

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the Inspector General

INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT

**Allegations of Bid Tampering
Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation
Natural and Historic Resources Division**

Report Number: PGC-008-2025-B

October 3, 2024

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Internal Control Report
Allegations of Bid Tampering

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A. Overall Perspective

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has completed their investigation into allegations of bid tampering for the leasing of waterfowl blind sites on the Patuxent River and has issued a confidential Fraud, Waste and Abuse Report (PGC-008-2025-A) detailing the results of the investigation.

During the completion of the investigation, the OIG identified opportunities to strengthen internal controls within the bidding process. This Internal Control Report is being provided as a supplement to the Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Report.

The fraud, waste and abuse investigation was conducted in accordance with the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General. The investigation covered activities between July 14, 2024 and August 31, 2024.

B. Findings and Recommendations

1. Strengthen Documentation For Bid Packages

Issue: The current process¹ for the submission and review of sealed bids does not require Natural and Historic Resource Division (NHRD) personnel to log the date and time received as well as the submission method (e.g., in person, U.S. Postal Service, Delivery Service, etc.). Upon receipt, bid packages are placed in a safe at the Patuxent River Park Office. Bidders are invited to witness the opening of bids.

Risk/Criteria: Capturing the date, time, and submission method is critical information for responding to possible bid protests. The leasing of waterfowl sites is increasing in popularity. As a result, bids are more competitive and the risk for protest inherently increases.

Cause: NHRD management did not consider the value of dating the bid packages.

Issue Risk: Medium

Recommendation: Natural and Historic Resources management should enhance the current bid procedures to include the logging of the date and time received and submission method. If possible, the bid package should be electronically time stamped.

Management Response: Patuxent River Park management has spoken with Corporate Procurement to discuss the OpenGov bid service provider currently used for M-NCPPC procurement bids. It was determined that this system would not be appropriate for the park's waterfowl blind site bid program due to its design and registration requirements being tailored for businesses and the likelihood that the bid solicitations would be advertised throughout OpenGov and thus across the country which is not necessary. Management will continue to explore other electronic sealed bid programs.

Additionally, Patuxent River Park management will implement the following changes for the 2025 waterfowl blind site sealed bid process:

1. Patuxent River Park will utilize a written log to document the date and time each bid is received.
2. The Park Director will be the new point of contact for this program.

¹ 2024-2025 Bid Solicitation instructions can be found in Exhibit A.

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3. Patuxent River Park will continue to encourage bidders to attend the bid opening. The park is considering moving the opening to the evening when more bidders may be able to attend.

Expected Completion Date: August 2025

Follow-Up Date: September 2025

C. Conclusions

We believe the findings identified and communicated are correctable and that management's responses to all recommendations satisfactorily address the concerns. It is the responsibility of management to weigh possible additional costs of implementing our recommendations in terms of benefits to be derived and the relative risks involved.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, Natural and Historic Resources Division management and staff for the cooperation and courtesies extended during the course of our review.

Modupe Ogunduyile

Modupe Ogunduyile, CIG
Deputy Inspector General

Renee Kenney

Renee Kenney, CPA, CIG, CIA, CISA
Inspector General

October 3, 2024

Exhibit A



SOLICITATION OF BIDS FOR THE LEASING OF WATERFOWL BLIND SITES ON THE PATUXENT RIVER

NEW for 2024-25 Season- Site E will have two locations in the general area that permit holders are able to hunt throughout the season. These two locations may not be hunted simultaneously. Sites C and G have been relocated to nearby locations.

Notice is hereby given that the M-NCPPC shall permit the right to establish a limited number of blind sites and stationary blinds for waterfowl hunting on M-NCPPC lands on the Patuxent River in Prince George's County. The fee for the permit will be determined by sealed bid. The permit will be awarded to the highest bidder. Individuals or groups may bid on any or all of the sites offered but will only be eligible to permit one site per season (except for Sites E1 and E2). Only four (4) hunters will be allowed on site at a given time.

Site A – Patuxent River (north of Eagle Harbor)

Site B - Black Swamp Creek (near Aquasco)

Site C – Patuxent River (in Jug Bay)

Site D - Back Channel (north of Route 4 at Wayson's Corner)

Sites E1 and E2 - Back Channel (northeast of Site D)

Site F - Patuxent River (south of Spyglass Island)

Site G– Patuxent River (north of Spyglass Island)

Site H – Black Swamp Creek tributary (near Aquasco, southeast of Site B)

The exact locations of the waterfowl blind sites are indicated by posted signage. Some sites have existing stationary blinds. The condition of each site varies and is permitted in its current “as is condition”. Interested bidders are encouraged to scout sites prior to submitting bids. The permittee(s) must provide his/her own materials and labor to construct a blind if they chose. The permittee(s) may also hunt from a boat blind at the stake marking the designated site.

Additional information may be obtained by calling Greg Kearns at the Patuxent River Park, 301-627-6074.

Bids must be submitted for all sites on attached bid sheet. Sealed bids identified by name, address, phone, and choice of site must be submitted by 12:00 P.M., Thursday, August 15, 2024 to:

**Waterfowl Blind Site Bid, M-NCPPC
Patuxent River Park
16000 Croom Airport Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-8395
ATTN: Greg Kearns**

Bids will be opened at 12:30 P.M., Thursday, August 15, 2024 at the above mentioned address.

Bidders are invited to witness the opening of the bids. High bidders will be notified by Friday, August 16, 2024. The bidder or designee must be readily available on this date or before to accept or deny the bid. All reasonable efforts will be made to contact the highest bidder. **If calls are not returned within 48 hours, the blind site will be forfeited to the next high bidder.**

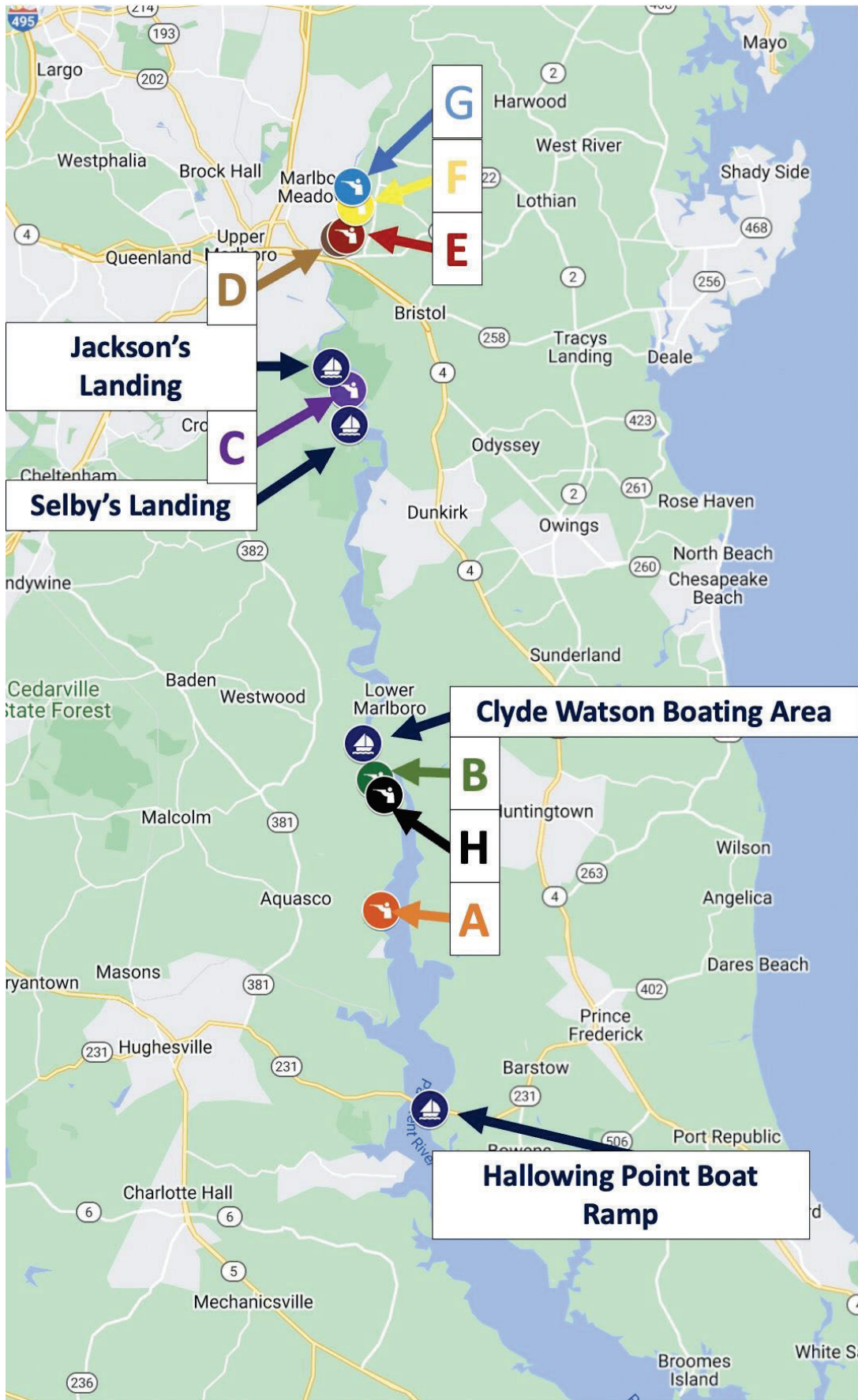
2023-2024 Season - Winning Bids

Bid Amount	Site	Location
\$800.00	A	Cedarhaven (north of Eagle Harbor)
\$2,956.00	B	Black Swamp (at Carpenters Creek)
\$3,200.00	C*	Jug Bay (near Swan Point Creek)
\$4,800.99	D	Back Channel (north of Rt.4 at Wayson's Corner)
\$13,330.00	E**	Back Channel (north of Site D)
\$3,150.00	F	Patuxent River (south of Spyglass Island)
\$6,154.00	G*	West side of Patuxent River north of Spyglass Island
\$3,550.00	H	715 yards southeast of site "B" on bend in Black Swamp Creek

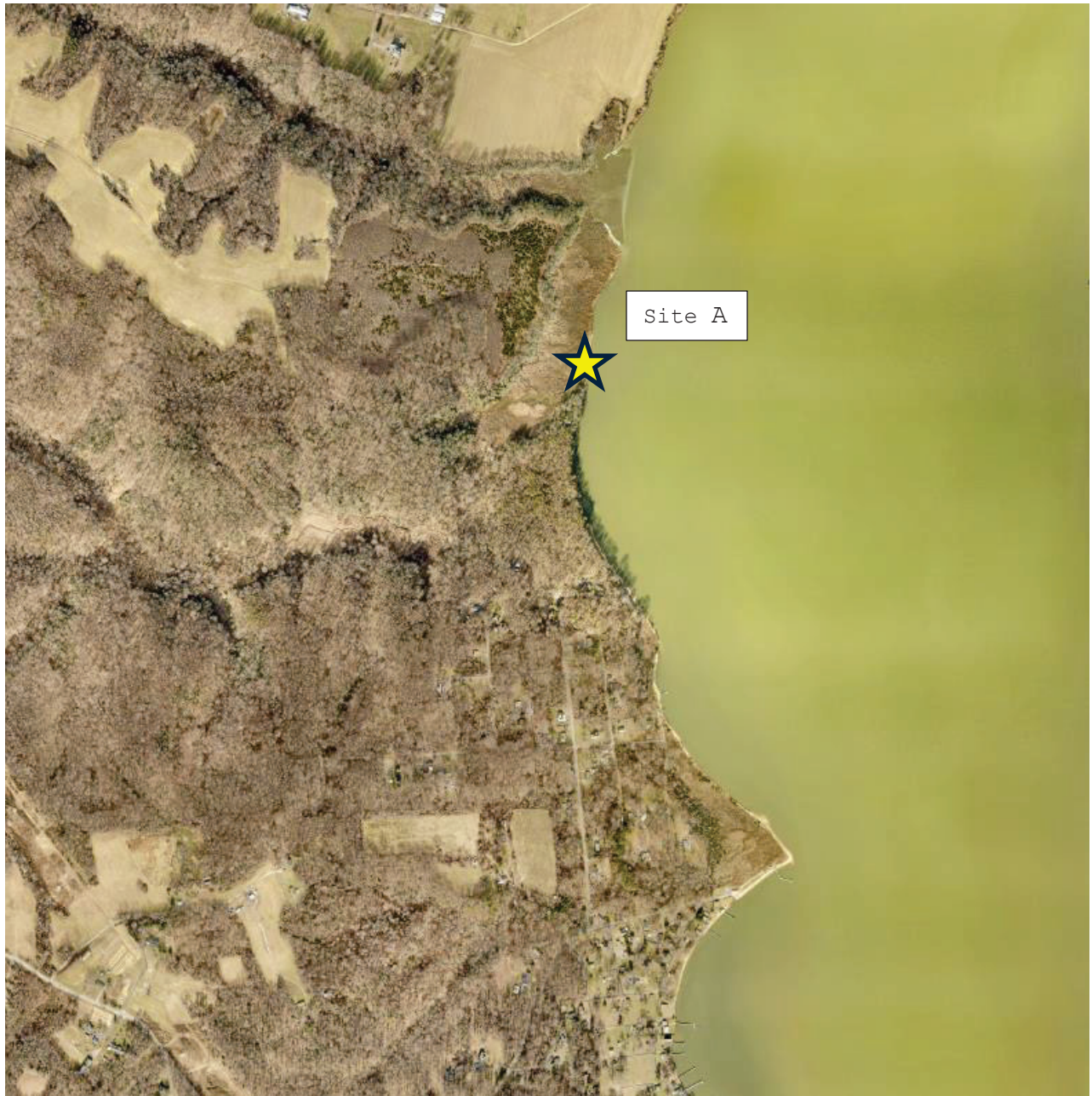
**new locations for 2024-25 season*

***additional hunt location for 2024-25 season*

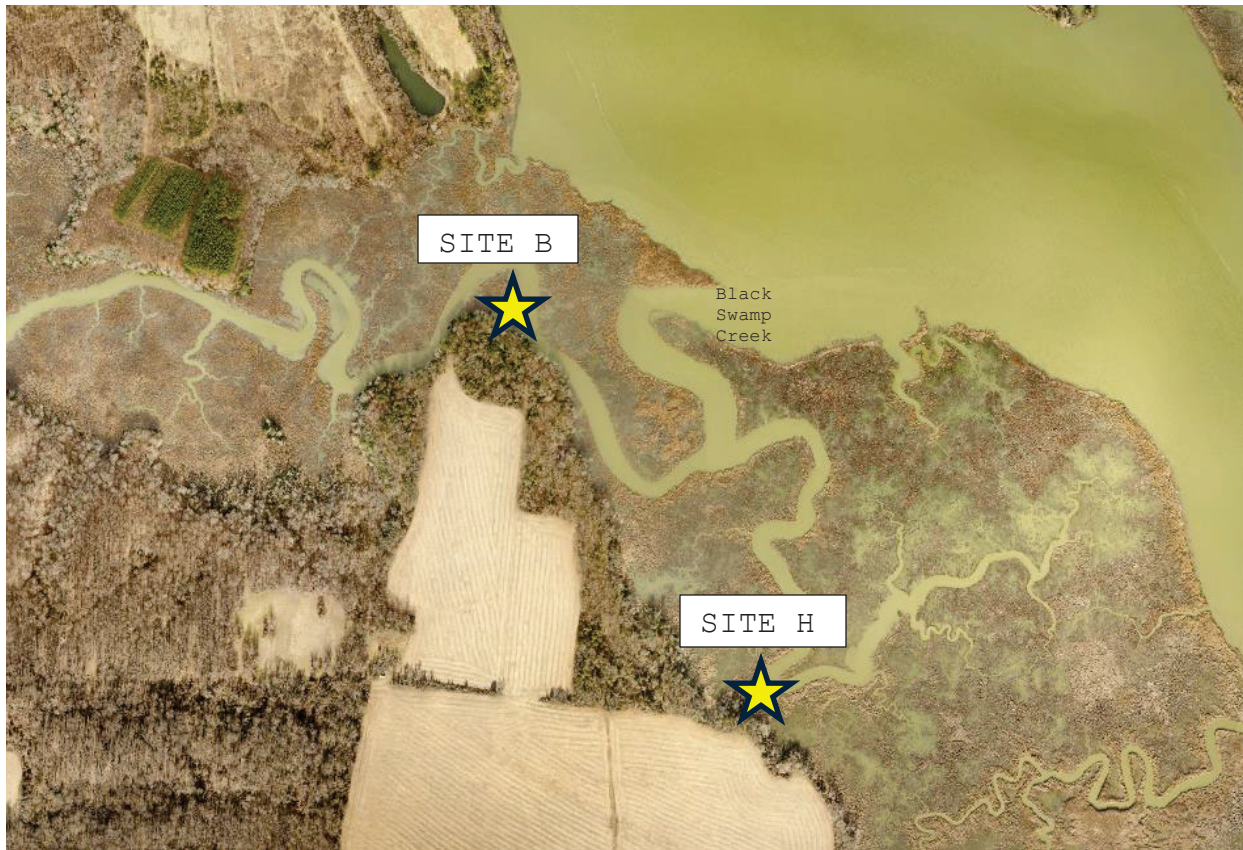
A credit card or check payable to **M-NCPPC** covering the full amount of the bid must be returned to the Patuxent River Park office by 5:00 PM, Friday, August 23, 2024. **FAILURE TO COMPLY WILL VOID THE PERMIT. BLIND SITE WILL BE AWARDED TO THE NEXT HIGHEST BIDDER.**



SITE DESCRIPTIONS

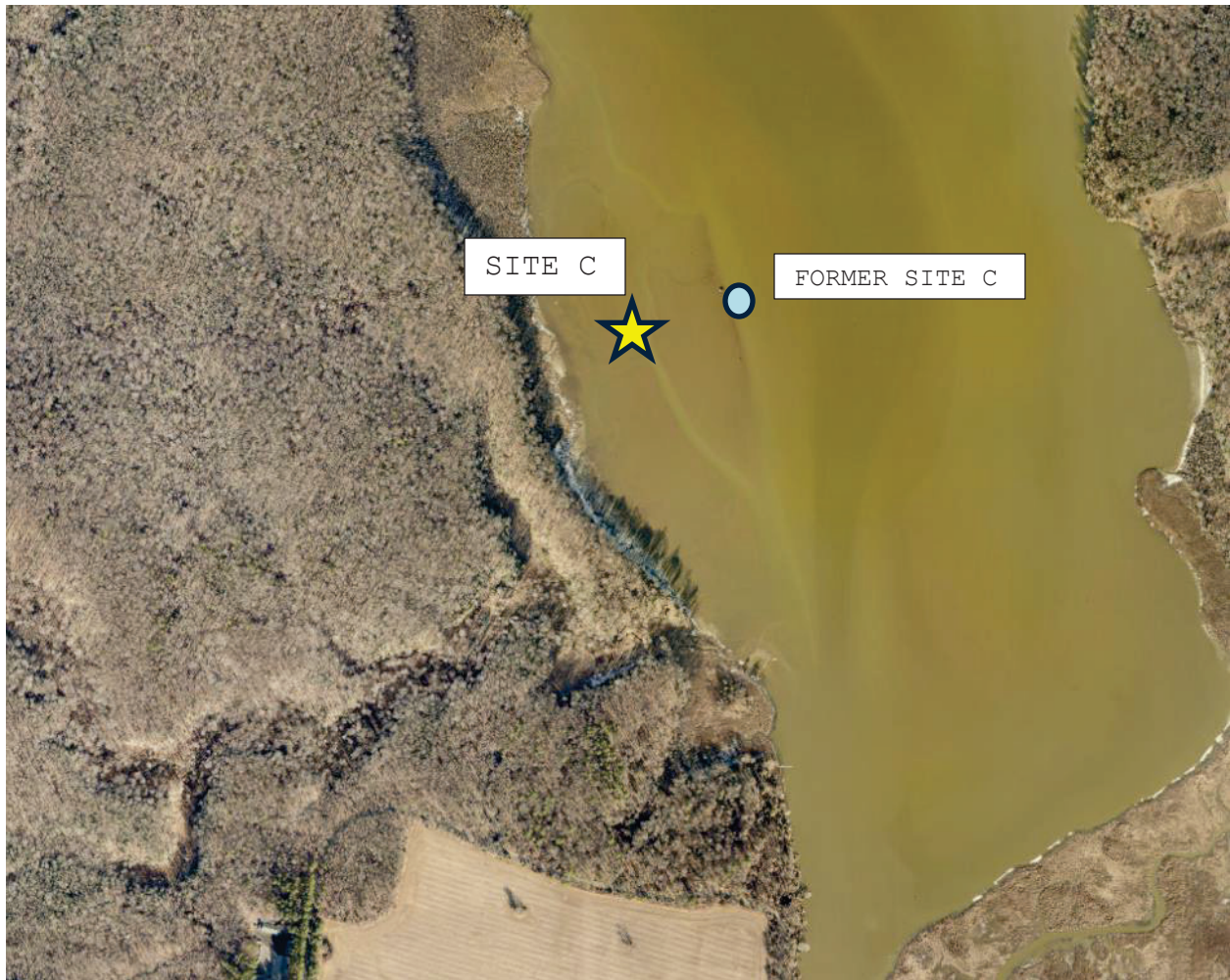


SITE A Near mouth of Jacks Creek; north of Eagle Harbor. Open water site. The closest public boat ramp is Hallowing Point Boat Ramp.



SITE B – After entering Black Swamp Creek, turn right at split. Travel approximately 0.27 miles. Blind site is located just past trees on the left. Located 715 yards northwest of Site H. The nearest public boat ramp is Clyde Watson Boating Area on Magruder’s Ferry Rd.

SITE H – After entering Black Swamp Creek, turn left at split. Travel approximately 0.37 miles in tributary. Blind site is located on the sharp bend; approximately 71 yards from Site B. The nearest public boat ramp is Clyde Watson Boating Area on Magruder’s Ferry Rd.



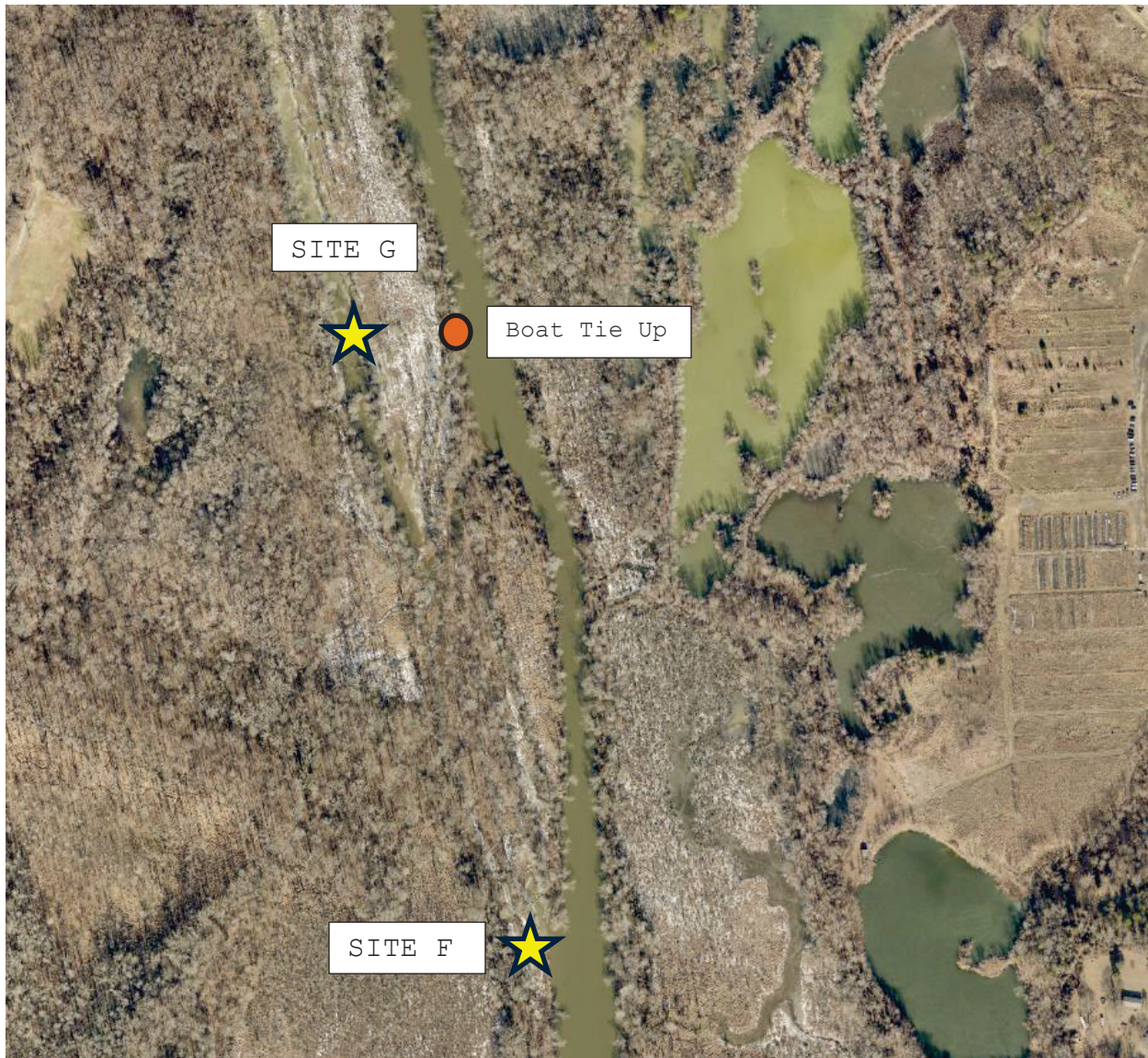
SITE C – NEW LOCATION. Approximately 0.7 miles from Selby's Landing at Jug Bay off small channel. Follow marked channel. Approximately 170 yards southwest from previous location.



SITE D – Approximately 250 yards up from mouth of Back Channel Creek and 630 yards southwest of Site E1. Located on a large creek in a fresh water marsh. The nearest public boat ramp is Selby’s Landing at Jug Bay Natural Area.

SITE E1 - Approximately 0.6 miles upstream from mouth of Back Channel Creek, 630 yards northeast of Site "D", 360 yards southwest of Site E2, and 1230 yards southwest of Site F. Located on a large creek in a fresh water marsh. May not be hunted at the same time as Site E2. The nearest public boat ramp is Selby’s Landing at Jug Bay Natural Area.

SITE E2 – NEW. Approximately 0.7 miles upstream from mouth of Back Channel Creek, 780 yards northeast of Blind "D", 360 yards northeast of Site E1, and 880 yards southwest of Site F. Located on a large creek in a fresh water marsh. May be in accessible on low tides or frozen. May not be hunted at same time as Site E1. The nearest public boat ramp is Selby’s Landing at Jug Bay Natural Area.



SITE F - Approximately 1 mile north past Back Channel Creek on left shore of river going upstream. Located across from the southern tip of Spyglass Island. The nearest public boat ramp is Selby's Landing at Jug Bay Natural Area.

SITE G – NEW LOCATION. Located 600 yards north of Site F. This site is located in a slough of standing water approximately 3ft deep. Slough has the potential to freeze. It will require an approximate 80 yard walk from the river shore/boat tie up. The nearest public boat ramp is Selby's Landing at Jug Bay Natural Area.

SPECIES	A	B	C	D	E1 + E2	F	G	H
Canada Goose	X*	X*	X*	X	X			X*
Mallard	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*
Black Duck	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X	X	X*
Pintail	X	X	X*	X*	X*			X
Wigeon	X	X	X	X	X			X
Wood Duck	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*
Greenwinged Teal	X	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*
Bluewinged Teal	X	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*
Scaup	X*	X	X					X
Ringneck		X	X	X	X*	X*	X*	X
Goldeneye	X			X	X	X	X	
Bufflehead	X	X	X					X
Ruddy Duck	X	X	X					X
Common Merganser	X	X	X					

*** - Predominate Species in Area of Blind Site**

X - Species likely to be seen

The waterfowl listed represent species seen in the area. We have attempted to identify those species that predominate near each blind site which could be important in determining which site you may wish to bid on.

EARLY RESIDENT CANADA GOOSE SEASON

This year we will again offer additional blind sites for the early resident Canada Goose season only (no Teal or other ducks shall be harvested; Canada Goose only). They will be offered on a daily reservation basis at no charge for the period of September 1-15 only. At the end of the resident goose season, these sites will be closed for hunting. The following procedures apply:

- Reservations can be made Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm, at 301-627-6074.
- Blind sites can be reserved beginning Tuesday, August 22 at 10:00 am.
- Up to (4) hunters are permitted at each blind site.
- Reservations require name, phone number, date and site.
- The blind site locations will be staked with a “letter” assignment and a boat is required for access. Please call Greg Kearns at 301-627-6074 for blind location information.
- Launch site available at Selby’s Landing or at Rt. 4 with a car-top boat.
- Hunting on Saturdays, September 7 and 14, is restricted to one-half hour before sunrise to 10:00 AM and from 4:00 PM to one-half hour **after** sunset.
- **NOTE: (No plug required for Resident Geese). Hunting hours for Resident Geese only are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.**
- The limit for resident goose season is eight (8) geese per person/per day.
- If you need to cancel your reservations, please call as soon as possible to make the site available for others. Call Greg Kearns at 301-627-6074.

The best times to hunt are early morning and late evening. You can expect boater and canoe activity. Please be courteous and cautious.

Department of Parks & Recreation

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK & PLANNING COMMISSION
Natural and Historical Resources Division

REQUEST FOR BID ON WATERFOWL BLIND SITES

Bids are due to Patuxent River Park by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 15, 2024

Mail to: Patuxent River Park, 16000 Croom Airport Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
“ATTN: Greg Kearns Waterfowl Blind Bid”

<u>SITE</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Site A	_____
Site B	_____
Site C	_____
Site D	_____
Sites E1 and E2	_____
Site F	_____
Site G	_____
Site H	_____

(Note: if you do not wish to submit a bid please enter “No Bid”)

Bidder’s Name & Address (printed): _____

Day Time Phone: _____ Email: _____

Bidder’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

REQUIRED: List all the names, addresses and phone numbers of the persons who will be on the permit if a site is awarded (please print) on the next page. Persons not listed on the bid will not be allowed on the permit. Please remember that only four (4) hunters are permitted to hunt at one time and there must be at least one permittee in attendance. ****Please note that all persons associated with a group cannot submit separate bids, either as an individual or as part of another group or their bid will be disqualified.****

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE#
