

e-News September 16, 2011

The Earthquake

Following the 5.9 Magnitude earthquake centered in Virginia on August 23rd, we immediately inspected the dam for damage. Our dam Emergency Action Plan requires it, but we checked the EAP after the inspection was already done. As part of our dam remediation (Phases I and II) we injected grout and installed a 'drainage collection' system whereby we can collect data quarterly telling us where and how much leakage/seepage is occurring. In an earthen dam, both are typical but too much, or a big change, are bad indications. The value of the system and the baseline data were both demonstrated as we were very quickly able to demonstrate that our dam had weathered the earthquake just fine. The simplest indicator is color or cloudy seepage and there was none of that even. Thanks to CME Engineering (Sean Isgan), Councilman Paul Cornez, and Mayor Miscoe (our Emergency Management Coordinator) for a speedy response.

The Flood

The question has come up... How did the 9/9/11 flood compare to the big one; the PMF?

The best available NWS data says that on 9/9/11 beginning around 1:00 p.m. we had a storm that dumped what seemed like an enormous amount of rain in a short period. The rate, which determines whether and how much the Lake fills up, was 1.55 inches per hour in Windber (the closest official station). It lasted around 1/2 hour. Unofficial reports say it rained even harder than that, for longer. This came on the heels of a series of rainy days and an already full Lake.

Rainfall of around 1.5 inches per hour across our entire watershed equals about 13,000 cubic feet (~100,000 gallons) per second. At 2282 feet (2 feet above the spillway height) our spillway can only handle about one-tenth of that, 1400 cfs or 10,000 gallons/second, so if rain keeps coming at a greater rate the Lake will keep filling up. If the ground is soaked it will fill up quickly.

The good news is the higher the lake gets, the faster it flows over the spillway. At 2285-2286 feet, 100,000 gallons flows in and 100,000 flows out each second, and all is well. We never got that high, but some contend we got to nearly 2283 feet, the highest since the 1970s...

So, what would the big one be like in comparison? Well, for starters TRIPLE the rate of the rainfall. The PMF (if it ever could actually occur) starts off with a rate of 4.5 inches per hour or 3x the 1.5 we saw on Friday.

It would then continue for 6 straight hours, non-stop. That's 12x longer. 27 inches would fall in the first 6 hours...

The rate of 4.5 inches per hour across our entire watershed is 39,000 cfs or 300,000 gallons per second. Our lake would fill up pretty quickly. At 2295 feet our spillway can pass 300,000 gallons per second. The problem is, the breast of the dam ain't that high... Bad news for Lake Stonycreek and Shanksville as our dam would overtop at 2291-2292 and fail.

This gets us to the second part of the story...

Easement Status

We have more than 410 easements signed and returned. We still have a few more to go. DEP will not allow us to begin work until all affected properties are under agreement.

IF YOU OWE US A SIGNED EASEMENT BUT HAVE NOT YET RETURNED IT, PLEASE DO SO ASAP. This will allow us to raise the dam and let the existing spillway do its job. ...And save Shanksville.

Commonwealth Court Remand

In December 2010 Commonwealth court remanded (returned without action) an appeal of the boat-dock easement granted to St. Clair Development (SCD). This required Judge Klementik to consider the case on its merits rather than summarily dispel it due to 'legal technicalities'. This week Judge Klementik ruled that Borough Council did not abuse their authority in granting SCD rights to water (and land under it) at no charge. Judge Klementik further ruled Council did not abuse their authority in rejecting the adjoining property owner's bid on this same area/easement, especially since no motion to accept it was ever made. This was the last remaining piece of litigation involving the Borough (with respect to SCD) and barring another appeal. In a related ruling, Judge Klementik ruled that Mayor Miscoe, then Council President, was not guilty of influencing Council or voting under a conflict of interest by nature of his employment with the Borough Solicitor's law firm.

You can view this ruling, and others, at <http://indianlake-pa.net/asp/News/Current.aspx>

It is our hope we can put these lawsuits behind us and avoid any others going forward.

Recycling

Arrangements have been firmed up with Reese's Sanitation to kick off our new recycling program. A large, bright-red, multi-compartment dumpster was placed above the Borough Building. The front compartment is for newspaper ONLY. The middle is for broken-down cardboard boxes. The back compartment is for aluminum.

Please adhere to the signage and these few simple rules. PLEASE DO NOT PUT REGULAR GARBAGE IN THE RECYCLING DUMPSTER!

Regular Garbage Collection

If you do not take your garbage elsewhere for disposal, you need to contact Reese's Sanitation for pickup of your garbage. There are no public dumpsters in the borough. If you put your garbage in a dumpster in the borough, someone else has to pay for its disposal. Since I am confident that none of you would want to pay for someone else's garbage removal, everyone needs to be considerate of their neighbors (and Reese's Sanitation) and pay for your own service. Mandatory garbage collection for all residents is an unpopular option, so let's not create a situation where that needs to be considered. This may seem like a small thing, but it is significant if you are the recipient of someone else's garbage. Thanks in advance to all for having done the 'right thing' in this matter.

Darren Miller - Marathon Swimmer

Darren was coming back to the Lake to train for the next phase of his assault on a world record but has had to cancel. He hopes to train here next spring. One of 800 or so people in history to swim the English Channel when he last trained here in June, Darren has since completed the Catalina Channel in California and is training for the Moloka'i Channel in Hawaii in October (tentatively 10/21). Darren's mission is to hold the world record for channel swims, completing the "Oceans' Seven" major channels within the next few years. Darren swims for charity; the Forever Fund and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. We can follow Darren on his quest at <http://www.darren-miller.com/>

Lake Study

Bill Kirkpatrick of Aquatic Environment Consultants (the "Weed" guy) has just completed a study of our Lake quality, similar to the DEP study done in 2006/2007. One of the purposes of this repeat study was to determine the wisdom of repeated lake drawdowns to control weeds. Nearby Lake Shawnee was permanently damaged in 2004 due to what has been attributed to repeated (annual/biannual) drawdowns. The report just came in today and has not been digested, but Bill has concluded we can safely do a drawdown this year. We will make that determination quickly; early next week. If you have input, don't be shy...

Dick Stern

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