

BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE  
P.O. BOX 389  
Hamburg, PA 19526

# BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

I N C O R P O R A T E D

Spring 2020

[www.bluemountainwildlife.com](http://www.bluemountainwildlife.com)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE :

**SAVING DIGGER BEES**

**I-78 PROJECT**

**DREDGING AND REMOVING THE DAM**

**FALL EVENTS**

**HELPING OUR FRIENDS**

## OUR MISSION

**THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE WILDLIFE AND WETLANDS ALONG THE SCENIC SCHUYLKILL RIVER IN NORTHERN BERKS AND SOUTHERN SCHUYLKILL COUNTIES**



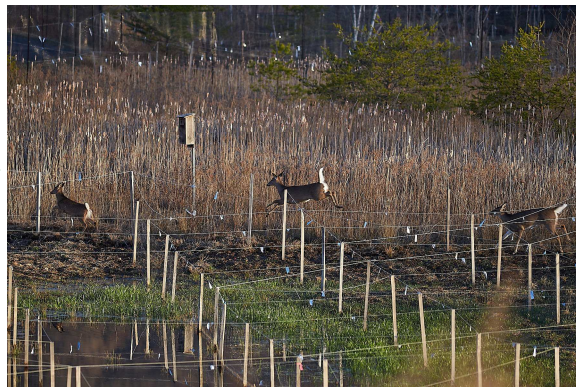
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## THE COVID SPRING

For the first time in twenty years, there was no Clean-Up at the Keryn. For only the second time in fifteen years, there was no race at the Keryn. No Invasive Species Walks or Bird Watches, either. Blue Mountain Wildlife's activities were on hold while the COVID-19 pandemic gave us new terms like "lockdown" and "social distancing".

Fortunately, the Keryn was still open to the public and the public flocked to it to find a refuge from the stresses of pandemic life. The Monument Parking Lot and the many trails saw much more traffic than would be considered normal during any other spring. Keeping the Keryn open was truly one of the bright spots for Blue Mountain Wildlife and the people of northern Berks this spring.



Blue Mountain Wildlife cancelled their April and May monthly meetings, but held the monthly meetings at the picnic area at the Monument Parking Lot in June and July, where they are likely to remain for the foreseeable future. Other than routine maintenance, nothing else is scheduled.

Nature, as she always does, adapted. The plantings in the new wetlands sprouted and bloomed. Turtles sunbathed on the new platforms in the wetlands ponds. Groundhogs and deer grazed, songbirds and waterfowl nested, and foxes and hawks hunted.

While BMW lays low, the Keryn moves on. Plan a visit this summer. Practice a little "social distancing" in the company of Mother Nature. You'll be glad you did.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS—SUMMER 2020

Thursday August 13, 2020...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Monument Parking Lot KDRA  
Thursday September 10, 2020...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Monument Parking Lot KDRA  
Thursday October 8, 2020...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Monument Parking Lot KDRA

## SAVING THE KERNY'S ABRUPT DIGGER BEES

KERRY GRIM

A year ago, Blue Mountain Wildlife reported on an effort to relocate a colony of ground-nesting bees. Mike Slater, the go-to guy in Berks County for insect-related knowledge, has been spearheading the project due to the I-78 bridge construction project which threatens one of the few colonies of such bees in Pennsylvania.

Mike's goal is to remove the bees, known as Abrupt Digger Bees or Chimney Bees, and relocate the colony to a protected area, hopefully returning them later when the bridge construction project is complete. The species is largely unknown in Pennsylvania and special requirements are needed in order for their survival. Their nests are made by digging in soft soil. Each bee lays their egg in a chimney-like structure. There is no queen bee. Each bee lives their own life independently of others, regardless of the other bees living in the colony. The habitat under the I-78 bridge provides just the amount of sunlight and

moisture while being sheltered from the worst of the weather.

Major progress was made this year. Mike will attempt to move the bees but first they must place their eggs in soil placed in foam boxes, as opposed to the soil where they had nested previously. A breakthrough came when J. D. Eckman, the bridgework contractors, brought in a couple of bucket loads of mulch and spread over the existing basin soil where the bees had already started to build their chimneys. This forced the bees to build new chimneys in the soil in the foam boxes. The J. D. Eckman and their employees have gone well out of their way in helping with and supporting this project, for which we are very grateful. The foam boxes will soon be moved out of the area and the next phase of Mike's project will continue. It is an ambitious project, requiring a lot of time and learning as the project progresses.





**THE I-78 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT MOVES FORWARD**

**GREGG ADAMS**

This spring, the I-78 Improvement Project started in the Hamburg area. The work, between the PA Route 61 exit and the Hamburg exit, will add a third lane and full shoulder to both east and west-bound lanes. This addition requires new spans to be constructed over the basin and Schuylkill River on the north and south sides of the existing I-78 bridge. According to Project Manager Tricia Hostetter of J.D. Eckman, Inc.,

the construction of the new bridge spans on the south side of I-78 will commence in April of 2021, with the new span on the north side starting soon afterward. She noted that the Therman Madeira Switchback will remain open during the construction, with conexas or rail cars to be placed on the trail to protect trail users from construction hazards overhead. She stated that the project is scheduled to be completed in 2025.

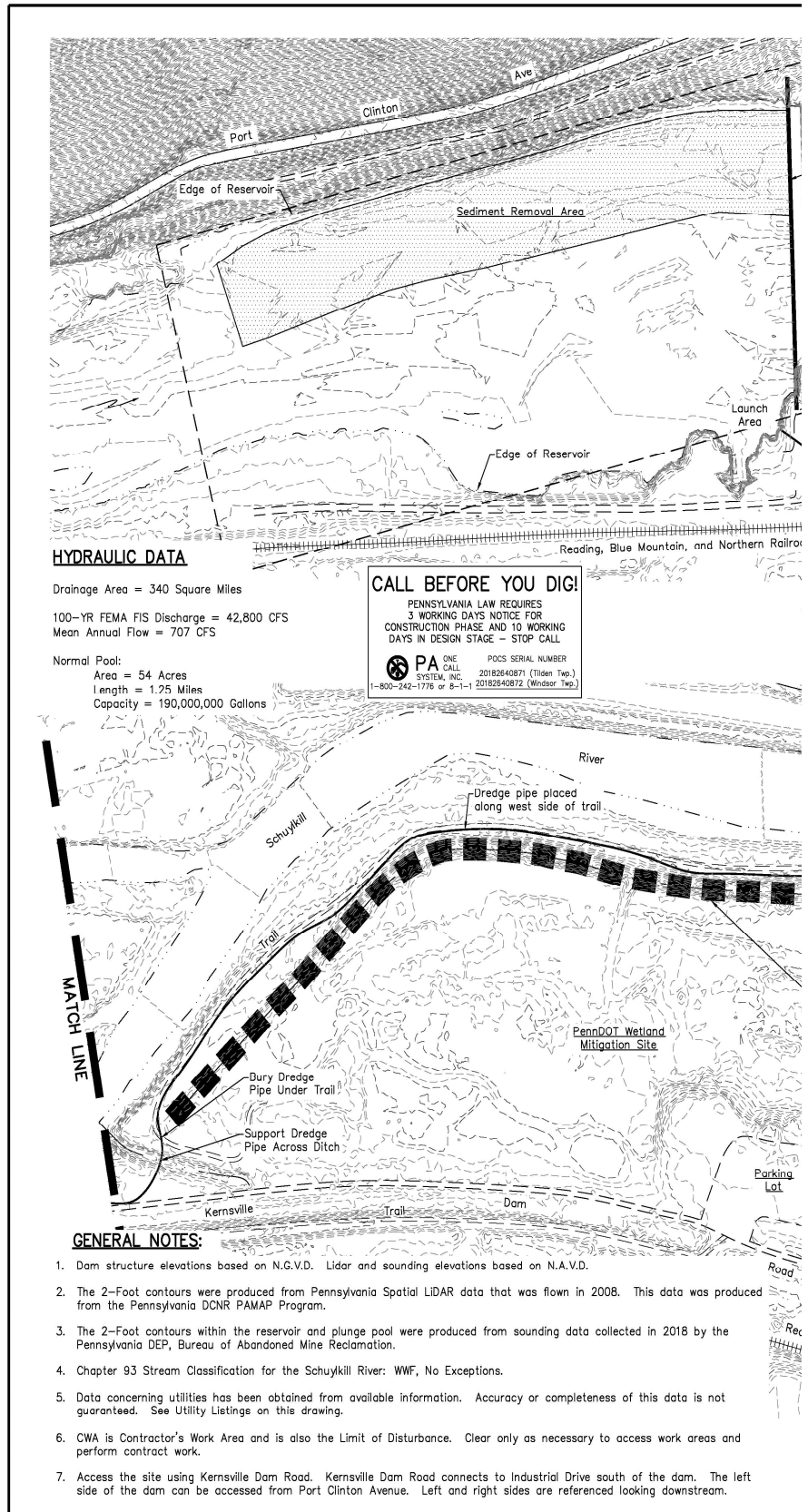
**PA DEP SUBMITS PLANS TO DREDGE THE KERNY AND THEN REMOVE THE DAM** GREGG ADAMS

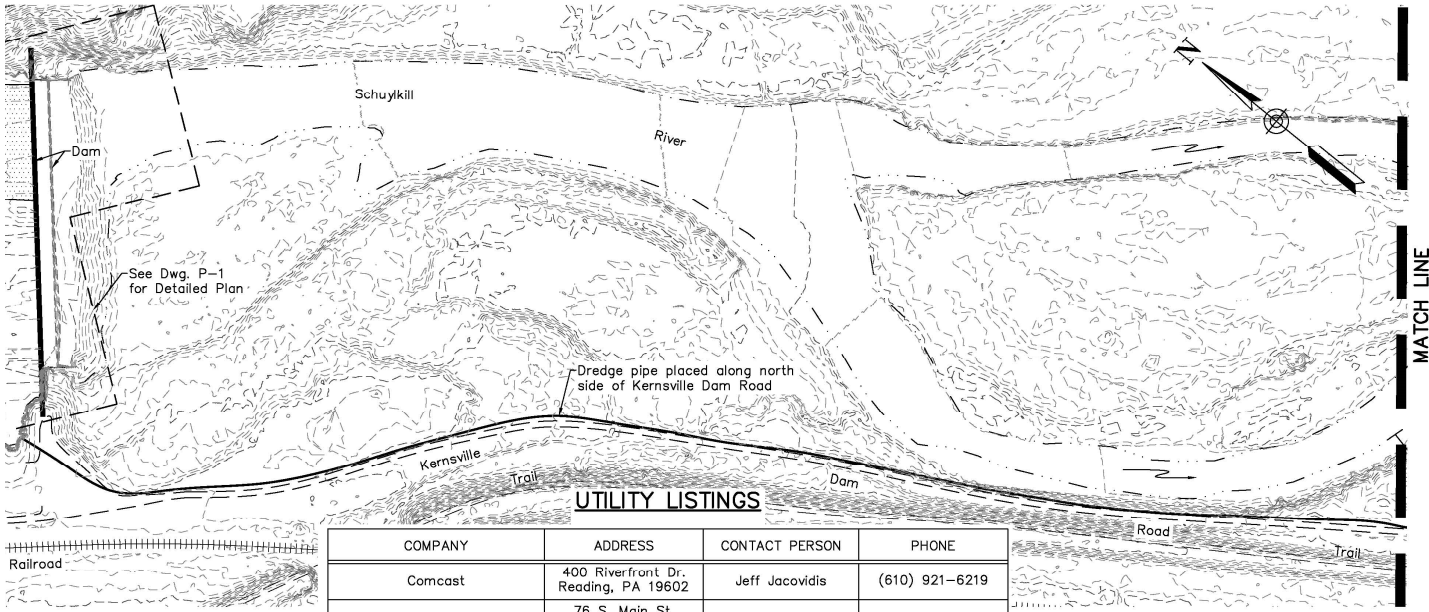
On July 2nd, Blue Mountain Wildlife received a Public Notice from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announcing that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (the owner of the Kernsville Dam Recreation Area) had submitted an application for a permit to dredge a portion of the pool of the New Kernsville Dam and then to remove the New Kernsville Dam. The notice included a draft set of plans for both phases of the project. The notice stated that the Army Corps is welcoming public comments related to the project and plans submitted. Public comments could be submitted to the Army Corps by email (preferred) or by postal mail. The public comment period will close on July 31, 2020.

The plans show that an estimated 78,000 cubic yards of sediment is proposed to be dredged from the original channel of the Schuylkill River from just downstream of the locks of the former Big Blue Mountain Dam to immediately upstream of the New Kernsville Dam. The sediment is to be piped to an impoundment area within the Desilting Basin south of the current I-78 Bridge project work area.

The dredging is likely to prepare the new channel of the Schuylkill River for the second phase of the project, the removal of the New Kernsville Dam itself. The plans for the removal are similar to those presented to Blue Mountain Wildlife earlier, with 220 feet of dam being removed to the downstream water level and the remainder being lowered only ten feet to meet what will be the final grade of the land between Kernsville Dam Road and the new course of the Schuylkill River.

To learn more, visit <http://www.bluemountainwildlifestore.com/new-kernsville-dam-removal>.



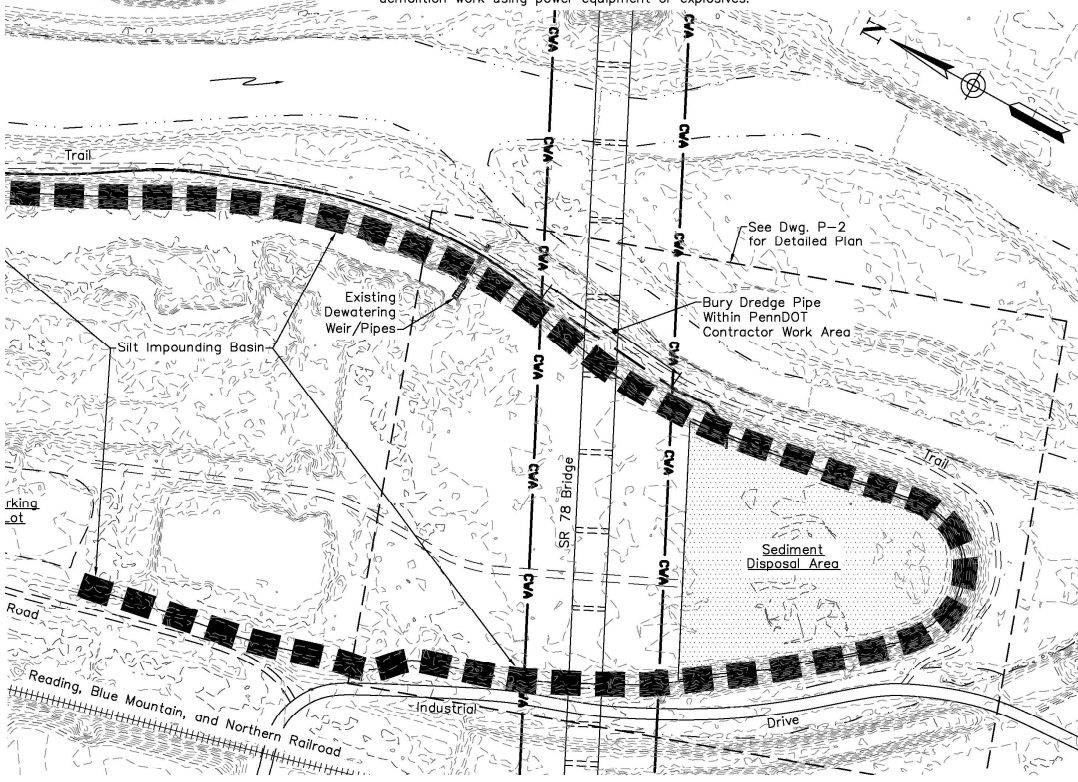
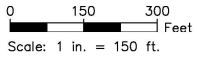


**UTILITY LISTINGS**

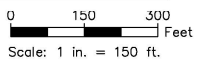
COMPANY	ADDRESS	CONTACT PERSON	PHONE
Comcast	400 Riverfront Dr. Reading, PA 19602	Jeff Jacovidis	(610) 921-6219
FirstEnergy Corp.	76 S. Main St. Akron, OH 443081890	Office Personnel	1-800-545-7741
Hamburg Municipal Authority	61 N. 3rd St. Hamburg, PA 19526	Keith Brobst	(610) 562-7821
Tilden Township	874 Hex Hwy Hamburg, PA 19526	Michael Quick	(610) 223-8596

Note: The Contractor shall comply with Act 287 of the General Assembly, as amended, which defines the procedures for notification to Public Utilities prior to excavation, drilling or demolition work using power equipment or explosives.



**GENERAL PLAN**



**GENERAL PLAN**



ALL DIMENSIONS AND EXISTING CONDITIONS SHALL BE CHECKED AND VERIFIED BY CONTRACTOR AT THE SITE.

NO.	DATE	REVISION	APPR.
SUBMITTED			
PROJECT COORDINATOR - D.E.P.			
APPROVED			
CHIEF - DIVISION OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT - D.E.P.			
APPROVAL			
DIRECTOR - BUREAU OF WATERWAYS ENGINEERING AND WETLANDS - D.E.P.			
			
PROFESSIONAL'S SIGNATURE	DATE	PROFESSIONAL'S SIGNATURE	DATE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICE OF WATER PROGRAMS			
PROJECT NO. D06-434-101.1			
NEW KERNSVILLE DAM SEDIMENT REMOVAL PROJECT SCHUYLKILL RIVER			
TILDEN TOWNSHIP WINDSOR TOWNSHIP		BERKS COUNTY	
<b>GENERAL PLAN</b>			
DRAWN BY	S.L.E.	DATE	DRAWING NO.
CHECKED BY	SCALE	As Shown	GP-1

## PA DEP SUBMITS PLANS TO DREDGE THE KERNY AND THEN REMOVE THE DAM (CONTINUED)

THIS IS NOT A PAID ADVERTISEMENT



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Philadelphia District  
Wanamaker Building  
100 Penn Square East  
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3390  
ATTN: CENAP-OP-R

## Public Notice

Public Notice No. CENAP-OP-R-2019-00070 Date **July 1, 2020**

Application No. File No.

In Reply Refer to  
**REGULATORY BRANCH**

This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1988 (33 U.S.C. 403) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments and recommendations from the public concerning issuance of a Department of the Army permit for the work described below.

**APPLICANT:** Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation  
P. O. Box 8460  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

**AGENT:** Mr. Shane Erdman  
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
P. O. Box 8460  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

**WATERWAY:** Schuylkill River

**LOCATION:** New Kernsville Dam and the upstream impoundment (Latitude/Longitude:  
40.574250°N, -76.003490°W)

**ACTIVITY:** The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing a project to dredge the New Kernsville Dam impoundment, including the historic Schuylkill River channel, and remove the New Kernsville Dam. The project area is located along the Schuylkill River in Tilden and Windsor Townships, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

The existing dam replaced the Kernsville Dam, which was located approximately 1,500 feet downstream of the current New Kernsville Dam. The dam was constructed as a result of the Pennsylvania Act 441, "Schuylkill River Desilting Project" and is one of many dams along the Schuylkill River constructed to form desilting basins. The construction of the concrete gravity dam was completed in November of 1949 by the Department of Forest and Waters, now known as the Department of Environmental Protection, for the purpose of creating an impounding reservoir to capture and prevent the downstream advancement of coal-rich silt carried by the Schuylkill River. The dam is classified as an Intermediate Size (Class B), High Hazard (Category

- 2 -

1) facility. Therefore, the dam has the potential for extensive property damage and possible loss of life along the Schuylkill River in the event of a failure.

The dam consists of a 600 foot long concrete gravity ogee central spillway with non-overflow sections at each end. On one end of the spillway is a concrete gravity wall which extends approximately 100 feet into an earthen embankment. The end of the embankment extends approximately 340 feet beyond the end of the spillway to high ground. On the opposite end of the spillway there is also a concrete gravity wall extending approximately 100 feet into high ground. The concrete ogee gravity type spillway has a base width of 58'-7" and a height above the foundation of 45'. The crest of the spillway is 18' above the stream bed with the remainder 27' below the riverbed.

Prior to dam removal, hydraulic dredging will be conducted and will cover an area of approximately 8 acres in the New Kernsville impoundment. This will remove approximately 80,000 cubic yards (CY) of accumulated sediment. It is estimated that there is approximately 250,000 CY of material within the post-removal floodplain. The material will be piped approximately one mile to the southeast, just north of the I-78 bridge, to an existing, historic disposal basin. In June of 2018, a bathymetric survey was conducted to determine approximate sediment depths. Sediment samples were also taken from the impoundment and plunge pool. The samples were tested by DEP's Bureau of Labs for organics, metals and PCB's. The results showed that the potential contaminant concentrations fell below threshold numbers for concern.

The dam removal process will include the removal and disposal of left and right concrete abutments, removal and disposal of the left concrete spray wall to elevation 363.0, removal and disposal of the right concrete spray wall to elevation 373.0 or 1 foot below finished grade. Additionally, dam removal project will include the removal and disposal of a 380 foot long by 10 foot high concrete spillway and the removal and disposal of a 220-foot length by 20-foot height of concrete spillway. The concrete rubble will be placed in the plunge pool below the dam in an effort to return the Schuylkill River to its historic channel. This will impact approximately 1.1 acres of the Schuylkill River. After the plunge pool is filled with concrete rubble, the plunge pool will be capped and seeded.

Additionally, the removal and disposal of associated infrastructure is proposed, including the removal of floodlights, hand railings, pipe drains, water stops, stop log guides, stop log frames, cable guiderail, floodlight corrugated metal sleeves, buoys, reinforcement steel, cable winch, drum, steel framing, concrete foundations, a concrete boat ramp and boat slip walls. The site will then be excavated and graded, per the proposed plan.

**PURPOSE:** Currently, the New Kernsville Dam is being operated and maintained by the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (BAMR). The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania owns the dam structure and the surrounding property. The purpose of the dredging of the New Kernsville impoundment and the removal of the New Kernsville Dam is to eliminate issues surrounding trespassing and the inherent safety issues this causes, most notably unauthorized swimming in the Schuylkill River. Additionally, the head waters of the Schuylkill River is no longer dominated by the coal mining industry and the dam no longer serves its design function to capture coal fines. After the dam removal project is completed, removal of the dam and

- 3 -

appurtenant structures, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) will acquire the encompassing property from BAMR. The property will be designated as a green public recreation area, with uses including, hiking, biking, and bird watching. The Schuylkill River is a navigable water of the United States from its confluence with the Delaware River to Port Carbon, PA. Currently the dam is a major barrier for paddlers and other recreational navigation on the Schuylkill River. Removal of the dam will increase the navigability of the river. Lastly, the removal of the New Kernsville Dam would help restore fish passage on the Schuylkill River by removing an impediment to fish and other wildlife migrating up and down the river channel.

A preliminary review of this application indicates that the proposed work would not affect listed species or their critical habitat pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as amended. As the evaluation of this application continues, additional information may become available which could modify this preliminary determination.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the activity's probable impact including its cumulative impacts on the public interest. The decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the work must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the work will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs and welfare of the people. A Department of the Army permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

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.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). A preliminary assessment of the species listed in the "Guide to Essential Fish Habitat Designations in the Northeastern United States, Volume IV: New Jersey and Delaware", dated March 1999, indicates that there is no EFH in the vicinity of the proposed work. However, the Schuylkill River is important habitat for anadromous fish such as alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*), blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*), and American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*), which use the river including in and around the proposed project site as migratory and foraging

- 4 -

habitat. The EFH final rule states that prey species are an important component of EFH and that loss of prey may be an adverse effect on EFH and managed species. As part of the permit review, consultation will occur with NMFS.

Compensatory mitigation is not proposed as the project will provide an uplift to the aquatic and riparian environment. During the restoration, minimization and avoidance of impacts to the aquatic environment is difficult as the purpose of the project is to restore the Schuylkill River channel, which is buried in accumulated sediment. This type of restoration work requires in-stream work to occur. Dredging and the placement of fill will allow for the historic Schuylkill River channel and its banks to be restored, which would provide important functions and services for the aquatic ecosystem.

In accordance with Section 307(c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, applicants for Federal Licenses or Permits to conduct an activity affecting land or water uses in a State's coastal zone must provide certification that the activity complies with the State's Coastal Zone Management Program. The applicant has stated that the proposed activity complies with and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the approved State Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program. No permit will be issued until the State has concurred with the applicant's certification or has waived its right to do so. Comments concerning the impact of the proposed and/or existing activity on the State's coastal zone should be sent to this office, with a copy to the State's Office of Coastal Zone Management.

In accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, a Water Quality Certificate is necessary from the State government in which the work is located. Any comments concerning the work described above which relate to Water Quality considerations should be sent to this office with a copy to the State.

The evaluation of the impact of the work described above on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act.

Any person may request, in writing, to the District Engineer, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for a public hearing shall state in writing, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Due to COVID-19, comments on the proposed work are encouraged to be submitted, by email, within 30 days to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District at PhiladelphiaDistrictRegulatory@usace.army.mil. If it is necessary to provide a paper copy, comments should be submitted, by traditional mail, within 30 days to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District.

Additional information concerning this public notice may be obtained by contacting Nathan Fronk at 267-284-6564, via email at [nathan.r.fronk@usace.army.mil](mailto:nathan.r.fronk@usace.army.mil).



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for

Michael A. Landis  
Chief, Operations Division

**COMING THIS FALL, MAYBE**

**GREGG ADAMS**

While it would be easy to say that everything will be back to normal this summer and fall and that Blue Mountain Wildlife’s usual slate of events will continue uninterrupted, the truth of the matter is that the COVID-19 pandemic is running its unpredictable course and that scheduling events that account for the health and safety of the participants and volunteers running the event more than a few days in advance is impossible. In March, the BMW Race Committee decided to postpone the 2020 BMW Trail Race Series to September 12th (Bartram Breeze), October 3rd (Mad Dash) and October 24th (Run to

the Rock) in the hopes that the extra time would result in a safer situation in which we could host the races. While the Commonwealth currently appears to be emerging from the worst of the pandemic, news from other parts of the country suggest that the pandemic is not under control yet. As a result, BMW will likely not be scheduling any events for the remainder of the year. As for the BMW Trail Race Series, the BMW Race Committee will be making a final determination on this year’s races in late August. Please check the BMW website and Facebook pages for updates as they happen. Until then, stay safe.

**HELPING OUT OUR FRIENDS**

**GREGG ADAMS**

The COVID-19 pandemic has played havoc with the fundraising efforts of non-profit organizations everywhere. While Blue Mountain Wildlife can operate fairly cheaply, other Hamburg non-profits aren’t so lucky. The Hamburg Historical Society’s annual fundraiser was stopped before it even started. So they are now offering a

new run of the popular “Home Cooking and Eating Out”, the combination Pennsylvania Dutch Cook Book and History Book. It’s filled with great old Dutch recipes for those who cook and great local history for those who don’t. Well worth the \$30. Use the order form below to purchase one (or more) and help out a good cause.

**IMPORTANT NEWS FLASH**

Because our BBQ Fundraiser has been put on hold for now, a limited reprinting of our Hamburg Area Cook Book is available for sale **by mail**.

Number of books \_\_\_\_\_ Total Price per mailed book \$30 each \_\_\_\_\_

Mail checks to: **HAMBURG AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**102 State Street, Hamburg PA 19526**

Enjoy the old-time advertisements and stories as you browse through these local recipes from our members. Try these mouth-watering recipes as you “Stay At Home” on your “STAY-kation”.

Buy some books for gifts for your friends and neighbors to help pay the bills for maintaining our Museum properties. We need your help to keep us going.  
**Thanks.**

Send Cook Books to:

\_\_\_\_\_

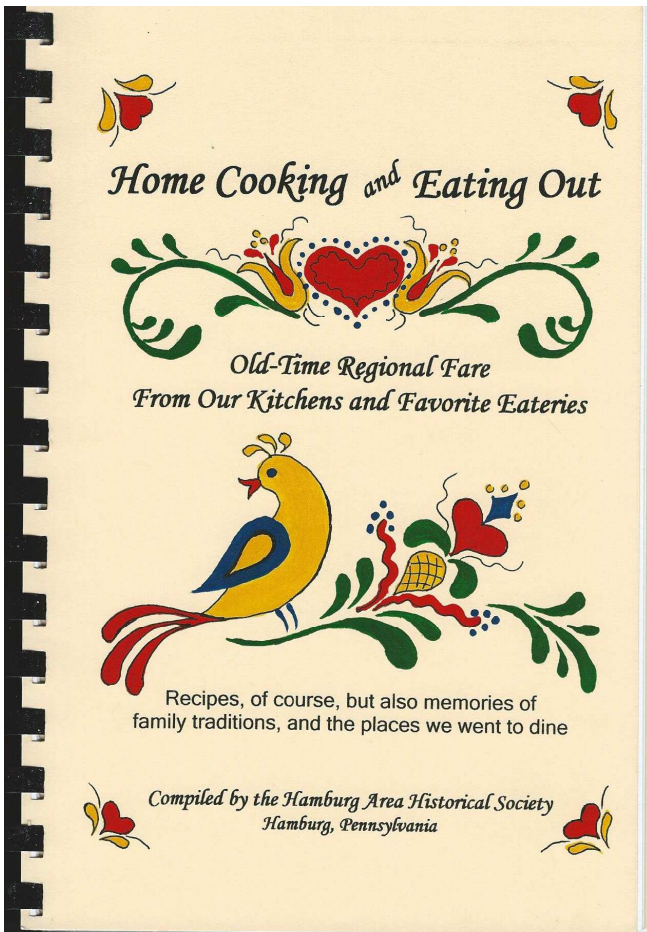
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Customer’s Name and Address:

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