

State Environmental Quality Review
Positive Declaration
Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft GEIS
Determination of Significance

October 13, 2009

This notice is issued pursuant to Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 - State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) of the Environmental Conservation Law. The Nassau County Department of Public Works (NCDPW), as lead agency, has determined that the proposed action described below may have a significant impact on the environment and that a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) will be prepared.

Name of Action:

Nassau County Mosquito Control and Surveillance Program

SEQRA:

Type I

Scoping:

NCDPW will conduct formal scoping for this action. A draft scoping document, dated September 21, 2009 has been prepared by the lead agency. A public scoping session will be conducted on November 18, 2009. There will be an afternoon session from 2pm to 4pm and an evening session from 7pm to 9pm at the following location:

Nassau County Legislative Chamber
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

NCDPW will accept comments on the draft scope until close of business, December 31, 2009. Comments can be delivered by hand, or sent by regular mail, commercial delivery service, fax transmittal or email, to the NCDPW contact person listed at the end of this notice.

The draft scope is available for public review at the NCDPW office listed below, and is also available online at NCDPW's website:

www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/DPW/Mosquitocontrolprogram

Description of Action:

Through mosquito surveillance and control, the NCDPW and Department of Health (NCDOH) work together to suppress mosquito populations that threaten public health (e.g. West Nile Virus) and create significant nuisance problems. To achieve this goal, the County employs Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by focusing on long-term suppression or prevention, with a minimal impact on health, environment, and non-target

organisms. IPM incorporates all reasonable measures to prevent mosquito problems by properly identifying species, monitoring population dynamics, and using physical, biological, or chemical population control methods to reduce mosquitoes to acceptable levels. Control measures emphasize prevention and proceed from the most environmentally friendly measures such as education of residents, water management and trapping in detention ponds and sumps, to chemical controls including the application of larvicides and adulticides. Chemical controls are only used if other measures prove to be insufficient.

The Nassau County Mosquito Control and Surveillance Program is a Type I action under SEQRA (6 NYCRR §617.4) and is therefore subject to SEQRA review (6 NYCRR §617.3). A DGEIS for the Nassau County Mosquito Control and Surveillance Program will be developed in accordance with 6 NYCRR §617.10(a) of the SEQRA regulations. The DGEIS will address all future mosquito control program activities by Nassau County, including water management and wetland restoration activities in Nassau County that affect mosquito and mosquito larvae populations.

Location:

Within the geographic boundaries of Nassau County

Reasons Supporting this Determination:

Potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action were identified in the Full Environmental Assessment Form. These impacts, which may be reasonably expected to result from the Project, have been compared to the criteria for determining significance identified in 6 NYCRR § 617.7(c)(1) and in accordance with 6 NYCRR § 617.7(c)(2) and (3). The Project may result in one or more significant impacts on the environment, and a DGEIS will be prepared to address those potential impacts.

Land Use, Zoning, Community Facilities, and Public Policy

The proposed project is not expected to impact any land uses, in the short-term or the long term. Likewise, zoning would not be changed as a consequence of the proposed action. Although not expected, there is a potential to impact public health (see below). The potential impacts to public health would be studied in a GEIS. Public policy already supports mosquito abatement activities, both for health reasons and nuisance control, so the proposed action supports public policy.

Public Health

The proposed action is largely mandated because of the real public health risks associated with mosquito-borne diseases, in particular West Nile Virus (WNV). The potential risks of WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases must be weighed against potential adverse impacts to the public from the spraying of larvicides and adulticides. These products are considered very safe to humans and pets, as they target insects specifically, but more analysis is required to review potential long-term effects and the potential impacts from an accidentally spillage of concentrated chemicals. If human health was adversely

impacted by the proposed program, these impacts could be significant, therefore this impact category is potentially important and the GEIS will examine these potential impacts in more detail.

Natural Resources

Nassau County is rich in natural resources, including birds, fish, shellfish, and estuarine organisms including turtles and amphibians. There is a potential for the program activities, including maintenance of ditches and spraying of chemicals, to impact these resources. If these impacts were widespread, they could be potentially important and could be significant. The GEIS will examine these potential impacts in more detail.

Water Supply

It is theoretically possible for chemical treatments to impact groundwater drinking water supplies, although the products proposed for use degrade very rapidly and have low toxicity to humans. This impact area will be evaluated in the GEIS.

Surface Water Quality

Surface waters are used by birds, reptiles, fish and shellfish. Nassau County has extensive coastal estuarine resources, as well as inland lakes and streams. The far eastern end of Jamaica Bay, which is a State-Listed Critical Environmental Area, also borders Nassau County. Lobsters and clams in particular may be affected by runoff of larvacides and adulticides, so the potential impacts to surface water quality will require further analysis in the GEIS. Due to the large surface areas involved, this impact category could potentially be important and may be significant.

Hazardous Materials

The larvacides and adulticides are classified as hazardous materials in their concentrated forms. The transport, storage, and disposal of any unused chemicals could all create hazards due to inadvertent exposures. These risks will be evaluated in the GEIS.

Socioeconomic Impacts

The project costs could have socioeconomic impacts, but the medical costs of an outbreak of WNV need to be weighed against the direct project costs. These costs will be evaluated in the GEIS.

Open Space Resources

The public values the open space resources of Nassau County, including inland parks, the beaches, and the coastal estuaries. These resources can be limited by the presence of nuisance mosquitoes and the risk of disease from mosquito vectors. On the other hand, the enjoyment of the open spaces would be affected during spraying. Therefore, impacts

on Open Space from the proposed project could be positive and negative. The impact of the proposed project on Open Spaces, with an emphasis on potential adverse impacts, will be part of the GEIS.

Cultural Resources

The New York State Historic Preservation Office lists 286 cultural resources in the County. Some of these are multiple listings at the same site. The proposed project is not anticipated to impact cultural resources, but since the use of these resources could be temporarily affected by the proposed project, the resources will be inventoried and the potential impacts described in the GEIS.

Visual Resources

No impacts to visual resources are anticipated from the proposed project. The only impacts to landforms would be the maintenance of ditches. Since these ditches are existing; maintenance activities are not expected to be a significant impact.

Transportation

No significant impacts to transportation are anticipated from the proposed project. There might be very short-term disruptions of traffic resulting from spraying activities from trucks, but the trucks would not be at any one place for long. These potential adverse impacts will be described in the GEIS.

Air Quality

The sprays would not adversely affect air quality. They would remain localized as aerosols, deposit on the ground, and rapidly biodegrade. The other air quality issue to consider is emissions from vehicles used for the surveillance and treatment of mosquitoes. Both types of impacts will be considered in the GEIS. Since the sprays are not regulated air pollutants, the potential impacts on health and ecological systems would be evaluated in other sections of the GEIS.

Noise

Most chemical treatments would be conducted by truck mounted equipment. It is also possible that helicopters and small planes could be used for aerial applications. The potential impacts from the noise of these activities would be part of the GEIS analyses.

Waterfront Revitalization Program

The proposed activity will be analyzed for compliance with the Waterfront Revitalization Plan of Nassau County and the plans that have been developed by local municipalities in the Coastal Zone of Nassau County. Certain preserve areas will be designated no-spray

areas as part of the proposed project to comply with restrictive uses in some of the waterfront areas.

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

The potential impacts of the proposed project on energy use and the emission of greenhouse gases will be analyzed. DEC has issued recent guidance on the measurement of greenhouse gases, and this policy will be followed in the GEIS. Impacts are anticipated to include vehicle emissions from the surveillance and spraying programs, construction equipment from ditch maintenance, and emissions from the manufacture of chemicals.

For further information or to offer comments, contact:

Nassau County Department of Public Works

c/o Mosquito Control Program Comments

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