



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PROPOSED MAINTENANCE DREDGING CHESAPEAKE AND DELAWARE CANAL APPLICATION FOR WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

DATE: September 11, 2014

Pursuant to Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.08.02, Regulation .10 Water Quality Certification, the Maryland Department of the Environment ("the Department") is required to give public notice of this application. Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act requires the State of Maryland to issue a Water Quality Certification for any federally proposed/permitted project which will result in a discharge to jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the State. The purpose of the Water Quality Certification is to advise the federal agency as to whether the proposed activity will or will not comply with Maryland's water quality standards.

Applicant: Operations Division
Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3391

Application # 14-WQC-02
Chesapeake Bay, Use I & II Waters

The purpose of this public notice is to solicit comments from the public regarding the work described below and to announce the date of a public informational hearing on the subject application. At this time, no decision has been made on this application for a Water Quality Certification (WQC) for the proposed activities. A public informational hearing on the application has been scheduled at the following time and location:

Date: Saturday, September 27, 2014

Time: 9:30 am

Location: Cecilton Elementary School

251 West Main Street
Cecilton, Maryland 21913

The public hearing will begin with brief presentations by the applicant and the Maryland Port Administration, which will be followed by a question and answer period. Beginning at 10:30 am, public testimony will be taken by the Department on the application. Depending on the number of speakers, a time limit of three minutes per speaker may be set to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to present their views.



Background: The Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) proposes to maintenance dredge the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal and place the dredged material at the Pearce Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF). The Pearce Creek DMCF has not been authorized for the placement of dredged material since the early to mid-1990's when groundwater deterioration was detected in public drinking water wells in the nearby communities of West View Shores and Bay View Estates. A recent independent study conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey concluded that the historic placement of dredged material at the DMCF was a source of the groundwater deterioration in the vicinity of the site. The Maryland Port Administration is investigating the potential of extending public water supply to the affected communities of West View Shores and Bay View Estates. Resolution of the water supply issue will be a major consideration in the decision on the application for a WQC from the Department.

Project Description: The Corps has applied for a WQC for the proposed maintenance dredging of the C&D Canal and its approach channel during the period of October 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, and to place the dredged material at the Pearce Creek DMCF in Cecil County, Maryland. Prior to any dredged material placement, the Corps proposes to install a Linear Low Density Polyethylene liner over the entire Pearce Creek DMCF site to ensure that the placement of dredged material at the site will have no effect on groundwater resources. In addition, the Corps proposes to relocate the sluice box such that the DMCF discharges to the Elk River, and not to Pearce Creek.

During the period October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016, the Corps proposes to dredge the following amounts of material from the C&D Canal and place the dredged material at the Pearce Creek DMCF. Maintenance dredging will be performed as required to maintain the authorized 35-foot project depth.

1. Pooles Island to Sassafras River – approximately 500,000 cubic yards of material to be removed by bucket, hopper, or hydraulic pipeline dredges.
2. Sassafras River to Courthouse Point – approximately 600,000 cubic yards of material to be removed by bucket, hopper, or hydraulic pipeline dredges.
3. Courthouse Point to Maryland State line within the Canal – approximately 200,000 cubic yards of material to be removed by bucket, hopper, or hydraulic pipeline dredges.

Any person or party interested in commenting on the probable water quality impacts of this project is requested to submit written comments to Elder Ghigiarelli, Jr., Deputy Program Administrator, Wetlands and Waterways Program, Water Management Administration, Maryland Department of the Environment, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 430, Baltimore, MD 21230, or email comments to elder.ghigiarelli@maryland.gov. Comments must be received by October 27, 2014.