

PEARCE CREEK IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
February 19, 2016; 10:00 AM
90B North Center Street
Cecilton, MD 21919

Attendees:

AECOM (formerly URS): Chris Rogers

Anchor QEA: Karin Olsen, Walter Dinicola

Bay View Estates (BVE) Residents: Norine Haines, Bill Haines, Dave Heacock, Stephen Zawatski, Kathy Zawatski, Jennifer West, Mary Ann Fischer, William Fischer, Glenn Sass, Penny Sass, Becky Kiersznowski

Cecil County Health Department (CCHD): Angela Scramlin

Cecilton Mayor: Joe Zang

Cecil Whig: Jake Owens

Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Kristen Keene, David Peters

Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Chris Correale, Kristen Weiss, Dave Bibo, Holly Miller

MPA Consultant: Fran Flanigan

Representative from Office of Congressman Harris: Mary O'Keefe

Sunset Pointe: Kathleen McDonough

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): Jerry Jones, Gavin Kaiser, William Roche

West View Shores (WVS) Residents: Valerie Woodruff, Diane English, Gene Alderson, Wayne Dooley, Patricia Koria-Dooley

1.0 Welcome & Introductions

Kristen Weiss

- Ms. Weiss welcomed the attendees to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2.0 Summary Approval

Committee

- The Pearce Creek Implementation Committee (PCIC) December 2015 meeting summary was approved as written.

3.0 Philadelphia District USACE (CENAP) Updates

CENAP

Liner Construction

- In the first two months of construction, the Pearce Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) has been cleared of vegetation and surveyed; the current work is focused on grading.
- About 50% of the liner materials have been delivered and is being stored on-site.
- The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) visited the site and expressed their satisfaction with the Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) measures, which will be in place before, during, and after construction.
- Although the liner installation is weather dependent, residents can expect to see more site activity. Twelve inches of on-site soil material will be placed atop the liner.
- A citizen asked if the perimeter of the site will be available for recreational purposes (e.g. bird-watching); CENAP replied yes, the perimeter will be available for recreational purposes, but only after construction is complete.

Groundwater and Discharge Monitoring Plans

- The dredging window occurs from October 1st – March 31st; however, discharge from the DMCF can occur any time of the year. Dredging is anticipated for October 2017.

- Discharge is restricted based on compliance with the Maryland state water quality standards. If the standards are not met; discharge must be stopped until the water quality criteria are in compliance.
- The Water Quality Certification (WQC) lists the constituents that will be monitored (i.e. pH, nutrients, etc.) and denotes that there will be monthly reporting requirements during discharge.
- The original location of discharge into the Elk River. That option was not economically feasible and the discharge waters will now enter the Pearce Creek drainage channel, move into the Pearce Creek Lake, and eventually the Elk River.
- The flow rate of discharge depends on the operational components of the spillway/slucice gate.
- The sediment from the navigation channels will also be tested and approved prior to dredging the material.
- The life expectancy of the Pearce Creek DMCF is currently unknown.
- Regarding dike raising to increase capacity, it is a possibility depending on the topography.
- The Pearce Creek DMCF has a two-foot freeboard requirement, and placement of material stops if the water level becomes too high
- CENAP is expected to submit the groundwater monitoring plan to MDE prior to October 2016.

Water Quality Certification (WQC) Renewal

- Regarding the WQC renewal, the WQC expires March 31, 2016 and CENAP has submitted a 1-year renewal/extension through MDE.

WQC Special Conditions

- Ms. Weiss shared the Special Conditions listed in the WQC that specifically relate to the monitoring requirements associated with the Pearce Creek DMCF. CENAP is required to submit an annual report containing tabular results of the prior year's monitoring, including water level, maps, and trends.
- CENAP is working with MDE on the specifics of the discharge monitoring plan.

4.0 Drinking Water Line Planning Progress

Chris Rogers and Mayor Joe Zang

Water System Construction Updates

- The transmission main contract was awarded and the Notice to Proceed will be given in the next couple of weeks. The distribution main contract is currently out for bid. The project completion time for the transmission and distribution mains has been estimated at 12 months.
- Once the transmission and distribution mains are nearing substantial completion, AECOM will begin the on-lot work.
- The transmission main carries the water to the communities, and the distribution main consists of the pipes throughout the communities.
- An addendum, regarding concerns of possible road damage that could be caused during the construction process, has been added to the bid documents for the distribution main project.
- The addendum includes more comprehensive and detailed road restoration specifications.
- The new bid is estimated to cost an additional \$345,000, which has been approved by the Maryland Port Administration (MPA). The contractor will have a one-year road warranty.
- A community-wide presentation regarding what to expect during the on-lot construction will be given in a few months. The on-lot work is expected to be completed in two years.

- As each lot is connected to the system, there will be immediate access to the potable water, and each potable water well on those lots will be abandoned accordingly. All lots on record will have a connection stub installed, including the vacant lots.

5.0 MPA Update

Kristen Weiss and Karin Olsen

Pearce Creek Exterior Monitoring Results

- MPA is overseeing the exterior monitoring, which they have voluntarily committed to; the exterior monitoring is not required by MDE.
- The first round of exterior monitoring (baseline sampling) has been completed by Anchor QEA, a consultant firm hired by MPA and Maryland Environmental Service (MES), and the results are available. Three more rounds of baseline sampling are currently scheduled (spring 2016, fall 2016 and spring 2017).
- The samples are focused on the waters and aquatic environment surrounding the Pearce Creek DMCF in an effort to establish baseline environmental conditions and identify trends over time.
- The testing program included surface water quality, sediment chemistry, bioassay sediment testing, and a benthic community evaluation.
- The Pearce Creek DMCF exterior monitoring program contains seven sample locations downstream of the discharge location in Pearce Creek Lake, and one reference location upstream. Elk River contains two sample locations, one being near the discharge location from Pearce Creek Lake, and the other upriver.
- The length of testing will be assessed via adaptive management and based on coordination with MPA and MES.
- The surface water chemical testing results were compared to the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) and Maryland acute (short-term effect) and chronic (long-term effect) water quality criteria.
- The Pearce Creek Lake is freshwater (0-0.5 parts per thousand (ppt) salinity) and the Elk River is oligohaline (0.5-5 ppt salinity). Concerns were expressed regarding the salinity of the lake changing due to discharge, and as well as concerns regarding the Pearce Creek Lake feeding the Magothy aquifer.
- Turbidity results were variable throughout Pearce Creek Lake due to shore erosion and algae, while Elk River has lower results due to deeper waters, higher flows, etc.
- Chemical testing results for Pearce Creek Lake were positive. Only one metal (zinc) exceeded the water quality criteria at one location; none of the Elk River samples exceeded water quality criteria.
- The sediment testing includes three components: physical characterization, chemical testing, and benthic bioassays. The sediment testing results were compared against a threshold effect concentration (TEC) and a probable effect concentration (PEC).
- If the results are lower than a TEC, no effects are expected on aquatic organisms; if the results are between the TEC and PEC, there is a potential for an effect on an aquatic organism; if the results are above the PEC, there is a probable effect on an aquatic organism.
- Probable effect does not necessarily indicate mortality, but could involve a different type of effect such as a behavioral effect or slowed growth.
- The sediments of the Pearce Creek Lake were composed of silts and clays, the Elk River monitoring location was sandy, and the Elk River reference location was silty with a significant amount of shell material.

- The nutrient and metal concentrations were found to be variable at all of the locations.
- Regarding the chemical screening, there were five metals at the Pearce Creek Lake monitoring locations which fell between the TEC and PEC, and nickel slightly exceeded the PEC. The nickel concentrations observed at Pearce Creek Lake are consistent with other nickel concentrations throughout the Chesapeake Bay due to the natural geology of the region.
- For the Pearce Creek Lake reference location, two metals were found between the TEC and PEC, and again nickel exceeded the PEC.
- Six metals were detected between the TEC and PEC at the Elk River monitoring location, and two metals were detected between the TEC and PEC at the Elk River reference location. None of the metals exceeded the PEC at either location in the Elk River. The group was reminded that metals are naturally occurring in the environment.
- The benthic bioassay testing was conducted using laboratory-raised *Hyallela azteca*. The organisms were measured for survival and growth after 10 days. High survival rates were observed for both the Pearce Creek Lake and Elk River sediments.
- The benthic community assessment involved 12 different metrics that are calculated for each location. Several of the metrics are combined to generate a value called the Chesapeake Bay Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity (B-IBI). The assessment allows for a direct comparison between sites throughout the Bay. Abundance, diversity, and species composition are identified and assessed to determine the health of the benthic community. Based on the results, locations are classified as Meets Restoration Goal, Marginal, Degraded, and Severely Degraded.
- Six of the Pearce Creek Lake sample locations, as well as the reference location, met the Chesapeake Bay restoration goal. One Pearce Creek Lake sample location was classified as Severely Degraded (PCL-07), which was determined by low abundance of organisms.
- The Elk River reference site was classified as Severely Degraded due to an overabundance of one species, and the Elk River monitoring location was classified as Marginal.

Elected Official Outreach

- The Executive Director of the MPA, Jim White, is currently at the Eastern Shore Delegation in Annapolis and will be providing a briefing on the Pearce Creek project.
- The Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) consists of an Executive Committee; the Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary serves as a co-chair with the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. Other members of the Executive Committee include the Secretary of MDE, US Army Corps of Engineers Colonels, a representative of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and Fran Taylor who represents the Citizens Advisory Committee.
- The DMMP Executive Committee receives quarterly briefings on the Pearce Creek project, and all of the other dredging projects for the State of Maryland.
- Citizens are encouraged to attend the Annual DMMP meeting, which is open to the public.

Community Outreach

- MPA was very encouraged by the turnout to the community meeting held on January 30th. The narrated PowerPoint presentation, which was given by AECOM, will be posted on the Pearce Creek outreach website (www.pearcecreekoutreach.com).
- Every resident of record will be receiving their plot plan in the mail with notes regarding the initial survey and the questionnaire that was completed at the time of the survey.
- Another community informational meeting regarding what to expect during the on-lot work is being scheduled for the fall with AECOM.

Pearce Creek Website Updates

- There are periodic updates being made to the Pearce Creek outreach website.
- Regarding the distribution of the plot plans, the website will contain information in the event that an in-home inspection still needs to be conducted, or changes need to be made to the existing plot plan.

6.0 Citizen Comments

Community Representatives

Community Meetings – Feedback from the Community Members

- There were a lot of questions regarding the on-lot work and the community access agreement.
- A citizen expressed three concerns: 1) the planting of the trees and site development; 2) the timing of the deliveries to the site, as some have occurred late at night; and 3) property damage from the deliveries and who should be contacted.
- In regards to the timing of deliveries, it was replied that to receive a delivery, a full crew needs to be present for safety concerns. Deliveries should not be occurring at night and those incidents will be investigated as well as the delivery schedule.
- Relative to property damage from deliveries, the citizen was directed to contact Jerry Jones.
- CENAP will include tree planting in the construction contract.

7.0 Future Meeting Discussions

Fran Flanigan

- The next PCIC meeting will be held April 15th.
- The PCIC agreed to a tentatively planned tour to follow the April PCIC meeting. Residents were asked to park nearby and/or carpool to the site for the tour, as parking is limited. Closed-toed walking shoes are required on the tour; the USACE will provide vests and hard hats for safety.

8.0 Adjourn

Kristen Weiss