



Saint Paul Audubon Society

January 11, 2022

Legislators:

The Saint Paul Audubon Society supports cleaning up waste left from the public dump which operated from the 1920s to the 1970s on public land north of Pig's Eye Lake. We also support the restoration of the land to natural habitat suitable for our native birds and wildlife.

We urge efforts by the State Legislature, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and other agencies to procure state and/or federal funds for landfill cleanup and site restoration.

Saint Paul Audubon has long held keen interest in Pig's Eye for its natural, historic, cultural and recreational character. Pig's Eye is on the Mississippi River Flyway, which carries 3/4 of all the migrating birds in North America as they travel back and forth from their breeding sites to their wintering grounds. Pig's Eye is home to the Pig's Eye Heron and Egret Rookery and Sanctuary. This is one of the largest mixed colonial bird nesting sites in the Upper Midwest. Pig's Eye Regional Park is also home to at least five active Bald Eagle nests. In addition, the area hosts grassland, forest, wetland, and aquatic birds throughout the year. The Pig's Eye area, known as Čhokán Tanka, is sacred to the Dakota people, who lived here for thousands of years. And still live here.

Cleaning up the waste at Pig's Eye Regional Park and restoring the public land and waters are an important step forward. The clean-up and restoration will mark a new day for how this important natural area with significant historical and cultural roots is treated with the care and respect it is entitled to. These critical areas must be managed for the good of the environment and for the health of our community.

The Pig's Eye Park area, with its multiplicity of local, regional and state controlled parcels, represents a unique opportunity for Minnesota. It is probably the only opportunity in the core urban area of the Twin Cities to restore to a quality environment such a large land area. And this large 1200-acre tract (600 acres of Pig's Eye Lake and 600 acres parkland around the Lake) is on the Mississippi River, North America's greatest bird migration corridor. Restoring this area could create one of the greatest bird habitats along the 2,000 miles of the Mississippi River. This is a unique and extraordinary opportunity for Minnesota.

The Saint Paul Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. We have 2475 members in this community. We are a volunteer organization. Our mission is to protect birds and their homes. Clean air, clean water, and healthy land protect us all. Saint Paul Audubon's programs and activities further that mission through conservation, education, and advocacy.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Donn Waage

Donn Waage, President
Saint Paul Audubon Society

Hello Peter! My name is Andrew Marotz and I am issuing this comment to you to communicate my support for increased funding to restore Pig's Eye Lake and Pig's Eye Regional Park in Saint Paul. As a member of the natural resources community in the Mississippi River Corridor, I am experienced first-hand with the current conditions of the park. There are several dedicated nonprofits who raise money to plant new vegetation and steward the forests with volunteers and staff, but any amount of state or federal funding dedicated to preserving and restoring that park would go very, very far in making more impactful changes.

Please put your full support behind this effort!

Dear Representative Strohmeier,

I'm writing in support of pollution cleanup and natural resource restoration on the Eastside of Saint Paul. The area is BIPOC Majority and Economically Disadvantaged.

This area has been disadvantaged when it comes to access and use of safe, healthy, and welcoming natural resource opportunities. Our great natural resources have instead been used as a place to dump waste. The barriers that restrict public access to our natural resources need to be removed. Regional Park Plans adopted by the City Council and approved by the Metropolitan Council over 40 years ago promised the park trails, boat access, pavilion, bathrooms, and park signage would be completed within 9 years. We are still waiting.

The Regional Park designation, State Critical Area designation, State Scientific and Natural Area designation and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area designation as part of the National Park System established in law the need and significance of protecting and enhancing the natural resources and recreational opportunities.

We have seen great progress in many areas to protect and enhance natural resources and enhance recreational opportunities. Sadly, the BIPOC Majority neighborhoods around Pig's Eye Lake have been denied the pollution cleanup, natural resource restoration, and enhancement of recreational opportunities that others have benefitted from.

Climate change has contributed to more violent storms and deluges of water. We have seen the tragic consequences. Removing pollution from the superfund site in the flood plain helps protect our City and those downriver who use the river as their source of drinking water.

Thank you!
Benny Olk

Dear Mr. Strohmeier,

Thank you to St. Paul City Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang for authoring Resolution 22-69 in support of pollution cleanup and natural resource restoration on the Eastside of Saint Paul. The area is BIPOC majority and economically disadvantaged.

This area has been disadvantaged when it comes to access and use of safe, healthy, and welcoming natural resource opportunities. Our great natural resources have instead been used as a place to dump waste/pollutant. The barriers that restrict public access to our natural resources need to be removed. Regional Park Plans adopted by the City Council and approved by the Metropolitan Council over 40 years ago promised the park trails, boat access, pavilion, bathrooms, and park signage would be completed within 9 years. We are still waiting.

I'm one of the lucky ones who has stumbled on Pig's Eye Park when looking at the map of St. Paul for new places to explore with my kids. Digging around on the internet led to some strange directions about how to get into the park and we've enjoyed exploring the land and water. We once tried to access the park from the railroad side and were confronted with the CP security and federal railroad police! (This freaked my kids out.) It wasn't clear to me that Shop Rd was private property—I find the signs around the railroad property confusing. Even the "correct" way to the park entrance feels like you're somewhere you're not supposed to be. It's way past time to make this awesome area more accessible to the public (who owns it!) and to clean it up and protect it. It's the only place I've ever seen green heron!

Pig's Eye Lake is a Glacial Lake. It was here before the Mississippi or Minnesota Rivers in Saint Paul. The lakes, wetlands, and flood plain forests of Pig's Eye Regional Park are unique natural resources of great value. The area has been and is important to the Dakota people and all of us who live in Mni Sota today. The Regional Park designation, State Critical Area designation, State Scientific and Natural Area designation and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area designation as part of the National Park System established in law the need and significance of protecting and enhancing the natural resources and recreational opportunities.

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The resolution authored by Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang is an important first step to rectify this disparity.

Climate change has contributed to more violent storms and deluges of water. We have seen the tragic consequences. Removing pollution from the superfund site in the flood plain helps protect our City and those downriver who use the river as their source of drinking water.

Thanks for your attention to this issue—I look forward to the day that my kids can enjoy this park and it's clear from the park amenities that it's ok to be there and enjoy its beauty.

Elizabeth Karre

Dear Rep Strohmeier,

I would like to express my support for Resolution 22-69 requesting funds to pay attention to a neglected space called Pig's Eye Regional Park. With a surplus and current opportunity for Federal funds, this should be an easy resolution to say yes to. Minnesota is known for its parks, wildlife, and outdoor spaces for the public and wildlife to enjoy.

Thank you,
Jen Saylor
District 1

Peter Strohmeier
Committee Administrator
Minnesota House of Representatives
Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
Local Government Division
430 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Peter Strohmeier,

For a summer job when I was in college, back in the late 1960s, I had the opportunity to be a crew leader for the Neighborhood Youth Corps. I led a dozen or so young teens from the St. Paul “projects” and we worked hard clearing brush, planting trees and building trails in three Mississippi River bottomland parks that would become successful beyond anyone’s dreams: Fort Snelling, Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm.

Now in my early 70s and lucky to have good health in my retirement, I use those parks virtually every day. I live in St. Paul’s Highland Park and frequently will hike across the river to Fort Snelling State Park where I will go around Snelling Lake or Pike Island. Or I’ll do a round trip from my home downstream to the I-35 bridge; it’s an 8-mile walk along the river and back through Hidden Falls and Crosby. I love to bike in the summer and often will do the loop that takes me down the trails through Lilydale and Kaposia parks to the 494 bridge, and then come home on the Battle Creek Park side of the river, including the trail that skirts Pig’s Eye Lake.

I never take for granted how lucky I am to have parks and trails like these right outside my door. Every time I am visiting the river bottoms, I think about the women and men who had the foresight to set aside the land for these parks, and then figure out how to build the facilities so people can use them. I love seeing how well they are used, and think back to the early 60s when places like Hidden Falls were not much more than a dump for old furniture or a pile of shingles.

I am writing because we now have an opportunity to transform another stunning stretch of bottomland, the Pig’s Eye Park. It wasn’t easy to find, but I have hiked there and came away with the same feeling that I remember having when working on the parks upstream 50 years ago: boy, this could really be something!

Hats off to St. Paul City Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang for authoring Resolution 22-69 in support of pollution cleanup and natural resource restoration at Pig’s Eye Park, and to the rest of the council and the mayor for their unanimous support.

I wholeheartedly join them in support of the request. The time has come to turn this area into a treasure we can hand down to the next generation.

Sincerely,

Jim Winterer
1032 Bowdoin St.
St. Paul, MN 55116-1812

Mr. Strohmeier,

As a state with so many racial disparities, it would seem that addressing the pollution clean up on the Eastside of St Paul, being proposed via Resolution 22-69 is a “no brainer”. I’m sure you are aware that Pig’s Eye Regional Park is located in an area that is majority BIPOC and economically disadvantaged.

This area has been disadvantaged when it comes to access and use of safe, healthy, and welcoming natural resource opportunities. Our great natural resources have instead been used as a place to dump waste/pollutant. The barriers that restrict public access to our natural resources need to be removed. Regional Park Plans adopted by the City Council and approved by the Metropolitan Council over 40 years ago promised the park trails, boat access, pavilion, bathrooms, and park signage would be completed within 9 years. We are still waiting.

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The area remained a largely untouched natural area until recent times. For more than a century plans called for the whole area to be protected as a natural area for all to enjoy. While plans called for it’s protection, City resources were focused on creating Mississippi River Boulevard, Reserve Boulevard, Summit Avenue, Como Park, etc.. During the Depression the City opened up the park as a place to dump anything into the wetland. This continued through the 1970’s as an unlicensed dump.

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The resolution authored by Council-members Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang is an important first step to rectify this disparity.

Passing the resolution is the right thing to do for our planet, state and our BIPOC neighbors.

Sincerely,

Juli Rasmussen

SUPPORT FOR PIG'S EYE REGIONAL PARK FIX UP

KATHY SIDLES, 1380 Winchell St., Saint Paul, MN 55106 651-771-7528

I am an east side resident who has been walking once a week since April of 2021 at Pig's Eye Regional Park.

I wrote this to support Saint Paul City Council Resolution 22-69 by Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang, to be voted on 01/12/2022: RESOLVED, the City of Saint Paul requests support from the State of Minnesota in coordinating our efforts to seek funding from the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (November 15, 2021) as well as state funds that could become available through the state budget surplus, to fund the cleanup and restoration of the Minnesota Superfund sites at Pig's Eye Lake.

I am submitting it here also for the 01/18/2022 Minnesota House Environment & Natural Resources Finance & Policy Committee meeting in support of finding funding to fix up state superfund site Pig's Eye Regional Park.

As a park user here are observations and ideas I have had during my park visits for restoring Pig's Eye Regional Park for people and the plants and animals that are there now.

1. **SAFE AND MARKED ACCESS TO THE PARK IS NEEDED** - In April 2021 I went on a tour of the park area roads with Kiki Sonnen. As we drove down roads lined with industry, and parked at three park entrances I asked "Are we allowed to be here?" She said yes, these are public roads and a public park. My husband Paul and I go on a walk every day at different local parks for health reasons and for fun in retirement. When I brought him to Pig's Eye Regional Park for a walk at one of the entry places a sign said DO NOT ENTER. He refused to walk there so we had to walk at a different park. He did come with me to a tour event with other people but at that entry you have to drive past a big pile of pallets on park land waiting to be chipped, then park at a large pile of sewer sludge. The boat launch listed on the Saint Paul Park's web site at the SE corner of Pig's Eye Lake isn't marked and is overgrown and no one I have met knows how to access it.



2. **RESIDENTS ARE LOOKING FOR PARKING, WILDLIFE, PORT-A-POTTIES, KAYAK INPUT AND HISTORY INFORMATION** - I have hiked at Pig's Eye Park most Tuesdays at 9:30 AM since then at tour events, with Kiki Sonnen and Tom Dimond, driving past the pile of pallets, parking at the sewer sludge area, and walking on the truck trail to the small bridge across Battle Creek. I have met a few east side residents who found the park

entrance and have been walking there for many years. I have met other people who have finally found the park after up to five tries. People see it on the map and for personal or professional reasons take it on themselves to find the park and explore it in spite of the difficulty and rail road and truck traffic. Some people bring dogs for a long walk. Many people are looking for a place to put in a kayak. One person's father fished for walleye in the lake decades ago. One person was interested in aquatic species. Other people are birders like I am. It's fun to see birds in the prairie and lake I don't see in our east side neighborhood. Some people belonged to two different local hiking clubs. Many people live in the area and like my husband and I are exploring our neighborhood parks. Kiki and I have a Facebook Page called Pig's Eye Park Friends. The explanation of how to get to the park from Warner Road across RR tracks and past the wood chipper to the sludge pile is a paragraph long. But I see people are happy to find this large park with a long trail, lots of history, and nature to observe and be in.



- 3. NATIVE BURNED PRAIRIE AND SHORT MOWED TRAILS ARE NEEDED:** Before the drought hit the truck trails that are used to get to the monitoring wells had high grass so lots of ticks drop off the grass on to hikers. A request was made to mow the truck trails but they were never mowed. As a flood plain this area is damp. Replacing the thick non-native Brome grass and other invasive plants that were planted at the last restoration with native plants, burning as was done historically, and staying on short grass are known ways to reduce ticks and Lyme disease spread from them. The high level of ticks in the habitat as it is now prevents people from returning. I have only heard of one tick being seen in my 20 years of being in east side parks and as a Saint Paul Parks volunteer at Frost Lake Park and the woods along the Bruce Vento Bike Trail. Being from southern Iowa and managing our family farm and doing the natural area work there for 18 years I know a lot about ticks. But most people in the city don't know how to dress for them. I think Stagecoach Prairie maintained by Belwin is a good example of a simple but easy to visit natural area park plan.



4. **BETTER TRAIN FUEL SPILL AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS ARE NEEDED:** In July a 360 to 720 gallon train engine fuel spill into Battle Creek through the park happened when the engine hit a train track mechanism. The railroad got booms and pads in place to soak it up but an email didn't go through so the state didn't know about it until hikers Kiki and Tom notified them. For the next few weeks I got to see how the oil kept coming down the creek into habitat where we had been seeing lots of Leopard Frogs, Blue Herons, Egrets, Robins and other birds in the weeks before. I brought some mason jars and scooped up water from the top inch near the oil that you could see. They smelled strongly of diesel fuel. Even when the last booms and pads were taken up they still smelled faintly of diesel to me. The next month more gallons were spilled north of Pig's Eye next to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary when two trains - who didn't have electronic upgrades yet to prevent it - collided. I saw lots of Rail Road rocks put into trucks to take the fuel somewhere.



5. **WE NEED TO REMOVE NOT EXPAND SEWER SLUDGE, TREES, PALLET, AND SAND DUMPING IN THIS PARK TO NOT MAKE IT SO EASY TO AVOID WORK TO RECYCLE IT WHERE IT COMES FROM NOT OUR CITY**

PARK: As a Saint Paul resident I am interested in learning more about how we are living within and not instead of nature especially along the rich habitat of the Mississippi River. As I got more familiar with the park area it sure looks like even though the garbage from the old dump was removed and covered over it is still way too easy for people from far and near to keep dumping things from their area into our park. It looks like trees and pallets



(which often have chemicals spilled on them) are brought from far and wide and piled in our park waiting a long time to be chipped, and so is sewer sludge, and so is sand coming down the river going to be used to build islands in the middle of the lake to get rid of it more than to upgrade the lake. We should do our best to recycle things in place – trees should remain in parks as logs or chips for trails, sewer sludge should have chemicals removed closer to communities it comes from and be put back on farmland to grow more food, and sand wouldn't come down the river if we protect wetlands and creeks along it better.

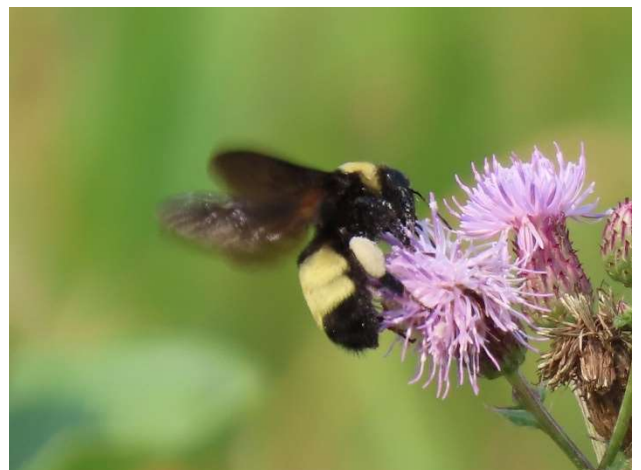
6. **DESIGNATED WETLANDS ARE BEING CROWDED BY TREE, PALLET AND SLUDGE PILES AND SO ARE ENDANGERED BY POLLUTION:** I attended a webinar put on by Master Naturalists for people in north metro suburbs about all the rules regarding designated wetlands on your private property. So I looked up the map to see where wetlands are designated in Pig's Eye Park. Since it is near the river and in a flood plain there are a lot of designated wetlands throughout the park on the map. It looks to me like with all the tree, pallet and sewer sludge piles that the additional wide areas around each wetland I heard in the seminar are required aren't being respected in the way homeowners have to do.



7. **SLUDGE AND PALLETS SHOULD BE STUDIED FOR MORE REGULATION DUE TO CHEMICALS IN THEM:** Sewer sludge and pallets contain chemicals. Those of us who put in pollinator gardens are encouraged to NOT buy colored wood chips since they are chipped pallets that have chemical stains on them so are dyed. I know pallets are a big industry in Minnesota. To be a good steward of the trees we should do better to prevent this kind of chemical contamination. We could requiring an electronic tag on any pallet with a chemical spill, and recycle them locally, in a Saint Paul Park. Allowing sewer sludge to be so easily piled in our parks where its chemicals leak into our park makes it too easy to avoid the remaining hard work of figuring out how to recycle it locally in one step, and get it back on farm fields to grow more food with it. I bet these are state-wide problems.



8. **THE PARK SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF A RIVER WILDLIFE CORRIDOR:** On each walk I count birds to upload when I have time to www.ebird.org for citizen science. I also take pictures of bumblebees and upload them to www.bumblebeewatch.org. I have seen 93 endangered rusty-patched bumblebees since 2016, mostly on the east side of Saint Paul! I know they have been seen near Pig's Eye Archery and in places farther south. I spent many hours scouting bumblebees south of



Albert Lea last summer for the first year of a five year University of Minnesota Bee Lab project to survey Minnesota bumble bees out of the cities. I spent many extra scouting hours but found way fewer bumblebees than in Watershed District and pollinator garden plantings on the east side, and just one rusty-patched bumblebee. This compares to 37 ID's at Bumblebee Watch, mostly on the east side this summer. I took pictures of them not far from Pig's Eye at Mounds Park and Swede Hollow, and also at Ames Lake, Lake Phalen, along the creek to Keller Lake and other places in spite of the drought. So far it looks like Saint Paul is an important caretaker of the remaining populations of endangered rusty patched bumblebees. Bumble bee genetics is such that they decline fast if they don't have nearby nests to mate with (the males only have their mother's genes, not both father and mother). Like the other parks in Saint Paul and south this park is a key part of the Mississippi River as a wildlife corridor. Pollution needs to be removed from the park and access for people added, but I think it's most important to restore and maintain it as native habitat, and to visit it within that context. I can see with industry and railroads every right of way and wetland and other creative solutions need to be in place for it to be a good wildlife corridor. While larger insects like bumble bees fly up to half a mile, from implementing family farm conservation programs I know smaller insects needed for a healthy land like lady bugs only fly 30 feet. Farm wildlife corridor programs require connected habitat and so should urban ones.

9. **PRESENT BUMBLE BEES, BLUE HERONS, MONARCHS, BEAVERS AND OTHER PLANTS AND ANIMALS SHOULD BE WORKED WITH AND AROUND DURING ANY RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE:** When I mention seeing beavers in parks along the river people

want to see them. You don't usually see them since they are out at night, but you can see the trees they fell and their lodges, dams and channels. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has information on protecting any trees and culverts, and keeping dam water from flooding infrastructure that are easy to implement. They use fences, cages and tubing to protect trees and culvert entries and to keep beavers from hearing flowing water.



Studies show living with beavers greatly improves the diversity of habitat – they will do work we need for free. I have seen and heard of beaver activity in parks up and down the river including at Pig's Eye. On a bumblebee survey during the Third Annual Backyard Bumblebee Count last July I also saw lots of Monarchs headed south. I think there were too many and they were up too high to just be from the milkweed and goldenrod patches at Pig's Eye. Maybe the bluffs create a Monarch flyway so when the sun is right they can gather and head with a north wind down the river valley to Mexico

to overwinter. There is an important Heron Rookery at the SW corner of the park – the Herons will leave with too much boat traffic. The north end of the lake are filled with native sedge plants, not invasive non-native cattails. Restoration plans should be aware of and work around the importance of the area for bumble bees, Blue Herons, Monarchs, Beavers and other present residents of the park that may be there without us knowing. The park has been neglected and maybe never studied.

10. FURTHER CONTAMINATION ANALYSIS AND WALKING PATHS SEEM LIKE THE SAFEST USES OF PIGS EYE PARK RIGHT NOW:

It looks like from reports I've seen that its unknown where PFAS chemicals are leaking but it is known that some areas have not been checked. It could be over the last twenty years new methods for detecting PFAS chemical sources have been figured out. I went to the map showing where Super Fund and other chemical spill or special use sites are in Minnesota and zoomed in on Pig's Eye Regional Park. I noticed a letter sent to the company recycling trees and pallets there. The pallet company asked to do soil bores for equipment footings and the response was go ahead, but let us know if there are methane leaks or drums of chemicals show up. It seems to me that the safest thing to do in this park given that it was a former dump is to just walk in it, not allow more and more heavy truck traffic and dredging and more buildings to be built - like the new sewer sludge building - or long paved park roads that require bulldozing trees and hills.



11. PIG'S EYE IS USED BY HELICOPTERS FOR SAFETY TRAINING TO REMOVE PEOPLE FROM DANGEROUS SITUATIONS:

Twice when I visited the park we cancelled the walk since when we arrived a helicopter was lowering people to pick up dummies from park land near the Battle Creek bridge. Another time I saw the helicopter headed for the bridge so left the area before it could get there. This training is also done elsewhere in the river valley area. A less public place for this training and a way for park maintenance and users to know when this training is scheduled is needed.



Thank you to St. Paul City Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang for authoring Resolution 22-69 in support of pollution cleanup and natural resource restoration on the Eastside of Saint Paul.

As someone who lives blocks from the Mississippi River and who utilizes most of the parks and recreational facilities all along the river in St. Paul, I am especially interested in the Pig's Eye Regional Park. In a past visit to the park (which I only found through the directions given to me by a friend) I was struck by the strangeness of it all.

After maneuvering our way past the heavy equipment handling wood chipping we found a parking area and assumed we were there. But there were no signs, no trail markers, no information boards. We were perplexed.

I relocated to St. Paul about six years ago. It is a huge source of pride to show all of the amazing green spaces, bike and hiking trails and natural beauty of my new hometown to visiting friends and relatives,

The historical significance of Pig's Eye Lake to indigineous people and the importance of this area to the environment would make it a must see. However, I'm not sure visitors would understand why this important area is still terribly polluted and barely recognizable as a recreational destination.

This area has been disadvantaged when it comes to access and use of safe, healthy, and welcoming natural resource opportunities. Our great natural resources have instead been used as a place to dump waste/pollutants. The barriers that restrict public access to our natural resources need to be removed. Regional Park Plans adopted by the City Council and approved by the Metropolitan Council over 40 years ago promised the park trails, boat access, pavilion, bathrooms, and park signage would be completed within 9 years.

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The resolution authored by Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang is an important first step to restore this important area as much to its natural state as possible.

Thank you,
Lisa Erbes
St. Paul

Please help clean our pig eye community
Our city needs to be kept clean

Nancy Negrette

Hi Peter,

Just wanted to lend my voice in support of funding for the Pig's Eye Park clean-up.

It is so very important to the quality of life of those living in St Paul.

Thanks!

Neil Peterson
Eastsider!

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Thank you,
Nick Vorpahl

January 14, 2022

To: Members of the MN Legislative House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy

I will keep this brief. I am writing, as an avid birder in St Paul, in support of funding to upgrade Pig's Eye Park. Particularly in this fragile time of climate change, it is important to do all we can to repair and restore existing natural environmental areas. Wetlands are critical for flood mitigation. Being on the Mississippi Flyway, this area is critical habitat for birds, in particular the Blue Herons and Bald Eagles in the area. Superfund cleanup for Pig's Eye Park is a logical step. I urge your committee to take a serious look at this site for renovation.

Thank you.

Robin Murie
1768 Ashland Av
St Paul MN. 55104

I'm writing to show my support for Resolution 22-69 which has been proposed by Jane Price and Nelsie Yang. This portion of the Pig's Eye Regional Park deserves the support of pollution cleanup and restoration of the natural resources present in the area.

Over 40 years ago the Met Council promised a system of park trails, boat access, pavilion, bathrooms and park signage. Please take action and begin the clean up around Pig's Eye Lake, along with natural resource restoration and enhancement of recreational opportunities. Over the years other areas wishing the city have seen the resources come their way, it's beyond time to invest in the Eastside!

Respectfully,

Theresa Del Rosario

Tom Dimond
2119 Skyway Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55119

Pollution cleanup and natural resource restoration in our National Park

Saint Paul City Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang authored Resolution 22-69 in support of pollution cleanup and natural resource restoration at Pig's Eye Lake. The City Council unanimously approved the resolution. Mayor Melvin Carter signed the resolution. This is a significant step forward to cleanup the threat to park users, wildlife, drinking water and the aquifer. This site is of Regional, State and National Significance as a Regional Park, State Critical Area, State Scientific and Natural Area, and National Park. Most directly impacted are the BIPOC majority, economically disadvantaged, historically marginalized, and underserved who live in surrounding neighborhoods.

Local residents and National Park visitors are put at risk when the park lacks safe, healthy, and welcoming natural resources within the park. Pollutant in the water and soil endangers visitors and wildlife. Testing of bird eggs have found some of the highest concentrations of pollutant in bird eggs in the world. This places at risk wildlife in the State Scientific and Natural Area and National Park. Our great natural resources have unfortunately been used as a convenient place to dump waste/pollutant with little thought of the consequences. This hinders public access of healthy natural resources and needs to be removed. Regional Park Plans adopted by the City Council and approved by the Metropolitan Council promised by 1990 the completion of a parkway entrance, parking, trails, boat access, pavilion, restrooms, and park signage. More than thirty years later we are still waiting. Funding the cleanup of pollution and restoration of the natural resources is essential to moving these plans forward.

Extensive funding has gone into park facilities elsewhere. The BIPOC Majority in our part of town have not seen fulfillment of promises made during 50 years of Regional Park planning, and creation of our National Park and State Critical Area. Equity calls for immediate action to provide safe and healthy natural resources accessible by all.

Pig's Eye Lake is a Glacial Lake. It precedes the existence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers in Saint Paul. The lakes, wetlands, and flood plain forests of Pig's Eye Regional Park are unique natural resources of great value. The natural resource values of wetlands have not always been understood and appreciated. Filling and destruction of wetlands contribute to a great loss of essential habitat, ponding and filtration of runoff water. Wetland protection and restoration are essential.

French traders called the lake's vast wetlands Grand Marais. The area was teeming with wildlife in a beautiful setting.

The area remained a largely untouched natural area until recent times. For more than a century, plans called for the whole area to be protected as a natural area for all to enjoy. While

plans called for protection, City resources were focused on creating Mississippi River Boulevard, Reserve Boulevard, Summit Avenue, Como Park, etc.. During the Depression the City opened up the park as a place to dump anything into the wetlands. This continued through the 1970's as an unlicensed dump.

The upside was the absolute disgust of many watching what was happening to this unique and valuable natural resource. This disgust combined with the growing environmental movement in the 1960's and 70's demanded the protection and enhancement of Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park and the surrounding bluffs.

The Regional Park designation, State Critical Area designation, State Scientific and Natural Area designation and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area designation as part of the National Park System established in law the need and significance of protecting and enhancing the natural resources and recreational opportunities. It is our responsibility to honor those commitments.

We have seen great progress in many areas to protect and enhance natural resources and recreational opportunities. Sadly, the BIPOC Majority neighborhoods around Pig's Eye Lake have been denied the pollution cleanup, natural resource restoration, and enhancement of recreational opportunities that others have benefitted from.

The resolution unanimously approved by the City Council and signed by the Mayor a huge step to end this disparity.

We have all seen how climate change has contributed to more violent storms and historical deluges of water. We have seen the tragic consequences. Removing pollution from the superfund site in the flood plain helps protect Saint Paul and those downriver who use the river as a source of drinking water and are working to protecting the health of the river.

We have a rare opportunity to fund cleanup of the pollution. The Federal Infrastructure Bill provides \$21 billion for brown field and superfund site cleanup. The \$7 billion plus State budget surplus provides resources that can fund cleanup. The Metropolitan Landfill Contingency Action Trust Account (MLCAT) will have \$13.9 million available when the MLCAT Account is repaid.

Mr. Strohmeier,

I hope you are well. My name is Tony Aarts, and I live in Mac-Groveland in St. Paul. My purpose for writing is to add my support for funding to help restore the largest public park in St. Paul.

Pig's Eye has not received major investments in over a decade. I know that Representatives Jay Xiong and Rick Hansen are to meet with the MPCA to discuss possible funding opportunities. Knowing that our state has a \$7.7 billion surplus, it is my hope that funds may be used to address the legacy pollution the park has sustained over the years.

I love the parks in St. Paul. They are amazing features for our residents, for wildlife, for natural growth, and they need our protection/care. I very fervently want to add my support for this effort as a community member and a resident of this city.

I think this is a wonderful opportunity to be honorable caretakers of this land and its wildlife. This park, like so many in St. Paul, is a special place. We should safeguard its future.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Tony Aarts
1878 Juliet Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105

Hello,

I'm delighted to know that my visionary and hardworking Rep. Xiong is involved in locating funding for the Pigs Eye MN Superfund Site cleanup, in collaboration with Rep. Hansen. As a five-year resident of the Mounds Park neighborhood on Dayton's Bluff, I want to lend my voice and strong support for this.

Pigs Eye, living up to its name, is an old armpit of St. Paul and the Mississippi River. It is well on the way to being restored to the breathtakingly beautiful site that is its true legacy. The City of St. Paul continues to turn towards the Mississippi River as a natural jewel of immense value to the city, the people who live here and the wildlife that continues to share this land.

With developments underway at the nearby Wakan Tipi Sanctuary Nature Center and on the West Side of the River that involve forward-looking offices, this part of the urban landscape is undergoing a transformation.

It would be a grand vision to change the name of Pigs Eye, and Battle Creek, to reflect more accurately their future. A sign giving a history of their past would be enough for me. Let us move forward with verve.

Warmly,
Jean

Jean Rivard
959 Burns Ave
St. Paul, MN 55106

Hello Mr. Strohemeier,

My name is Gemma, a resident of the East St. Paul community for the last 13 years and I wanted to take the time to reach out to you and comment on my excitement for the renovations of my community park. I believe we heal in nature as it can bring peace and calmness. I am ecstatic for people in my community to have a beautiful park to serve as a sanctuary and help ease the stress of our everyday lives.

I'd be happy to participate in any volunteering of this project if any.

Thank you for your commitment in serving our community.

Best regards,
Gemma

Mr. Strohmeier,

I am writing to urge the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee to support and adopt Resolution 22-69, which would use funds from both President Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the state's \$7 billion budget surplus to help clean up Pig's Eye Regional Park.

The lakes, wetlands, and flood plain forests of Pig's Eye Regional Park are natural resources that provide a habitat for river birds like herons as well as flood protection for communities along the river. However, the area was used as an unlicensed dumping ground up through the 1970s and a superfund site in the late eighties and early nineties.

Pollution is rampant at Pig's Eye, and that pollution threatens both the majority BIPOC communities adjacent to the park and the communities further downstream. As flooding increases in both frequency and severity as a result of climate change, there is a good chance that the lingering pollution in both Pig's Eye Park and Pig's Eye Lake will be swept into the Mississippi River and further contaminate it.

It is of urgent importance that the City of St. Paul act now to begin cleaning up Pig's Eye Regional Park and restoring its natural resources - not just for the sake of the area's biodiversity, but for the underprivileged communities who live near it, the communities downstream, and for all of us who rely on the Mississippi for clean, usable water.

Sincerely,

Ellen Rozek

For decades, the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant disposed of its sewage sludge ash to the surrounding wetlands in a liquidified slurry. By my rough estimates, just between 1966 - 1976, 156,000 tons was disposed of in an unpermitted activity. The disposal pipelines are still in place to this day.

The wetlands between the Plant and Battle Creek have a distinct layer of brick red sewage sludge ash. This unpermitted disposal took place during an era prior to the industrial pretreatment program. Add to that the fact that sewage sludge was conditioned with ferric chloride which currently would be classified as a hazardous waste. The Plant's multiple hearth incinerators in operation at the time were never evaluated for the removal of compounds such as PFAS. That incineration was probably very inefficient in that regard and is now an obsolete technology.

The wetlands have never been sufficiently investigated, sampled or analyzed for contaminants. Definitely not for PFAS!

This environmental analysis must be done!

Michael Nevala, MS, CHMM Emeritus







Pig's Eye Dump & Pig's Eye Lake

January 2018



WWTP Property Line

0.5 Miles

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Metro WWTP Dewatering , Incineration Ash Disposal 1938 - 2015

Year	Number	Incinerators Description	Design			Dewatering & Sludge Conditioning			
			mmbtu/hr each	DTPD each	DTPD total		Lime % dry CaO	Ferric % dry FeCl3	Polymer % dry
1938	3	F11 - MHI 8-hearth 22'-3" OD Inc #1-3	30	60	180	Vacuum filters (6)	3.3	1.1	
1951	4	F11 - 8-hearth 22'-3" OD - fewer rabble teeth (inc # 1-4)	30	60	250	Vacuum filters (8)	2.9	1.0	
1966	4	F12 - MHI 9-hearth Envirotech (inc #5, #6, #7, #8 added later) all with wet scrubbers	45	90	250	Vacuum filters (20)	2.3	0.9	
1976-1980	*	Air pollution control added to F11 incinerators during transition to F12	45	90		Vacuum filters (20)			
1983	6	F12 - MHI 9-hearth Envirotech (6) with W198 (4) Quad cyclones (inc 7-10) and wet venturi scrubbers (inc #5-10)	45	90	360	Vacuum Filters (8) Roll presses 1982-2004 (4) Plate and Frame Presses - 1980-92 (8), Zimpro Thermal Conditioning LFO 1980-2004 (8)			0.7
1995	6	Storm sewer separation project (1985-1995) increased volatile solids to plant. Bio-P started 1998	45	80	360	Roll Presses (4); Plate and Frame Presses phased out 1992; Vacuum Filters phased out 1997; Centrifuges (2 in 1997, 4 in 2003)			0.7
2004	3	SMB - Fluid bed reactors (FBR #1, 2, 3 - startup 11/2004 to 3/2005)	100	130	315	Centrifuges (7 in 2005; 8 in 2008)			0.6

Year	%TS cake	%TVS cake	Actual Rates			Ash disposal methods	DTPD cake incinerated	DTPD cake fertilizer	DTPD cake landfilled
			Aux Fuel MMBTU/GI	Ash DTPD	Ash DTPD				
1938-51	32.4	72%(dewatering feed), 70%(inciner. feed)	0.2	34	34	Ash sluiced and pumped to ash disposal from plant: 52 (kump) and NE - Pig's Eye Dump (1977-1985)	90.5	6.7	Land-spreading phased out to a very limited volume in 1946.
1951-66	28.9	68%(dewatering feed), 63%(inciner. feed)	0.1	35.9	35.9		118.9	1.2	
1966-76	28.0	72.0 (dewatering feed includes secondary sludge) 70.6 (incinerator feed)	0.1	43.3	43.3	Wet ash to on-site disposal (phased out 1986 and about 275,000 tons from ash lagoons hauled 1988. Dry ash to beneficial use (roads, cement kiln) 1988 - 2004	140	0.1	Land-spreading resumed 1978. 205,000 dry tons cake was land applied 1978 - 1995. 44,400 dry tons cake landfilled 2004-2013.
1976-80	25.0	408 project: construction of roll presses, plate and frame presses, Zimpro thermal conditioning, incinerator waste heat boilers. Polymer replaced ferric and lime as sludge flocculant.					135	49	
1983-95	33.1	72%(dewatering feed), 73%(incinerator feed). 1990 higher inc temperature limit for MHI increases fuel use.	0.5	45.6	45.6	Dry ash to landfill since 2005 (because of Hg content)	201	20 (12% of Metro cake was land applied from 1980-83)	
1995-2004	31.2	75%(dewatering feed), 77%(inciner. feed)	0.8	41	41		209		
2004-13	28.5	79.0 (dewatering) 81.4(incinerator). Zimpro shut down 2004 increasing volatile solids. WHB steam increase from 20 to 60MMBTU/hr. Turbine generators started 2005/2013	0.4	43.4	43.4		231.1	0	3.1

Metro WWTP Dewatering , Incineration Ash Disposal 1938 - 2015

Year	Number	Incinerators Description	Design			Dewatering & Sludge Conditioning			
			mmbtu/HR each	DTPD each	DTPD total	Time % dry CaO	Ferric % dry FeCl3	Polymer % dry	
1938	3	F11 - MHI 8-hearth 22'-3" OD Inc #1-3	30	60	180	Vacuum filters (6)	3.3	1.1	
1951	4	F11 - 8-hearth 22'-3" OD - fewer rabble teeth (Inc # 1-4)	30	60	250	Vacuum filters (8)	2.9	1.0	
1966	4	F12 - MHI 9-hearth Envirotech (Inc #5, #6, #7, #8 added later) all with wet scrubbers	45	90	250	Vacuum filters (20)	2.3	0.9	
1976 - 1980	*	Air pollution control added to F11 incinerators during transition to F12	45	90		Vacuum filters (20)			
1983	6	F12 - MHI 9-hearth Envirotech (6) with WGRB (4). Quad cyclones (Inc 7-10) and wet venturi scrubbers (Inc #5-10)	45	90	360	Vacuum Filters (8) Roll presses 1982-2004 (4) Plate and Frame Presses - 1980-92 (8). Zimpro Thermal Conditioning LPO 1980-2004 (8)			0.7
1995	6	Storm sewer separation project (1085-1995) increased volatile solids to plant. Bio-P started 1998	45	80	360	Roll Presses (4); Plate and Frame Presses phased out 1992; Vacuum Filters phased out 1997; Centrifuges (2 in 1997; 4 in 2003)			0.7
2004	3	SMB - Fluid bed reactors (FBR #1,2,3 - startup 11/2004 to 3/2005)	100	130	315	Centrifuges (7 in 2005; 8 in 2008)			0.6

Actual Rates									
Year	%TS cake	%TVS cake	Aux Fuel MMBTU/dt	Ash DTPD	Ash DTPD	Ash disposal methods	DTPD cake incinerated	DTPD cake fertilizer	DTPD cake landfilled
1938-51	32.4	72%(dewatering feed), 70%(inciner. feed)	0.2	34	34	Ash sluced and pumped to ash disposal from plant: SE (dump) and NE - Pig's Eye Dump (1977-1985)	99.5	6.7	Land-spreading phased out to a very limited volume in 1946.
1951-66	28.9	68%(dewatering feed), 63%(inciner. feed)	0.1	35.9	35.9		118.9	1.2	
1966-76	28.0	72.0 (dewatering feed includes secondary sludge) 70.6 (incinerator feed)	0.1	43.3	43.3		140	0.1	
1976-80	25.0	408 project: construction of roll presses, plate and frame presses, Zimpro thermal conditioning, incinerator waste heat boilers. Polymer replaced ferric and lime as sludge flocculant.				Wet ash to on-site disposal phased out 1986 and about 275,000 tons from ash lagoons hauled 1988. Dry ash to beneficial use (roads, cement kiln) 1986-2004	135	49	Land-spreading resumed 1976. 200,000 dry tons cake was land applied 1976 - 1995. 44,400 dry tons cake landfilled 2004-2013.
1983-95	33.1	72%(dewatering feed), 73%(incinerator feed). 1990 higher inc temperature limit for MHI increases fuel use.	0.5	45.6	45.6	201	20	(52% of Metro cake was land applied from 1980-83)	
1995-2004	31.2	75%(dewatering feed), 77%(inciner. feed)	0.8	41	41	209			
2004-13	28.5	79.0 (dewatering) 81.4 (incinerator). Zimpro shut down 2004 increasing volatile solids. WHB steam increase from 20 to 60MMBTU/hr. Turbine generators started 2005/2013	0.4	43.4	43.4	Dry ash to landfill since 2005 (because of Hg content)	231.1	0	3.1

September 28, 2020

Victoria Reinhardt, Commissioner
Ramsey County, District 7
Ramsey County Board Office
15 West Kellogg Boulevard, Room 220
St. Paul, MN 55102

Re: Public Comment on Pig's Eye Lake Island Building Project and
Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant Abandoned Ash Lagoons

Dear Commissioner Reinhardt:

I am writing to you and the Ramsey County Parks Department during the public comment period for the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project to construct dredge sand islands in Pig's Eye Lake (PEL). After 30+ years of public service at the Metropolitan Council, I retired in March 2020 as a Principal Environmental Scientist. During that time, I was the Council's point person for all environmental issues between the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWTP) and the Pig's Eye Dump. In recent years, add Battle Creek, PEL sediments and the surrounding wetlands to the list of concerns.

In August 2009, the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) conducted a subsurface exploration on the MWWTP property for potential use as a wetland compensation site. Seven soil borings were advanced in a triangle of land (3 acres) immediately south of four large abandoned sewage sludge ash storage/dewatering lagoons. Field conditions such as soil type and groundwater levels were recorded and soil samples were taken for laboratory analysis.

Briefly, the findings of the subsurface exploration were:

- 1) The universal presence of imported fill below the surface in a 5 - 13 foot thick layer of materials consistent with sewage treatment screenings, grit and possibly sludge ash.
- 2) Groundwater is present beginning at 7 feet below surface. This means that the imported fill is sitting in groundwater. Add to this condition the recurring flooding of the Mississippi River into its backwaters such as PEL and the abandoned ash lagoons.

- 3) Laboratory analysis shows the presence of heavy metals such as cadmium, chrome, silver, mercury and lead significantly above expected background levels. If the “totals” analytical results are divided by 20, consistent with the dilution conducted in the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP), chrome and lead might be present at concentrations exceeding the regulatory levels for characteristic hazardous wastes. Only laboratory TCLP analysis of “fresh” soil samples can determine whether or not this is indeed hazardous waste.
- 4) Analytical “hits” were made for pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and benzo(a)pyrene equivalent compounds. These have the potential to exceed various drinking water and soil cleanup threshold values depending on routes of human exposure.
- 5) Diesel range organic compounds reached a high of 23,000 mg/Kg which is representative of petroleum contamination. Add a high of oil and grease at 35,000 mg/Kg.
- 6) Perfluorochemical (PFC) analysis was not conducted for the 2009 soil samples. Since then, these compounds are routinely included in the analyses of environmental samples from PEL and its surroundings.

How do these findings potentially impact the USACE project? The four large abandoned sewage sludge ash storage/dewatering lagoons and triangle of land are a few hundred yards west of the shore of PEL and one of the proposed dredge sand islands. Is the imported fill described in August 2009 a hazardous waste or a petroleum contaminated waste? Is the triangle of land sampled in August 2009 an unpermitted hazardous waste landfill or petroleum dump? If any of this is hazardous waste or petroleum waste and given the very shallow groundwater under the triangle of land, are the waters and sediments of PEL in the vicinity of the proposed islands contaminated? Unlike the delineated Exclusion Zone and Best Management Practices Zone where Battle Creek enters the north end of PEL, the west side of PEL has had no significant environmental evaluation and therefore no island building restrictions.

The proposed location of the USACE dredge sand islands and associated construction activities will significantly impact the shallow water and sediments of PEL. In order for this project to successfully proceed, there must be a current and thorough collection of environmental information from the adjacent MWWTP property. This information then must be subject to professional and public review and subject to regulatory actions and engineering modifications, if necessary.

The complete findings from the August 2009 subsurface exploration can be found in the following reports on file with the MCES:

- 1) Subsurface Exploration Report, Wetland Compensation Site
AET Project No. 03-03504
October 28, 2009
- 2) Wetland Mitigation, Pigs Eye Peninsula, MCES Project # 802710
MCES Contract # 07P181, Wenck File # 1140-18
October 2009
- 3) In addition, the findings were reported as an environmental release to the Minnesota State Duty Officer, Report Number 105492, on August 12, 2009.

An environmental investigation into the four large abandoned sewage sludge ash storage/dewatering lagoons and environs and into the past solids disposal practices of the MWWTP can be of immediate benefit to the USACE island building project. In the long term, these investigations will also beneficially serve for the restoration of the Battle Creek Regional Park and Pig's Eye Lake area into a natural habitat and open space recreational park for wildlife to thrive and for people to enjoy!

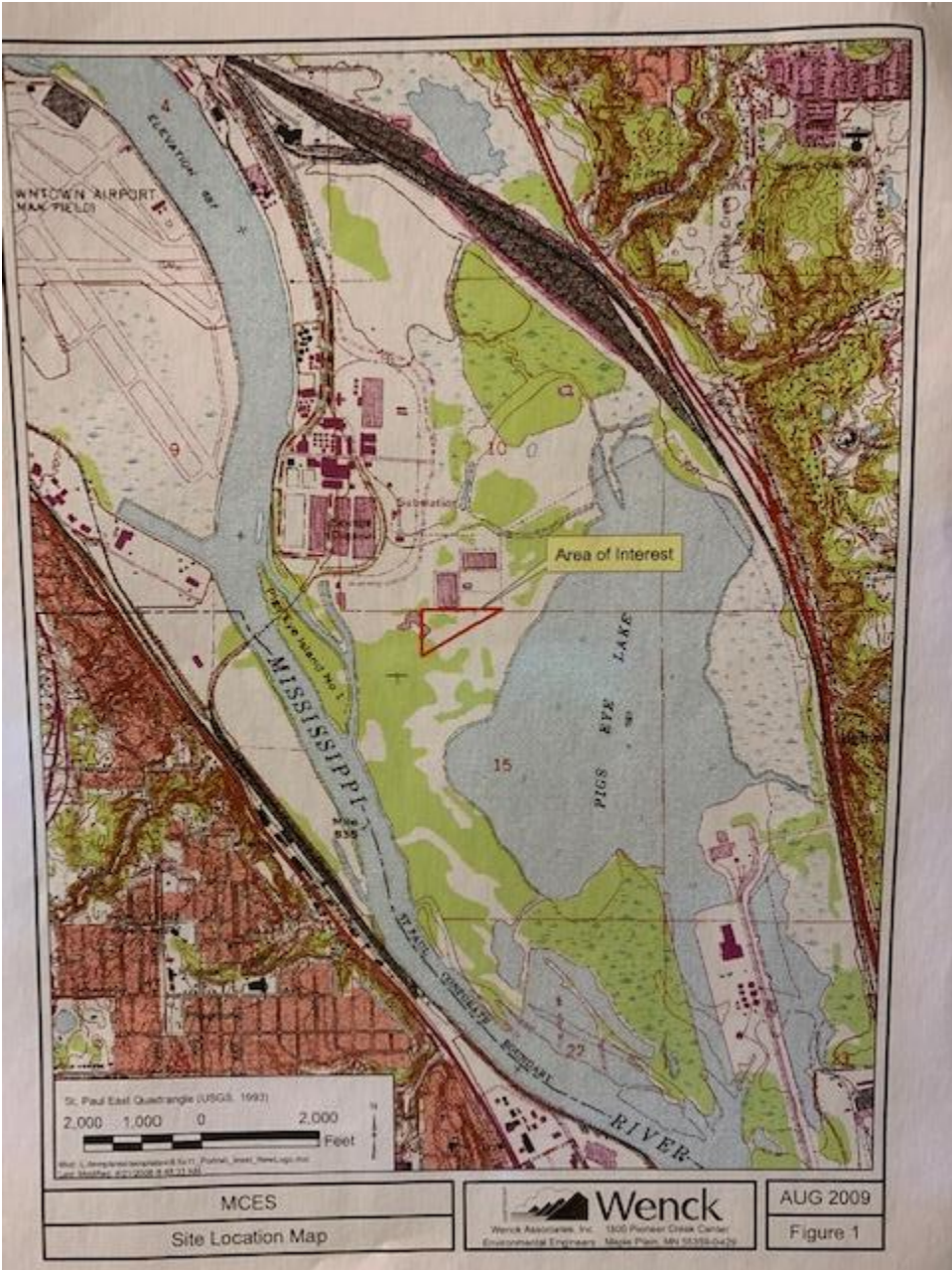
Thank you!

Michael Nevala

2129 Cedar Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Cc: Charles Zelle, Chair, Metropolitan Council





St. Paul City Council asks state to help clean up Pig's Eye Lake

By [ZOË JACKSON](#), STAR TRIBUNE
January 11, 2022 - 7:50 PM

St. Paul Audubon Society Treasurer Kiki Sonnen has visited Pig's Eye Regional Park since the 1970s. The park is part of a major North America flyway for heron, who nest there and travel up to 30 miles around the region to feed before returning to Pig's Eye.

"Great blue herons, great egrets, black-crowned night herons, double-crested cormorants. They nest together on an island called Pig's Eye Island Number 2," Sonnen said, who is passionate about birds and wildlife.

But over the years, the number of heron nests have declined sharply, from 1,200 to 500, said Sonnen. One cause could be the high level of pollutants, including PFAS, that have been found in eggs at the Heron Rookery island at the park, according to a St. Paul staff report.

The St. Paul City Council is asking the state for funds from President Joe Biden's federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the state's \$7 billion state budget surplus to help clean up years of pollution near the underutilized lake. The amount of funding needed was not specified.

The area near the lake, wetlands and flood plain were used as a landfill from 1920 to the early 1970s. The state designated the Pig's Eye landfill and fish hatchery dump site as a Minnesota state Superfund site in 1989.

- [EPA moves to crack down on dangerous coal ash storage ponds](#)

Serious pollutants threaten all downstream communities that rely on the Mississippi River for their water supply, Council Member Jane Prince said in an e-mail.

"With the climate disruptions that have become more common, there is an increased likelihood that flooding of Pig's Eye threatens the Mississippi River," Prince said.

Council Members Prince and Nelsie Yang will introduce a resolution on the issue Wednesday, and Rep. Rick Hansen, DFL-St. Paul, will hold an Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy hearing on the matter Jan. 18.

"We think that once it's cleaned up, then people won't look at it as a dump anymore, they'll look at it as a sacred site, a valuable site for the entire community," Sonnen said.

Zoë Jackson is a reporter covering St. Paul and its neighborhoods for the Star Tribune. She previously covered young voters on the politics team, supported by Report for America and the Minneapolis Foundation.

zoe.jackson@startribune.com [zoemjack](#)

I strongly support Resolution 22-69 to designate funding for pollution remediation and natural resource restoration at Čhokáj Tájka Pig's Eye Regional Park, and I applaud and thank Reps. Xiong and Hansen along with St. Paul Councilmembers Prince and Yang for their work in support of this important proposal.

Minnesota prides itself as a leader in conservation, environmental protection, natural resources, and outdoor recreation. St. Paul is also known in particular for its green spaces and parks systems. We cannot in good faith claim these merits when such a culturally important place, in a majority non-white and marginalized area, is left as a neglected and unmaintained superfund site.

I urge the Committee to support robust funding for this necessary work. Thank you.

Tess Dornfeld
55418