



# Public Notice

U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers

Baltimore District

PN-19-38

In Reply to Application Number  
NAB-2008-01075 (Mitigation Bank-Vargo Site)

Comment Period:

June 14, 2019 to July 14, 2019

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**THE PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLIC NOTICE IS TO SOLICIT COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE ACTION DESCRIBED BELOW. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE ACTION WILL BE APPROVED AT THIS TIME.**

This District has received a request pursuant to 33 CFR 332.8, the Corps/EPA “Mitigation Rule” as described below:

**SPONSOR:** Pennsylvania Department of Transportation,  
Engineering District 3-0  
Attn: Luke Franzen, Environmental Manager  
715 Jordan Avenue  
Montoursville, Pennsylvania 17754

**SITE LOCATION:** Vargo Advanced Wetland Compensation Site, in Lewis Township, Northumberland County. The site is bounded by State Route 54, Warrior Run Boulevard, and Trent Road. The property is posted as State Game Lands and owned by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The coordinates for the 45 acre site are N. 41-06-47.40 X W. -76-47-24.99

**PROPOSED ACTION:** The Vargo Advanced Wetland Compensation Site has operated as a wetland bank under a 1999 Advanced Wetland Compensation Memorandum of Agreement since 2004, and is considered a grandfathered mitigation bank under the Corps/EPA Mitigation Rule. The sponsor, PennDOT District 3-0, wishes to add the site to the “Umbrella Mitigation Banking Instrument for Pennsylvania Department of Transportation” (UMBI), approved by the Corps in May, 2013. The purpose for enrolling the site in the UMBI is to bring the site into conformance with crediting, debiting, monitoring, and assessment protocols spelled out in the UMBI. The bank would operate under a set of standards consistent with other PennDOT bank sites.

The site consists of 45 acres, of which 17.9 acres of wetlands were constructed in 2004. The wetlands are reported to include 2.3 acres of open water, 6.9 acres of emergent wetlands, 2.0 acres of scrub-shrub wetlands, and 6.7 acres of forested wetlands. A total of 5.5 acres of credits remain unobligated for the site. While the site was initially deficient in forested wetland credits, adaptive management measures, including adjustment to water levels, has enhanced tree abundance and growth to meet debited obligations

**ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:** A Prospectus detailing the proposed action was presented to the Pennsylvania Interagency Review Team on May 28, 2019. A copy of the prospectus may be viewed at the Regulatory In-Lieu-Fee and Bank Information Tracking System (RIBITS).

[https://ribits.usace.army.mil/ribits\\_apex/f?p=107:278:10135794108983::NO:RP,278:P278\\_BANK\\_ID:1165](https://ribits.usace.army.mil/ribits_apex/f?p=107:278:10135794108983::NO:RP,278:P278_BANK_ID:1165) The current ledger and most recent monitoring report are also viewable in RIBITS.

The decision whether to approve this action will be based on an evaluation of the effects 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 reasonable 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 thereof; among those are conservation, economic, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, 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, and consideration 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 this proposal to amend this site to the Umbrella Mitigation Banking Instrument. 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 provided will become part of the public record for this action. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Written comments concerning approval of the site as an amendment to the UMBI related to the factors listed above or other pertinent factors must be received by the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, within the comment period specified above.

The applicant must obtain any State or local government permits which may be required.

A preliminary review of this request indicates that the proposed administrative action will not affect Federal listed threatened or endangered 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 evaluation of the impact of this request on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Any person who has an interest which may be adversely affected by the approval of this action may request a public hearing. The request, which must be in writing, must be received by the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, 401 East Louthier Street, Suite 205, Carlisle, PA 17013, within the comment period as specified above to receive consideration. Also it must clearly set forth the interest which may be adversely affected by this activity and the manner in which the interest may be adversely affected.

It is requested that you communicate this information concerning the proposed activity to any persons known by you to be interested and not being known to this office, who did not receive a copy of this notice.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. John Gible, Transportation Program Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 401 East Louthier Street, Suite 205, Carlisle, PA 17013, telephone (717) 249-9457, or email at [john.gible@usace.army.mil](mailto:john.gible@usace.army.mil).

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER

Wade B. Chandler  
Chief, Pennsylvania Section  
Regulatory Branch