

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee and the only member from Maryland, announced that the House of Representatives today passed the Fiscal Year 2007 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill which included \$100,000 for the construction of jetties at St Jerome Creek.

“Last week, work began to deepen the channels of St. Jerome Creek,” Hoyer said. “The federal navigation channel there restricts the ability of local recreational boaters, watermen, charter boat operators, and others to exit and enter the waterways during periods of low tide. The construction of jetties will free up these critical pathways and reduce the dredging need from a two year cycle to a ten year cycle.”

St. Jerome Creek provides the only safe harbor between Point Lookout and the Patuxent River for boats on the Chesapeake Bay seeking shelter from rapidly approaching storms. Many residents of the Creek depend on access to the Chesapeake Bay for income, including watermen and charter boat operators. At the request of Congressman Hoyer, the Army Corps of Engineers agreed to expedite this project, and dredging to improve the navigability and safety of St. Jerome Creek is currently underway.

Last year, Hoyer secured \$200,000 to enable the Army Corps to undertake a study to determine the feasibility of constructing one or more jetties at the mouth of St. Jerome Creek. The funding included in the House bill would enable the Corps to complete plans and specifications for the project.

*Rep. Hoyer also helped secure funding for the following projects in Southern Maryland.*

**Patuxent River, Patuxent Beach Road, \$565,000**

Continuous wave action has caused erosion behind the bulkhead at Murray Road forming large eroded sinkholes. Further erosion will compromise the stability of the road located along the bulkhead. This funding will enable the Corps to construct a new bulkhead and provide adequate protection against further shoreline erosion.

**North Beach Restoration, \$65,000**

The marsh at North Beach has been identified as a significant Black Duck stopover, one of the few remaining on the western shore of Maryland. However, the marsh is becoming severely degraded from nearby development, altered hydrology, and poor drainage. This project seeks to restore a more natural hydrologic regime and enhance the existing 440-acre salt marsh.

*The Senate must now pass the Fiscal Year 2007 Energy and Water Appropriations Act and the differences between the two bills must be reconciled in a House-Senate Conference Committee before the bill can become law.*

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