

NOTICE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Preliminary Notice of an Adverse Effect to Prime Farmland

The USDA, Rural Development utilities programs (Rural Utilities Service) has received an application for financial assistance from the Seneca County Commissioners for a wastewater treatment improvements project in the unincorporated community known as Bascom, Ohio. As required by the National Environmental Policy Act, the Rural Development utilities programs (Rural Utilities Service) has prepared an Environmental Assessment that evaluates the potential environmental effects and consequences of the proposed project. This notice announces the availability of the Environmental Assessment for public review and comment.

The proposed project consists of the construction of a wastewater collection and treatment system to serve the unincorporated area of Seneca County, known as Bascom. The wastewater treatment plant is proposed to be located along State Route 18 on the east side of the Village. Construction of the WWTP will require approximately 2 acres of land. If implemented, the proposed project could have an adverse effect to Prime Farmland known as Shoals silt loam soil. The location of the new wastewater treatment plant was the target of a USEPA Superfund cleanup of approximately 300 abandoned 55 gallon drums and smaller containers of hazardous waste, with structural asbestos removal during 1994. A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment was conducted on the site in 2010, which determined that the site is suitable for the construction of the new wastewater treatment plant and no further action is necessary.

The purpose of this notice is to inform the public of the conversion of land from agricultural use and request comments concerning the project, alternative sites or actions that would avoid this impact and methods that could be used to minimize this impact.

Copies of the Environmental Assessment are available for review at *USDA, Rural Development, Columbus Office*, Federal Building, 200 North High Street, Room 507, Columbus, OH 43215. For further information please contact Scott L. Shaneyfelt at (614) 255-2414. Any person interested in commenting on this proposed project should submit comments to the address above by **Friday, September 3, 2010**.

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A general location map of the proposal is shown below

