



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Philadelphia District

Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3390
ATTN: CENAP-OP-R

Public Notice

Public Notice No. Date

CENAP-OP-R-2016-0054-1

Application No. File No.

In Reply Refer to:
REGULATORY BRANCH

This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments and recommendations from the public concerning issuance of a Department of the Army permit for the work described below.

APPLICANT: Blue Ridge Peat Farms Inc.
RR1, Box 292A
White Haven, Pennsylvania 18661

AGENT: Joseph Mullen
Pennoni Associates
100 North Wilkes-Barre Boulevard, Suite 409
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18702

WATERWAY: Cranberry Creek

LOCATION: The project site is located along the south side of Sand Spring Road in Cresco, Barrett Township, Monroe County, Pennsylvania. The coordinates for the site are Latitude 41.152451⁰ N and Longitude 75.277448⁰ W. The project site is flowed by an unnamed tributary that flows through a railroad embankment along the western side of the property and discharges into Cranberry Creek.

ACTIVITY: The application is requesting authorization to continue excavation and fill activities associated with peat mining activities at the existing Blue Ridge Peat Mine site located on Sand Spring Road in Cresco, Monroe County, Pennsylvania. The existing peat mining site has been in operation since 1967. An initial Department of the Army permit (CENAP-OP-R-1986-0258) was issued on December 10, 1986, which authorized excavation and fill activities associated with the peat extraction operation within a 19.3 acre portion of the property. A subsequent Department of the Army permit (CENAP-OP-R-1996-1150) was issued on September 26, 1996, which authorized continued activities at the site. These previous authorizations have expired. The previous approvals authorized disturbance to approximately 20 acres of wetlands for peat extraction within the project site. This application is requesting authorization to continue peat extraction within a 6.2 acre portion of the site that was previously authorized for peat mining. While actual peat extraction would be limited to the 6.2 acre portion

of the site, the remaining portions of the 20 acre peat mining areas would continue to be disturbed through continued site maintenance including vegetation control, ditch maintenance

and drainage. The previous Department of the Army permit (CENAP-OP-R-1996-1150) included a restoration plan for the peat mining site. The restoration work was not conducted since the peat mining activities have not been completed. As a part of the current application the applicant is proposing to conduct the previously approved restoration after completion of peat mining activities. As a part of the restoration work approximately 20 acres within the proposed and previously mined areas would be re-graded with appropriate top soil materials, stabilized and seeded with an approved seed mix with an expectation that the site would be restored to various forested, scrub-shrub, and emergent habitats. The location and plans of the proposed work are shown on the attached plans.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the proposed project is to continue peat mining operations within the previously approved areas.

A preliminary review of this application indicates that the proposed work would not affect listed species or their critical habitat pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as amended. As the evaluation of this application continues, additional information may become available which could modify this preliminary determination. The proposed work areas were evaluated for potential bog turtle habitat. As part of this evaluation, it was noted that the areas of peat extraction and drainage maintenance were previously cleared and mined and no longer support potential bog turtle habitat.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the activity's probable impact including its cumulative impacts on the public interest. The decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the work must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the work will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs and welfare of the people. A Department of the Army permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Comments on the proposed work should be submitted, in writing, within 30 days to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District, Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3390.

Review of the National Register of Historic Places indicates that no registered properties or properties listed as eligible for inclusion therein are located within the permit area of the work.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The project site is not located in or near any areas identified as essential fish habitat pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and is upstream of any anadromous fisheries spawning areas. Accordingly, it has been determined that the proposed project would have no effect on any essential fish habitat or related resources.

In accordance with Section 307(c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, applicants for Federal Licenses or Permits to conduct an activity affecting land or water uses in a State's coastal zone must provide certification that the activity complies with the State's Coastal Zone Management Program. This project is not located within the Pennsylvania Coastal Zone. As such, a consistency concurrence with the Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Program is not required.

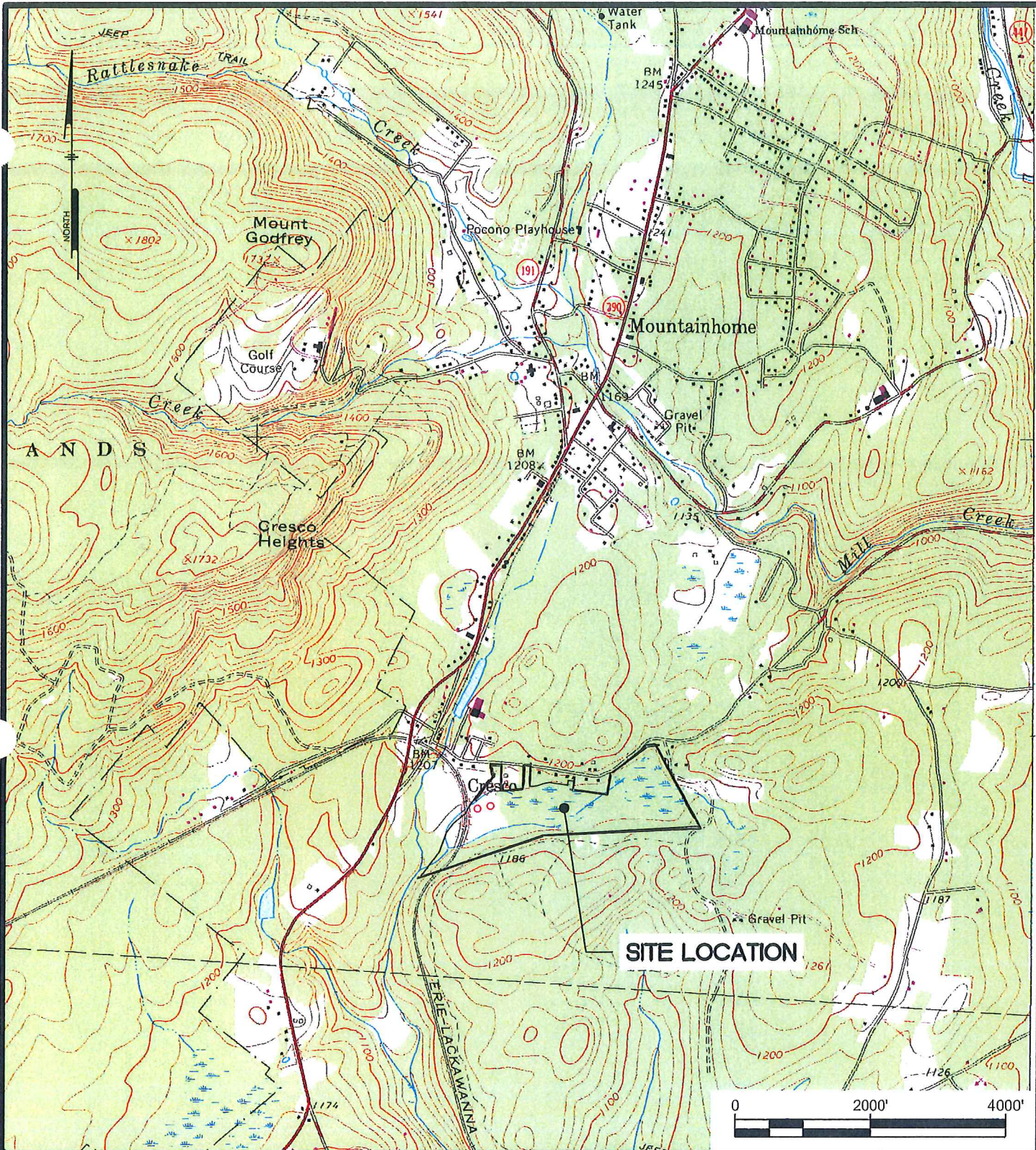
Compensatory mitigation: The application does not include any compensatory wetland mitigation. The applicant has submitted a restoration/reclamation plan which would restore vegetative cover for the approximately 20 acre mining site following the completion of all mining activities. The restoration plan would provide for a 5-year monitoring period to assure successful restoration of the site.

In accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, a Water Quality Certificate (WQC) is necessary from the State government in which the work is located. The required WQC is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP). An application for the required State authorizations, including the WQC, has been submitted to PADEP. Any comments concerning the work described above which relate to Water Quality considerations should be sent to the State with a copy to this office.

The evaluation of the impact of the work described above on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act.

Any person may request, in writing, to the District Engineer, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for a public hearing shall state in writing, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Additional information concerning this permit application may be obtained by calling Edward Bonner at 215-656-5932, via email at edward.e.bonner@usace.army.mil, or writing this office at the above address.



PENNONI ASSOCIATES INC.
 100 N. Wilkes-Barre Boulevard, Suite 409
 Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702
 T 570.824.2200 F 570.824.0800

ALL DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY PENNONI ASSOCIATES ARE INSTRUMENTS OF SERVICE IN RESPECT OF THE PROJECT. THEY ARE NOT INTENDED OR REPRESENTED TO BE SUITABLE FOR REUSE BY OWNER OR OTHERS ON THE EXTENSIONS OF THE PROJECT OR ON ANY OTHER PROJECT. ANY REUSE WITHOUT WRITTEN VERIFICATION OR ADAPTATION BY PENNONI ASSOCIATES FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE INTENDED WILL BE AT OWNERS SOLE RISK AND WITHOUT LIABILITY OR LEGAL EXPOSURE TO PENNONI ASSOCIATE; AND OWNER SHALL INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS PENNONI ASSOCIATES FROM ALL CLAIMS, DAMAGES, LOSSES AND EXPENSES ARISING OUT OF OR RESULTING THEREFROM.

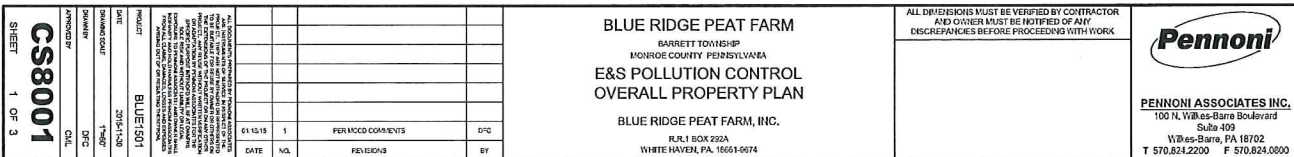
BUCK HILL FALLS QUADRANGLE
 BLUE RIDGE PEAT FARM
 BARRETT TOWNSHIP
 MONROE COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA
LOCATION MAP

BLUE RIDGE PEAT FARM, INC.
 R.R.1 BOX 292A
 WHITE HAVEN, PA. 18661-9674

PROJECT	APCP1501
DATE	2015-11-30
DRAWING SCALE	1"=2000'
DRAWN BY	DFC
APPROVED BY	CML

LOC-MAP

SHEET 1 OF 1





BLUE RIDGE PEAT FARM
 BARRETT TOWNSHIP
 MONROE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

E&S POLLUTION CONTROL PLAN
 PEAT FARM EXPANSION
 BLUE RIDGE PEAT FARM, INC.

R.R. 1 BOX 222A
 WHITE HAVEN, PA. 16051-6674

ALL DIMENSIONS MUST BE VERIFIED BY CONTRACTOR AND OWNER MUST BE NOTIFIED OF ANY DISCREPANCIES BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH WORK

Pennoni

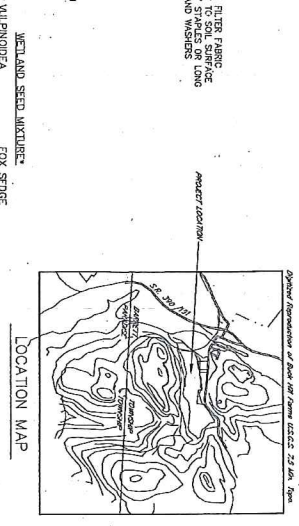
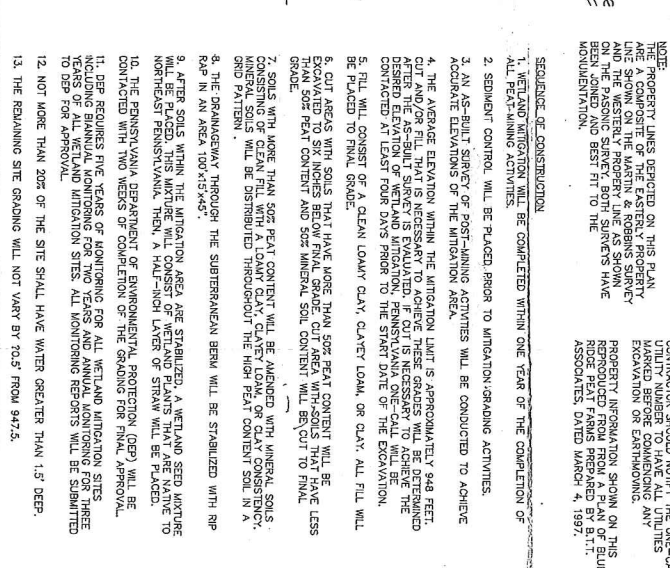
PENNONI ASSOCIATES INC.
 100 N. Wilkes-Barre Boulevard
 Suite 400
 Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702
 T 570.821.2200 F 570.821.0600

CS8002

SHEET 2 OF 3

DATE	NO.	REVISIONS	BY
01/15/14	1	FOR HOOD COMMENTS	J. J. G.

PROJECT	BLUE RIDGE
DATE	2014-01-14
DRAWN BY	J. J. G.
CHECKED BY	J. J. G.
APPROVED BY	J. J. G.

[illegible]

Revisions:	Drawn By:	Checked By:	Reviewed By:	Design Date:	Design By:	Checked By:	Reviewed By:	Design Date:	Design By:	Checked By:	Reviewed By:
1. REVISED PER PA DEP COMMENTS.	C.M.L.	J.F.M.	9/7/2003	9/2/03	9/2/03	9/2/03	9/2/03	9/2/03	9/2/03	9/2/03	9/2/03
<p>REVISIONS: ALL REVISIONS TO BE MADE BY THE DESIGNER. THE DESIGNER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED. THE DESIGNER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OTHERS. THE DESIGNER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OTHERS. THE DESIGNER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OTHERS.</p>											
<p>CH2M HILL CLIFTON HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LTD. 2000 ONE WATSON BLVD. SUITE 100 MONROE, PENNSYLVANIA 15067-1799 TEL: (412) 341-1515 FAX: (412) 341-0644 CMA Project No. 11885</p>											
<p>BLUE RIDGE PEAT FARM EXPANSION BLUE RIDGE PEAT FARM, INC. BARRETT TOWNSHIP MONROE COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA</p>											
<p>FINAL RESTORATION PLAN PEAT FARM EXPANSION</p>											
<p>PROPOSED FOR 4000 SOUTH MAIN ST. SCRIBNER, PA 15855</p>											
<p>DATE: AUGUST 18, 2003</p>											
<p>SHEET 1 OF</p>											