



# Summit Hall Turf Farm Water Access Poolesville, Maryland

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/ ASSESSMENT OF EFFECT



July 2011





# **Summit Hall Turf Farm Water Access Poolesville, Maryland**

***Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park***

***Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect***

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# **PROJECT SUMMARY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The National Park Service (NPS) Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal NHP) is evaluating the proposed modification of an existing water line and construction of an additional water line from the Potomac River to the Summit Hall Turf Farm, Inc. (formerly Potomac Valley Turf Farm, Inc.) crossing the C&O Canal NHP, between canal Mile 28.46 and canal Mile 29.35 of the park. The proposed project has been requested by Summit Hall Turf Farm, Inc., located at 21300 River Road, Poolesville, Maryland. Summit Hall's Warranty Deed (Deed) information allows it to install up to three raw water intakes across NPS property for agricultural purposes. Two intake lines have been installed (Lines # 1 and #2), and the farm is requesting to modify Line #2 and install the final third line (Line #3).

## **PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE ACTION**

The purpose of the project is to address a request from Summit Hall to modify Line #2 and complete the farm's irrigation system by installing Line #3, as outlined in the Deed established in 1975. Under the terms of the Deed, Summit Hall must complete the modification of Line #2 and installation of Line #3 under the supervision of a representative of the superintendent of the C&O Canal NHP and ensure full compliance with agreed-upon terms of installation, which would be identified in a Special Use Permit for construction and which would include the mitigation measures from this environmental assessment (EA). The action is needed because the farm has had difficulty maintaining a suitable water intake situation for Line #2, and because of additional irrigation needs due to the expansion of farm operations over the years. Line #2 was established in 1975 via the Deed and is located through the historic culvert #39, at Mile 28.46 of the park. Due to changes along the Potomac River shoreline, the intake for Line #2 is impacted frequently from siltation, reducing its capability to draw water. Summit Hall holds a permit from the state of Maryland to withdraw water from the Potomac River for agricultural purposes.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE ALTERNATIVES**

Two alternatives are addressed in this EA:

- Alternative A: no action. Line #2 would not be modified and Line #3 would not be established. This is not a legal option based on Deed conditions, but is a required alternative under the National Environmental Policy Act and serves as a baseline for impact analysis.
- Alternative B: modify Line #2 and install Line #3 using either directional drilling (option 1) or open trenching (option 2).

## **SUMMARY OF IMPACTS**

Impacts of the proposed alternatives were assessed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act; the NPS Director's Order 12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making* (DO-12); and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Several impacts topics were dismissed from further analysis because the proposed action would result in no impacts or negligible adverse impacts on those resources. No major impacts are anticipated as a result of this project.

## **HOW TO COMMENT**

Agencies and the public are encouraged to review and comment on the contents of this EA during a 30-day public review and comment period. A public meeting will be held during the comment period. We invite you to comment on this plan, and you may do so by any one of several methods. The preferred method of providing comments is through the NPS's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website for the park at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/choh>. You may also submit written comments to:

Kevin Brandt, Superintendent,  
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park  
Summit Hall Water Access – Environmental Assessment  
1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100  
Hagerstown, MD 21742

The date and location for the public meeting are listed below:

Public meeting date: July 27, 2011

Public meeting time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Public meeting location: John H. Poole Middle School, 17104 Tom Fox Avenue, Poolesville, MD  
20837

Only written comments will be accepted. Please submit your comments between July 11 and August 12, 2011. **Please be aware that your entire comment will become part of the public record. If you wish to remain anonymous, please clearly state that within your correspondence, although we cannot guarantee that personal information, such as email address, phone number, etc., will be withheld.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Chapter 1: Purpose and Need .....</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| Introduction.....  | 1         |
| Purpose of and Need for the Action.....  | 1         |
| Project Background.....  | 3         |
| Relationship to Laws, Executive Orders, Policies, and Other Plans.....                         | 4         |
| Scoping Process and Public Participation .....   | 6         |
| Issues and Impact Topics .....   | 6         |
| Impact Topics Analyzed in this Environmental Assessment .....                                  | 6         |
| Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis.....   | 8         |
| Impairment.....  | 11        |
| <b>Chapter 2: Alternatives .....</b>   | <b>13</b> |
| Introduction.....  | 13        |
| Descriptions of Alternatives.....  | 13        |
| Alternative A: No Action.....  | 13        |
| Alternative B: Modify Line #2 and Install Line #3 (Preferred Alternative with Option 1) .....  | 13        |
| Mitigation Measures of the Action Alternatives .....   | 16        |
| Alternatives Considered but Dismissed .....  | 18        |
| Environmentally Preferable and NPS preferred Alternative.....                                  | 18        |
| <b>Chapter 3: Affected Environment.....</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| Soils.....   | 21        |
| Vegetation .....   | 23        |
| Terrestrial Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat.....   | 23        |
| Cultural Resources .....   | 24        |
| Archeological Resources.....   | 25        |
| Historic Structures and Districts .....  | 27        |
| Visitor Use and Experience.....  | 29        |
| Park Operations and Management .....   | 29        |
| <b>Chapter 4: Environmental Consequences .....</b>   | <b>31</b> |
| General Methodology for Establishing Impact Thresholds and Measuring Effects by Resource ..... | 31        |
| Soils.....   | 34        |
| Vegetation .....   | 38        |
| Terrestrial Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat.....   | 41        |
| Cultural Resources .....   | 45        |
| Historic District and Structures.....  | 46        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Archeological Resources.....                          | 49        |
| Section 106 Assessment of Effect.....                 | 53        |
| Visitor Use and Experience.....                       | 54        |
| Park Operations and Management .....                  | 57        |
| <b>Chapter 5: Consultation and Coordination.....</b>  | <b>59</b> |
| <b>Chapter 6: List of Preparers.....</b>              | <b>61</b> |
| <b>Chapter 7: Glossary and Acronyms .....</b>         | <b>63</b> |
| Glossary of Terms.....                                | 63        |
| Acronyms .....  | 67        |
| <b>Chapter 8: Bibliography.....</b>                   | <b>69</b> |
| <b>Appendix A: Impairment Determination .....</b>     | <b>73</b> |
| <b>Appendix B: Deed .....</b>                         | <b>77</b> |
| <b>Appendix C: Consultation and coordination.....</b> | <b>97</b> |

## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Impairment Determination  
Appendix B: Deed  
Appendix C: Consultation and Coordination

## LIST OF TABLES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 1. Summary of Environmental Consequences .....           | 20 |
| Table 2. Archeological Resources in the Summit Hall Area ..... | 26 |
| Table 3. Historic Structures in the Study Area .....           | 27 |
| Table 4. Actions that Contribute to Cumulative Impacts.....    | 34 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 1. Summit Hall Water Access Project Area.....                   | 2  |
| Figure 2. Location of Proposed Lines #2 and #3 .....                   | 15 |
| Figure 3. Existing Line #1 Anchored on the Shoreline.....              | 16 |
| Figure 4. Project Area Soils Map.....                                  | 22 |
| Figure 5. View along the Towpath near Mile 28 .....                    | 28 |
| Figure 6. View of Culvert #39, Showing Existing Water Intake Line..... | 28 |