

PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A WATERWAY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

1. Letter of Interest submitted by seventy-five percent (75%) of the property owners indicating District boundaries.
2. Letter of Interest is forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources, by St. Mary's County, requesting the preparation of a Need and Feasibility Report and approval of the project.
3. The Department of Natural Resources prepares a Need and Feasibility Report with their recommendation and submits to St. Mary's County.
4. Potential dredge material placement (DMP) sites should be identified by the community.
5. A Public Informational Meeting is scheduled and estimated costs presented to the property owners.
6. A Petition must then be submitted by seventy-five percent (75%) of the benefiting property owners, which includes the identification of properties, district boundary map, estimated costs and the chosen method of assessment. The Petition must be approved by County staff.
7. County staff performs an evaluation concerning the value of the benefit from a project on benefiting properties versus the costs of the project to determine that the property receives a benefit substantially equal to or greater than the assessment.
8. A Public Hearing is held with the County Commissioners to establish the District by ordinance.
9. Preliminary designs developed, DMP site secured, permit applications submitted to the State.
10. Waterway Improvement Fund Grant Application submitted to DNR with preliminary design.
11. DNR project priority established, funding requested for Legislative approval. Larger projects may require multi-year funding.
12. Full project funding must be approved in the County budget.
13. County designs (in-house or by bid contract) the project; prepares the plans and specifications.
14. The project is advertised and bid for construction.
15. A Public Informational Meeting is scheduled and probable costs presented to the property owners. If bid proposals for construction and design costs exceed the amount identified in the Ordinance establishing the District, then a Public Hearing must be held to amend the budget of the District.
16. The construction contract is then approved and awarded.
17. After construction is complete, the County executes Waterway Improvement Fund (reimbursable) Loan Agreement with DNR and requests loan reimbursement from the Fund.
18. A Public Hearing is held by St. Mary's County to fix the assessment (Levy Ordinance).
19. The Board of County Commissioners shall fix and levy the benefit charges upon each lot in the District. The benefit charge shall be paid annually as County taxes.
20. Future maintenance of the project is the responsibility of the District.