

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

MAHONING RIVER TRAIL

BERLIN LAKE
STARK COUNTY
OHIO

Stark County is seeking a real estate easement from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District for the Mahoning River Trail also named the Deer Creek Trail. The Mahoning River Trail, a recreational trail, proposed by the Stark County Parks District would connect the City of Alliance with the Deer Creek Reservoir. Deer Creek Reservoir, which was built on Berlin Lake project lands by the City of Alliance, Ohio, under agreement with the Department of the Army, provides a reservoir for domestic water supply to nearby communities.

The Mahoning River Trail would provide a scenic multi-purpose trail along the Mahoning River and is part of an overall plan to connect the parks, cultural resources, historic sites and natural areas of Stark County. The trail would be partially constructed within the boundary of the Berlin Lake project.

An Environmental Assessment for the proposed Mahoning River Trail was prepared by the Environmental Design Group, Inc., of Akron, Ohio, for the Stark County Parks District. The Environmental Assessment was completed to identify potential environmental impacts and evaluate their significance and to fulfill reporting requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S. Code, sections 4321-4370d, as amended. Consideration included water quality, wetlands, terrestrial habitat, fish and wildlife resources, threatened and endangered species, flood plains, recreation, soils, scenic rivers, and cultural resources. The Environmental Assessment evaluated a preferred alignment and two alternatives as well as a no action plan. The alternatives were not accepted due to wetland, ecological and cultural resource concerns. The no action plan was not selected because it would deprive local residents the future use of this necessary link to the overall recreational resource.

The recommended trail would be eight feet wide with a two-foot grassed berm on each side and would consist of crushed limestone over a six-inch aggregate base. Construction would involve clearing and grubbing the surface followed by leveling the surface prior to placement of the aggregate and stone. A small amount of down timber which is located within three feet of the trail will be removed. The berms and all other disturbed areas will be seeded. Any overhanging canopy limbs will be cleared to a 10-foot clearance over the trail.

The assessment concluded that any necessary clearing and grading activities be conducted between September 15 and April 15 to avoid impacts to the endangered Indiana Bat's summer habitat and nesting Osprey. The assessment also identified impact

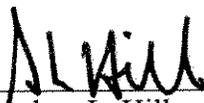
to 0.01 acre of Category 1 and 0.35 acre of Category 2 wetlands. This is mitigated by the purchase of 0.70 acre at the Yankee Creek Consolidated Wetlands Mitigation Project in agreement with the Ohio Department of Environmental Protection.

All necessary coordination with Federal and state agencies was conducted to fulfill the requirements of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Several meetings, including a public meeting, were conducted and the Environmental Assessment was distributed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the State of Ohio Historic Preservation Office, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources. As noted above, an acceptance of mitigation was also agreed upon by the Ohio Department of Environmental Protection. None of the comments received suggest that significant impacts would result, provided that the required wetland mitigation is performed. Letters are included as an Appendix to the Environmental Assessment documentation which is on file in the Pittsburgh District.

After careful review and evaluation of beneficial and detrimental aspects related to the development of the proposed Mahoning River Trail at the Berlin Lake project as described in the Environmental Assessment, I have reasonably concluded that the public interest would be best served by the proposal, with mitigation, and the associated activities will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Construction would be minor while little disturbance would ultimately be expected by users. The preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted. This Finding of No Significant Impact precedes the Corps of Engineers final decision on the proposed action. A copy of the Finding of No Significant Impact is available for viewing on the Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District web site located at www.lrp.usace.army.mil.

20 Mar 07

Date



Stephen L. Hill
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer