



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St Paul District

APPLICANT: U.S. Silica Company

Public Notice

ISSUED: 25 September 2015

EXPIRES: 09 October 2015

REFER TO: MVP-2015-00953-SJW

SECTION: 404 - Clean Water Act

1. APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO discharge fill material into 8.84 acres of wetlands adjacent to Bridge Creek for the development of the U.S. Silica-Fairchild mine and associated rail facilities. This project was on public notice in June 2015. Because of additional 0.97 acre of wetlands identified in the project area to be impacted, an additional 15 day comment period is being provided.

2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:

U.S. Silica Company
200 N. LaSalle, Suite 2100
Chicago, Illinois 60601

AGENT:

Mandy Bohnenblust-BARR
Engineering

AGENT'S ADDRESS:

4700 W. 77th Street #200
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55435

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site is located in Sections 19, 20, 27, 28, 29, 33, and 34, Township 25 North, Range 5 West, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin. The approximate UTM coordinates are Lat: 44.72687 Lon: -91.28604. (See attached figure labeled MVP-2015-00953-SJW: Figure 1 of 8).

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: U.S. Silica has submitted a request for authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for unavoidable wetland impacts associated with the establishment of a non-metallic sand mining operation and associated rail facilities. The proposed activity would include the development of a 677 acre non-metallic sand mining and processing operation capable of producing three million tons of sand per year. The project would include the construction of a sand processing facility and associated rail facilities to allow for high volume shipments of sand which are expected to be produced at this site. The construction of new rail lines would include three separate segments of track; a unit train, a manifest track, and a load-out spur. In addition, improvements would be made to the existing main line tracks to meet the requirements of Union Pacific, the owner of the existing tracks.

QUANTITY, TYPE, AND AREA OF FILL: The proposed project would result in the discharge of fill material into 8.84 acres of wetlands from the construction of the new rail line facilities. The wetlands found within the 677 acre review area fall within the Eau Claire Watershed (07050006). In addition, approximately 3,462 linear feet (0.65 miles) of unnamed streams would be realigned to

Operations - Regulatory (MVP-2015-00953-SJW)

follow for modifications to the existing rail facilities. (See attached figures labeled MVP-2015-00953-SJW Figure 6 of 8 through 8 of 8).

VEGETATION IN AFFECTED AREA: The U.S. Silica Fairchild Mine Project area consists of 17 identified wetlands. The wetlands on site were accounted for in two separate delineation reports and a supplemental delineation report completed by SEH and Barr Engineering. The locations of the wetlands listed below can be seen on the attached figure labeled MVP-2015-00953-SJW: Figure 2 of 8 through 6 of 8.

BARR Delineated Wetlands

- Wetland 1 (0.46 acres)-dominant vegetation species includes red maple, gray alder, bottlebrush sedge and interrupted fern.
- Wetland 1A (0.22 acres)-dominant vegetation species include Canada bluejoint, sensitive fern, dwarf red raspberry, steeplebush, and gray alder.
- Wetland 2 (0.78 acres)-dominant vegetation species include woolgrass, dwarf red raspberry, steeplebush, and gray alder.
- Wetland 2a (0.54 acres)-dominant vegetation species include upright sedge, bristly dewberry, gray alder, and red maple.
- Wetland 3 (2.83 acres)-dominant vegetation species include steeplebush, hairy sedge, and broadleaf cattail.
- Wetland 4 (0.63 acres)-dominant vegetation species include bladder sedge, fringed sedge, and gray alder.
- Wetland 4a (0.08 acres)-dominant vegetation species include red maple, dwarf red raspberry, white meadowsweet, and Canada bluejoint.
- Wetland 4b (0.10 acres)-dominant vegetation species include northern pin oak, dwarf red raspberry, blackberry, and reed canary grass.
- Wetland 5 (1.02 acres)-dominant vegetation species include upright sedge and Canada bluejoint.
- Wetland 5a (0.90 acres)-dominant vegetation species include reed canary grass, woolgrass, Canadian goldenrod, quaking aspen, paper birch, black cherry, gray alder, gray dogwood, black elderberry, black cherry, and American hazelnut.
- Wetland 6 (3.15 acres)-dominant vegetation species include broadleaved cattail, woolgrass, Canada bluejoint, meadow willow, and quaking aspen.
- Wetland 6s (0.02 acres)-dominant vegetation species include various sedge species and reed canary grass.

Operations - Regulatory (MVP-2015-00953-SJW)

- Wetland 7s (0.03 acres)-dominant vegetation includes fall panicum, yellow nut sedge, white clover, dandelion, and tumble grass. This wetland is currently planted with row crops.
- Wetland 8s (0.09 acres)-dominant vegetation includes fall panicum, barnyard grass, blunt spikerush, and hybrid clover. This area is located in a forage field and was mowed prior to the delineation.

SEH Delineated Wetlands

- Wetland 1, 1sa, and 1sb (15.64 acres)-dominant vegetation species include reed canary grass, common red raspberry, and allegheny blackberry.
- Wetland 2 (0.20 acres)-dominant vegetation species include quaking aspen, red maple, black elder, and spotted touch-me-not.
- Wetland 3 (27.49 acres)- dominant vegetation species include red maple, quaking aspen, black elder, lake sedge, and reed canary grass.
- Wetland 4 (12.90 acres)-dominant vegetation species include red maple, common hackberry, European buckthorn, spotted touch-me-not, reed canary grass, cottongrass bulrush, and softstem clubrush.
- Wetland 5 (0.70 acres)-dominant vegetation species include reed canary grass.

SOURCE OF FILL MATERIAL: Clean granular fill material would be excavated from an on-site upland borrow pit. Pre application exploratory borings have confirmed the suitability of this material for use on the embankments.

SURROUNDING LAND USE: The lands surrounding the project site predominantly consist of agricultural land and forested areas with homes scattered randomly throughout the landscape.

THE FOLLOWING POTENTIALLY TOXIC MATERIALS COULD BE USED AT THE PROJECT SITE: Use of heavy mining equipment could result in minor spills of gas, oil, fuel oil, or other petroleum products.

THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED BY THE APPLICANT: Wetlands not impacted by the proposed project will remain intact and erosion control devices will be installed in accordance with the WDNR's applicable requirements to minimize the potential for additional impacts to wetlands and water quality.

MITIGATION: At this time, U.S. Silica has yet to finalize a mitigation plan to compensate for the unavoidable loss of 8.84 acres of wetlands, however, U.S. Silica has stated that they plan to purchase credits from an approved wetland mitigation bank, or through the Wisconsin Wetland Conservation Trust (WWCT) in-lieu fee program.

Operations - Regulatory (MVP-2015-00953-SJW)

3. REPLIES/COMMENTS.

Interested parties are invited to submit to this office written facts, arguments, or objections within 15 days of the date of this notice. These statements should bear upon the suitability of the location and the adequacy of the project and should, if appropriate, suggest any changes believed to be desirable. Comments received may be forwarded to the applicant.

Replies may be addressed to Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, 1314 Contractors Boulevard, Plover, Wisconsin 54467.

Or, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Sam Woboril at the Stevens Point field office of the Corps, telephone number (651) 290 - 5878.

To receive Public Notices by e-mail, go to: http://mvp-extstp/list_server/ and add your information in the New Registration Box.

4. FEDERALLY-LISTED THREATENED OR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE OR PLANTS OR THEIR CRITICAL HABITAT.

None were identified by the applicant or are known to exist in the permit area. However, Eau Claire County is within the known or historic range of the following Federally-listed threatened (T) and endangered (E) species:

Species

Gray wolf (E) – Northern forested areas.

Northern long-eared bat (T) – Caves, mines, and surrounding upland forests/wooded areas.

Sheepnose (E) – Chippewa River

Karner blue butterfly (E) – Prairie, oak savanna, and jack pine areas with wild lupine.

Barr Engineering Company conducted a level 1 Karner Blue Butterfly (KBB) survey on July 23, 2014 and determined that a substantial amount of lupine was present which has the potential to support a viable population of KBB. Based on the findings of the level 1 KBB survey, a level 2 survey was conducted on July 23, 2014, and no KBB were observed. Two additional level 2 surveys were conducted during the second flight of the KBB and once again no KBB were observed. Although this site does contain the preferred habitat type for the KBB, based on these surveys the KBB does not reside within the project area. The proposed site does not contain critical habitat for the additional species listed above and therefore the proposed work would not result in an impact to these species or their preferred habitats.

This application is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Any comments it may have concerning Federally-listed threatened or endangered wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

Operations - Regulatory (MVP-2015-00953-SJW)

5. JURISDICTION.

This application is being reviewed in accordance with the current practices for documenting Corps jurisdiction under Section(s) 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 08-02. We have made a preliminary determination that the aquatic resources that would be impacted by the proposed project are subject to Corps of Engineers jurisdiction under Section(s) 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. If an approved jurisdictional determination is completed as part of the review process for this application, a copy will be posted on the St. Paul District web page at the following link: <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>.

THE APPLICANT HAS STATED THAT THE FOLLOWING STATE, COUNTY, AND/OR LOCAL PERMITS HAVE BEEN APPLIED FOR/ISSUED:

6. STATE SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION.

This Public Notice has been sent to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and is considered by the District Engineer to constitute valid notification to that agency for Section 401 water quality certification. A permit will not be granted until the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has issued or waived Section 401 certification.

7. HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL.

This public notice is being sent to the National Park Service and the State Archaeologist for their comments. The Corps will review information on known cultural resources and/or historic properties within and adjacent to the project area. The Corps will also consider the potential effects of the project on any properties that have yet to be identified. The results of this review and the Corps' determination of effect will be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer independent of this public notice. Any adverse effects on historic properties will be resolved prior to the Corps authorization, or approval, of the work in connection with this project.

On behalf of U.S. Silica, Orbis Environmental Consulting conducted a Phase I Archaeological Records Review and Reconnaissance of the site, in accordance with a September 8, 2014, letter from the USACE. On January 5, 2015, the State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the findings of the report that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project.

8. PUBLIC HEARING REQUESTS.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, in detail, the reasons for holding a public hearing. A request may be denied if substantive reasons for holding a hearing are not provided or if there is otherwise no valid interest to be served.

Operations - Regulatory (MVP-2015-00953-SJW)

9. PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW.

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 proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Environmental and other documents will be available for review in the St. Paul District Office.

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 need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Jeffrey M. Olson
Chief, Northeast Section

Attachments:

MVP-2015-00953-SJW: Figures 1 of 8 through 8 of 8

NOTICE TO EDITORS: This public notice is provided as background information and is not a request or contract for publication.



- Study Area
- ~ Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
- River and Stream Centerline (WI DNR)
- + Wetlands (Barr - July 2015)
- + Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2015)
- + Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
- Upland Sample Point
- Wetland Sample Point
- Other Feature

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.

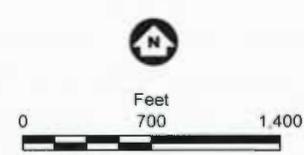


Figure 8
 REVISED WETLAND
 DELINEATION MAP
 JULY 2015
 U.S. Silica - Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI

File Name: April 13, 2015 10:50 AM 48 The information on this map was derived from the following sources: Barr, October/December 2014; Wetland Delineation Map and Data File



- Planned Project Boundary
- Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
- River and Stream Centerline (WI DNR)
- Wetlands (Barr - July 2015)
- Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2015)
- Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.

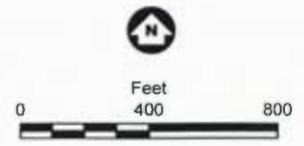


Figure 9c

WETLAND DELINEATION
MAP
U.S. Silica - Fairchild
Eau Claire County, WI



- Planned Project Boundary
- Preferred Alternative**
- Rail Grading Limits
- Roads
- Hopper
- Equipment
- Conveyor
- Ponds
- Ditch
- Buildings
- Railroad
- Wetland Impacts (7.87 acres)
- Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
- Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
- Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
- Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)



Figure 10a
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
 US Silica – Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI



-  Planned Project Boundary
- Preferred Alternative**
-  Rail Grading Limits
-  Roads
-  Railroad
-  Wetland Impacts (7.87 acres)
-  Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
-  Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
-  Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
-  Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)

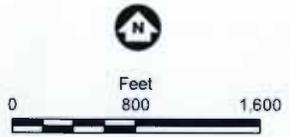


Figure 10b

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
 US Silica – Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI