

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
DIVISION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

ADOPTED AMENDMENT TO THE OCEAN COUNTY WATER QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public Notice

Take notice that on ~~FEB - 2 2010~~ pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 58:11A-1 et seq., and the Statewide Water Quality Management Planning Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4), an amendment to the Ocean County Water Quality Management Plan was adopted by the Department. This amendment was submitted on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA). The project involves the construction, in two phases, of a consolidated logistics and training facility within the Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station (Lakehurst) in Jackson Township, Ocean County. The project site is located on an approximately 140 acre portion of Block 10, Lot 90 which is 6,464 acres in its entirety. The project site is located directly east of the Plumsted Township/Jackson Township border in the vicinity of Hornerstown Road and is within the NJ Pinelands National Reserve. It is largely wooded with coniferous and mixed deciduous-coniferous forest trees and there are two open, successional fields in the center. The site was previously designated as an area to be served by Individual Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Area of Less Than 2,000 gallons per day (gpd) in the adopted Ocean County Central Planning Area Wastewater Management Plan (WMP).

Phase I involves the construction of a 109,000 square foot building, an 87 space parking lot, and associated site improvements. The building will contain a combined support maintenance shop to be utilized for the storage and repair of military vehicles. The facility will replace and consolidate several existing New Jersey Army National Guard (NJANG) logistical support functions within close proximity to Fort Dix training ranges and facilities. Phase II includes the construction of an 82,340 square foot building to be used as a unit training equipment site and will include a series of advanced work bays designed to maintain and support all current and projected training equipment utilized by

the NJANG. This phase also includes the construction of an 11,130 square foot addition to an existing guardhouse building, a 63 space parking lot, and associated site improvements. All of the above described facilities from both phases are to be served by an on-site subsurface sewage disposal system which will discharge to groundwater. The projected wastewater flow of all the improvements, calculated in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:9A-7.4 is 7,680 gpd.

Because the proposed project is located in the Pinelands National Reserve and the State regulated Pinelands area, NJANG submitted an application to the New Jersey Pinelands Commission requesting their approval of the project. The Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) requires that, where feasible, development in a Military and Federal Installation Area shall be located in that portion of the installation located within the Pinelands Protection Area. The development proposal in this application is located in the Pinelands Preservation Area. As part of DMAVA's application to the Pinelands Commission, DMAVA demonstrated that there was no feasible alternative location for the proposed development that would not require development in the Preservation Area. Specifically, DMAVA has indicated that, based on the size of the proposed project site (140 acres), the need to readily access existing training and existing range areas at Fort Dix, the unavailability of lands not encumbered by existing uses and wetlands protection standards, the proposed development could not be located in the Pinelands Protection Area. As indicated below, the Pinelands Commission has accepted that the project can not be feasibly located in the Pinelands Protection Area as part of the Commission's approval of the two phases of this project.

This proposed amendment has been reviewed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.18.

The Department's review determined that the entire site is designated as threatened and endangered species habitat as identified by the Department's Landscape Project. The Division of Fish and Wildlife's Endangered and Nongame Species Program has developed the Landscape Project, which identifies State and Federal listed Endangered and Threatened Species habitat. Historically, the site was documented for a variety of species that were found to occur onsite. A threatened and endangered species survey was

completed by the applicant for the Pinelands Commission application, No. 1991-0836.023. That survey evaluated the entire 140 acre project site for Sickle-Leaved Golden Aster, Grasshopper Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, and Northern Pine Snake. The completed survey demonstrated that the entire project site was not critical habitat for Grasshopper Sparrow or Upland Sandpiper and that there was no evidence of any local population of Sickle-Leaved Golden Aster within the entire project site. Although no Northern Pine Snakes were located on the project site during the survey, Northern Pine Snakes have been observed on the site by Lakehurst personnel and by previous threatened and endangered species studies completed by Lakehurst. Due to this fact, Pinelands Commission staff required an additional study to determine if any Northern Pine Snake dens or nests were located within the entire project site. Although no dens or nests were identified during that study, it appears that Northern Pine Snakes do utilize a portion of the project site as foraging and basking habitat and that, although not associated with nesting, the snakes may utilize the area for breeding activities. The Pinelands Commission authorized the first phase of this project, based in part on the evaluation of the habitat on the proposed development site being only a small portion of habitat within a much larger suitable habitat block that includes the New Jersey Colliers Mills Wildlife Management Area and the New Jersey Manchester Wildlife Management Area, both contiguous to Lakehurst. The Commission approved Phase I on April 6, 2006 through Pinelands Resolution No. PC4-06-23. For the applicant's Phase II application to the Pinelands Commission, under application No. 2006-0160.002, the Commission determined that the same habitat evaluation would apply in addition to the added effects of the already constructed facility on the subject habitat. The Commission found that the applicant demonstrated that the proposed development would not have an irreversible adverse impact on habitats that are critical to the survival of Northern Pine Snake and approved Phase II on June 12, 2009 via Pinelands Resolution No. PC4-09-30.

Pursuant to the New Jersey Water Quality Management Planning Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.7, the Department is to ensure that amendments are consistent with the intent and programs of the Pinelands Protection Act, N.J.S.A. 13-18A-1 et seq. The Department is relying on the habitat evaluation of the Pinelands Commission and accepts that Pinelands

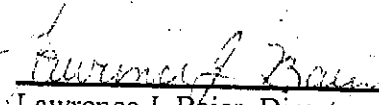
Commission finding that the project proposal would not have an adverse impact on threatened or endangered species and/or their habitat.

The Pinelands Commission's review determined that there were no wetlands within 300 feet of the proposed project site. There are no streams or stream buffers on-site.

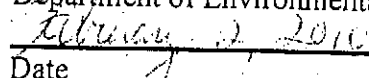
The proposed project's water supply will be a public water system (system) comprised of one on-site well withdrawing from an unconfined aquifer, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Formation. An application for the system was submitted to the Department's Division of Water Supply (Water Supply). Water Supply determined that the proposed withdrawal is not of a consumptive/depletive nature, does not raise any inter-basin transfer or stream flow depletion issues, and the proposed withdrawal would be within the limits of Lakehurst's existing water allocation permit (PWSID NJ1511429).

This amendment proposal was noticed in the New Jersey Register on November 16, 2009 at 41 N.J.R. 4323(a) and no comments were received during the comment period.

This amendment represents only one part of the permit process and other issues may need to be addressed prior to final permit issuance. Additional issues which may need to be addressed may include, but are not limited to, the following: compliance with stormwater regulations; antidegradation; effluent limitations; water quality analysis; exact locations and designs of future treatment works (pump stations, interceptors, sewers, outfalls, wastewater treatment plants); and development in wetlands, flood prone areas, designated Wild and Scenic River areas, or other environmentally sensitive areas which are subject to regulation under Federal or State statutes or rules.



Lawrence J. Baier, Director  
Division of Watershed Management  
Department of Environmental Protection

  
Date