

Dames Quarter Focus Area Factsheet

Boundaries of the Focus Area:

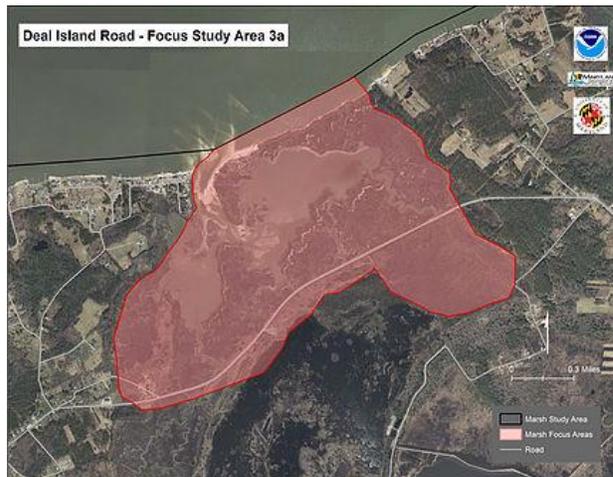
The Dames Quarter Focus area includes the area north of Deal Island Road in between Dames Quarter Creek and Rock Creek, and Riley Roberts Road to the south.

Description and Uses:

Most of the shoreline properties along the Tangier Sound are protected with riprap and/or bulkhead. Natural shorelines exist along Dames Quarter Creek. There are two public boat ramps, one on Messick Road and one in the Deal Island State Wildlife Management Area (WMA) at the end of Riley Roberts Road. These provide access points for hunting, recreational crabbing and fishing, and boating by local residents and visitors. The ramp at the end of Messick Road provides access to the Monie Bay water trails. The area is primarily residential, but there are also several commercial watermen businesses and tourism businesses. These include the Farmhouse Bed and Breakfast, an artist studio and shop, and a kayak rental company.

Important Historical/Heritage Features:

Dames Quarter has two historic United Methodist Churches: Somerset United Methodist (white congregation) and Macedonia United Methodist (black congregation). Both churches are still in use, though both have declining membership. Somerset UMC currently has an active congregation, while Macedonia UMC is only used for special events. Other historically significant sites located here include Henry's Beach, a former African American beach resort that was in operation through the 1950s, and a former Rosenwald school on Riley Roberts Road, one of many African American schools built in the early 20th century by philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, and the last still standing Rosenwald school in Somerset County. There are also several historic cemeteries located here.



Focus Area Demographics:

2014 Census Data estimates

Population	177
Over 65	19
Under 18	43
Median household income	\$36,027
% Total population employed	28%
% Population living below poverty line	40% (53% of those are over 65)

The population of Dames Quarter was estimated to have been 565 people in 1940, showing a drastic decline over the past century. Compared to other Deal Island peninsula communities Dames Quarter has a much lower percentage over 65 and much higher percentage under 18 showing a more normal population distribution than the other communities. However, Dames Quarter's population has a 40% poverty rate compared to only 1% for Chance and 23% for Deal Island. In 2000 Dames Quarter had an estimated 84 occupied households (part or full time) out of 132 total household units.

Information from Risk Assessment Worksheets: (**The numbers below are based on 26 responses from Dames Quarter and are not representative of Dames Quarter's population.*)

- **Additional demographics:** 84% of respondents are full time year-round residents. 42% of male household heads work in the community compared to only 28% of female heads. Only 29% of respondents are actively engaged in local community organizations.
- **Primary concerns:** Roughly 60% of respondents are concerned about flooding with storms, tides, and/or roadside ditches. 27% are concerned about shoreline erosion and 15% are concerned about the integrity of their bulkhead or riprap. Several people noted concerns about road access during flood events.
- **Social vulnerabilities:** 12% indicated that they have children under 18 living at home; 16% have elderly/disabled people living at home. Most said they are able or most likely able to handle the financial burden of moderate storm damage; 8% indicated that they cannot.
- **Property vulnerabilities:** Almost all respondents own reported property (rather than rent or reporting on another's property). 63% said their property was in the floodplain (12% were uncertain). 39% have a non-elevated HVAC unit; 48% reported having flood vents. Just over half have a free-standing propane tank, but under half of those individuals (42%) said their propane tank is anchored. Most have additional structures on site. 54% live adjacent to a shoreline; 35% live adjacent to marsh; and 31% live adjacent to ditches.
- **Shoreline vulnerabilities:** 31% of shoreline property owners said their shoreline is in good condition. 27% of property owners have bulkhead, 31% have riprap, and 27% have natural shoreline. Only 12% of those with bulkhead said it is in good condition; 27% of those with riprap said their riprap is in good condition.
- **Flooding vulnerabilities:** 46% have experienced recent flooding (within the past month). 23% indicated this flooding was moderate (2-5 inches); 12% said it was severe (over 5 inches). 42%

have experienced past flood damage to their primary residence; 8% have had damage to their business, and 35% have had damage to shoreline.

- ***Ditch conditions:*** Roughly 30% of respondents indicated that they have ditches on or adjacent to their property that are between 1-3 feet across, while 19% have ditches over 3 feet in width. 35% indicated that their ditches are filled with water. 56% reported that their ditches had been cleaned within the last year.

Targeted Areas of Vulnerability:

- ***Long Point Road:*** Significant road flooding occurs at the entrance to Long Point Rd. during rain events and super tides, as well as where the road passes over marsh at Long Gut. Water depths are significant enough to prevent access to the neighborhood at the end of Long Point Rd. Flooding also hinders access to basic services, such as mail delivery, utility maintenance, and school bus service.
- ***Riley Roberts Road:*** Significant road flooding occurs on road next to Macedonia United Methodist Church from tidal ditch overflow and during storm events. Tidal water has been documented on roadway in this area even during low tide and ideal weather conditions (see photos below). Flooding also inundates properties along roadway. Road flooding is also reported to prevent school bus service. Many properties along Riley Roberts Road are also experiencing marsh encroachment. This area is socio-economically depressed, and therefore more vulnerable to impacts.
- ***Hodson White Road:*** Roadway flooding occurs near intersection with McInturff Rd. as well as near the intersection with Hideaway Lane. Flooding is the result of tidal ditch overflow during super tides and rain events. Flooding is not severe enough to prevent residents from accessing properties, but it does prevent school bus service. Shoreline erosion is impacting properties along Tangier Sound. One long-time resident reported around 25 feet of shoreline lost since 1985. Much of the shoreline is bulkheaded or riprapped. Marsh migration is also occurring around roadway in flood prone areas.
- ***Messick Road:*** Roadway flooding occurs at the end of Messick Road during super tides and storm events, and has been reported to inundate boat ramp property. Storm damage occurred on properties next to boat ramp during Hurricane Sandy.

Select Focus Area Photos:



Above: Flooded ditches, roadway, and marsh encroachment near Macedonia UMC on Riley Roberts Rd. on a sunny day. (Feb. 2017).



Left: Flooding at the end of Messick Rd. at public boat ramp (Photo Credit: Maryland DNR)



Left: Flooding on Long Point Rd. after a storm event in January 2017 (above), and Long Point Rd. under normal conditions (below). Photo credit: Alane Ortega



Above: Erosion behind bulkhead on Hideaway Lane (Feb. 2017)