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Corps of Engineers to hold Public Environmental Impact Statement Scoping meeting to discuss Mason-Dixon Mining Complex, Jan. 17

The Pittsburgh District of the US Army Corps of Engineers will hold a Public Comment/Environmental Impact Scoping (EIS) Meeting associated with the Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permit application submitted by Wolfpen Knob Development Company for the proposed construction of the Mason Dixon Mining Complex.

The meeting will be held at the Clay-Battelle High School located at Route 7 West, Blacksville, West Virginia, on January 17. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. and conclude at 8:30 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the meeting will be held at the same location and time on January 25. Consult the Corps' website, www.lrp.usace.army.mil/or/or-f/permits.htm, for meeting updates.

The Mason Dixon Mining Complex involves multiple mining operations including: a deep mine, a preparation plant, refuse disposal site, a water impoundment, and a new rail line. The estimated lifespan of this mining complex is projected to be 20 years. The purpose of this project is to extract bituminous coal from the Pittsburgh coal seam, which will be processed at the at the preparation plant, with refuse being sent to the refuse disposal site. The water impoundment will provide water for operation of the preparation plant and dust control at the deep mine, preparation plant, and associated haul roads. As a result of site development, impacts to aquatic resources are anticipated; however, compensatory mitigation will be required for all unavoidable impacts to Waters of the United States.

An Environmental Impact Statement is required to assess the direct, indirect and cumulative environmental, social, and economic effects of issuance of a Department of the Army permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for discharges of dredge and fill material into Waters of the United States associated with the construction of the proposed Mason Dixon Mining Complex. The preparation of an EIS begins with a scoping process/meeting to determine the issues to be addressed in the EIS.

This initial public comment/scoping meeting is being held to give all concerned parties an opportunity to submit comments both written and verbal. The submitted comments will assist the Corps of Engineers in focusing its environmental review, and aid in the development of finalized National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance document. Additional public information meeting(s) may be held during the EIS process. Relevant comments and issues identified by the public and interested parties will be incorporated into the document as appropriate.

The issues to be addressed in the EIS will include, but are not be limited to: impacts on surface water and groundwater resources, including water quantity and quality, impacts on the immediate and adjacent property owners and nearby communities, downstream hydraulics and hydrology, geologic resources, vegetation, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, soils, prime farmland, noise, light, aesthetics, historic and prehistoric cultural resources, socioeconomics, land use, public roads, and air quality.

For additional information, questions or to submit comments via email, please contact Jon Coleman, Regulatory Project Manager, at (412) 395-7188, or by email at mason.dixon@usace.army.mil.

For media inquiries, contact the Public Affairs Office at 412-395-7500 or email: mason.dixon@usace.army.mil.