



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Philadelphia District

Public Notice

Public Notice No.
CENAP-PL-E-15-01

Date
25 March 2015

In Reply Refer to:
Operations Division

Pearce Creek Dredged Material Containment Area Modifications Cecil County, Maryland

Notice is hereby given that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District proposes to conduct modifications to the Pearce Creek Dredged Material Containment Area (DMCA) for future dredged material placement operations. Concerns have been raised that past use of the Pearce Creek DMCA has contributed to water quality degradation in domestic wells in neighboring residential communities. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes by considering the environmental impacts of proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions. Although the Pearce Creek DMCA is a Federally-owned existing placement site, it has not been used for dredged material placement in 22 years. In coordination with the Maryland Department of the Environment, the USACE has developed a plan to prepare the Pearce Creek DMCA by re-establishing the perimeter earthen dikes, grading, and installing an impermeable barrier that will eliminate the hydrogeologic connection of dredged materials placed within the site and underlying groundwater.

In conjunction with installation of the impermeable liner and site preparation work by the USACE, the Maryland Port Administration has committed to funding a public water supply hookup for the communities of West View Shores, Bay View Estates, and the subdivision of Sunset Pointe. The pipeline from Cecilton was designed to provide a safe and adequate water supply for the homes already impacted.

The project is being conducted as maintenance of an existing Federal project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Philadelphia District (USACE) has the mission and authority under the Rivers and Harbors Act to maintain navigation channels in the interest of safe navigation for both large ocean-going and smaller vessels in compliance with authorized channel dimensions. The Federal navigation project *Inland Waterway from Delaware River to Chesapeake Bay, DE and MD* requires a dredging management program to ensure that there is sufficient capacity for placement of material dredged during channel maintenance operations. Currently, the C&D Canal and approach channels carry 40 percent of shipping traffic in and out of the Port of Baltimore.

To maintain navigability, the C&D Canal Southern and Northern Approach Channels in the upper Chesapeake Bay are periodically dredged and the material has been placed in either upland dredged

Material containment areas (DMCAs) or up until 2012, placed overboard in aquatic sites in the upper Chesapeake Bay (Pooles Island Open Water Placement Sites). The state of Maryland closed the use of all overboard placement sites near Pooles Island in 2012. The USACE needs to utilize alternative available placement sites for maintenance dredging. The existing Pearce Creek DMCA is the preferred option for its available capacity and proximity to the Chesapeake Bay approach channels.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, this notice serves to announce the availability of the draft EA. Federal, state, local agencies and interested parties of the public are invited to review the draft EA and provide written comments, questions, and concerns to this office within 30 days from the date of this notice. The document can be downloaded from the following internet link:
<http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/publicnotice>

All comments and questions regarding this study should be directed to Mr. Tim Kelly, ATTN: Operations Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3390 or by calling (215) 656- 6878 within 30 days of the date of this notice.



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