

review of a Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permit issued to Commonwealth Chesapeake Corporation for construction of a 397.5 MW simple cycle peaker power plant in Accomack County, Virginia. Pursuant to a delegation of authority from EPA, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) issued the final permit on May 21, 1996. Because of the delegation, the Virginia permit is considered an EPA-issued permit for purposes of federal law (40 CFR 124.41 (1991)); 45 FR 33413 (May 19, 1980)), and is subject to review by the Agency under 40 CFR 124.19 (1991).

Four private citizens, residents of Accomack county, petitioned the Board for review of the PSD permit. PSD Appeal No. 96-2 was filed by Elizabeth Trader; PSD Appeal No. 96-3 was filed by Dorothy Bonney; PSD Appeal No. 96-4 was filed by Marvel Wimbrow; and PSD Appeal No. 96-5 was filed by William Reese.

The Board issued an Order denying review in the above case on February 19, 1997. The Board held that: (1) One petitioner (Appeal No. 96-5) lacks standing to petition for review of the permit because he failed to participate in the public hearing or provide comments on the draft permit, and therefore that petition must be dismissed; (2) with respect to Appeals No. 96-2, No. 96-3 and No. 96-4, the Board concludes that petitioners have not met their burden of showing that VDEQ's decision should be reviewed.

Anyone wishing to review the permit, petitions, order denying review, or related materials should contact the following offices:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,  
Region III, Air, Radiation and Toxics  
Division, Permit Programs Section  
(3AT23), 841 Chestnut Building,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107  
or

Virginia Department of Environmental  
Quality, Tidewater Regional Office,  
5636 Southern Boulevard, Virginia  
Beach, Virginia 23462.

Dated: May 6, 1997.

**Andrew Carlin,**

*Acting Regional Administrator Region III.*  
[FR Doc. 97-13037 Filed 5-16-97; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

## COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### American Heritage Rivers Initiative; Proposal With Request for Comments

**SUMMARY:** In the State of the Union  
Address, President Clinton announced

that he had directed his Cabinet to design an initiative to support communities in their efforts to restore and protect America's rivers. The White House subsequently convened an interagency task force to develop what has come to be known as the American Heritage Rivers initiative. The charge of the interagency task force is to integrate the environmental, historic and economic programs and several federal agencies to benefit communities. The agencies designing this initiative include the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Interior, Justice, and Housing and Urban Development, the Environmental Protection Agency, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Army Corps of Engineers and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

There are many citizens, nongovernmental organizations and local, state and tribal governments working to restore and revitalize their river communities. The Administration is creating the American Heritage Rivers initiative to help these communities restore and protect their river resources in a way that integrates natural resource protection, economic development, and the preservation of historic and cultural values. This initiative proposes to assist these communities through better use of existing programs and resources and coordinating the delivery of those services in a manner designed by the community, or "bottom-up."

Under this program, the President will designate ten rivers as American Heritage Rivers in calendar year 1997. These designated rivers will receive special recognition and focused federal support and will serve as models of the most innovative, economically successful and ecologically sustainable approaches to river restoration and protection for communities across the United States. In addition to the ten rivers receiving designation, the initiative will provide improved information and services for all river communities. The initiative will create no new regulatory requirements for individuals or state and local governments.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 9, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality, Old Executive Office Building, Room 360, Washington, D.C. 20501. Fax: 202-456-6546.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Karen Hobbs, Agency Representative,  
Council on Environmental Quality, Old  
Executive Office Building, Room 360,

Washington, D.C. 20501. Phone 202-395-7417; Fax: 202-456-6546.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice is available on the American Heritage Rivers Internet Homepage at: <http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/heritage/rivers.html>. This document is divided into four sections: background on the American Heritage Rivers initiative; overall program design; benefits of designation and the designation process; and services available to all river communities. Comments are sought on the usefulness of the initiative, its design, and ways in which the federal government can support communities.

### Background

Rivers have always been an integral part of our Nation's history—providing opportunities for trade and commerce, routes for exploration and discovery, inspiration for ideas and culture, means of recreation, and focal points for community development. Rivers often define the distinctive character of communities. To capture or restore that distinctive character, communities across America are working to revitalize their waterfronts, and to enhance the historic, cultural, recreational, economic, public health, and environmental values of their rivers. Federal and state governments enact laws and impose regulations to clean up pollution and improve water quality. The goal of the American Heritage Rivers initiative is to support communities (hereafter referred to as River Communities), within existing laws and regulations, by providing them with better access to information, tools and resources, and encouraging private funding of local efforts deserving of special recognition.

The development of this initiative has been guided by six principles. The Administration believes that a successful initiative will be community-led, flexible, coordinated, broad, partnership-based, and action-oriented. These principles embody the Administration's effort to reinvent government in accordance with the National Performance Review. The National Performance Review, directed by Vice President Gore, seeks to create a government that works better and costs less through focusing on customer service, developing partnerships and delegating power to the front lines.

### Overall Program Design

The initiative will be driven by the needs and desires of communities that wish to participate in the program. Communities already work with the federal government in numerous ways that affect rivers, and this work will

continue. The initiative will make national expertise available to community-based restoration, protection and revitalization efforts, and will simplify community access to existing federal resources. The initiative will actively promote successful models that demonstrate private and public collaboration to preserve the special heritage associated with our rivers, and share this information through a clearinghouse.

The American Heritage Rivers initiative will have two components:

- Enhanced services and program delivery to designated rivers; and
- Improved delivery of services and information.

#### **Part I: Benefits of Designation and the Designation Process**

The President will designate, by proclamation, ten rivers in calendar year 1997. These designated rivers will receive focused support in the form of programs and enhanced services, including a "River Navigator" (formerly referred to as a "caseworker" in public meetings and earlier documents) to work with the community to provide access to the federal agencies and existing programs and to simplify the delivery of these programs. Designated rivers and their communities will also receive a commitment from federal agencies to act as "Good Neighbors" in making decisions that affect communities. Each river will become a laboratory for reinvention of federal programs and delivery of services that will support each Community's revitalization efforts.

##### *1. Presidential Proclamation*

Communities designated as American Heritage Rivers will receive recognition by proclamation of the President of the United States.

##### *2. "River Navigator"*

Each designated river will be assigned a "River Navigator" to help implement the community's vision and provide a single contact/liaison for all federal resources.

##### *3. Coordinated Delivery of Federal Services*

Programs exist in numerous federal agencies, including the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, Army, Housing and Urban Development, the Environmental Protection Agency and others to support rivers. An interagency task force, established to oversee the development of the initiative in Washington, D.C., will reduce duplication in and of programs, coordinate and leverage streamlined

resources, and pay particular attention to designated rivers.

The interagency task force will work with each River Community as it is designated to identify technical and funding needs. First, a team of planning and technical assistance experts will help each designated River Community assess its strategy and implementation plan to identify technical assistance and funding needs. Then, federal agencies will commit field staff and resources to the teams, which will also include non-federal partners, such as state, local, tribal governments and nongovernmental organizations, as well as other partners. Technical assistance, education, funding and high quality aerial photography and maps will help identify and evaluate historic, environmental and economic resources. Planning assistance and community outreach will ensure a well-defined action strategy and a broad base of support. Training in soil and water quality testing will help communities develop a baseline against which to measure progress and environmental monitoring will help communities develop a report card in river conditions and trends. Economic modeling will help communities assess benefits and costs of proposed river projects. Interpretative techniques will identify the unique aspects of the American settlement of the community. The teams will help to implement the "Good Neighbor Policy" (discussed below). Through the establishment of the teams, federal agencies will seek stronger intergovernmental partnerships with state, local and tribal governments to streamline and speed the delivery of services and programs. Individual program services will be simplified and expedited, within existing laws and mandates. For some River Communities, Performance-Based Organizations will be established. A Performance-Based Organization, an idea championed by Vice President Gore and the National Performance Review, is granted flexibility for certain bureaucratic requirements in exchange for a commitment to achieve ambitious performance-based goals. In addition, regional and state personnel of federal agencies will assess their successes and implementation problems associated with the initiative, and make recommendations for improving delivery and accessibility of services and programs.

##### *4. "Good Neighbor Policy"*

Federal agencies will commit to a "Good Neighbor Policy" under which they will help ensure that their actions have a positive effect on the natural,

historical, economic and cultural resources of American Heritage River communities.

The interagency task force will develop ways to inform communities and federal agencies about American Heritage Rivers goals and objectives to ensure that federal actions are complementary to these goals. The "Good Neighbor Policy" will require the federal agencies to identify ways to inform local groups regarding federal actions and will require agencies to consult with American Heritage River communities early in the planning stages of federal actions and take into account the community's goals and objectives.

##### *5. Private Sector Opportunities*

The Administration will encourage nongovernmental organizations, businesses and other partners to work with state, tribal and local governments to restore, protect, and revitalize American Heritage Rivers that run through their communities.

##### *How Do River Communities Nominate a River?*

Communities wishing to nominate their river must meet basic criteria and complete a nomination form. The nomination will require information from the nominating River Community, such as:

1. A brief description of the proposed American Heritage River area;
2. A brief description of how the proposed American Heritage River meets the qualifying criteria;
3. The names, addresses and phone numbers of sponsors listed separately. Letters of endorsement and support are highly recommended.

Nominations must be no more than 15 pages, 10 point type size or larger with one inch margins. Letters of endorsement and support and maps describing the proposed designated area will not count towards the 15 page limit. Due to the constraints of the review and selection process, additional materials, such as videos, photographs and/or plans, will not be considered. E-mail transmissions of the applications will be accepted.

Information about the American Heritage Rivers initiative is readily available to all River Communities through personal contacts, Internet access, a toll-free phone line and written materials. Federal agency field staff will receive special orientation on the initiative to enable them to answer river community questions. Special emphasis is given to outreach methods for minority and low income communities.

Information about qualifying and selection criteria and the selection process is available to the public and clearly explained in the application package as well as in other information media (such as those listed above).

#### *Who May Put Forward Nominations?*

Any River Community working to improve, protect or revitalize a river is eligible to nominate a river area. A River Community is self-defined by the members of the community. It can include private citizens, landowners, educational and arts organizations, community leaders, economic developers, businesses, nonprofit organizations, public and private institutions, local and state government agencies, Indian tribes, elected officials, and/or other parties within and adjacent to the proposed area or areas that support the designation and the goals of American Heritage Rivers.

#### *Scope of Area Covered by Nomination*

A River Community will define the area covered by the nomination and should reflect the River Community's capability to implement its plan of action. The length of the area, whether it be an entire watershed, the length of an entire river, or a short stretch of a river, may cross jurisdictional boundaries (if supported by that government and community through letters of support and endorsement).

#### *What Are the Qualifying Criteria?*

The qualifying criteria are intended to be broad, flexible and credible. Designation is available both to community-led efforts that are well underway and to communities just beginning. In making a nomination, sponsoring communities or organizations must demonstrate broad community support; notable resource qualities; local and regional partnership agreements; strategies that lead to action; and an ability to achieve measurable results.

#### **1. Broad Community Support**

A broad spectrum of private citizens, such as landowners, businesses, educational and arts organizations, community leaders, economic developers, nonprofit organizations, public and private institutions, local and state government agencies, Indian tribes, elected officials, and/or other parties within and adjacent to the proposed area or areas support the designation and the goals of American Heritage Rivers.

#### **2. Notable Resource Qualities**

There are within the proposed river area (as defined by the community or organization) a range of natural, economic, scenic, historic, cultural, and/or recreational features that demonstrate distinctive qualities of America's river heritage.

#### **3. Local and Regional Partnership Agreements**

The principal party or parties nominating the river and local or regional governmental entities show their willingness and capability to enter into new, or to continue and expand existing, partnership agreements with each other as well as with federal and state agencies, Indian tribes, and/or other parties to implement a plan for the river area.

#### **4. Strategies That Lead to Actions**

The principal local sponsoring party or parties has in hand, or is developing, a broad plan of action for the river area. Any actions planned on the designated area should not impact downstream communities. At a minimum, the strategy includes the following components:

- Community vision;
- Operating procedures and policies;
- Description of how the proposal takes into account existing plans for the area;
- Public participation and public education;
- Projects and products (including any anticipated impacts beyond the designated river area);
- Resources committed and anticipated (including means for generating additional and matching support from both public and private sources;
- Schedules of actions;
- What the community expects the federal role to be;
- Obstacles to community action, including those the community believes can be resolved by joint federal, state and local support;
- Measures of success.

#### **5. Measurable Results**

Implementation of the community's vision must result in measurable benefits to the river community reflecting the community's goals, including, but not limited to, protection of water resources and/or public health, restoration of rivers, protection and highlighting historic and cultural resources, revitalization of local and regional economies, and/or implementing sustainable development within the river area.

#### *What are the Selection Criteria?*

A selection council, convened by the President and discussed below, will, for those nominations meeting the qualifying criteria, also seek to ensure that, individually or as a group, American Heritage Rivers will exemplify America's river heritage at its best, in all its natural, historic, cultural, social, economic, and ecological diversity. The selection council will judge whether the designated rivers will showcase a variety of stream sizes and situations, in urban, rural, and mixed contexts. They will also assess the potential for an American Heritage River to showcase one or more innovative programs in such areas as watershed planning, historic preservation, wildlife management, fisheries restoration, community revitalization, floodplain management and recreation. Applicants should keep in mind the selection criteria in their responses to the qualifying criteria.

In addition, designated rivers will be able to benefit significantly from a broad range of refocused or retargeted federal programs or other assistance and help generate broader public support for the goals and guiding principles of American Heritage Rivers as excellent examples and models for emulation throughout the Nation.

#### *Evidence of Support*

The ability of a River Community to achieve its goals of river quality improvement and economic and community revitalization will depend on the cooperation of state, tribal and/or local officials, as well as strong partnerships with nongovernmental and community organizations. If a state, tribal and/or local government(s) nominates a watershed, river or river stretch, letters of support from nongovernmental organizations and community groups are highly recommended. If a nongovernmental organization(s) nominates a watershed, river or river stretch, letters of support from state, tribal and/or local units of government are highly recommended.

#### *Number of Designations*

The President will designate ten rivers in calendar year 1997. The experience gained from the designated rivers and the level of community support for the initiative will guide future river designations.

#### *Terms of Designation*

Designation will generally be considered permanent, subject to implementation of the community's plan of action. The "River Navigator",

however, will be for a term not to exceed five years.

#### Selection Council

An interagency task force, composed of the heads of federal agencies, will make recommendations to the President regarding designations. The Administration is considering options on how to include the opinions of the public and experts from a variety of fields this decision-making process.

#### Part II: Services Available to all River Communities

All River Communities will be able to take advantage of improved delivery of existing federal agency services and greater access to information. Federal agencies will use existing staff, resources and programs to assist all River Communities in their river restoration and community revitalization efforts.

##### 1. Improved Delivery of Existing Services and Programs

During the first year, federal agencies will focus on improving service and program delivery to the designated river communities, but will also implement methods to improve information access and service delivery to all river communities. There will be an emphasis on establishing stronger intra- and inter-agency communications systems and incentives and performance measures for field staff to rely more on partnerships with other federal agencies. Special emphasis will be given for outreach to minority and low income communities.

##### 2. Information

###### A. Internet Services

A "State of the Rivers" Home Page will provide information via the Internet on river conditions and demographics of river communities. Visitors to the American Heritage Rivers initiative Home Page will also be able to access Web Pages devoted to the "State of Your River," (modeled on EPA's Surf Your Watershed program) which will in turn link to various sources of information. For example, a person might use a zip code or county name to locate a particular river, and then "point and click" for information about that river, such as drinking water sources, land use, or population. From the American Heritage Rivers initiative Home Page, a user will be able to link to the Home Pages to all participating federal agencies to access information on such topics as economic modeling, available grants, teaching guides and where to get aerial photographs and advice from experts.

An American Heritage Rivers Riverfront Internet Page will present users with a broad array of goods and services from which to choose. This electronic tool kit will be customer-driven, so that users can easily scan the tools available and quickly find and obtain those that best fit their community's interests. The Riverfront Internet Page will be divided into the following categories: facts and maps; getting started; assistance yellow pages; local action, building partnerships; and knowing your assets.

###### B. "Talent Bank"

A "talent bank" will share knowledge and techniques about community river restoration and revitalization efforts. The "talent bank" will build on existing expertise and provide access to creative ideas for addressing river goals and needs; real world experience in translating those ideas into practical; workable action; and expertise (professional, technical, organizational, financial or other skills) for helping carry out particular projects or other aspects of community plans. It will be available on both the Internet and in hard copy.

###### C. Catalog of Federal Support

A catalog of federal support will be developed and made available via the Internet, as well as in hard copy. Whether on the Internet or in hard copy, this information is intended to provide hands-on, step-by-step help to communities that are just beginning to restore and revitalize their rivers. The information will consist of brochures, "how-to" pamphlets, a bibliography, and videos.

#### Next Steps

Specific input is sought on the following:

- Overall design of the American Heritage Rivers initiative.
- Qualifying and selection criteria.
- Nomination and selection process.
- Types of assistance needed by communities working on rivers, including comments on existing or needed federal programs and services.

During April and May, the interagency team sought ideas from communities and interested parties to establish criteria for river selection, to determine how rivers will be designated, and to propose how the initiative will be implemented. The following cities hosted meetings, with the approximate number of attendees in parentheses:

April 7 Washington, D.C. (100 attendees)

April 14 Washington, D.C. (40 attendees)

April 16 Albuquerque, New Mexico (60 attendees)

April 22 Boston, Massachusetts (40 attendees)

April 25 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (80 attendees)

April 28 Atlanta, Georgia (40 attendees); Chicago, Illinois (120 attendees); San Francisco, California (30 attendees)

April 29 Los Angeles, California (30 attendees)

April 30 Seattle, Washington (40 attendees)

May 1 Asheville, North Carolina (60 attendees)

May 7 Denver, Colorado (50 attendees)

The schedule for subsequent action is as follows:

May/June: **Federal Register** Notice of Draft Program Design, with Comment Period

June: Cabinet Recommends Initiative Design to President

June: **Federal Register** Notice of Final Program, Open Nominations

August: Applications Due to Be Considered For the First Round Of Designated Rivers

Fall/Winter: Designated Rivers Announced & Applications Due To Be Considered for the Second Round

After comments from the **Federal Register** notice have closed, the Cabinet will incorporate changes and suggestions into the design of the American Heritage Rivers initiative before forwarding it to the President for approval. If the President approves the initiative design, it is expected that the President will direct his Cabinet to implement the American Heritage Rivers initiative.

Dated: May 15, 1997.

**Kathleen A. McGinty,**

*Chair, Council on Environmental Quality.*

[FR Doc. 97-13210 Filed 5-16-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3125-01-M

#### FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

##### Notice of Public Information Collections Submitted to OMB for Review and Approval

May 13, 1997.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Communications Commissions, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burden invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection, as