



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Water Quality Certification Granted To PCS Phosphate For Expansion

RALEIGH – The state Division of Water Quality today issued water quality certification for the expansion of mining areas for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Phosphate Division more commonly known as PCS Phosphate Inc. of Aurora.

The certification is one step in the process of acquiring a federal permit for wetlands and stream impacts from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The certification approves impacts to 18,621 feet of streams; 3,789 acres of wetlands; 19 acres of ponds and 28.14 acres of streamside buffers. These impacts are anticipated to occur over a 35-year period on three tracts of land on the east, south and west of the current mining site.

The certification requires that the Bonnerton Road Non-Riverine Wet Hardwood Forest located west of the current mining site be protected. This wetland area is a “wetland of exceptional state or national significance ecologically” due to its age and the types and diversity of species – both plant and animal – that are present.

The certification also includes general and specific conditions for protection of water quality standards and the preservation of the designated uses of downstream areas. Among the conditions detailed are requirements for sedimentation and erosion control and groundwater monitoring for several chemical parameters and to ensure that the hydrology of adjacent wetland areas is maintained. A water management and stream monitoring plan for water quality, water quantity, fish and other aquatic animal populations shall be continued for the life of the permit. This plan shall be designed to assure the protection of downstream water quality standards including primary and secondary nursery area functions in all tributaries to South Creek, Porter Creek, Durham Creek and the Pamlico River adjacent to the mine site.

Wetland and stream mitigation is required by the certification to be done in accordance with mitigation approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Buffer mitigation is to be carried out for approximately 23 acres of the approved buffer impacts. Mitigation for the remaining proposed impacts is subject to state Environmental Management Commission approval and may require an alternative approach to development of the site.

PCS Phosphate Inc. began operation in North Carolina in 1965. The company mines phosphate ore and manufactures phosphoric acid, solid and liquid fertilizers, animal feed supplements and purified phosphoric acid used in food products and industrial processes.

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