

Pig's Eye Dump Task Force

Notes for Pig's Eye Dump Task Force Meeting #12

Friday, October 10, 2025

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

Virtual and in person 2nd floor - MPCA 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155

Members in Attendance

- Dan Scollan, Water Resources Ecologist, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Sam Paske, Metropolitan Council
- 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)
- Jimmy Francis, Mayor, City of South Saint Paul

Members not in Attendance

- Bill Sumner, Council Member, City of Newport

Other Contributors

- Pam Anderson, MPCA
- Hans Neve, MPCA
- Stephen Mikkelsen, MPCA
- Corinne Stremmel, MPCA
- Kara Van Lerberghe, Zan Associates
- Megan Ryan, Zan Associates

Presenters

- Hans Neve, MPCA
- Pam Anderson, MPCA

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. Final report timeline and plan for remaining meetings

Hans Neve (MPCA) went over the goal of this meeting and the schedule for upcoming meetings. He went over the timeline for when the draft report will be ready for review and the timeline for receiving comments. The task force members agreed to the timeline.

3. Update on stakeholder conversations

Hans Neve (MPCA) provided an update on a follow up meeting with MnDOT, FAA, USDA, and the St. Paul Airport. He went over the stakeholders' primary concerns for future development at the Pig's Eye Dump site which included height restrictions, large bird populations during and after construction, and general wildlife attractants. Hans emphasized that these concerns would be addressed during the design phase of the project and that they are important concerns to be aware of. He went over various future considerations that will be taken into consideration in the planning stage including aviation, wetland, flood, infrastructure, and zoning/building. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) emphasized the importance of keeping in mind funding challenges as the project moves forward.

4. Proposed recommendations overview

Hans Neve (MPCA) provided an overview of the remediation and restoration options that the task force is considering. He then went over the draft recommendations and clarified that these are a starting place and open for the task force to edit.* Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) shared that she discussed recommendations with other commissioners and emphasized their concerns about environmental and safety risks of digging up the waste and wanting that to be clear in the recommendations. For the dig and haul option, they would like to ensure that if the waste is removed, it is not causing a new problem where it is disposed of. Hans clarified that the waste would be sorted and stored at a proper facility that can contain the waste safely. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) clarified that the waste is currently not contained, which is what causes the existing risk. If the waste is removed and stored elsewhere, it will be contained to prevent contamination. Victoria shared that she would like to make sure that guidance on where and how waste will be stored is clear in the recommendations. Hans then went over the draft funding recommendations. Victoria asked how many dumps there are in Minnesota and Kirk answered that there are around 1800. He added that most landfills have systems in place to address risks whereas dumps do not. Victoria asked when waste was last placed at Pig's Eye Dump and Hans answered 1972. Victoria asked if any dumps were still active and Kirk responded that there are no open dumps and all waste disposal is permitted.

Caleb Johnson (Washington County) suggested adding redirecting existing revenue from solid waste tax that could be a source of funding for Pig's Eye Dump cleanup. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) brought up how some revenue from the solid waste tax isn't used towards solid waste issues. Hans asked if high level the recommendations aligned with what the task force has discussed, and they agreed it was on track. Nathan Wallerstedt asked about the feasibility study and if there was funding for the MPCA to do one. Hans confirmed they do have funding for it through the MLCAT. A task force member asked what kind of feasibility study would be done and who would be doing it. Hans shared that they have a team supporting Pig's Eye Task Force project as well as a remediation division who works on the dump, which would be combined. There is a superfund process to guide a feasibility study, but it would need to be adjusted to consider task force recommendations. Hans suggested that the feasibility study would focus on the waste and be guided by the task force recommendations. In addition to the waste itself, there are additional considerations such as groundwater, sediment, and off-site sources. Sam Paske (Metropolitan Council) shared concerns about how unanticipated impacts that show up during the feasibility study are taken into consideration. Hans agreed that it would be

essential to identify potential impacts with stakeholders before the feasibility study takes place. Hans emphasized the importance of focusing on the waste first to control the contamination source. Kirk added that the feasibility study would also look at potential disposal locations. Sam shared that there is the feasibility of remediation but also the feasibility of future use and wondered how the latter would be funded. Kirk clarified that the feasibility study would take future use impacts into consideration still. David Bell (MDH) asked if the feasibility study would do any characterization of the waste. Hans responded that they would get a better understanding of the waste characteristics and volume during and after the feasibility study. Victoria shared that they do not have a new revenue source and using existing funding like MLCAT can cause tension due to it being taken from other projects. She suggested leaving out using existing funding as a recommendation. The task force clarified that Pig's Eye Dump is already a part of MLCAT. Kirk added that if there are any new concepts or recommendations to add, now would be a good time to discuss it.

5. Break

The task force took a 15-minute break.

5. Public comment

A member of the public shared that they think it is valid to use solid waste tax to help fund the dump since the public had a hand in disposing waste there. They shared concerns about additional waste from the fish hatchery site near Pig's Eye Dump and think that should be included in the remediation plan and suggested moving the waste to the fish hatchery site. Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) responded that the remediation team did look into it, and that they determined the fish hatchery site would be challenging due to the volume and water adjacent. Jimmy Francis (City of St. Paul) asked about if they found evidence a certain business disposed of the waste at the dump if they could go after them for funding. Hans Neve (MPCA) and Kirk responded that they do have the option to go after responsible parties, but it can cause complications because it may result in that party bringing in additional responsible parties causing legal and administrative barriers.

A member of the public asked if any Native American representatives have provided comment on the remediation options. Hans responded that they met with Prairie Island Indian Community and Wakan Tipi was involved in past public engagement events. Kirk added that they did reach out to other tribal nations who identified they were interested in projects in Saint Paul but have not heard back yet. A member of public asked if the meeting recording could be posted sooner after the meeting.

5. Recommendations discussion

Hans Neve (MPCA) and Kirk Koudelka (MPCA) kicked off the discussion by clarifying that not all recommendations need to move forward, and they can also edit wording. Melanie McMahon (City of St. Paul) asked if they could discuss funding recommendations first. David Bell (MDH) suggested clarifying in the first recommendation that both existing and new funding sources should be considered. Melanie McMahon (City of St. Paul) suggested that the second recommendation should specifically say Pig's Eye Dump instead of remediation of all dumps. Melanie then suggested combining it with the first recommendation. Kirk clarified that the recommendations include different options for funding, but the task force can decide how detailed they want to be in the recommendations. Melanie added that she wanted to see recommendations four and five removed because they don't need to call out responsible parties. She would like to see one recommendation that clearly states that no one funding source is adequate, they will need to pursue new funding sources, and they should pursue state and federal funding. She also suggested potentially showing examples of funding sources. Dave Magnuson (Dakota County) mentioned that they don't want to get into scope creep and want to be specific to Pig's Eye Dump. Hans clarified if they wanted to take consolidation of waste from other dumps off

the table and Melanie said that she thinks it could be included provided it did not compromise potential Pig's Eye Dump funding. Dan Scollan (DNR) added that if they say dumps in general, then it becomes a larger state issue compared to a local Pig's Eye issue. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) added that being broader could create more challenges compared to focusing on Pig's Eye Dump. Kirk added that if there needs to be a new revenue stream on the state level, that may be a good recommendation for the Task Force to make compared to just generally saying there needs to be new funds. Victoria shared she wants to be clear that federal funding should be pursued and doesn't think it is necessary to include examples. Victoria added that there should be some type of recommendation included about pursuing public private partnerships. Melanie responded that she doesn't think it's necessary to mention responsible parties because it is covered under existing law. The task force discussed the specific language used in recommendation five and if it was necessary to state anything about existing law and responsible parties or if a fee should be assessed on waste disposal. They discussed keeping a statement that clearly stated that the responsible party identification process should not be utilized, and that instead a fee should be assessed on all waste disposals. Kirk emphasized that they do not have to finalize wording during this meeting. Victoria added that the language of the recommendations needs to be actionable. The task force discussed the language in recommendation three about federal funding being pursued. They discussed making it clear that there needs to be new federal sources or adjustments to existing sources that ensure Pig's Eye Dump is an eligible use. They decided they should provide examples of funding structures such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative or the Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative. The task force discussed removing recommendation four and instead including information on other funding options in another area of the report. The task force instead decided to keep public-private partnerships in a recommendation now as a possibility to be pursued. The task force discussed keeping recommendation six as a specific recommendation for restoration funding. The Task Force ended the discussion on the funding recommendations and emphasized that the wording of the recommendations should be cleaned up and ensured they are actionable.

Hans transitioned to the remediation and restoration recommendations discussion. He went over two new recommendations that were added over break that acknowledged safety protocols for nearby communities and workers and that hazardous materials will need to be separated and sent to appropriate facilities if they implement dig and haul. The task force clarified that the safety protocol recommendation should be clear about safety during both excavation and transportation of waste. The task force had no other comments on the two new recommendations. In recommendation one, the task force discussed being clear about the large amount of uncontained waste nearby bodies of water. For recommendation two, the task force implemented minor wording changes for clarity. For recommendation three, the task force added that efforts should be consistent with other planning work without excluding any remediation options the task force has recommended. They also added that it should be consistent with any other relevant plans other than the ones they listed. For recommendation four, they clarified the language to consider aviation regulations and concerns. For recommendation five, they opted to delete it and ensure that the report communicates that environmental remediation is a higher priority than cost. For recommendation six, they opted to combine it with recommendation one so that it clearly states the preferred remediation options and why. For recommendation seven, the task force discussed changing the last sentence so it does not explicitly say that waste should not be disposed of at metro area landfills. Instead, they edited the statement to say that the impact to metro area waste disposal capacity and impact to community revenues should be considered. For recommendation eight, the task force did not have any changes. For recommendation nine, they discussed checking the correct name for the wood recycling facility near the dump. The Task Force discussed adding both expansion and ongoing operation of nearby facilities. For recommendation ten, the task force clarified that the feasibility study would

also include restoration options and impacts to nearby facilities. Hans asked if the task force had any final comments and they did not.

6. Final discussions and wrap ups

Hans Neve (MPCA) opened the discussion to the public for them to make comment. A member of the public asked if the statement about remaining feasible and financially achievable could be removed from recommendation two. They also disagreed that the wood recycling facility was an environmental benefit. The task force agreed that they could remove the statement from recommendation two. Another member of the public agreed that the woodchipper was not an environmental benefit and shared concerns about the impact on the area and the Pig's Eye Park.

7. Adjourn

Hans Neve (MPCA) adjourned the meeting.

**The draft recommendations that the task force discussed are shown below. These recommendations do not reflect the changes that were discussed in the meeting.*

Draft Remediation and Restoration Recommendations Evaluated by the Task Force

1. The existence of the large volume of uncontained waste directly adjacent to the Battle Creek and Pigs Eye Lake is a risk to the environment. The waste should not remain in place as it currently is.
2. Remediation and restoration efforts should focus on options that best prioritize protectiveness of local communities, wildlife, and natural habitat and improve water quality, while remaining feasible and financially achievable.
3. Remediation and restoration actions should be consistent with existing planning work including City of St. Paul and Great River Passage plans.
4. The remediation and restoration options pursued should be implemented in a way that addresses aviation concerns related to the St. Paul Downtown Airport.
5. Environmental remediation should place greater priority on long-term environmental protection over achieving the lowest possible cost.
6. The preferred remediation options are the dig and haul and dig and line options.
7. Excavating all the waste and sending it to existing metro landfills would greatly impact the remaining waste capacity for the metro area. If dig and haul is implemented, the final disposal locations should not be existing metro area landfills.
8. Future use of the site should include as a safe and accessible natural area for passive recreation, such as walking trails and wildlife observation.

9. The environmental cleanup and restoration plan should allow for future expansion of the Metropolitan Water Resource Recovery Facility and the Pigs Eye Wood Recycling Center both facilities serve a public purpose and have an environmental benefit.
10. The MPCA should complete a feasibility study of the remediation options presented to the Task Force prioritizing the dig and haul and dig and line options.

Funding Recommendations

1. No one funding source is able to provide the needed funding for environmental remediation, so a combination of various funding sources will be required.
2. A new revenue source should be created to fund the remediation of dumps.
3. Federal funding should be pursued. Adjustments to the Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative, or creation of a structure similar to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative are recommended.
4. Public-private partnerships should be considered to fund remediation efforts. Private parties include haulers and industries who contributed waste to the facility would contribute funding. Public entities could fund or contribute through tax, appropriations, in-kind. The state could utilize bonding, MCLAT or new revenue to provide funding.
5. The potential responsible parties for Pigs Eye Dump would encompass most waste generators when the dump was operating. This would include waste haulers, businesses, nonprofits, local governments in most of the counties within the metro area. Given the expansive list of potential responsible parties a fee should be assessed on all waste disposal to cover remediation expenses for Pigs Eye and similar dumps.
6. Pursue other federal or state sources of funding for restoration efforts (LCCMR, Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund, etc.).