



State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

PUBLIC INTEREST CENTER

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NEWS RELEASE

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Public Invited to Comment on Water Quality Impacts from Proposed Ohio River Clean Fuels Project

A coal-to-liquids fuel plant proposed for Columbiana and Jefferson counties and its potential impact on Rocky Run and the Ohio River will be the focus of an April 17, 2008, Ohio EPA public meeting. The information session and public hearing will begin at 6 p.m. at Wellsville High School, 929 Center Street.

The meeting is an opportunity for citizens to ask questions and submit comments concerning an application submitted by Ohio River Clean Fuels, LLC (ORCF), to construct a plant to transform coal and other biomass into liquid fuel via a coal gasification process. If constructed, the plant would produce an estimated 52,000 barrels per day of liquid fuel and enough electricity to operate the plant and provide a surplus for export on the adjacent power grid.

The proposed project site is at Sixteen School Road, west of Ohio State Route 7 and south of Wellsville. ORCF's application includes construction alternatives that could potentially impact up to 15,186 feet of streams, 1.92 acres of wetlands and 1.08 acres of ponds. However, the applicant's preferred site plan (listed in the application as the "minimal degradation alternative") would limit impacts to 8,745 feet of streams, 1.71 acres of wetlands and 0.29 acre of ponds. Ohio EPA will consider other alternatives resulting in lesser or no impacts to water quality before making a final decision on the application.

To mitigate the impacts, ORCF is proposing to rehabilitate and protect Rocky Run and a portion of its tributaries totaling approximately 13,118 feet, and create 2.57 acres of wetlands. All mitigation would be performed onsite.

Anyone wanting to discharge dredged or fill material to waters of the State must first obtain a water quality certification from Ohio EPA and a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Ohio EPA's review is to ensure the project will comply with Ohio's water quality standards.

The proposed project may result in a change from the current water quality conditions of Rocky Run and the Ohio River, but cannot violate Ohio's water quality standards that protect human health and the environment. Ohio EPA will consider the technical, economic, social and environmental aspects of the project before deciding to issue or deny a water quality certification.

Comments on the application may be presented at the hearing or submitted in writing to: Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, Permits Processing Unit, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049. The public comment period ends April 24, 2008.

The application and related materials are available by calling (614) 644-2001 or online at: www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/401/OhioRiverCleanFuels/index.html.

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