



William B. Hunt, AICP, Director

Harry Knight, Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

March 2, 2021

To: Commissioners of St. Mary's County
Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, County Administrator

From: William B. Hunt, Director *WBH*

Subject: Report on questions from property owners who responded to the notification of the public hearing on the State-determined 1000 foot Critical Area Boundary

Staff requested a public hearing on the State-determined 1000 foot Critical Area Boundary that the County is required to adopt. This request for public hearing was made at the CSMC meeting of February 2, 2021. At that time Commissioners directed staff to send a letter to property owners with an increase in the amount of Critical Area on their properties. The GIS Division downloaded the data used by the State to produce the maps with the new 1000 foot Critical Area Boundary into a spreadsheet. The Administration Division of Land Use and Growth Management produced the letters and mailed the information about the March 2nd public hearing to the 2000 property owners identified in the spreadsheet.

A chart was made listing the names of the residents who asked questions, the property address, a summary of the question or questions, and a summary of the Department's reply. The third column in the chart states if the resident contacted the Commissioners or the Department. If the contact was made to the Department, the form of the contact – phone or email – is included. The contacts are put into the chart in alphabetical order by residents' last names.

The replies that were sent to the property owners, along with the emails with the questions when the questions were sent by email, have been scanned and are included in BoardDocs. The replies are also arranged in alphabetical order by the residents' last names. The email asking for information is followed by the information sent to the resident. Separate paper copies of the chart and the responses have been provided to the Commissioners.

Summary of information requested:

The most frequently asked question was how much more of my property is now in the Critical Area. To answer this, a map of the current extent of the Critical Area on a property was sent along with a map showing where the new 1000 foot Critical Area boundary will be.

Several people were not aware that their property is in the Critical Area. In addition to a map showing the extent of the Critical Area, these people were also given information about the Critical Area, with links to State pages / websites describing the Critical Area Program.

There were also some miscellaneous questions, such as timber harvesting and taxes. These were answered with information from other agencies as well as links to webpages where the information related to the question could be found.