Public Notice

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Pittsburgh District

In Reply Refer to Notice No. below

US Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District
1000 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4186

Application No. 2014-438 Date: July 15, 2014

Notice No. 14-32 Closing Date: July 30, 2014

1. TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The following application has been submitted for a Department of the Army Permit under the provisions of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

2. APPLICANT: Mr. Robert Shema
The B-25 Recovery Group
223 Jackson Circle
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15229

3. LOCATION: Monongahela River, River Mile 4.9, within river channel, Baldwin Boro, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (40.404277° N, -79.950659° W)

4. PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION OF WORK: The applicant proposes to conduct exploratory dredging to potentially recover a missing B-25 bomber plane from a crash landing in the Monongahela River in 1956. The survey area is located completely within the Monongahela River at RM 4.9, approximately 150 feet off the left descending bank. A 200 foot long transect is proposed to be dredged to search for parts/pieces of the missing bomber. Approximately 1,100 cubic yards of dredge material will be brought to the surface and hand sorted on a barge. Upon completion of sorting the dredge material will be placed back in the same river bottom location by using a clamshell bucket. Work is expected to take place over a weekend and will be done mostly by volunteers within the B-25 recovery group. See attached project description and figures for further description.

5. ENCROACHMENT PERMIT: The applicant may need to obtain a Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit which includes 401 Water Quality Certification from the:

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Southwest Regional Office
Waterways and Wetlands Section
400 Waterfront Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4745

The applicant is currently in consultation with the PA DEP to determine the state permitting requirements, if any.

6. IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES: The District Engineer has consulted the most recently available information and has determined that the project will have no effect on endangered species or threatened species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of habitat of such species which has been determined to be critical. While concurrence with this determination is not required, this Public Notice serves as a request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for any additional information they may have on whether any listed or proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species may be present in the area which would be affected by the activity, pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1972 (as amended). PNDI receipt #20130729414716 – No federal species identified.

7. IMPACT ON CULTURAL RESOURCES: The Corps permit area is completely within the Monongahela River (see attached map). As a result, there will be no impact on any known historic structures or archaeological resources. The National Register of Historic Places has been consulted, and it has been determined that there are no properties currently listed on the register which would be directly affected by the proposed work. If we are made aware, as a result of comments received in response to this notice, or by other means, of specific archeological, scientific, prehistorical, or historical sites or structures which might be affected by the proposed work, the District Engineer will immediately take the appropriate action necessary pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 - Public Law 89-665 as amended (including Public Law 96-515).

8. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in the paragraph below entitled "RESPONSES," that a public hearing be held to consider this application. The requests for public hearing shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

9. EVALUATION: Interested parties are invited to state any objections they may have to the proposed work. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposals must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. 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 overall public interest of the proposed activity. The evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, under the authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230).

10. RESPONSES: A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest. Written statements concerning the proposed activity should be received in this office on or before the closing date of this Public Notice in order to become a part of the record and to be considered in the final determination. Any objections which are received during this period may be forwarded to the applicant for possible resolution before the determination is made whether to issue or deny the requested DA Permit. All responses to this notice should be directed to the Regulatory Branch, attn Josh Shaffer at the above address, by telephoning (412) 395-7121, or by e-mail at Joshua.d.shaffer@usace.army.mil. Please refer to CELRP-OP-F 2014-438 in all responses.

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

// SIGNED //

Jon T. Coleman
Chief, Regulatory Branch

PROJECT PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

THE B-25 RECOVERY GROUP
MONONGAHELA RIVER
MILE POINT 4.9
PITTSBURGH
ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

On January 31, 1956 a United States Air Force B-25 medium bomber was forced to ditch into the Monongahela River, just downstream of the Homestead High Level Bridge. Despite extensive search efforts by the United States Coast Guard, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the Pittsburgh Police River Rescue, the aircraft was never recovered.

Many theories exist surrounding the B-25, its potential top-secret cargo, and the possibility that the military removed the aircraft under the cover of darkness. Even after interviewing eyewitnesses, researching historical records, and reviewing declassified military documents, the whereabouts of the B-25 are unknown, and it still remains one of Pittsburgh's most enduring urban mysteries.

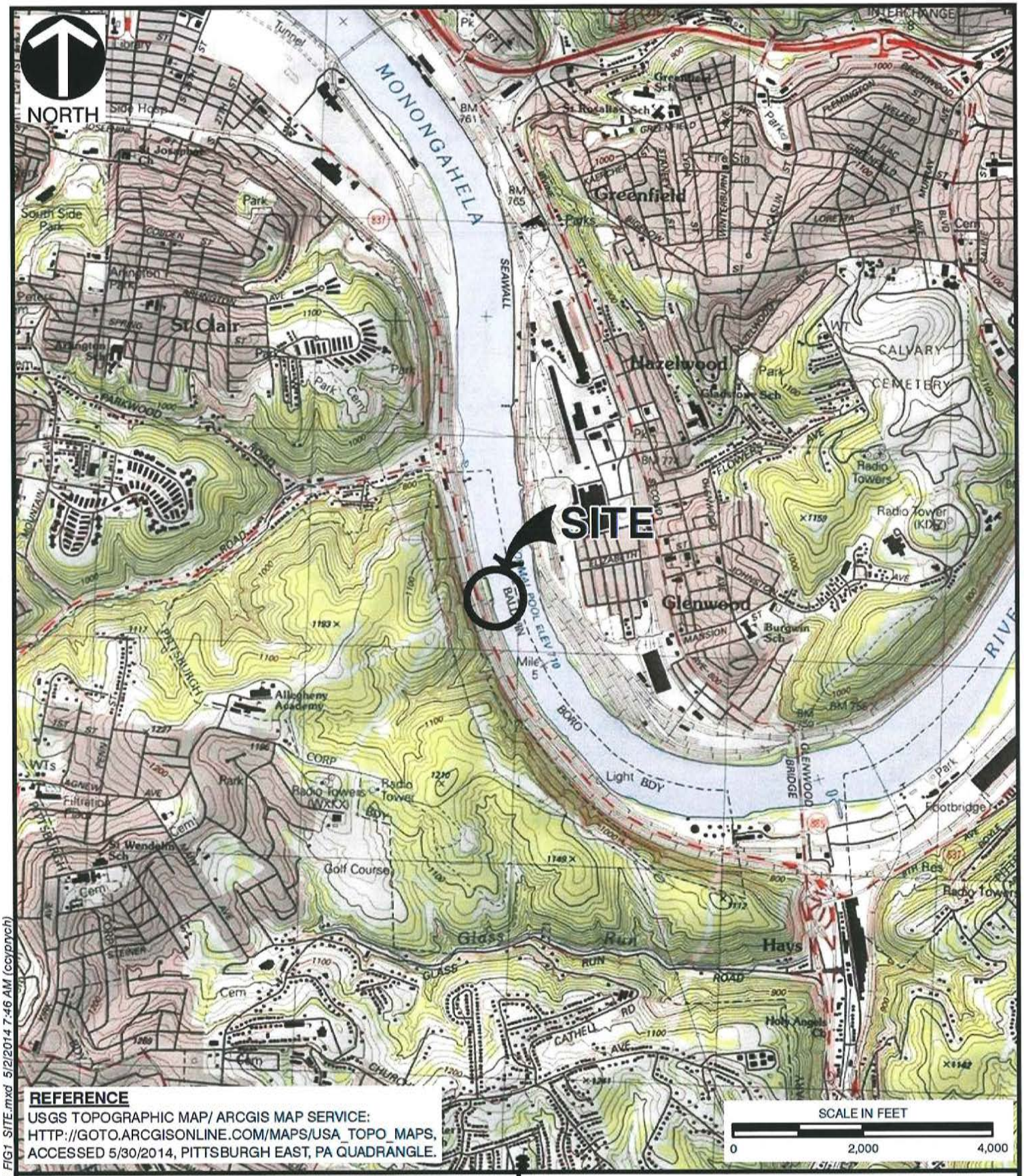
The B-25 Recovery Group is applying for a Department of the Army Nationwide Permit 6 to survey and perform exploratory sampling on the Monongahela River at mile point 4.9. The survey area is located approximately 150 feet off of the left descending bank where a large dredge hole was created in the early 1950's by Dravo Corporation to obtain fill material for mooring cells being built downriver by J&L Steel. During the search for the B-25 in 1956, an echo-sounder identified a hole that was 47 feet deep. Today we believe that same hole is only 32 feet deep. The 15 feet of depositional material that has accumulated in the hole could easily conceal the B-25.

A bathymetric survey of the area will be performed to identify the limits of the hole and allow for an excavation centerline to be established. The survey will be conducted using a towboat, barge mounted crane with a 1-cubic yard clamshell bucket, a flattop barge for material evaluation, and a skid-steer for material handling. A 200 foot length of the centerline will be excavated to a depth of 10 feet using the 5 foot wide clamshell bucket, assuming 45 degree side slopes for the excavation. The excavated material will be placed on the flattop barge where it will be sorted, evaluated, and stored until the crane needs to be repositioned. Prior to repositioning the crane, the material will be returned to the river bottom using the clamshell bucket to minimize siltation within the water column. Once the material is returned to the bottom, the crane and flattop barge will be advanced along the centerline until the survey is complete. Approximately 1,100 cubic yards of material may be excavated and returned, depending on the findings of the survey.

The survey area is on a relatively straight section of the Monongahela River, allowing an adequate line-of-sight and safe passage for commercial river traffic. Proper day signals and navigation lighting will be provided during the survey efforts.

A team of professional divers will be on stand-by during the survey, as well as personnel familiar with vintage aircraft components. Additionally, technical experts will be available offsite to assist with the identification of potential objects via video and electronic communication.

The United States Air Force has relinquished claims to this aircraft with the stipulation that any personal items be returned to the next of kin. It is the intention of the B-25 Recovery Group to share its findings with local museums and educational institutions to archive this unique piece of Pittsburgh history for all to enjoy.



REFERENCE
USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP/ ARCGIS MAP SERVICE:
HTTP://GOTO.ARCGISONLINE.COM/MAPS/USA_TOPO_MAPS,
ACCESSED 5/30/2014, PITTSBURGH EAST, PA QUADRANGLE.

Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.
333 Baldwin Road - Pittsburgh, PA 15205-9072
412-429-2324 · 800-365-2324
www.cecinc.com

THE B-25 RECOVERY GROUP
MONONGAHELA RIVER, M.P. 4.9
PITTSBURGH, ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PA

SITE LOCATION MAP

DRAWN BY:	CLC	CHECKED BY:	SMF	APPROVED BY:	* Hand signature on file MLS*	FIGURE NO:	1
DATE:	5/30/2014	SCALE:	1 " = 2,000 '	PROJECT NO:	131-918		

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PROPOSED SURVEY AREA

DRAWN BY:	CLC	CHECKED BY:	SMF	APPROVED BY:	* Hand signature on file MLS*	FIGURE NO:	2
DATE:	5/30/2014	SCALE:	1 " = 300 '	PROJECT NO:	131-918		

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