



Dear Neighbor,

You are one of over 500 property owners in the 10 DCL coves which DNR now labels as "sediment impacted".

**Have you heard? DNR has decided "it is not in the best interest of the State" to dredge these coves.** Of course, we think this is the wrong decision. Enclosed are materials about your cove; the DCL Sediment Study and the State decision. Even more information is posted on our web site.

Our organization was built in response to peoples' concerns about sediment, shallow coves, grasses and invasive species. **Six of our Board members have property in one of these 10 coves.** We know what "sediment impacted" means because we live it every day—we go elsewhere to swim, have to pull our boats out before the season ends, watch the grasses and invasive species spread, have our children and grandchildren say "it's yucky" and we understand the financial impact on our lake investment. We love "cove living" and know how beneficial our coves are to the overall Deep Creek Lake "experience".

**We have to do something.** After 5 years of work on these issues, our position is clear:

- The **State owns the lake** and, as owner, **the State is responsible** to protect the natural resource, keep ecological balance and ensure recreational use. It is unacceptable to write off sections of the state-owned lake by deciding not to dredge them.
- We know sediment and accompanying nutrients threaten lake health and recreational uses.
- We know that the high nutrient mud in these coves provides perfect habitat for grasses and for invasive species; all 10 coves have Eurasian Watermilfoil and 4 have hydrilla.

Last year over 1600 lake and Garrett County residents sent Governor O'Malley petition asking that he commit to Saving the Lake and to provide our lake with state programs and state funds. Our petition this year affirms our request and specifically urges immediate action by the State to

- 1) **develop a State financial mechanism to funding dredging and to implement dredging at DCL;**
- 2) **create a program to prevent further importation of invasive species into our lake.**

What we all need to do: Become informed. . . Organize community meetings. . . Circulate the petition to family, friends, visitors, and your business contacts . . . Help raise funds.

Join us now. We either sit and get stuck further in the mud, losing more of our coves and more of our lake **OR** organize ourselves and lift our collective voices to ensure that the State does its job to manage, protect and ensure sustainability of Deep Creek Lake.

Join us in celebration of July as Lake Appreciation Month—enjoy our very wonderful, special lake **AND** commit to take steps to be sure it will be here for future generations to enjoy!

*Best wishes for a great summer at the lake!*

*Members of the Friends of Deep Creek Lake and your neighbors*

*Promoting stewardship, conservation and restoration in the Deep Creek Lake watershed*

*779 Chadderton School Rd Oakland, MD 21550, web site: [friendsofdcl.org](http://friendsofdcl.org); email: [contact@friendsofdcl.org](mailto:contact@friendsofdcl.org)*



**Governor O'Malley, Members of the Maryland General Assembly: We urge the administration and the State to make a commitment to Save Deep Creek Lake, as you have done for the Bay.**

Last year over 1600 Garrett Countians submitted a petition to the Governor requesting action. Since then lake health has declined: 1) *hydrilla*, an aggressive aquatic plant, has been found; 2) DNR has determined that 10 coves are "impacted" by sediment; and 3) DNR has stated "it is not in the best interest of the State" to dredge, though Maryland and Federal laws deem sediment accumulation to be an impairment, requiring remediation. **What is the impact of inaction?** All sectors of the lake, county and region are increasing hurt financially by sediment accumulation.

Our lake is owned by the State and it is your responsibility to protect this resource, ensure its health and commit to a sustainable future. We will cooperate with you, but you must take the lead. Inaction is risking the future of our lake and increasing restoration costs.

- The longer the State puts off dredging the greater the costs —as you have learned in the Bay.
- The longer the State delays in preventing importation of nonnative aquatic species, the great the costs to remedy. DNR is spending \$330,000 this year in a reactive, containment approach to the *hydrilla*.

We urge the State to adopt the proactive approach to protect DCL, as advocated by former DNR Secretary John Griffin.

**DO NOT WRITE OFF DEEP CREEK LAKE! DO NOT LEAVE THE LAKE USERS STUCK IN THE MUD!**

Print Name	Signature
Address, City, State, Zip	
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Print Name	Signature
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Print Name	Signature
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**Please return to: FoDCL, 779 Chadderton School Rd, Oakland MD 21550**



## FoDCL Talking Points

### *DCL sediment impacted coves, why dredging is necessary and what we can do*

After 4 years of study, Maryland Department of Natural Resources DNR has determined there are 10 coves "impacted" by sediment, as of 2012. With the release of the DCL Sediment Study this spring, DNR announced it does not intend to dredge these coves.

*"The Department has determined that it is not in the State's best interest to pursue dredging of these relatively small coves due to the minimal benefit to the general boating public and the possible deleterious impact on the lake."*

As one of the over 500 property owners in these 10 coves, you are already too familiar with the reality of what "sediment impacted" means.

- You have to keep moving your docks to get enough water for boating.
- Some of you even have to pull your boats before summer is over.
- You have more grasses and now invasives species like Eurasian Watermilfoil and hydrilla—thriving in the nutrient-rich mud in your cove.
- You go elsewhere to swim because you wonder about the water quality in your cove.
- Your kids and grandkids don't enjoy jumping in the lake like they used to; it's "yucky".

Here are some things you may not know.

- Your lake property values are worth about 40% less than you think, according to analysis done by Garrett County. You have at least 25% loss in value as direct result of being in a sediment impacted cove and another 15% loss due to invasive grasses.
- Most of you lost already lost about 20% in property valuation with the last triennial tax assessment.

But, you love the lake and most especially your coves, the secret and quiet places at DCL.

Why should others care about your situation?

- Your coves are places where others using the lake seek out t—less waves, wind and boat traffic, a place to tour and explore nature or just hang out for an afternoon.
- According to Garrett County analysis
  - Lake-related businesses and tourism increasingly feel the financial impact.
  - Loss in property values means lower tax revenues for the cash-strapped County, struggling just to keep their schools open.
  - Jobs in the region also are impacted.

We are a lake of coves. We know lakes "age", which starts with accumulation of sediment which in



The following figure displays the coves that are proposed for sediment management:

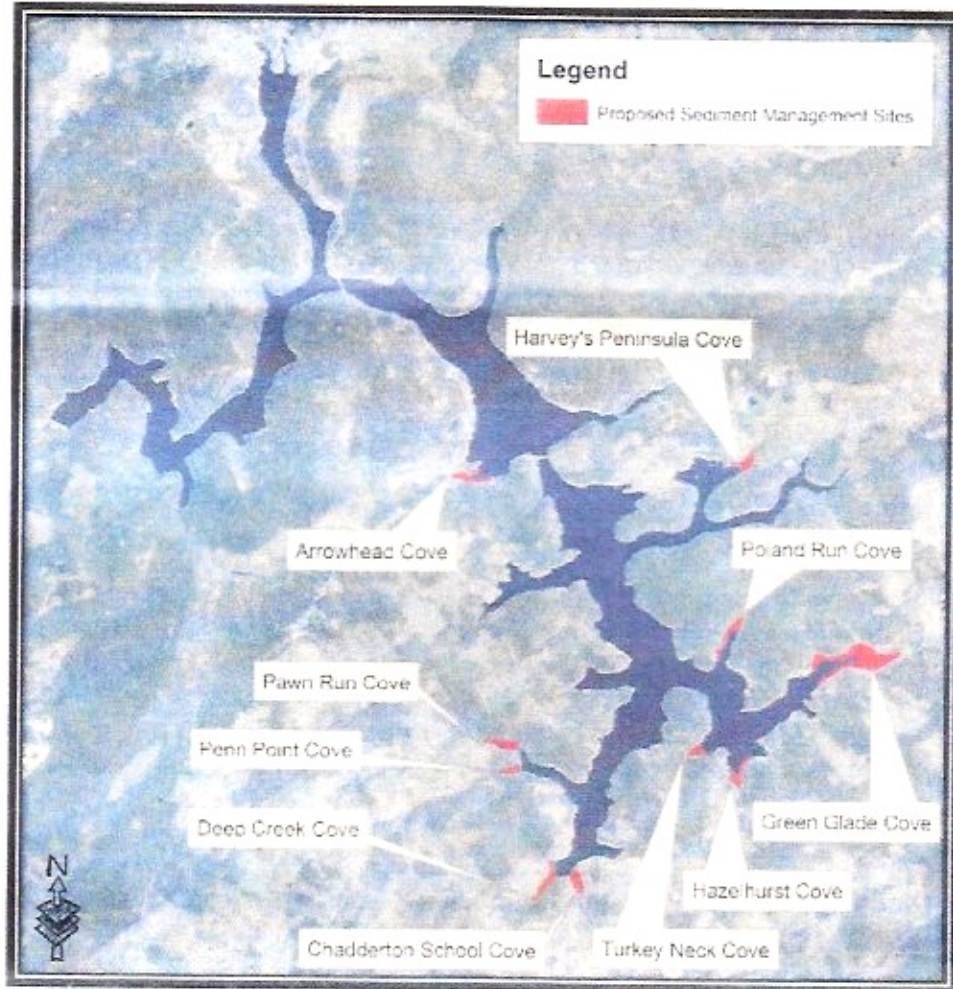


Figure 1.2 – Coves with Potential Sediment Management

Note: Back Bay Cove is referred to as Turkey Neck Cove



turn leads to grasses and declining water quality. Left alone, eventually the coves will fill in. This is a natural process which required a pro-active lake management approach to protect our lake. All of us are being impacted –property owners, businesses, tourism, the County and the job market.

It appears the only one against dredging is the state. Below are the three reasons they give to justify not dredging.

**“Relatively small coves”**— Any cove in DCL is small compared to the Bay, the DNR frame of reference. Within the DCL, not all of the 10 coves are small by lake standards.

In fact, Green Glade and Harvey’s are some of the largest coves on the lake. Arrowhead may not be large in size but is the most visible to everyone who comes to the lake and most important for lake-related businesses.

**“Minimal benefit to boating public”**— There is no data on boating use in these coves upon which such an assessment of benefit can be based. Is it of “minimal benefit” to the fisherman who explore the shallows of your cove, the jet skiers who zoom around, folks water skiing, wake boarding and tubing, families on pontoon boats touring the lake? And don’t forget those who seek your cove for a quiet place to anchor to get away from boat traffic on a busy summer week-end. As the lake gets more crowded, the safe havens of the coves have increasing positive benefit to the “lake experience” for our guests, Garrett County locals and you. These are assets to be protected, not written off.

**“Deleterious impacts”**—Is DNR suggesting dredging would be bad for other parts of the lake? The Sediment Study does not present research on this topic. Is DNR referring to the 2-3 month loss of access during the dredging in the spring or fall? Property owners would most certainly accept some short term limits in off-season use, knowing they will gain substantial benefits of increased recreational use and easing of negative financial impacts on their property.

DNR paints a positive view of sediment and its accumulation as follows “of increased ecological value to the lake, particularly to increasing fishing populations due to abundance of submerged aquatic vegetation growth and shallow water habitat.”

- The MDE Web site states: “(S)ediment contributes to a decline in water quality by blocking sunlight, reducing photosynthesis, decreasing plant growth, destroying bottom dwelling species’ habitat, carrying attached pollutants such as phosphorous, and so on. The list of negative impacts is long.” Sediment is has a negative impact on the health and sustainability of our lake.
- Both Federal and Maryland law identify sediment as an “impairment” to clean water and remedial action is required under the Clean Water Act.

### Summary

Sediment is not “deleterious”. So why has DNR adopted a no-dredging position? We must assume DNR agency chooses not to spend state funds to restore Deep Creek Lake, the state-owned lake.

### What are your options?

Property owners in the impacted coves may pay for dredging. Under current policy, as an abutting private property owner, you could work with DNR and MDE to plan and implement dredging in your cove. Of course privatizing the costs ignores the realities:

- You are already suffering the negative financial consequences of the second home housing bubble and on-paper financial losses from sediment and invasive species; and



- You are not the only one who uses your cove for recreational enjoyment.

#### State funding options.

Waterway Improvement Fund which receives revenues from the excise tax on vessel sales. This is how the dredging on the Bay has been funded. With downturn in economy, this Fund has dwindled and there is little chance we can get it to underwrite dredging at DCL, though we all have been paying into this state trust fund since 1966.

Maryland bonds The State floats bonds for many capital projects. This is a rather simple mechanism. A cost sharing agreement would probably mean the State would pay for 50% of the cost and the balance spread between the County and all the property owners. Former DNR Secretary Griffin was open to this approach in 2013.

#### **The responsibility is clear. Let's not muddy the waters.**

Under the state law, management guidelines for DCL are clearly outlined: **"the protection of the lake as a natural resource, the preservation of its ecological balance, and furtherance of its highest use as a recreational resource"**. Sediment and accompanying nutrients and pollutants impact the lake as a natural resource, cause ecological imbalance and hinder recreational use.

Dredging is the appropriate and needed management response to remedy sediment impairments at Deep Creek Lake- this is clear. The longer the delay in dredging, the greater the cost to all involved.

#### **Drawing a line in the mud. Time to get involved.**

- Spread the word to your neighbors and everyone else about the need for dredging at DCL.
- Invite us to your community association or host a house part of your neighbors or friends.  
We have data on each cove, each property, the cost of dredging, analyses, etc
- Circulate the enclosed petition to everyone you know-- your family, friends, your visitors, your neighbors people you do business with-- young and old!
- Volunteer to conduct a cove survey on recreational use of your cove on a summer Saturday.
- Donate to the effort. Hold a neighborhood party and "fun" fundraiser.

**Our bottom line:** Friends of DCL must raise a substantial amount of money to take this effort to Annapolis—where decisions about funding and dredging are made. With you, we will take the petition and our collective voices to state policy makers. But, there is no point in doing this if we are not going to be effective. We need professional help—to shape our message, communicate to key people and convince folks saving DCL matters. We will need a lobbyist and a lawyer to review legal options.

If everyone one of the over 500 property owners gave \$30 (equal to one night out at the movies!), we would be able to make a real difference, hopefully saving our coves. We can do this. It just takes money and hard work . . . **starting with you. What other choice do we have?**





The cost of dredging in your cove is estimated to be  
**\$780,750** or  
**\$26,025--** for each lot.

In your cove, the estimated average loss per lot from **NOT** dredging is **\$209,646** in property devaluation. This figure will increase as sediment continues to accumulate, SAVs grow, and water quality declines.

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