

U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM
HICKEY RUN STORMWATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT PROJECT
3501 New York Avenue, NE
Washington, D.C.

Delegated Action of the Executive Director

April 27, 2006

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996, I comment favorably on the concept site development plans for the Hickey Run Stormwater Pollution Abatement Project, at the U.S. National Arboretum, as depicted in the project study report titled; *Final Conceptual Design Report, Hickey Run Stormwater Pollution Abatement Project, dated December 2005.*

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture has submitted a concept design for a stormwater abatement facility at Hickey Run on the northern boundary of the Arboretum. The proposed area of the project entails approximately 0.9 acres of land straddling Hickey Run just south of an existing stormwater outfall culvert that exists under New York Avenue, NE, on Arboretum property.

The project will serve to collect and remove floatable debris, oil, and grease from water within Hickey Run that addresses the first one-inch polluted discharge of the 1,000-acre upstream watershed. This upstream area is entirely piped underground until the point of open outfall of the stream at the Arboretum. The project would serve to abate all floatable material, grease, and oil which would be present in water flows of up to approximately 98 cubic feet per second (cfs), with maximum stream flow at 128 cfs. Base flow at Hickey Run is at approximately 0.5 cfs. Beyond 128 cfs, the treatment facilities reach maximum capacity and would then side discharge the volume of water over a proposed concrete weir of approximately seven-feet in height.

The site development for the stormwater structures will essentially be underground except for the weir, which is constructed within the streambed area. Once the water flow is diverted into and passes through the structures, the water is discharged back into the streambed. Landscape and tree preservation at the site perimeter, and additional tree planting would occur at the stream embankment in disturbed areas of the site. A site stormwater management and erosion control plan, which meets District of Columbia standards, will be provided in the preliminary and final design and would be implemented by the Arboretum.

The project location, although adjacent to the historic brickyard area of the Arboretum, does not adversely impact the boundary of the brickyard structures or the concrete drive. Temporary access to the project site will have to be established utilizing the concrete service drive of the brickyard and kiln area, which will be reviewed and coordinated with input from the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance was achieved through the master plan process that identified and discussed the water quality improvements necessary at the Arboretum, and was completed in October 2000, in a Finding of No Significant Impact determination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Staff review of the current submission finds the proposed site improvements in conformance with the NCPC categorical exclusion criteria of §8(C)(21) of the Commission's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures as an action minimally modifying the existing drainage facilities.

The Coordinating Committee reviewed this item at its meeting on April 12, 2006, and forwarded the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies participating.

The project is consistent with the Commission approved master plan, is less than 50,000 square feet in building space area, and would have no adverse impact on land uses or environmental resources of the site. The Department of Agriculture had identified improved water quality initiatives in its National Arboretum master plan, and has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the D.C. Department of Health and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DCWASA) to undertake improvements to the stormwater measures. Staff believes that the concept design would appreciably improve the water quality of Hickey Run, provides substantial local improvement to the Arboretum environment, and notably adheres to the Commission's environmental Comprehensive Plan goals to improve the Anacostia River watershed.

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director