

**State Environmental Quality Review
NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Notice of Determination of Non-Significance**

This notice is issued pursuant to Part 617 of the State regulations issued pursuant to Article 8 of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) of the Environmental Conservation Law.

The Town Board of the Town of New Paltz (the "Town"), as SEQR Lead Agency, has determined that the proposed action described below will not have a significant effect on the environment and that a draft environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Name of Action: Backup Water Supply for Town and Village of New Paltz

SEQR Status: Type 1 Action.

Conditioned Negative Declaration: No

Description of Action: New York City will be shutting down the Catskill Aqueduct for ten-week periods beginning October 1, 2017, through 2019. The Aqueduct supplies the Town and Village with water. The Village reservoirs at Mountain Rest Road will be unable to support the 7,000 Village and 300 Town water supply customers. New wells have been drilled to investigate potential additional supply and a new water district and an expanded water district are proposed. A new water main is proposed to service residents of Plains Road, Woodland Drive, Locust Lane, Shawangunk View Drive and a portion of Cedar Lane. Service will be installed directly to the homes. Approximately 12,000 feet of pipe will be laid in public roadways. In a corner of Sojourner Truth Park accessed from Plains Road, a new mechanical backup well, pump station and water treatment building are proposed. Proposed work at the Village reservoirs includes dredging to reduce sediment buildup and installation of flash boards to increase capacity. The sediment is proposed to be deposited at the Fair Grounds in the Town. Existing wells will be used at the Turk property between S. Ohioville Road and I-87, with the inclusion of a water distribution line for Paradies Lane. The existing well supply and new treatment are proposed to be connected to the Water District 3 distribution network. The proposed Backup Water Supply improvements will meet the projected average daily demand of 610 gpm during the 10-week aqueduct shutdown period.

Location: Plains Road, Woodland Drive, Locust Lane, Shawangunk View Drive, Cedar Lane and Paradies Lane, the New Paltz Fairgrounds Sports Park, and the two Village Reservoirs of Mountain Rest Road, in the Town and Village of New Paltz, Ulster County, New York.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

During review of this project, the Town identified the following environmental concerns, which are analyzed below:

Land.

The proposed backup water supply project includes 1) improvements to the existing reservoirs, 2) a new well and a new water district to be created on Plains Road, and 3) extension of an existing water district to include an existing well field on vacant land (the Turk property). A water main is proposed to be constructed to service the residents of the Plains Road neighborhood (i.e., new Town Water District No. 5) and would include installing individual water service connections directly to the homes as part of those water district improvements. A new mechanical backup well, pump station and water treatment building are proposed on property previously used as a permitted soil mine. A booster pump station located in a portion of Sojourner Truth Park is also proposed. Existing wells on the vacant Turk property, located on Paradies Lane south of Route 299 between South Ohioville Road and the New York State Thruway I-87, will also be used. A new water main is proposed to serve existing residential and office properties along Paradies Lane via the extension of the existing Town water district (i.e., Extension One of existing Town Water District No. 3). This new water main is also proposed to connect to an existing town water main near the Thruway to provide an additional backup water supply source to the existing water system. Work proposed at the reservoirs off Mountain Rest Road includes maintenance dredging to reduce sediment buildup and installation of flash boards to increase reservoir storage capacity. This sediment is proposed to be disposed at the town of New Paltz Fairgrounds Sports Park where it will be used as fill necessary for the future development of soccer fields.

All proposed construction will occur on land where the water table depth is generally more than 15 feet below surface. Minor grading associated with the construction of the water treatment buildings is proposed near wetland resources at both the 101 Plains Road property and the Turk property, but beyond the adjacent restricted area. No impact on the wetlands is expected because of the separation distance. No construction is planned on slopes greater than 15%. Approximately 5% of the project site contains exposed bedrock. The depth to bedrock ranges from 0 to 15 feet. No blasting is proposed. Removal of bedrock will require no more than conventional construction noise.

All construction is anticipated to take place during a 10 month period. The project is designed to not result in increased erosion following construction. Soil erosion control measures will be employed and maintained throughout construction as required by the Stormwater SPDES General Permit GP-0-015-02. Disturbed areas will be stabilized prior to removal of the erosion control practices.

The only significant land material to be removed from the work site will be at the reservoirs. It is estimated that 5,400 cubic yards of sediment material will be removed from the existing upper and lower reservoirs. This sediment washed down during prior flooding events (i.e., Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011) and has reduced

water capacity at the respective reservoirs. This material is proposed to be transported to the New Paltz Fairgrounds Sports Park to be used as fill that is needed for the future development of soccer fields. Representative samples will be taken during the work to ensure that what is deposited at the Sports Park is safe. If it needs special disposal it will be disposed of at an approved waste disposal facility. The silt is from a primarily undeveloped watershed feeding the reservoirs, so the chance of finding contaminated soil is very remote.

Surface Water.

The proposed project will minimally increase the surface area of the upper and the lower reservoirs that will have flashboards installed within the spillway structures. The existing steep reservoir side slopes will limit the minor increase in the reservoir surface area. These existing reservoir side slopes are maintained and stabilized to prevent surface erosion.

The dredging is proposed within the existing reservoirs that impound the watershed runoff conveyed by a NYSDEC Class AA stream. The spillway discharge of the lower reservoir returns excess flow to another NYSDEC Class AA tributary stream. Dredging will remove the accumulated sediment from the bottom of the existing upper and lower reservoir water bodies. Beyond dredging, flash boards will be installed at the existing upper and lower reservoir spillway structures to increase reservoir storage capacity. Flash boards are installed in the existing spillway structure openings and are placed horizontally in the spillway opening with shear failure pins to allow them to fail / break at a predetermined force of hydraulic head. There would be no disturbance of resources with regard to the flashboard installation as all work will be done within the concrete spillway structures.

Due to the dredging, temporary disturbance to bottom sediments during removal will occur and may increase turbidity downstream of the dams. A temporary culvert to reroute minimal flow around the work area will minimize the occurrence of turbidity. It is expected that the bulk of the sediment to be removed is near the reservoirs' intakes. This removal is expected to be done in July or August during low flow periods to further minimize impacts to the receiving stream.

The proposed action may cause temporary soil erosion that is typically associated with construction activity within the area to be disturbed by the construction. However, soil erosion and sediment transport via stormwater discharge will not lead to siltation or degradation of receiving water bodies. Soil erosion and sediment control practices will be installed and maintained in all areas of land disturbance in compliance with the required project's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and in accordance with the project's Stormwater SPDES General Permit GP -0-015-02.

Minor grading is associated with the construction of the water treatment buildings which are near wetland resources at both the 101 Plains Road property and the Turk property,

but beyond the wetland adjacent or restricted areas. Due to the separation distance, no impact on the wetlands is expected.

Groundwater.

The purpose of the project is to ensure that the businesses and residents of New Paltz that are served by the public water supply will continue to be supplied with safe drinking water while the DEP shuts down the Catskill Aqueduct for repairs. The existing and new wells will be utilized, which will create additional demand on area groundwater supplies. A new water district is proposed to provide public water service to the Plains Road residential neighborhood via a new water district (i.e., proposed Town Water District No. 5). Water supply to this area of the Town is presently provided by individual private wells.

An existing well field will be used to provide public water service to the Turk / Paradies Lane business and residential neighborhood via the extension of the existing Town Water District No. 3. Similar to the Plains Road neighborhood, these properties are presently served by individual private wells. The Turk property is presently vacant agricultural land with a proposed hotel development pending application before the Town Planning Board. The existing well field on this property was developed 25 years ago to support proposed commercial development on this vacant agricultural property.

The increased public water supply demand will be met by utilization of these new groundwater supply sources. Water demand to supply proposed Town Water District No.5 is 20 gallons per minute (28,800 gallons per day) and water demand to supply the proposed extension of Town Water District No. 3 is 50 gallons per minute (72,000 gallons per day).

Water supply for the proposed backup water supply system must serve the entire New Paltz community and is projected to be an average daily demand of 610 gallons per minute (878,400 gallons per day). The backup water supply system will operate for a maximum 10-week duration during an aqueduct maintenance shutdown period. This backup water supply system is restricted to operate no more than once per year and not following periods of below average precipitation.

Under such conditions, the maximum safe groundwater withdrawal rate during the shutdown period, as demonstrated by documented well tests, will be 400 gallons per minute from the proposed Water District No. 5 groundwater source and is anticipated to be a minimum of 100 gallons per minute contributed by the existing well field on the Turk / Paradies Lane property. The maximum safe yield of the latter well field has not been calculated.

By agreement with NYCDEP, who is funding the project, the backup water supply system may operate at capacity only for the maximum 10-week duration of an aqueduct maintenance shutdown period. The system will be permitted to operate no more than

once per year and not following periods of below average precipitation. The maximum safe groundwater withdrawal rate during the shutdown period, as approved by documented well tests, will be 400 gallons per minute from the proposed Water District No. 5 groundwater source. During normal operations outside of Aqueduct shutdowns, the system will only be permitted at 20 gallons per minute, which is calculated to be sufficient for the District users.

Continuing and enhancing the use of the existing Village reservoirs and implementation of water demand reduction practices are also proposed to meet the community's water demand. Tests according to NYSDEC established protocols and procedures have demonstrated that the new well supply from proposed District 5 and the existing well field in expanded District 3, combined with the increased reservoir capacity and water conservation measures will safely satisfy the Town and Village demand.

Any risk of contamination of the water from the Turk property is minimal. The Turk property is currently under review by NYSDEC as part of their Brownfields Program for potentially contaminated properties. Formerly, the site was a commercial orchard and utilized pesticides as well as an Underground Storage Tank (UST) that was used in the prior farm operation. The site is identified as an existing brownfield cleanup site (Class A- I.D. C356053) and arsenic has been found as exceeding residential use at 114ppm in the soil. The pesticide contaminant particles in question do not move readily through the soil structure. Also, the existing drilled wells that will be utilized as part of this project are located over 700 feet from the area of contamination. Recent sampling of this bedrock aquifer indicated that this groundwater meets applicable drinking water standards.

The project will not require bulk storage of petroleum or any chemical products. The disinfection treatment system proposed generates chlorine on-site, thereby eliminating the storage of disinfection chemicals. Minimal water treatment building heating requirements will be met by an LP gas supply.

Flooding.

Portions of the proposed project will occur within a designated floodway, 100 year floodplain or 500 year floodplain. However, the scope of the work does not involve permanent changes to the landscape of these floodplains.

The dams located at the upper and lower reservoirs are proposed to be upgraded with flashboards to allow for increased water storage capacity by an estimated 1.8 million gallons. Overall, the dams in question are classified as B and appear to be well maintained as cited in the most recent NYSDEC required dam safety inspection. A Dam Engineering Safety Assessment will be performed as part of these project activities to certify the dams' stability and condition.

Air.

Impacts on air quality will be limited to short-term construction phase impacts due to use of heavy equipment. Proper maintenance of construction equipment will minimize potential short term impacts on air quality.

Plants and Animals.

The proposed action will not cause reduction in population or loss of individual threatened or endangered species. Several species were noted by the Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Information for Planning and Conservation database (IPaC): Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*- endangered), northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*—threatened), and bog turtle (*Clemmys muhlenbergii*-threatened) and the New York State Natural Heritage Program (NHP) (sedge wren (*Cistothorus platensis*- NYS threatened), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*-NYS threatened), and prairie wedgegrass (*Sphenopholis obtusata*-NYS endangered). The scope of the work will not cause a reduction in species numbers of any of these species and proper avoidance and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be utilized to ensure such.

The proposed project action will not result in degradation of habitat. The redheaded woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) was reported by NHP as a NYS species of special concern; a pair was spotted utilizing a park in 2012. The scope of the work will not affect this species and proper avoidance and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be utilized to ensure such.

While suitable bat roosting habitat was identified adjacent to the project areas, no disturbance is expected. Should the scope change, all tree removal required as part of this project will be completed during the Conservation Cutting Window, October 31 to March 31. The bog turtle is normally found in fens, highly acidic wetlands, and areas of soft, deep mud. Several wetland complexes are near, but not within, the proposed areas of disturbance. No impacts are expected to be made to these resources.

The sedge wren is a rare visitor to New York. It is known as a nomadic species and may be present some years and absent others. Marshes are the preferred habitat of the sedge wren. No impacts are expected due to absence of habitat in the work area. Bald eagles prefer habitat along large bodies of water and shoreline area. While the project does have close proximity to the Wallkill River, no habitat is within the work area.

Prairie wedgegrass is a species that is sporadic in distribution. Open woodlands, prairies, and pasture are common habitat for the species. The last known occurrence in this area was in 1957, categorizing it as historic. Due to much of the project occurring on previously disturbed land as well as the historic nature of the last known sighting, no impact is expected. Finally, riverbank quillwort is a plant species found growing on marginal habitat near water body edges and wetlands. Since these habitats are not in the work area, no impact is expected.

Agriculture

While the proposed action will occur adjacent to agricultural land and on vacant land previously used for agriculture, none of the proposed work will have a moderate to large impact on these resources. Although the Turk property was once used for an orchard, it is currently under review by NYSDEC as part of their Brownfields Program for potentially contaminated properties. Formerly, the site utilized pesticides as well as a UST that was used in the prior farm operation. The site is identified as an existing brownfield cleanup site (Class A- I.D. C356053) and arsenic has been found as exceeding residential use at 114ppm in the soil. It is highly unlikely the site would ever be returned to agricultural use. A proposal is currently before the Planning Board for a hotel development on the.

Historic Resources.

The only anticipated impact on historic resources is construction noise. No blasting is anticipated. While the proposed action will occur adjacent to historic or archaeological resources, none of the proposed work will have a moderate to large impact on these resources. The disturbance limits of the project will have an isolated footprint at each site, including the laying of pipelines in public roadways. Consultation with SHPO is underway for concurrence and guidance and any recommendations SHPO provides regarding excavation for the pipelines will be followed

Open Space and Recreation

The only anticipated impact on open space and recreation will be the installation of the booster pump station on unimproved land in the southwest portion of Sojourner Truth Park. The fully enclosed pump station, parking area for 2 vehicles, fuel storage and standby generator will occupy a fenced in area of approximately 2,600 square feet, which is 2.2% of the total land area of the park. To minimize any adverse effect, low level, motion activated LED lighting will be used and landscape screening will be provided to be compatible with the surroundings. This impact is considered to be small.

Energy

While the proposed action will increase the use of energy, none of the proposed work will have a moderate to large impact on this resource. During construction, standby power generators will be needed (4-50 kW) through local grid sources. The facilities constructed will require minimal increase in energy resources long term. Generators for standby power during power outages will be provided at groundwater pumping and treatment facilities.

Noise, Odor, and Light.

While the proposed action may result in an increase in noise, odors, and outdoor lighting, none of the proposed work will have a moderate to large impact on these features. Noise and odor increase would be limited to the construction phase of the project and between

the hours of 7am-5pm due to use of heavy construction equipment. Outdoor lighting will be in the form of LED motion detecting lights at the proposed pump/treatment facility. An associated standby generator will also be run at this facility once weekly for maintenance purposes for a short period of time. Acoustic shielding and buffering will be provided to minimize standby generator sound levels at pumping and treatment facilities.

Human Health.

The only anticipated adverse impact on human health would be construction noise. The proposed action, involving the installation of new water mains and service lines as well as pump stations, wells and treatment buildings, is located within 1,500 feet of the following schools, hospitals, day care centers, group homes, nursing homes, and retirement communities: Mountain Laurel Waldorf School, Sojourner Truth Schoolhouse, Little Hands Child Care, Ivy League & TLC Daycare. The proposed improvement will not detrimentally impact any of these facilities. See the discussion above regarding noise and light. No blasting is anticipated.

The Turk property is currently under review by the NYSDEC as part of their Brownfields Program for potentially contaminated properties. See the discussion above under "Groundwater." Recent sampling of this bedrock aquifer proved that this groundwater meets applicable drinking water standards.

Conclusion.

The Town Board, therefore, concludes that the project will not adversely affect the natural resources of the State and/or health, safety and welfare of the public and is consistent with social and economic considerations. In reaching this decision, the Town Board carefully considered the "Criteria" for Determination of Significance listed in the SEQR Regulations (6 NYCRR 617.7).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Date: February __, 2016

A Copy of this Notice shall be sent to:

Town of New Paltz Town Board (Lead Agency)
All involved agencies
Any person who has requested a copy

Environmental Notice Bulletin, 625 Broadway, Albany NY, 12233-1750

Neil Bettez, Supervisor, Town of New Paltz