

PEARCE CREEK IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
May 19, 2023 10:00 AM
90B North Center Street
Cecilton, MD 21919

Attendees:

Bay View Estates (BVE) Residents: Dave Heacock, Ralph Shrom

Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Christine Offerman

Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Holly Miller

Town of Cecilton: Mary Cooper, Brandon Jackson, Teresa Quinn

US Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District: Michael Hart

West View Shores (WVS) Residents: Penny Sass, Gigi Steele

Action Items:

- Ms. Offerman will coordinate with Mr. Hart regarding placement of the groundwater monitoring results on the Pearce Creek Outreach website.
- The Town of Cecilton will collect water samples from a few homes to ensure the chlorine levels are appropriate.
- Ms. Cooper will coordinate with Ms. Offerman regarding placement of the Town of Cecilton yearly water quality reports and monthly bacteriological reports on the Pearce Creek Outreach Website.
- Mr. Heacock will contact Mr. Jackson the next time the sinkhole opens to fill it with gravel

1.0 Welcome & Introductions

Ms. Offerman, Chair

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

2.0 Philadelphia District Corps (CENAP) Update

Michael Hart, CENAP

Pearce Creek DMCF Operations

- Mr. Hart stated that the US Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District (CENAP) continued the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) approach channels dredging project.
 - Six cycles have been placed at the Pearce Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF).
- Due to a delay in dredging commencement in 2021, the contractor was unable to complete the dredging for that cycle.
 - CENAP requested and received an emergency dredging approval from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to remove the shoaling which had created a navigational hazard; dredging began September 2022.
 - Approximately 1 million cubic yards of material was placed at the Pearce Creek DMCF; the amounts included the shoaling as well as the typical yearly dredging.
- The next contract to dredge the upper Chesapeake channels is anticipated to be awarded in September 2023 with work commencing after October.
 - Ms. Sass asked if CENAP would be able to dictate when the dredging contractor would perform the work.
 - Mr. Hart replied that the only requirement is that the contractor conducts the dredging within the dredging window (i.e., typically October 1 through March 31).

- Ms. Steele asked if dredging and placement would occur for the foreseeable future and noted that the Pearce Creek DMCF was not utilized in the past.
 - Mr. Hart replied that dredging will continue for the foreseeable future; Pearce Creek is estimated to be able to accept 25 cycles of dredging.
 - The reason Pearce Creek was not utilized for placement in the past was because Open Water Placement near Poole's Island was legal at that time and the preferred material placement option.
- Mr. Shrom noted that at other containment facilities in New Jersey the material was able to be reused beneficially and asked if any of the material at Pearce Creek could be reused.
 - Mr. Hart stated that currently the goal is to provide a protective layer of dredged material to add an additional barrier between any equipment and the liner installed.
 - It is possible that in the future the material could be used for beneficial use projects.
 - Ms. Miller noted that the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) currently uses Chesapeake Bay material for beneficial use for restoration of Poplar Island. Additionally, in Baltimore Harbor the MPA Innovative Reuse and Beneficial Use Program looks at options for reusing the material to assist with placement capacity.

3.0 MPA Updates

Holly Miller, MPA

Fall 2022 Exterior Monitoring Update

- Ms. Miller noted that the MPA continues to provide voluntary monitoring of Pearce Creek Lake and Elk River.
 - Water and sediment monitoring was conducted in Fall 2022.
 - The presentation slides and summary of the exterior monitoring results were provided to the attendees and will be placed on the Pearce Creek Outreach website.
- Ms. Offerman provided an update on the Fall 2022 post-placement exterior monitoring sampling results; sampling was conducted in late September 2022.
 - Dredged material placement has occurred annually since the 2017/2018 dredging cycle.
 - Previously, four baseline sampling events were conducted in Fall 2015, Spring and Fall 2016, and Spring 2017.
 - The post-placement monitoring for Fall 2022 consisted of collecting samples for surface water quality, sediment chemistry, and benthic community identification.
 - The samples were taken from seven Pearce Creek Lake sites and one Elk River site.
 - There were two reference site samples collected outside the influence of the Pearce Creek DMCF, including one sample from Pearce Creek Lake and one from the Elk River.
 - The post-placement sampling results were comparable between the reference and eight monitoring locations and were again consistent with the baseline monitoring program.
 - For more information, please visit:
<https://pearcecreekoutreach.com/ExteriorMonitoringReports.html>.
- The meeting attendees were reminded that the sampling program uses adaptive management to determine sampling frequency based on previous sampling results.
 - Sediment, surface water, and benthic community sampling will continue for Fall 2023.
- Ms. Steele asked if the wells were being sampled, and if so, if any changes have been seen.
 - Mr. Hart replied that the CENAP conducts groundwater monitoring; the results for the CENAP wells are within anticipated tolerances and there have been no spikes in constituents.

- The groundwater monitoring results are published annually; Ms. Offerman will coordinate with Mr. Hart regarding placement of the groundwater monitoring results on the Pearce Creek Outreach website.

4.0 Citizen Comments

Community Representatives

Feedback from the Community Members

- Mr. Heacock noted that the residents were not made aware of the emergency dredging ahead of time and requested that, in the future, a notice be distributed so residents will be aware of any pending work.
 - Ms. Miller stated that emergency dredging is not expected to happen in the future, but the residents will be made aware of any dredging outside of the dredging window.
- Mr. Heacock stated that the project managers for CENAP and MPA should keep in mind the impacts dredging has on residents as the noise was constant and caused sleeping issues.
- Mr. Heacock asked, on behalf of the West View Shores President, if there were still restrictions on using well water for irrigation purposes.
 - Ms. Miller stated that the well restrictions are still in place and cannot be used for any purpose.
- Ms. Steele expressed a concern regarding water availability from the Town of Cecilton.
 - Ms. Cooper replied that the Town of Cecilton obtains water from wells and reservoirs, and there are no concerns regarding water abundance.
- Mr. Heacock asked if there had been any changes in Chlorine levels in the community water lines as residents have noted an odor.
 - Ms. Cooper replied that there have been no changes to the chlorine added to the community waterlines.
 - The Town of Cecilton will collect water samples from a few homes to ensure the chlorine levels are appropriate.
- Ms. Cooper noted that the yearly water quality report for the Town of Cecilton water supply is available; additional information regarding the monthly bacteriological testing can also be made available.
 - Ms. Cooper will coordinate with Ms. Offerman regarding placement of the Town of Cecilton yearly water quality reports and monthly bacteriological reports on the Pearce Creek Outreach Website.
- Mr. Heacock noted that a sinkhole has been opening repeatedly on a resident's property, right above the waterline and asked if the Town of Cecilton could assist in a solution.
 - Mr. Jackson stated that gravel may be able to be placed to move water away from the area and prevent the sinkhole from reforming from rainwater.
 - Mr. Heacock will contact Mr. Jackson the next time the sinkhole opens to fill it with gravel.

Future Meeting Discussions

Holly Miller, MPA

- Ms. Miller asked the attendees for their preference for future updates, either continuing the Pearce Creek Implementation Committee Meetings, or via email.
 - Mr. Heacock requested the meetings remain in-person.

- Ms. Offerman reminded the attendees that they could reach out anytime to the project managers; contact information is available on the Pearce Creek Outreach website: <https://pearcecreekoutreach.com/Contacts.html>
- The next PCIC meeting will be held **Friday, November 17, 2023 at 10am.**