler restrictions to influence/increase antlerless harvest.
- Reduce the statewide buck bag limit to increase antlerless harvest.
- Have DMP-type permits for conservation reasons – not just commercial crops. This would help landowners protect/conservate their property – broaden the Forest Management Plan allowances.

Deer Management Permits

- Farm bureau is in favor of allowing the weapon of choice for all agents on a DMP.
- Some counties have had a 'pilot project' allowing this already and no problems have occurred as a result.
- Farm bureau would like to see rifles allowed in all counties for DMPs.
- Farmers view using DMPs as a management tool rather than a recreation opportunity. They would like to see a balanced herd and the ability to use rifles and see an expanded sharpshooter program.

- Feel that DNR should monitor DMPs closely.
- No need to do additional monitoring of DMP system.
- Does the ag community know FHFH exists and are they working to ensure the deer are used? We could continue outreach efforts to make farmers aware of FHFH facilities, etc.
- Increased FHFH facilities have resulted in additional deer taken on DMPs.
- Farm bureau promotes FHFH and runs the Doe Challenge Program.
- Increasing the number of FHFH processors would be a positive step.
- Increase outreach efforts regarding handling animals in hot weather, etc.
- Carroll Co has a 24 hour walk-in cooler. FHFH pays for this one. Montgomery Co has them also.
- A lot of butcher shops aren't open year-around but may open their coolers for managed hunts, etc.
- Could use the Guide to Hunting & Trapping to reach out to farmers about DMPs.
- Reach out to farmers who may not be involved with the Farm Bureau.
- Need to increase outreach for farmers and hunters.
- Where will funding come from for additional outreach and increased efforts? Other user groups who benefit from a reduced deer herd should help fund these programs. Broaden our funding base.

Deer Cooperator Permits:

- Would community input be required in an agricultural setting?
- Keep the safety factor in the process if DCPs are expanded to agricultural settings.
- Being trained to conduct it safely and even getting a certification could be positive. Night shooting would be a positive. Training to do this in an efficient manner would be welcome.

Financial Incentives to Harvest Deer:

- Recognized that this is very controversial. Perhaps this could be an option where DNR has exhausted other options and a management predicament still exists. Must apply this in specific areas.
- Concern that this might create poaching incidents and overharvest the resource.
- This may increase logistical concerns for the local butchers (e.g. permitting, etc.).
- Limit permission to sell venison to DMP holders. Use a sunset clause with any regs or laws introduced.
- Allow financial incentives in Region B only.
- The financial burden should lie with insurance companies, etc. – those people who are suffering financial damage from deer.
- Give a credit or rebate on your hunting license paid by insurance companies, etc. to donate those deer to FHFH, etc.
- Conflicts with non-hunters may escalate if hunters are incentivized.
- Could there be a tax incentive if you donate a deer (personal income tax)?

- Implement a pilot program for agricultural control or sensitive environmental areas. Licensed hunters with a special license (for selling venison) could be used. This would further regulate who could participate.
- Limit this to DCP holders. Potentially include DMP holders as well on a limited basis.
- Use DCP holders to conduct this.
- Incentivizing harvest is potentially dangerous for the deer herd.

Other Options:

- Outreach efforts are needed to reach the non-hunting public.
- We need to increase retention efforts to keep hunters in the ranks.
- 'Apprentice Days' instead of 'youth days' to help recruit non-youth hunters.
- Offer a reduced cost license for 'apprentice' hunters.
- Need non-hunting ways to solve the problem of too many deer.
- Ensure that nonlethal options are not paid for by state monies.

**2014 Deer Management Stakeholder Meeting
Attendees and Affiliation
October 8, 2014**

Last Name	First	Organization	Position
Zembower	Jerry	Allegheny/Garrett Sportsmen/Women's Association	President
Schroyer	Joe	Allegheny/Garrett Sportsmen/Women's Association	Member
Guilfoyle	Matt	Carroll County Sportsman's Association	President
Fornaro	Nick	Delmarva Sika Deer Association	President
Kelkye	Ben	Frederick County Sportsman's Council	President
Lushbaugh	Rick	Frederick County Sportsman's Council	Member
Rhodehamel	Chick	Maryland Botanical Heritage Work Group	Member
Compton	Lou	Maryland Bowhunters Association	Pres. & WAC
Stafford	Wayne	Maryland Farm Bureau	Officer
Teffeau	Matt	Maryland Farm Bureau	Staff
Bishoff	Billy	Maryland Farm Bureau – Garrett County	County Pres.
Baker	Dan	Maryland Fur Trappers, Inc	President
Santelli	Tami	Maryland Chapter, Humane Society of the US	Director
Ellis	Allan	Maryland Hunting Coalition	Board Member
Seigler	Jane	Maryland Horse Council	President
Kimball	Crystal	Maryland Horse Council, Equiery Magazine	Editor
Miles	Bill	Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation	Member
Johnson	Kirsten	Maryland Native Plant Society	President
Winter	Cheri	Maryland Chapter, Quality Deer Mgmt Association	President
Grimes	E.W.	Maryland Chapter, Quality Deer Mgmt Association	Member
Sutherland	David	Maryland Sportsman's Foundation	Member
Lamp	Joe	Maryland Votes for Animals	Board Chair
Tracey	Greg	Maryland Waterfowler's Association	President
Winter	Joe	Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs	President
Feinburg	Enid	Wildlife Rescue	Member
Plummer	Jeff	Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission	Chairman
Gregor	Tina	Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission	Member
Michael	Joseph	Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission	Member
Rodney	Charles	Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission	Member
Wojton	Beth	Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission	Member
Gill	Joe	Secretary of DNR	Staff
Norling	Rich	DNR Legislative Liaison	Staff
Peditto	Paul	Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS), Director	Staff
Stonesifer	Karina	WHS, Associate Director for Regional Operations	Staff
Spiker	Harry	WHS, Game Mammal Section Leader, WHS	Staff
Eyler	Brian	WHS, Deer Project Leader	Staff
Timko	George	WHS, Assistant Deer Project Leader	Staff
Jayne	Pete	WHS, Associate Director for Game Management	Staff
Bakeoven	Robert	DNR, Natural Resources Police	Staff
Shirley	Angie	DNR, Natural Resources Police	Staff
Fawley	Chuck	DNR, Natural Resources Police	Staff
Johnson	Edward	DNR, Natural Resources Police	Staff