



**Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve
Public Scoping Meeting
Tuesday, April 22, 2008
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

**Jon G. James, Deputy Superintendent
National Park Service
George Washington Memorial Parkway**



- Welcome to the first public scoping meeting for the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Our objective tonight is to provide information on the EIS and planning process.
- Questions and comments will not be taken during this PowerPoint presentation.
- At the conclusion of our presentation, we invite you to ask questions at each of the stations assembled around the room.



- Written comments will be accepted tonight and during the 45-day public comment period through Friday, May 23, 2008.

You can submit comments on the Web at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/gwmp>

Or by mail to:

Mr. David Vela, Superintendent

ATTN: Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve EIS

George Washington Memorial Parkway

Turkey Run Park

McLean, Virginia 22101



- Dyke Marsh is administered by the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a unit of the National Park Service.
- Dyke Marsh is one of the last remaining tracts of tidal freshwater marsh along the Potomac River in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area.
- It has existed for approximately 5,000 years. Historically, the marsh was mined for sand and gravel. This resulted in the loss of approximately 270 acres of marshland.
- In 1974, Congress passed legislation calling for the restoration of Dyke Marsh “...so that fish and wildlife development and preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount...”



At this time, I would like to turn the program over to Brent Steury, Natural Resources Manager for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, to provide a historical perspective of the Marsh followed by Melissa Behrent, Environmental Protection Specialist with the National Park Service, who will provide information on the EIS process.



Dyke Marsh History and Legislation



Dyke Marsh — is at least 5,000 years old (Myrick and Leopold (1963) U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 442-B).

Between 1940 and 1972 - Smoot Sand and Gravel Corporation dredged approximately 270 acres of Dyke Marsh.

1959 – Public Law 86-41 - **The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire certain lands** in exchange for certain dredging rights All lands acquired by the United States pursuant to this Act shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary shall administer all of the lands described in this bill **so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount**



P.L. 86-41, 1959

.....to acquire an area of irreplaceable wet lands near the Nation's Capital which is valuable for the production and preservation of wildlife... 4b Secretary of Interior...authorized to prescribe in contracts...dredging operations, deposition of spoil, and the revegetation of these areas....

4c ...administer these lands **so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation shall be paramount...**

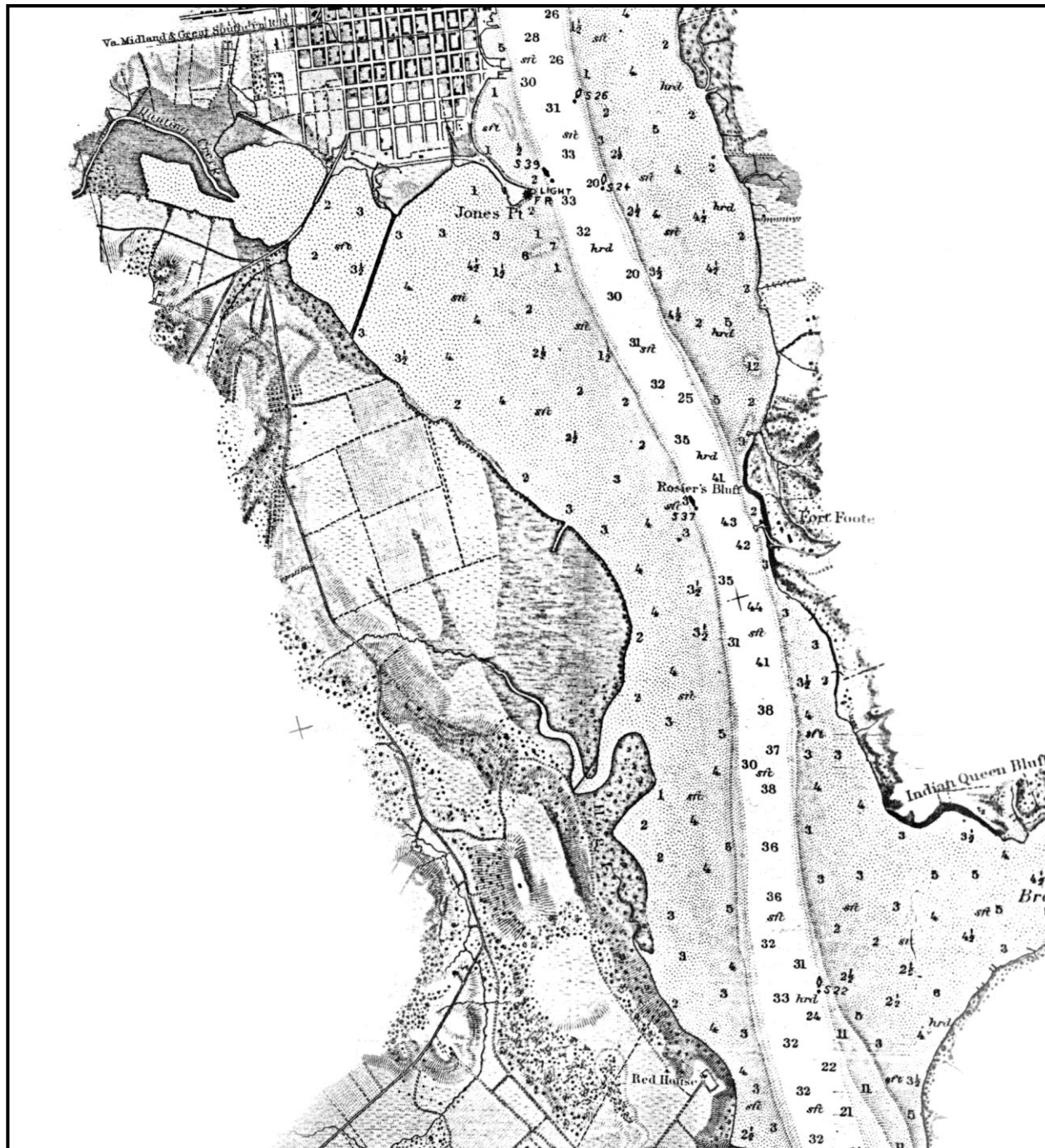
Fran Uhler, 1968 Subcommittee Hearings – 90th Congress

The Dyke area still supplies a moderate amount of good tidal marsh. But that is at this moment being rapidly whittled away by dredging operations and actually there is just a token remnant of the original marsh today.

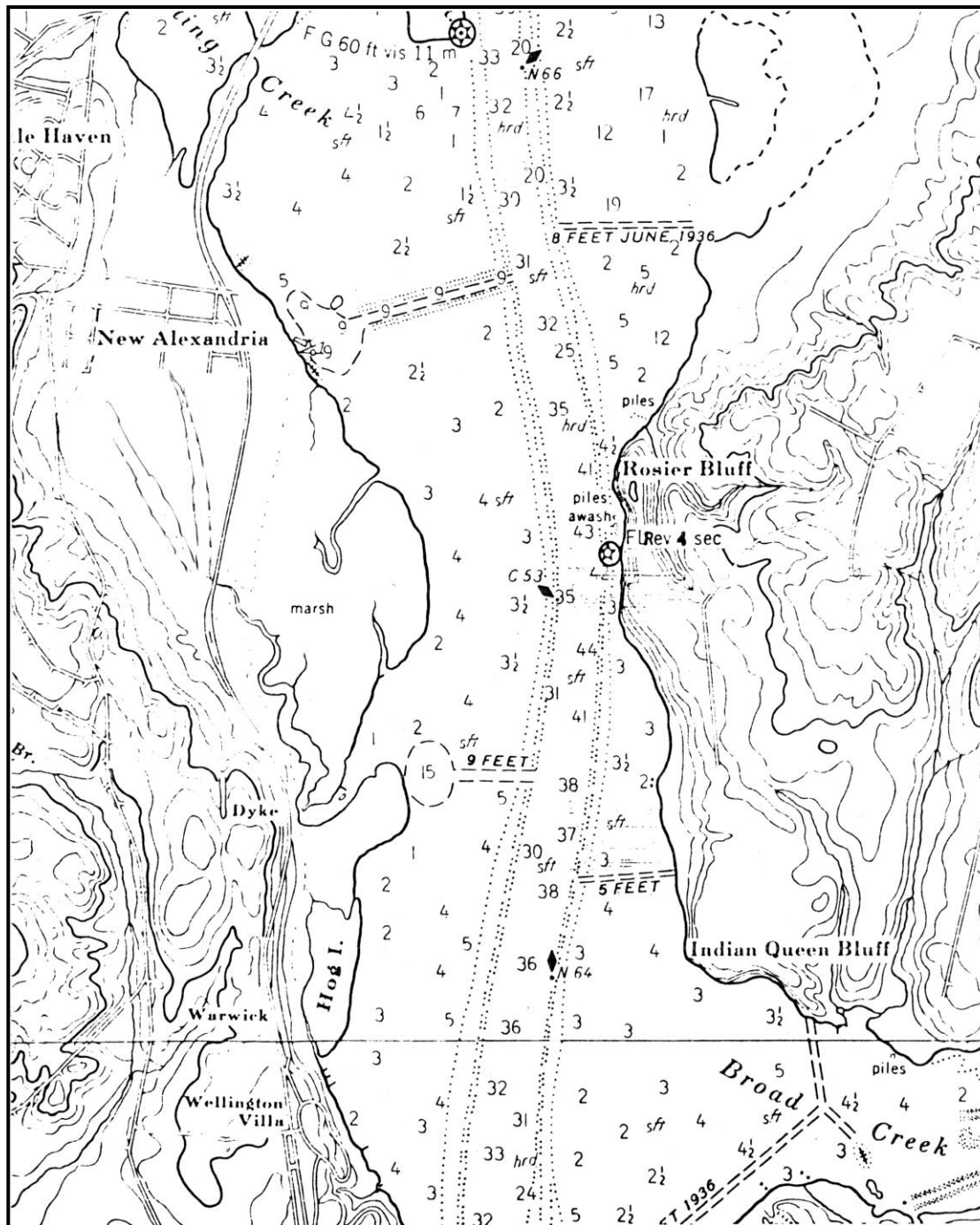
1972 - Smoot Sand and Gravel relinquished dredging rights in Dyke Marsh.

P.L. 93-251, Sect 86a, 1974 - Sec'y of Army acting thru the Chief of Engineers is authorized to assist NPS...to plan for, design and implement restoration of the historic and ecological values of Dyke Marsh. Such assistance may include, but need not be limited to furnishing suitable fill....

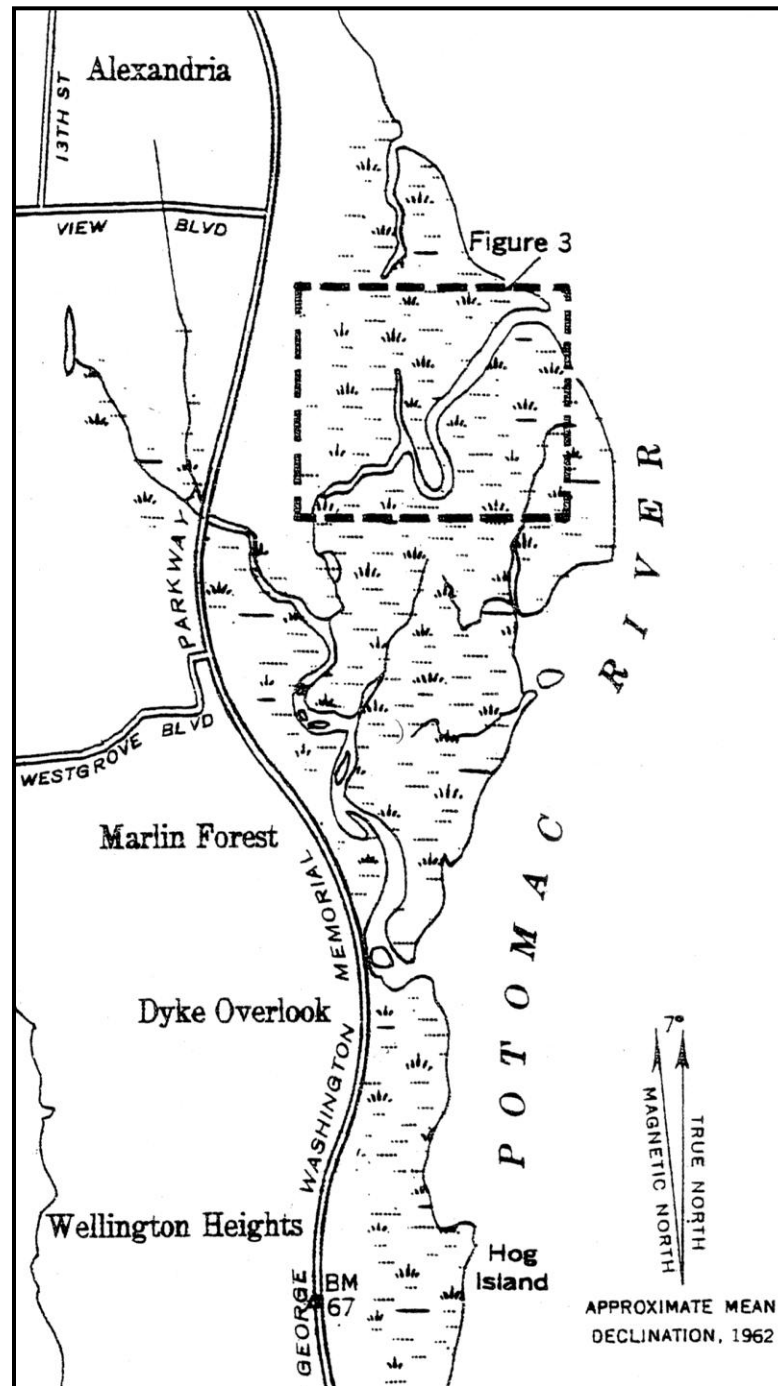
1904

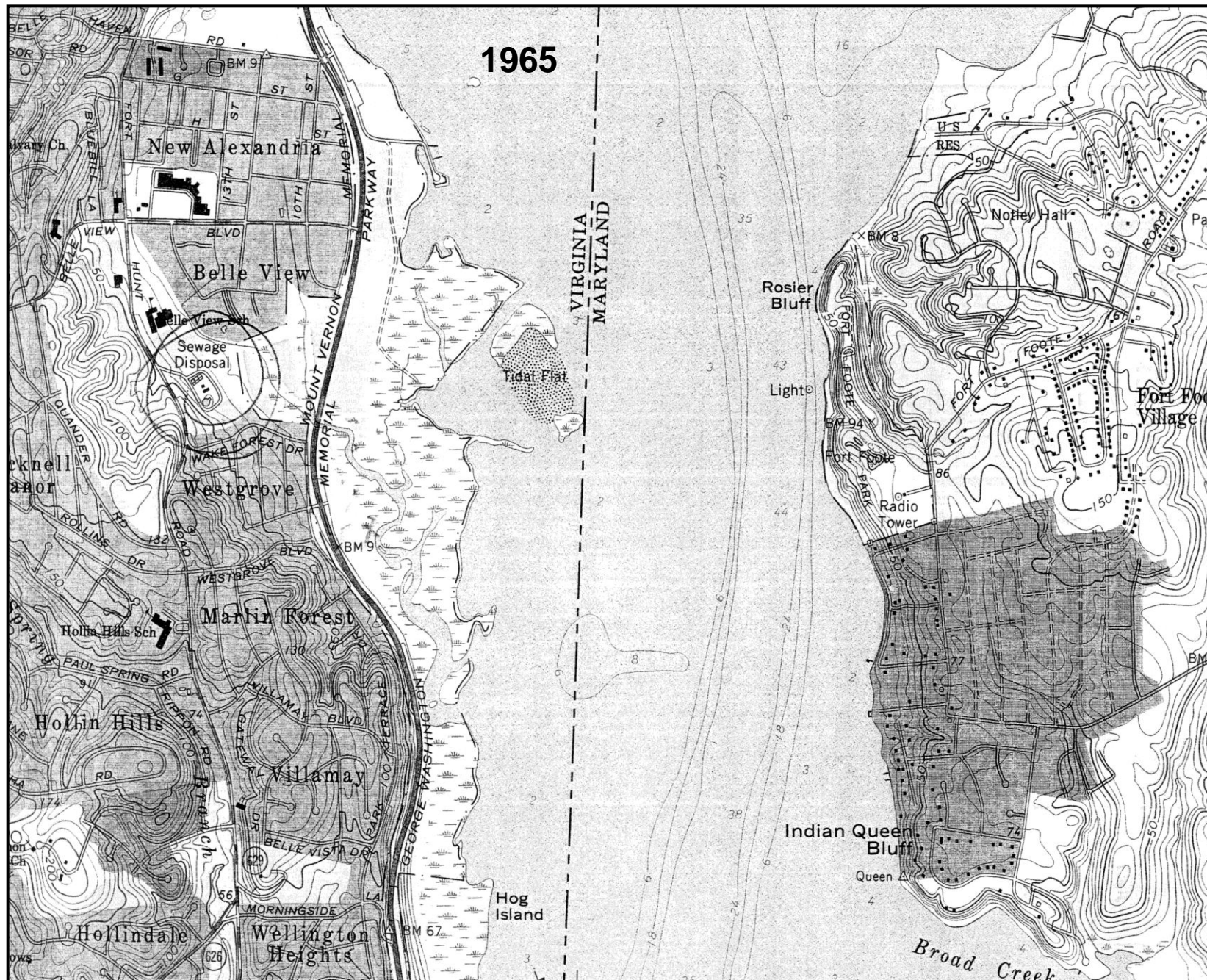


1942

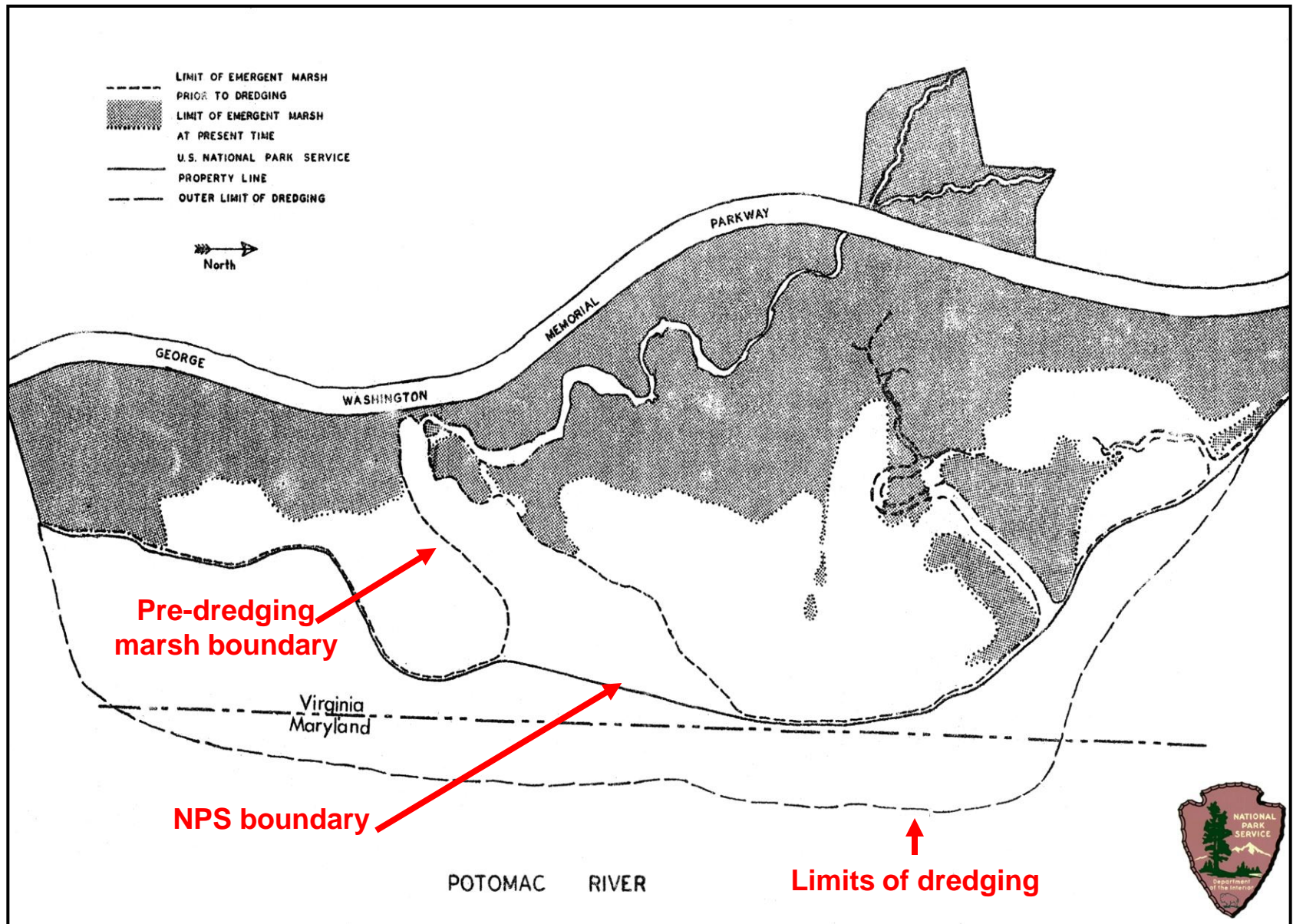


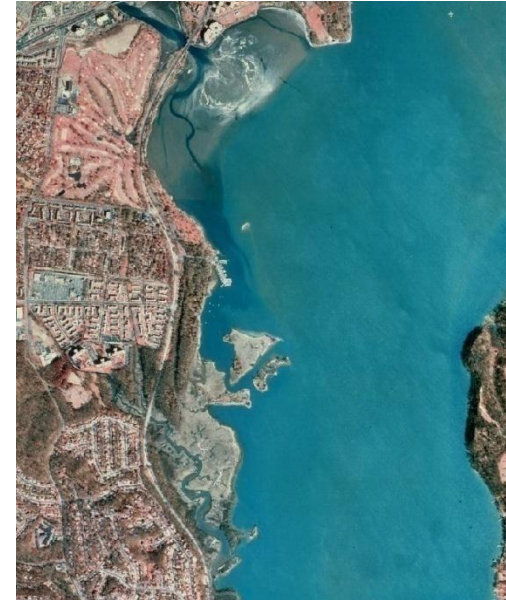
1962





1976





The aerial photographs above represent Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve and the embayment of Hunting Creek through several decades. On the left is an aerial photo from 1937, the middle is an aerial photo from 1959, and on the right is an orthophoto from 1994.



The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Was passed in 1969 and has been called the “foundation of modern American environmental protection” (CEQ 1997).
- Is a legal requirement for federal agencies, but is better described as an environmental planning process.
- Is “...the most important and far-reaching environmental and conservation measure ever enacted by Congress.”



Actions Requiring NEPA Planning

- ***Any federal action*** or federal decision being considered that would, if implemented, have an impact on the human environment
- ***Projects, plans, grants, official policy, permits*** trigger the need for NEPA review



Elements of the NEPA Process

- Articulate the purpose, need, and objectives.
- Look at all reasonable alternatives, including **No Action**.
- Analyze impacts using reliable scientific data and a problem-solving approach.



Implementing NEPA Public Participation

- The interested and affected public are involved and informed.
- The NPS is required to be diligent in its efforts to involve the public.
- NEPA documents are meant to be focused, analytic, problem-solving reports to help agencies make informed and wise decisions.



Purpose, Need and Objectives

- **Purpose:** Broad goal statement that tells readers what the proposal intends to accomplish by taking action
- **Need:** It answers the question “Why take action now?”
- **Objectives:** Specific statements of purpose that must be met in large part for the plan to be considered a success



Alternatives

- Alternatives are different ways to solve the “problems” identified in the purpose and need.
- They are within stated constraints, including NPS policies.
- Each should minimize impacts to all or several resources.



Alternatives

- Alternatives are the “heart” of the NEPA environmental planning process.
- Alternatives provide options for decision makers.
- They are based on environmental, rather than technical, logistic or economical differences.
- They must be **reasonable**.

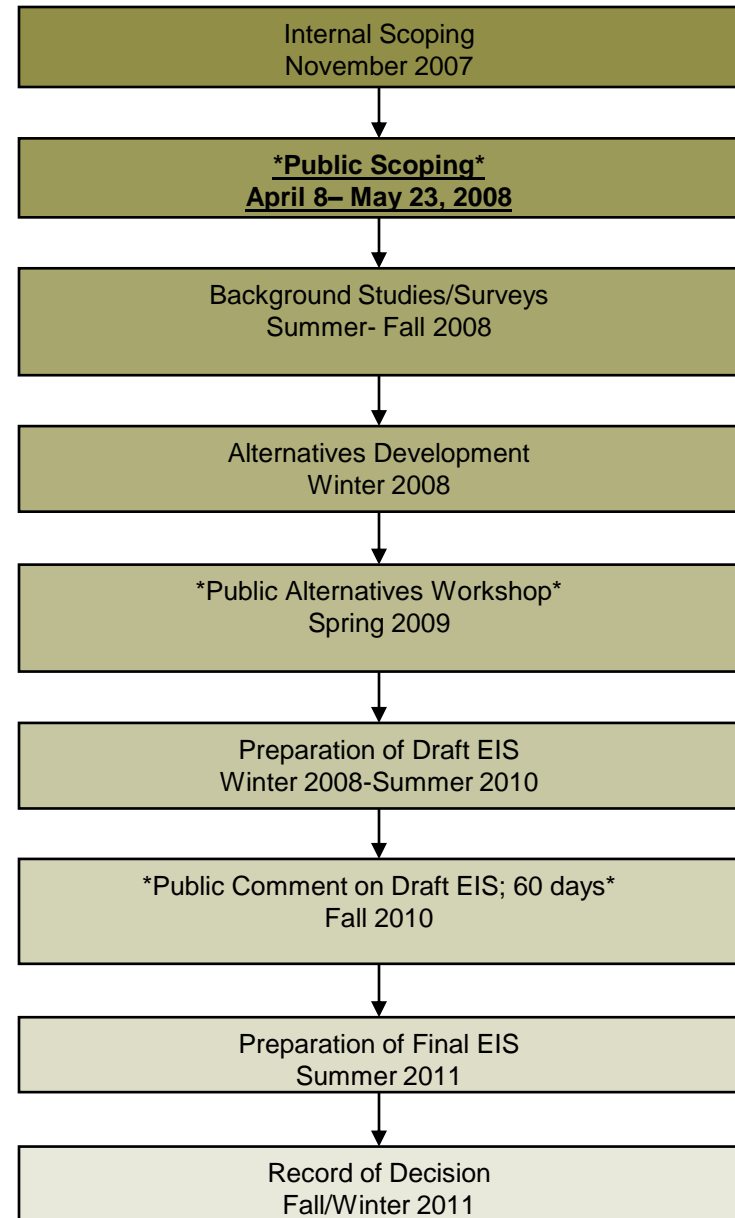


Reasonable Alternatives

- Economically feasible
- Display common sense
- Meet the objectives of taking action
- Technically feasible
- Not necessarily the cheapest or easiest solution



NEPA Process





How to Provide Comments During Scoping

- We are accepting comments tonight.
- You can submit comments directly on-line on the Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/gwmp>
- Submit written comments to the park.
The formal comment period will close
on Friday, May 23, 2008



- This concludes our formal presentation.
- Once again, we will not be accepting public testimony tonight.
- However, tonight you may provide written comments on flip charts or comment forms or submit them at a later date.
- The public comment period ends on Friday, May 23, 2008.



- At this time, we invite you to visit with staff at each of the stations assembled to address any specific questions that you may have on the Environmental Impact Statement and process.
- Thank you for your continued interest and support in helping to guide future restoration and management alternatives for Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.