

Pig's Eye Dump Task Force

Notes for Pig's Eye Dump Task Force Meeting #10

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Virtual and Lower Level - MPCA 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155

Members in Attendance

- Dan Scollan, Water Resources Ecologist, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Sam Paske, Planning Assistant General Manager, Metropolitan Council
- Jimmy Francis, Mayor, City of South Saint Paul
- Bill Sumner, Council Member, City of Newport
- Melanie McMahon, Executive Project Lead – Mayor's Staff, City of Saint Paul
- Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County
- Dave Magnuson, Waste Regulation Supervisor, Dakota County
- Caleb Johnson, Environmental Program Manager, Washington County
- Nathan Wallerstedt, Project Management Branch Chief, Army Corps of Engineers - Saint Paul District
- Kirk Koudelka, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
- David Bell, Environmental Research Scientist, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

Other Contributors

- Hans Neve, MPCA
- Stephen Mikkelsen, MPCA
- Corinne Stremmel, MPCA
- Ashley Thompson, Zan Associates
- Kara Van Lerberghe, Zan Associates

Presenters

- Hans Neve, MPCA
- Diane Ruddle, Clean Harbors
- Narayanan Raghupathi, WSP

1. Welcome, introductions, agenda

Hans Neve (MPCA) kicked off the meeting, thanked everyone for being in attendance, introduced himself, and went over the agenda. Task force members and consultants followed by introducing themselves.

2. Re-cap previous meetings and next steps

Hans Neve (MPCA) provided a recap of the last meeting and what the task force discussed including waste sorting, disposal capacity, transportation costs, and ranking remediation options. He went over an update on the timeline of the task force and conversations the team had with other stakeholders.

3. Updated map of Pig's Eye Dump area

Hans Neve (MPCA) shared an updated map of the Pig's Eye Dump area that showed what land is owned by the Metropolitan Council, what are designated park areas, and where the wood recycling facility is located.

3. Sorting waste

Hans Neve (MPCA) provided more information on the feasibility of sorting waste in Pig's Eye Dump. He shared that large materials such as metals and debris can be removed during excavation, but it is likely not feasible to sort waste at a materials recovery facility due to cost, lack of market, and low recovery. Dave Magnuson (Dakota County) shared concerns about worker safety as well due to hazardous material in the waste such as asbestos. Jimmy Francis (City of South Saint Paul) asked if they had any details about what type of waste is located within the dump and Hans responded that they do not have detailed information on what type of waste is located other than what they can see visually. Bill Sumner (City of Newport) added that some of the materials that are worth anything may have been scavenged back when there was still active dumping. Dan Scollan (DNR) asked if there has been any characterization of the waste and Narayanan Raghupathi (WSP) responded that they did recently complete soil sampling that should provide more information at the next task force meeting. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) asked if the task force wants them to spend more time looking into mining landfills and potential case studies and the task force responded that they do not. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) asked about details of how another landfill was managed in Olmsted County and how it compares. Dave added that this dump is unique due to its wetness and that in his experience he doesn't think the risk reward trade off would be worth it.

4. Moving waste

Diane Ruddle from Clean Harbors provided a background on the type of work Clean Harbors does with waste management. Diane went over the feasibility of moving Pig's Eye Dump waste via barge and the factors to consider. A barge is likely not a feasible option for moving this waste due to cost, volume, and hazardous material. Diane then went over transporting waste by rail which is a more feasible option and how it works. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) asked if there are any example projects Diane has worked on that are comparable, and Diane answered that there is one in the New York area, but they usually have data from soil borings that would inform how they manage it. Diane added that this would probably be a long-term project that is completed in a staged process. David Bell (MDH) asked what Diane viewed as the most complicated aspect of the project, and she answered that there is a lot of unknown data that would be helpful to inform how it is managed. Dave Magnuson asked if it is possible to build an incineration facility onsite so that you do not have to move it, and Diane responded that yes but there are multiple factors that need to be controlled including emissions.

5. Break

The meeting paused for a 20-minute break.

6. New landfill cover remediation option

Narayanan Raghupathi (WSP) provided a recap on the waste clean up options the task force has discussed so far. He then went over a new option that the task force discussed in the previous meeting that would include creating a slope and building a new cover over the dump to prevent infiltration from the top of the dump. He went over a graphic showing how it would look, potential costs, and factors to consider. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) asked for clarification on if the waste would still be sitting in groundwater during flood events and Narayanan

confirmed that would not change. Nathan Wallerstedt (Army Corps of Engineers) asked if they had an estimate of how much fill would be needed and Narayanan estimated that they might need up to 2 million cubic yards of clean fill. Caleb Johnson (Washington County) asked what the environmental benefit would be if you prevent infiltration and Narayanan answered that it is hard to know right now since they do not have the soil data right now.

7. Dig and Line

Narayanan Raghupathi (WSP) provided an overview of the Dig and Line considerations and more information on what factors went into the current cost estimate. He then went over the benefits and potential challenges of the Dig and Line option. Sam Paske (Met Council) asked when a discussion is feasible on how this option would impact neighboring properties. Narayanan responded that they would need to investigate how topography changes would impact neighbors such as the metro plant operations and drainage systems. David Bell (MDH) asked what the potential height of the landfill would be and Narayanan responded that it could range from 80 feet to 150 feet if all the waste stays on site. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) asked when discussions about impacts to neighboring properties would happen and Narayanan clarified that it would need to happen before the design phase. Sam added that before they were able to confidently say a specific option is a potential alternative, they would need to know the impacts or ways to mitigate them. Caleb Johnson (Washington County) asked if there are any studies on the impact to neighboring home values if a landfill was built. Kirk Koudelka said that it is not a well-researched area and that they run into those questions in other areas of work as well. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) asked for clarification on if this option would change the floodplain and Narayanan said they would not actively try to change the floodplain.

6. Public comment

One attendee shared that they believe the objective is to clean up and restore the area and that the options discussed today do not meet that objective. They added that these options would also conflict with existing plans for the future of the area. Another person suggested the waste be moved east of Highway 61 out of the water. Another attendee shared other factors to consider including a pipe, train spills, negative impacts to bird wildlife, and the unknown material in the dump. Another attendee shared that although the cost is higher, it is most feasible to remove the waste to mitigate environmental impact. Another member wants to ensure the solution is beneficial for future generations and encourages people to visit the site to see how it is an environmental asset.

7. Discussion

Hans Neve (MPCA) kicked off the discussion with suggesting task force members discuss the options with their organizations and start to consider how they would rank them or what factors are most important. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) shared that cost is not the only factor and wants to make sure they are focusing on the impact on the environment as well. She added that their charge is to deal with environmental and health concerns at the site. Dave Magnuson (Dakota County) emphasized that they need to consider the impact if the material leaves the site on other landfills and the cost. Melanie McMahon (City of Saint Paul) added that there is no preordained outcome required from the legislation, but that cost is an important factor as many local entities including the City do not have the funds to deal with the waste. She added that she would like to see a preferred option for the report and another option as well due to the complexity. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) asked for more details about the pollinator habitat and Hans responded that adding pollinator habitat is a requirement for capping landfills but that generally the dig and line option would look like a large green hill. The

task force added that it would be helpful to see a model of what the dig and line option would look like in context of the area. Jimmy Francis (City of South Saint Paul) added that this is a difficult decision but would like to explore partnerships with nearby states and federal partners about addressing landfill capacity and waste management. Dave Magnuson (Dakota County) added that if they moved forward with the dig and line option, they may have flexibility of how it is designed. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) added that it would be helpful if the task force considered what factors are most important to the task force member's organizations. Victoria Reinhardt (MPCA) added that it would be helpful to have materials they can take to their organization or have speakers come in to provide more information on the options. Kirk responded that they could pull together some of the materials that have been created so far. Bill Sumner (City of Newport) asked about the impact to communities downriver that could be utilized to help come up with funding. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) added that they will likely need to look towards federal funding for cleaning up the site. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) added that the next meeting will discuss potential funding options at a local, state, and federal level. Caleb Johnson (Washington County) emphasized that he does want to keep in mind the health impacts to downstream communities. David Bell (MDH) asked what the minimum height of the dig and line would be, and Narayanan Raghupathi (WSP) said that there are different options that would get more detailed during the design phase. David asked for more information on the next few meetings and when they need to determine their priorities as an organization, and Kirk responded that they would send out more information after this meeting about the next steps.

A member of the public added that although the costs are high the impacts to communities are dangerous and it needs to be addressed. Victoria Reinhardt responded that there is no perfect answer but feels decent about where the progress they have made so far. Hans confirmed with the task force that the Dig and Haul with Backfill option is not being considered anymore. A member of the public shared concerns about the dig and line option impacting the floodplain. Another attendee asked about treating the water and soil for PFAS and Kirk responded that most methods for addressing PFAS would not include treating the soil and water and putting it back. Diane Ruddle (Clean Harbors) added that there is some technology of on-site fixation but that it likely isn't a viable solution for the geology of this site.

8. Adjourn

Hans Neve (MPCA) adjourned the meeting.