



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**

Philadelphia District

## Public Notice

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Public Notice No.  
CENAP-PL-E-17-02

Date  
07 June 2017

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Internet Homepage:

<http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Public-Notices-Reports/>

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In Reply Refer to: Environmental Resources Branch

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to evaluate an easement agreement allowing PennEast Pipeline Company, LLC to construct and operate a pipeline through USACE owned/administered properties at the Beltzville Dam and Lake located in Carbon County, Pennsylvania. The Draft EA was prepared in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Council of Environmental Quality's regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and the Corps' Engineering Regulation 200-2-2, Procedures for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, 4 March 1988. The results, as found in the Draft EA, show that the Proposed Action would not have significant adverse impact to the environment on the USACE owned/administered properties at the Beltzville Dam and Lake. At the conclusion of the public comment period, it is anticipated that a FONSI would be appropriate and would be signed for the Proposed Action. An Environmental Impact Statement; therefore, is not necessary to implement the Proposed Action.

The purpose of the Beltzville Lake crossing is to facilitate construction of the Mainline Route of the natural gas pipeline project. The entire PennEast pipeline project would entail the construction of approximately 114.6 miles of 36-inch diameter pipeline from Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, to Mercer County, New Jersey. The Project's approximately 114.6-mile Mainline Route crosses USACE owned/administrated properties between Mile Post 42.9 and Mile Post 43.9. Within these USACE owned/administrated lands, the pipeline would cross Wild Creek and Pohopoco Creek approximately 5.1 and 5.4 river miles upstream of the dam, respectively.


Alternatives for the Proposed Action considered in the Draft EA include the No Action Alternative, and three different routing alternatives: 1) Open cut dry crossing (coffer dam); 2) Two shorter horizontal directional drills (HDD), one for each waterbody crossing; and 3) One single HDD spanning underneath both Wild Creek and Pohopoco Creek. The No Action Alternative, which provides environmental baseline conditions, was determined to be unfeasible as it does not address the project's purpose and need. The open cut and two shorter HDD lengths alternatives were determined to have greater impacts on vegetation, water and wetland resources, recreation and recreational areas, viewshed, and other resources than the single HDD crossing alternative.

The preferred alternative involves the use of the HDD method to cross both waterbodies in a single span, thereby avoiding and minimizing direct impacts to Wild Creek and Pohopoco Creek, the surrounding forested uplands, wetlands, Beltzville State Park recreational facilities and USACE owned/administrated properties. One single bore measuring approximately 6,100 feet in drill length would cross under both waterbodies. The drill entry point would be sited in an open agricultural field adjacent to an upland forested area within the park boundaries. The drill exit point would be located on a property south of the USACE owned/administrated lands. Through use of a single HDD bore, PennEast would avoid and minimize impacts to forests, wetlands, waterbodies, and recreational facilities such as trails.

All natural and social environmental factors that may be relevant to the Proposed Action, including the cumulative effects thereof, were considered in the Draft EA. Potential impacts were assessed with regard to the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem, endangered and threatened species, hazardous and toxic materials, aesthetics and recreation, safety, cultural and historic resources, and the general needs and welfare of the public. The Draft EA determined that the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to the natural or human environment, but temporary and minor impacts would include, and are not limited to, temporary noise and displacement of wildlife during construction, changes in existing land uses and existing visual/aesthetic resources, temporary impact on traffic and transportation, and minor impacts to topography, vegetation and geology. The Proposed Action will avoid and minimize impacts on resources in the project area and will include the restoration and mitigation of all impacts to these resources, consistent with USACE's restoration goals.

The public and all agencies are invited to comment on this proposal. The public notice and the Draft Environmental Assessment are available for review on the Philadelphia District web page at <http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Public-Notices-Reports/>. Any person may request, in writing, to the District Engineer, within the comment period specified in this notice (**07 June through 06 July 2017**) that a public hearing be held to consider this proposal. Requests for a public hearing shall state, in detail, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

All comments on the work described in this public notice and/or in the Draft Environmental Assessment should be directed to Mr. Peter R. Blum, Chief Planning Division, ATTN: Environmental Resources Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3390 by **06 July 2017**. Comments on the proposed work may also be submitted via email to the Philadelphia District's Public Affairs Office at [PDPA-NAP@usace.army.mil](mailto:PDPA-NAP@usace.army.mil).

for   
Peter R. Blum  
Chief, Planning Division  
Philadelphia District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers