

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army****Intent To Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (E-SEIS) for Permitting Continued Mining Operations of PCS Phosphate, White Springs (Hamilton County), Florida**

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Division (Corps), has received a request for a modification to Department of the Army permit no. 19840452 for the PCS Phosphate-White Springs mine (PCS Phosphate), located in Hamilton County, Florida. A more minor modification was issued in 1997. The Corps has determined that the proposed modification of the existing permit will involve substantial changes that are relevant to environmental concerns. Therefore, a Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement, dated February 1986 will be prepared.

ADDRESSES: Chief, Regulatory Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 4970, Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Osvaldo Collazo, 904-232-1675.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: PCS Phosphate has been engaged in phosphate mining in its project area in Hamilton County under permits from the Corps, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and Hamilton County. The current Federal permit will expire in 2002. PCS Phosphate has begun the application process with state and Federal regulatory agencies for the permitting of continued mining operations within the company's 100,000-acre project area in Hamilton County. The modification involves mining new sites within the general boundary of the project area. This is the same project area reviewed under the original EIS.

Proposed new mining areas include jurisdictional wetlands. Permit modification would be issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, as amended. Permits would be issued under a joint permitting process with the DEP. A new permit would also be required from Hamilton County. Other state, regional, and Federal agencies are expected to participate in the permit evaluation. Mitigation for loss of wetland functions and values is anticipated.

In addition, PCS Phosphate has requested that the DEP initiate a process

under s. 403.752, Florida Statutes for coordinated review and agency actions. The process will be expected to result in a binding ecosystem management agreement, which would include the required state permits and approvals. The ecosystem management agreement process requested by PCS Phosphate includes the opportunity for public participation and comment. The Corps agreed that these public meetings would also serve the purpose of the scoping process and review and the SEIS and permit actions. The first public meeting was held on December 11, 1997. Public comment was initially requested in two areas: (1) the scope of the environmental studies to be performed for support of permitting actions and (2) identification of persons or organizations for both active participation in the process and receipt of periodic mailings. Coordination has included a number of Federal, state, regional, local agencies, and environmental groups including but not limited to the following: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, State Historic Preservation Officer, Suwannee River Water Management District, Hamilton County, Florida Department of Community Affairs, Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, Sierra Club, 4 Rivers Audubon, and Florida Defenders of the Environment.

Scoping: The public meetings provided much information that has served the scoping process. A draft Plan of Study for the Ecosystem Management Agreement and the SEIS has been prepared. This Plan of Study is intended to fulfill the information requirements for all anticipated regulatory actions. The results of the study will be compiled into a Supplemental Technical Background Document (TDB) and analyzed in a SEIS. The document can be made available for review upon request. The Corps will hold a formal public scoping meeting on July 30, 1998. All parties are invited to participate in the scoping process by identifying any additional concerns on issues, studies needed, alternatives, procedures, and other matters related to the scoping process.

Public Participation: We invite the participation of affected Federal, state and local agencies, and other interested private organizations and individuals.

Draft SEIS Preparation: We estimate that the Supplemental TBD will be available to the public on or about mid 1999, and the Draft SEIS will be prepared later that year.

Dated: June 17, 1998.

Marie G. Burns,

Acting Chief, Regulatory Division.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**National Assessment Governing Board**

AGENCY: National Assessment Governing Board; Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of Information Collection Activity; Request for Comment.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces a proposed information collection request (ICR) of the National Assessment Governing Board. The information collection is to conduct pilot tests of items developed for use in the proposed voluntary national tests in 4th grade reading and 8th grade mathematics. Before submitting the ICR to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Governing Board is soliciting comments on the information collection as described below.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before August 31, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments identified by "ICR: Voluntary National Tests—Pilot," by mail or in person addressed to Ray Fields, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, National Assessment Governing Board, Suite 825, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20002. Comments may be submitted electronically by sending electronic mail (e-mail) to Ray __ Fields@ED.GOV. Comments sent by e-mail must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption.

All written comments will be available for public inspection at the address given above from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ray Fields, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, National Assessment Governing Board, Suite 825, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20002. Telephone: (202) 357-0395, e-mail: Ray __ Fields@ED.GOV.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Information Collection Request**

The National Assessment Governing Board is seeking comments on the following Information Collection Request (ICR).

Type of Review: New.