



July 22nd, 2005

Bradley M. Campbell, Commissioner
State of New Jersey, DEP
CN 402
Trenton, NJ 08624-0402

Subject: *What you can do to support New Jersey's marine trades industry.*

Dear Commissioner Campbell:

As the voice of the marine trades industry in New Jersey, it is the responsibility of the MTA/NJ to communicate boating's vibrant economic contribution and demonstrate its substantial role as a part of New Jersey's tourism market and quality of life. In doing this, we spend a significant amount of time and effort working with State agencies, legislators such as yourself, and other organizations in finding solutions to any number of the challenges facing the recreational boating industry.

One challenge is the increasing need to provide adequate water depths for boaters to safely navigate State and back-bay channels and marinas. **The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information on how you can be a part of the strategy to develop and continue sustainable dredging and dredged material management programs.** Marinas, municipalities & State agencies must have the ability to efficiently, and with relative ease, apply for and conduct a dredging project – including the ability to manage dredged material. Multiple objectives can be accomplished by adding reasonable balance to the decision-making process. Together with your support and assistance a strategy for dredged material management that serves the entire waterfront community can be achieved.

A list of current activities and specific action items is enclosed for your consideration:

Current Activities and Action Items:

Activity:

The State Channel Dredging Program, managed by the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources is funded through an annual \$4-6 million appropriation from the Transportation Trust Fund and includes dredging, dredged material management, site acquisition, aides to navigation and other activities that support the safe operation, navigation, and maintenance of New Jersey's State channels.

Action Recommended:

- Ensure that the State Channel Dredging Program is adequately funded at the \$4 - \$6 million level annually.

Activity:

Educational Seminars and Conferences designed to provide the necessary tools and information to those concerned with and involved in dredged material management, including the public.

Action Recommended:

- Attend or send a representative to attend, such events. It is important that consistent information regarding dredged material is shared and discussed openly.
- Discuss the benefits of dredged material whenever possible with your staff, colleagues and most importantly, your constituency. It is extremely imperative that the public understands the nature of dredged sediment, the beneficial uses of this material, and the need for efficient dredged material management.

Recent events include:

- ✓ 1st Annual Dredged Material Management Summit held in Wildwood in 2004.
- ✓ 2nd Annual *Dredged Material: What To Do With It?* is planned for **October 6th, 2005** at Monmouth University in West Long Branch
- ✓ Dredging "101" (2002) conducted in partnership with the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources and the Monmouth Ocean Development Council
- ✓ Permitting "101" (2003) conducted in partnership with the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources and the Monmouth Ocean Development Council
- ✓ 2004 & 2005 MTA/NJ Annual Conference included representatives from the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources and the NJDEP who provided updates on the State Channel Dredging Program, new initiatives and beneficial uses of dredged materials

Activity:

An Economic Analysis of Recreational Boating in New Jersey will be conducted this year to quantify the economic impacts of the recreational boating industry in and to New Jersey.

Action Recommended:

- Encourage marine businesses in your district to participate actively in the analysis.
- Look for the release of the final document.
- Utilize information gained from this fully funded comprehensive effort to advocate for the marine trades industry, to bolster marine businesses locally, and to retain the charm of New Jersey's coastal, maritime and boat building heritage.

Activity:

The I BOAT NJ Program provides dedicated grant funds to selected eligible applicants to promote, improve and enhance the marine industry in the State of New Jersey for the benefit of the general boating public.

Action Recommended:

- Support the I BOAT NJ Program, look for Programs taking place in your district, and encourage additional creative programmatic planning along with dedicated dollars to support New Jersey's marine trades.

Activity:

On the Federal level, the National Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (NBIG) has brought almost \$2 million in new Federal funding to New Jersey to improve facilities for the transient boating public.

Action Recommended:

- Support the speedy reauthorization of the Federal transportation bill, known currently as SAFETEA.
- Be aware of the Wallop-Breaux amendment and the Sport Fish Restoration Act that includes programs beneficial to recreational boaters nationally. Encourage new or similar programs whenever possible!

Activity:

As the State advocate for marine trades and recreational boating, the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources has developed and continues to grow a comprehensive Marine Trades Program. Particular to dredging and dredged material management, multiple efforts are on-going including: a GIS-based Dredged Material Management System (DMMS), regional dredged material management planning and administration, statewide potential material management site review and acquisition, an analysis of the use of dredged material in New Jersey's flood control projects, and the characterization of many State confined disposal facilities to gain knowledge of what "type" of material exists where. Characterization will allow for the use of appropriate material in NJDOT transportation projects, as well as in private construction projects.

Action Recommended:

- Support NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources efforts listed above including the establishment of a regionalized system of dredged material management.
- Consider the introduction of legislation to provide incentives for the establishment and use of new and innovative beneficial uses of dredged material.
- Consider the introduction of legislation as a statewide companion to S235 (2003-2004 session).
- Consider the introduction of legislation to allow for the DEP definition of "incidental wetlands" to include historic confined dredged material disposal sites.
- Work with the MTA/NJ and Princeton Public Affairs to seek new legislation and the modification of existing legislation that will provide real and immediate solutions to New Jersey's dredging and dredged material management challenges.

Comprised of over 300 marine related businesses, the MTA/NJ looks forward to a favorable response and your support for the above action items. I thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me at 732.206.1400 or mdanko@mtanj.org if you would like to discuss these and related issues or require more information.

Sincerely,

Melissa Danko
Executive Director

Cc: MTA/NJ Membership
Genevieve Boehm, NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources