



Delegated Action of the Executive Director

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| PROJECT Various Stream Restoration, Wetland Creation, and Reforestation Projects Beltsville Agricultural Research Center 10300 Baltimore Avenue Beltsville, MD | NCPC FILE NUMBER 7396 |
| SUBMITTED BY United States Department of Agriculture | NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 3212.10(60.00)43612 |
| | ACTION TAKEN Preliminary and final approval of site development plans |
| | REVIEW AUTHORITY Advisory per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) |

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has submitted preliminary and final site development plans for stream restoration, wetland creation, and reforestation projects located at various sites throughout the USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC). For ease of reference, the four projects are referred to as IC-62, IC-84, PB-85, and REF-22. These projects are all a part of an environmental enhancement package that was included as Section 106 mitigation for the Intercounty Connector (ICC) project. Each of these projects were analyzed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the ICC project and recently reevaluated to see if supplemental environmental impact analysis was warranted.

IC-62 is a stream restoration project located in Indian Creek just west of Edmonston Road and south of Powder Mill Road. The project will restore approximately 1,900 linear feet of stream and entail: reconnecting the stream to the floodplain and create a natural channel, reducing bank erosion and in-stream sedimentation, enhancing riparian vegetation and habitat conditions, resolving utility conflicts, and opening a fish passage.

IC-84 is a wetland creation project at three separate locations at BARC. The three sites are generally bound by Edmonston Road, Power Mill Road, and Odell Road and are referred to as Area 1, 2, and 8. Area 1 has a drainage area of approximately 41 acres and includes a shallow wetland designed to remove pollutants and sediments using microbial breakdown, plant uptake, retention, settling, and absorption. Area 2 has a drainage area of approximately 116 acres and includes a shallow wetland at the end of existing culverts designed to hold and treat stormwater before draining into the existing agricultural fields. Area 8, located just south of Powder Mill Road, has a drainage area of approx. 28 acres and includes a wet pool for treatment of pollutants. The wet pool will treat runoff before draining to a dry pond facility. A wet pool is similar to a constructed wetland, a shallow basin filled with vegetation that is tolerant of saturated conditions.

PB-85 is another stream restoration project located along approximately 1,200 linear feet of Little Paint Branch. The project is located on the portion of the BARC campus that is south of I-495 just west of College Park. Stream restoration efforts included in this particular project

include bank stabilization, floodplain creation, utility conflict resolution, fish blockage removal, and riparian buffer enhancement. Little Paint Branch is a tributary of the Anacostia River; therefore this project will contribute to improving the water quality of the river.

The REF-22 reforestation project will provide approximately 41.6 acres of mitigation for forests cleared for the construction of the ICC. The five forest mitigation sites identified on the BARC campus were selected to quickly establish forest habitat for a variety of wildlife and provide other benefits such as erosion control, water quality improvement, aesthetics, pollution reduction, etc. The trees to be planted will be a minimum of five-feet in height, container grown at approximately 200 trees per acre and 2.5-inches caliper.

The project is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. These environmental stewardship projects will improve erosion control and stormwater runoff quantity and quality on the BARC campus. While the projects are not specifically included in the 1996 BARC Master Plan, the master plan does include provisions for addressing stormwater runoff with regard to quantity and quality. The projects have also been fully coordinated with state and local agencies. The stream restoration projects will use natural materials to help restore the natural stream flow and allow the stream to spill over its banks during periods of peak flow. This will reduce the amount of volume and abrasive erosion potential in the stream bed. The reforestation project will plant approximately 220 trees / acre over an area of 41.62 acres. The trees will be native species of varying caliper size.

As these are federal projects located in the environs of Washington, D.C. NCPC is advisory as to its review authority and therefore does not have an independent obligation to fulfill the requirements of NEPA and Section 106.

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Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996 and 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1), I approve the preliminary and final site development plans for various stream restoration, wetland creation, and reforestation projects located at the USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, MD, as shown in NCPC Map File No. 3212.10(60.00)43612.

Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

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