

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Project Scoping – Environmental Assessment for Summit Hall Turf Farm Water Access, Poolesville, Maryland

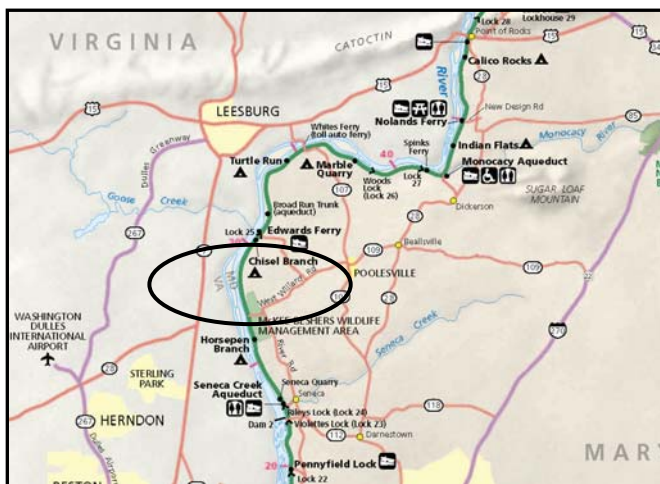
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



July 19 - August 20, 2010
Meeting – July 21, 2010

Environmental Assessment for Summit Hall Turf Farm Water Access, Poolesville, Maryland

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, across the C&O Canal NHP, between Mile 28.46 and Mile 29.35 of the park. The proposed project has been requested by Summit Hall Turf Farm, Inc., 21300 River Road, Poolesville, MD 20837.



Project Location

In 1975, a Warranty Deed (deed) was issued between the Potomac Valley Turf Farm, Inc. [Summit Hall Turf Farm, Inc.] and the NPS. As condition of the deed, the Potomac Valley Turf Farm, was granted right to establish three raw water intake lines for agricultural purposes through NPS property from the Potomac River. Water line #1 (Line #1) was in operation at the time of the 1975 deed and currently does not require any work. The farm is now requesting to modify the existing water line #2 (Line #2) and install water line #3 (Line #3), to complete the farm's irrigation system.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the NPS is initiating work on an Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effects (EA) to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed project to the natural, cultural, and human environment.

The EA will look at the proposed modification and additional deeded location for potential impacts to park resources. It will analyze if the locations will meet the needs of the Summit Hall Turf Farm operation, including

distance for water suction and adequate river intake location. The EA will also look at construction methods for installation and potential impacts to resources by the construction.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to address a request from Summit Hall Turf Farm to modify Line #2 and complete the farm's irrigation system by installing Line #3, as outlined in the Warranty Deed established in 1975. Under the terms of the deed, Summit Hall Turf Farm 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 insure full compliance with agreed upon terms of installation.



Line/Pump #2. Pump located off NPS property.

The action is needed because the farm has been experiencing difficulty in 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. Due to changes along the shoreline of the Potomac River, the intake for Line #2 is impacted frequently from siltation, reducing the capability to draw water.

Summit Hall Turf Farm holds a permit from Maryland to withdraw water from the Potomac River for agricultural purposes.

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Line #2 running through Culvert #39

Preliminary Resources and Impact Topics

Initial internal project scoping identified the following resources and impact topics for consideration in the EA:

- Geology & Soils
- Water Quality/Water Quantity
- Floodplains
- Vegetation
- Species of Special Concern
- Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife and Habitat
- Socioeconomics
- Historic Districts and Structures
- Archaeological Resources
- Cultural Landscapes
- Park Operations and Maintenance
- Visitor Use and Experience

Alternatives

Initial internal project scoping identified the following alternatives for consideration in the EA:

- 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.
- B. Modify Line #2 and install Line #3 using one of the following options:
 - B1 - Directional drilling – The project would employ directional drill technology to establish the additional water lines.
 - B2 - Open trenching - The project would employ trenching technology to establish the additional water lines.

Both the Line #2 and Line #3 would have a 10" pipe anchored on the Potomac River shoreline with concrete protection for the pipes from river forces and debris. This

intake area would be approximately 15"x15"x50". Extensions to the intakes would be attached as needed to access deeper pools in the river. These extensions would not be permanent and would be removed when the system is not in use. All construction costs would be incurred by Summit Hall Turf Farm.

Overview of the Process

Project milestones include:

- Public Scoping (July 19 - August 20, 2010)
- Public Scoping Meeting – July 21, 2010
- Analysis of Scoping Comments – August/ September 2010
- Preparation of EA – Fall 2010
- Public review of EA – Winter 2010
- Analysis of public comment – Spring 2011
- Preparation of decision document –Spring/ Summer 2011
- Announcement of decision on proposal – Late Summer 2011

Public Scoping Period

The Superintendent has announced a 33-day public scoping period to solicit public comments on this proposal. During this scoping period, the public is invited to identify any issues or concerns they might have with the proposed project so that the NPS can appropriately consider them in the EA. You may submit comments electronically at the NPS's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov>) or submit written comments to:

Superintendent
C&O Canal National Historical Park
1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Only written comments can be accepted. Mailed comments must be postmarked by August 20, 2010 to receive consideration. **If you wish to remain anonymous, please clearly state that within your correspondence.** Please feel free to use the attached comment form, which can be dropped off at the meeting or mailed to the address listed above.

Once the EA is developed, it will be made available for public review for a 30-day period. If you wish to be added to the park's mailing list for this or other announcements, please be sure to indicate that in your response.

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Please note that names and addresses of people who comment become part of the public record. **If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment.** We will make all submissions from organizations, businesses, and individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety.

Public Comment Form (Please Print)

Your Name: _____

Organization you represent (if any): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Comments:

[illegible]